



SOCI 401.51 L02

Sociology of Identity

Winter 2018

Instructor: Dr. Anya Litviniuc Email: alitivini@ucalgary.ca Office: SS903	Lecture: MWF 11:00 – 11:50 Location: SH 280 Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Description and Objectives

The aim of the course is to introduce you to the most prominent and fascinating theoretical and empirical research on the formation, reproduction and reconstruction of social identities, building upon and expanding your understanding of contemporary sociological theory and substantive topics, such as racialization and ethnic relations, gender and sexuality, deviance and social control, health and illness, etc.

During the first part of the course, which is primarily based on lectures and readings, we will explore the contemporary sociological theories of social identity, develop the appropriate terminology for discussing it and examine the appropriate research methods for studying it. During the second part of the course, which is based on student-led discussions, we will focus on the empirical research on the most interesting forms of identity, including racialized and ethnicized identities; national identities; gendered and sexualized identities; class, leisure and consumption identities; online and embodied identities; and deviant identities, as well as the intersectionality of various identities. The empirical research comprises qualitative studies from the Global North, primarily the English-speaking countries, such as Canada, the USA and the UK, to facilitate your understanding of how the current social conditions (e.g., globalization, neo-liberalism, the Internet, risk society, etc.) and social categories (e.g., race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, social class, religion, etc.) influence identity possibilities.

After actively listening to the **lectures**, successfully completing the **assigned readings**, engaging in **class discussions** and completing all **assignments**, you should be able to meet the following objectives:

Content focused objectives:

- explain how social identity can be conceptualized by critically discussing prominent social theories of identity using the appropriate vocabulary;
- define key concepts in social identity research;
- explain how social identity can be operationalized by discussing various identity classifications and methods used to study social identity;
- identify social factors that shape identities;
- demonstrate how the intersection of identities impacts one's social location in the world by engaging in self-reflection;

- demonstrate how identities can be mobilized for progressive/regressive social change by providing current examples;
- challenge the common assumptions about identities and reveal the values that underlie the construction of certain identities;
- develop sensitivity to different identities and revise judgement and behavior in the light of new information.

Non-content focused objectives:

- develop your ability to read critically, identify the main information, summarize and analyze sociological research;
- develop your ability to engage in self-reflection and produce reflexive writing;
- enhance your presentation skills;
- improve your ability to apply ethical reasoning.

Course Materials

There is no required textbook for the course. Instead, academic articles from electronic journals and book chapters from electronic books are assigned as pre-class readings. All the assigned readings are available online through the university library (<http://library.ucalgary.ca/>): you do not need to pay to access any of the assigned materials. If you have difficulty accessing the readings, please email me in advance. I strongly suggest you download all the readings at the beginning of the term to ensure they are all accessible in a timely manner. Please make sure to complete the readings before the class as **each class assumes your familiarity with the material**.

Teaching Methods and Class Rules

Teaching Philosophy: I envisage teaching as a student-centred enterprise, where my responsibility is to facilitate your active learning by creating a propitious class environment, selecting stimulating topics and readings, and delivering adequate assessment tools and feedback. I aim to provide you with enough challenge to stimulate learning and enough scaffolding to ensure success.

Attendance and active participation: Since this course is a **student-centred learning experience** that seeks to engage you in deep learning, your attendance and active participation during each session is required.

To attain deep learning:

- listen to the lectures and discussions actively, taking notes and asking questions;
- relate prior knowledge developed during other Sociology courses to the new theories and concepts;
- analyze evidence and evaluating arguments critically;
- reflect on your personal experience in the light of new information.

Laptop use: Often instead of facilitating learning, laptop use distracts you and harms your performance, as demonstrated by recent research findings (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/using-laptops-in-class-harms-academic-performance-study-warns>). If you decide to use the laptop in class, please refrain from using it for non-class related activities. Additionally, please refrain from using your phone and other electronic devices in class.

Safe learning environment: Since at times the course deals with sensitive material, please share your opinions and interact with your peers and instructor in a respectful manner. Give each speaker the benefit of the doubt before reacting to their statements.

Contacting the instructor: If at any point you have any issues with the material or coursework, please let me know and we will find a solution. I can be reached by email at alitvini@ucalgary.ca. I will respond to all emails that **follow a proper email format** within 24 hours, excepting weekends. Please consult the course outline before emailing with questions. If you require a lengthy explanation or discussion, please set up an appointment with me.

Methods of Assessment

Method of Assessment	Weight	Date
Midterm Examination	15%	February 26, 2018
Class Presentation	15%	February 28 – April 11, 2018
Written Reflection/Analysis	2 x 20%	February 28 – April 11, 2018
Final Examination	30%	Scheduled by the Registrar

Mid-term examination: The midterm will take place after the overview of social identity theories and research methods to test your ability to identify and evaluate them critically. In addition to multiple choice, fill-in-the-blanks, matching, and definition questions, it will contain short answer questions asking you to apply theories to real-life examples.

Class presentation: During the second part of the course, each student will present one empirical article on the topic of personal interest selected from the list available on D2L. Each presentation will last 20 minutes, during which you will summarize the article (stating the general topic of study and the research question, explaining the theory and methods, describing the analysis, providing the findings and conclusions); evaluate the article (topic, argument, method, evidence and conclusions); relate the article to other readings and real-world examples; and pose questions to your peers. Additionally, you must be able to answer your peers' and instructors' questions. Resources on how to summarize and critique an academic article are available on D2L.

