



THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
of the Faculty of Letters  
of “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați



Invites you to  
**THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP**  
**“NOT DISABLED, JUST DIFFERENTLY-ABLED”**  
**23 -25 November, 2023**



From the moment we come into this world we form our **mental representations** of the universe around us or of the people surrounding us, through our **senses**. Our eyes, our ears, our nose, our skin and our taste buds become like an airport wherefrom sensations take off to later land on our hearts and on our minds. And each and every time one sensory organ is weaker, the others take on responsibility to come to the rescue and fill in the missing bits and pieces of information. From the outside, it would seem as if the body were **disconnected** and yet it is not!

One sense the less, one strength the more as such an absence (regardless of its nature) most often does not mean being **disconnected**, but rather being **re-born and re-connected**... However, for the least lucky stories, it may also mean a life of entrapment in a body that resists certain directions!

Where the ears are poor, the hands or the eyes become stronger, and where the eyes are poor, then maybe the voice becomes stronger, or where feelings are feeble, creativity takes control and comes to shape on paper, on canvas or on tape. But until it happens so, the journey is

**bumpy, painful and never-ending**, resembling more a battle that maybe feels lost most days.

**“NOT DISABLED, JUST DIFFERENTLY-ABLED”** is the motto-title of this **WORKSHOP** as it is intended to **raise awareness** and help us **change perspective** not only of the way we perceive people with **additional needs** but of the way it may be faced with exclusion because of the **lack of knowledge**.

As luck would have it, over the years, there has been a shift in the way society views people with special needs from **"disabled"** rather to **"differently-abled"**. This is a **comprehensive phrase** that is used to promote a **more inclusive and respectful approach to disability**, highlighting the **unique skills** and **refreshing perspectives** that individuals with **special needs** bring to society.

So, let us all come together in this challenging and thought-provoking exercise of vision and imagination that this **WORKSHOP** is intended as and place ourselves on both sides of the barrier in a **reciprocating process of mutual understanding** of nothing more and nothing less than **human experiences**. Let us all remember and learn of the **talent, determination** and **unique perspectives** of the people whose stories have **enriched** the world and served as **inspiration** to many.

In so doing, future **participants** are invited to announce their intention to take part in the event with **presentations** that explore the **cultural** and **social multiplicity** of **disability**.

Possible papers and/or presentations associated with the topic may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **sight impairment;**
- **hearing impairment;**
- **physical disabilities** (limitations on a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina);
- **mental disabilities** (anxiety disorders, dissociative disorders, mood disorders, trauma and stressor-related disorders, neuro-developmental disorders, substance related and addictive disorder);
- **cognitive disabilities** (intellectual disability; autism spectrum disorders; severe, persistent mental illness; brain injury; stroke; Alzheimer's disease and other dementias);
- **inclusion, dialogue and prospective change.**

The ultimate aim of the **WORKSHOP** is to bring together academics and specialists in the field of disability, students and/ or parents whose children deal with some sort of disability so that **awareness** is raised, **expectations** become grounded in reality and **social stereotyping** is overcome.

Send a **250-word abstract**, **5 keywords** and a **100-word bio** to the workshop organizer, to Lidia Mihaela Necula, “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați, at [lidia.necula@ugal.ro](mailto:lidia.necula@ugal.ro) by 1<sup>st</sup> August.