

Robert Wilton from McMaster University, Canada – Semester 2 2016.



Where you have come from and what do you teach?

I am a professor of geography based in the School of Geography and Earth Sciences at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Much of my research over the past two decades has been concerned with the challenges that people with disabilities face in their efforts to participate in social life. While these challenges stem in part from people's impairments, they are also linked to enduring social, economic and attitudinal barriers that many people confront. At McMaster, I regularly teach undergraduate and post-graduate courses on the social dimensions of disability, social inequality and North American urban geography. I also teach research and field methods.

What interested you in the Erskine Programme/Why did you want to come to UC?

I had heard about the Erskine Programme from a health geographer in Ireland who visited the Department of Geography and spoke very highly of his experience. I was delighted when my colleague Sarah Lovell, a health geographer based in the School of Health Sciences here, asked if I would be interested in coming to UC this term.

What have you been doing at UC?

My main role this term has been to help with the development and delivery of a qualitative research methods course for postgraduate students in the School of Health Sciences. I have been working with Sarah Lovell and Lois Tonkin to develop content and readings for the course, which is being offered for the first time this term.

I've also given a guest lecture to undergraduate health sciences students on different models or ways of understanding disability. Later this term, I will give a research seminar on my current research, which looks at the role of social enterprises in creating work opportunities for people living with psychiatric disabilities.

What have you most enjoyed about your time here at UC/Christchurch?

The programme has provided a great opportunity to step outside my own disciplinary and institutional home, and to interact with faculty and students who come from different academic backgrounds. Also, the warm welcome that we've received at UC and at Ilam School where my sons are enrolled has been tremendous. People have gone out of their way to make us feel at home. My oldest son has already indicated that he doesn't want to leave at the end of the term!