Written reflection/analysis: During the second part of the course, you will select two substantive topics for a total of two written assignments: either a reflective essay, analyzing your personal experience within the context of the theories discussed in class, or a practical application assignment, analyzing a real-life event using the theories and concepts discussed in class. **You will submit the assignments via Dropbox two weeks after the class presentation of the selected topic in class.** Specific assignment topics and guidelines are available on D2L.

Final examination: The final examination is cumulative and will focus on both the theoretical and empirical research discussed in class. The questions will follow the same pattern as those for the midterm examination.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percent range	Grade	Percent range
A+	96 - 100%	C+	67 – 69%
A	90 – 95%	C	63 – 66%
A-	85 – 89%	C-	59 – 62%
B+	80 – 84%	D+	55 – 58%
B	75 – 79%	D	50 – 54%
B-	70 – 74%	F	<50%

Grade Reappraisal

If you have any doubts about the expectations of an assignment, please speak to me in person or via email before the deadline. If you have checked your understanding of the assignment with me before submission, but believe that the received grade does not reflect the quality of your work, please submit a written response via email, explaining why your assignment should be re-considered **within two weeks of the date the assignment is returned**. I will re-evaluate the assignment and book a time with you to discuss your work.

Deferrals

Deferrals will only be allowed in case of illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. All deferral requests due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar. **Travel arrangements, misreading the syllabus and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral.** If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, you may write a make up test, whose date and location will be scheduled at the convenience of the Department of Sociology.

Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information about deferring the final exam and the necessary forms are available at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-forms>. Please note that requests to defer term work past the end of a term requires a form to be filled out (https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15_0.pdf) and submitted to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean.

Tentative Class Schedule

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Lesson	Date	Topics
1.	08/01	Course outline overview.
CONCEPTUALIZING IDENTITY.		
2.	10/01	Definition of identity. Self. Other.
Symbolic interactionism		
3.	12/01	Erving Goffman: The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Stigma.
Late modernity and identity		
4.	15/01	Ulrich Beck: Risk society and identity.
5.	17/01	Zygmunt Bauman: Liquid modernity and identity.
6.	19/01	Anthony Giddens: Modernity and self identity.
7.	22/01	Manuel Castells: Network society and identity.
Postmodernism, poststructuralism and identity		
8.	24/01	Michel Foucault: Power and identity.
9.	26/01	Nikolas Rose: Governmentality, biopolitics and identity.
10.	29/01	Pierre Bourdieu: Distinction.
11.	31/01	Judith Butler: Performativity.
12.	02/02	Jean Baudrillard: Simulacra.
Postcolonialism and identity		
13.	05/02	Homi Bhabha: Of Mimicry and Men.
14.	07/02	Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: Can the subaltern speak? bell hooks: Choosing the margin as space of radical openness.
15.	09/02	Chandra Talpade Mohanty: Under Western eyes.
OPERATIONALIZING IDENTITY		
16.	12/02	Abdelal et al.: Identity as a variable. Brubaker and Cooper: Beyond Identity.
17.	14/02	Loseke: Narrative Identity. Buchholz: Discursive Identity.
18.	16/02	Lamont: Boundaries. Bernstein: Identity as a social movement and organizational strategy. Brekhus: Trends in qualitative studies of identity.
19.	26/02	MIDTERM EXAM
EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF IDENTITY.		
20.	28/02	Racialized identity. Whiteness as identity.
21.	02/03	Ethnic identity. Hybridity.
22.	05/03	Religious identities.
23.	07/03	National identities.
24.	09/03	Gendered identities.
25.	12/03	Sexuality identities.
26.	14/03	Social class identities.
27.	16/03	Consumption identities.

28.	19/03	Celebrity culture, fandom and identities.
29.	21/03	Online identities: social media.
30.	23/03	Embodied identities: body image.
31.	26/03	Embodied identities: tattoos, piercing, plastic surgery.
32.	28/03	Health and identities.
33.	02/04	Illness and identities.
34.	04/04	Deviant and subcultural identities.
35.	06/04	Criminal identities.
36.	09/04	Identity dilemmas.
37.	11/04	Intersectionality.
38.	13/04	Course conclusion.
EXAM PERIOD: 16 – 25 APRIL, 2018		

Additional Administrative Information

Handing in assignments: The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters: to submit any work, please speak directly to me personally or via email. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department: they are only available online.

Academic accommodation: The student accommodation policy can be found at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>. Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

Student representation: The 2017-18 Students' Union VP Academic is Tina Miller (suvpaca@ucalgary.ca). For more information, and to contact other elected officials with the Student's Union, please visit the link: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/>. You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/contact>.

Protection of Privacy: The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Ethics Research: Please be advised that any research involving human subjects, even unobtrusive observation or interviewing friends and family, must have the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee. In completing the course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic misconduct: Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>.

Emergency evacuations: In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom, please proceed to the assembly point at Education Block Food Court. Please check these assembly point locations for all classes at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>.

Safewalk: The University of Calgary provides a “safe walk” service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the “Help” phones located around Campus.