

Clarkson University

Fall 2022 David A. Walsh '67

Arts & Sciences Seminar Series

Friday, December 2nd @ 12pm in SN 214

Beyond Accommodations: Belonging and Mental Health in the University

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on global mental health, especially among young adults. How should universities, and Clarkson in particular, support students who may be struggling with mental health in the pandemic era? In this presentation, I will suggest that while individual accommodations for psychiatric disability are important, it is at least as important to address the environment or *world* in which distress and disability occur. This presentation looks at the link between belonging and mental health or illness, and how the field of phenomenological psychopathology allows us to better understand this relationship. The role of belonging in psychopathology is further illuminated by new trends in phenomenological research and theory emphasizing alterations in the *situated* subject. By expanding our focus beyond the individual we may start to think differently about interventions for students who face mental health struggles.

Dr. Elizabeth Pienkos is a licensed clinical psychologist and an assistant professor of psychology at Clarkson University. Her research focuses on the phenomenology of schizophrenia, using qualitative methods to explore the mechanisms and features of this and other psychiatric disorders. Recent studies have investigated experiences of depersonalization/derealization disorder as well as experiential changes associated with the pandemic.



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SA&S 300: Arts and Sciences Seminar is a one credit course intended to foster an interdisciplinary outlook in undergraduates majoring in the School of Arts and Sciences.