Ableism is embedded in every oppression; and disability is one of the most fluid and complex marginalized identities that exists. Notably, one does not have to be disabled to experience ableism because ableism evaluates and assigns value to people based on their divergence—whether actual or perceived—from constructed ideas of normality, intelligence, wellness, excellence, beauty, and [re]productivity. For example, oppression, deprivation, violence, and precarity are leading causes of disabilities for marginalized people including youth and students. Developing a more expansive understanding of disability and ableism will allow us to find ways to create and implement practices to increase solidarity between more people, and across more communities and social justice movements.

Talila “TL” Lewis will facilitate a campus-wide conversation on the past and present nexus between ableism, racism, and other forms of oppression. TL will share personal experiences of navigating racism and ableism as an undergraduate student, as a law student, and beyond. Additionally, TL will challenge dominant narratives of disability and ableism, provide recommendations and/or tips for educators, including faculty and administrators, to foster access-centered practices and center disability justice and racial justice, among others, in and outside the classroom.