

PhD Program
Santé, Médecine et Société
Health, Medicine and Society



Disability studies
Edition 2025

PhD Program

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Health, Medicine and Society

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Deadline: November 10, 2025

SMS Doctoral School 2025/2026: Disability Studies - Interdisciplinarity, Law, and Practice

The 2025/2026 academic year of the SMS PhD Program is dedicated to the theme of Disability, a topic of growing importance in public health, social justice, and human rights. Addressing disability requires a critical and interdisciplinary approach that challenges normative frameworks, institutional practices, and social dynamics shaping the lived experiences of disabled individuals. To explore this complex issue, the program is structured around three key events (totaling 2.5 days), bringing together researchers from various disciplines and professionals working in the field. These events aim to deepen understanding of disability and strengthen connections between academic research, public policy, and societal engagement.

Disability from an Interdisciplinary Perspective: 20 November 2025

This research seminar is designed to create a shared foundation of knowledge among all participating PhD students, regardless of whether their research directly addresses disability-related issues. This event brings together scholars from fields such as social sciences, epidemiology, philosophy, law, and critical disability studies to explore how different academic traditions approach disability, and how these perspectives can inform and challenge each other.

Disability & Law: March 2026 (date to be confirmed)

The second event focuses on the legal dimensions of disability. It begins with an introduction to interdisciplinary research methods, setting the stage for a critical examination of how law contributes to the social construction of disability. Drawing on Critical Disability Studies, feminist legal theory, and intersectional approaches, the day will explore both the potential and limitations of existing legal frameworks. Special attention will be given to jurisprudence and legal activism, highlighting the tensions between formal inclusion and structural discrimination.

Disability from a Practical Perspective: June 2026 (date to be confirmed)

The final event focuses on practical engagement with disability-related organizations and policy actors. Doctoral students will meet with representatives from advocacy groups and institutions to discuss the real-world challenges faced by people living with disabilities and those working to support them.

This call for applications is open to Ph.D. students from different disciplinary backgrounds in the social sciences and humanities, who tackle questions related to health and medicine in their research, and doctoral students in medicine, nursing sciences, or public health.

More information: www.unine.ch/ids/en/home/enseignements/etudes-doctorales/programme-doctoral.html

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