



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 3321F-001

Identity & Society

Fall 2023

Delivery Method: In-person

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Course Description: This course provides students with an in-depth analysis of social psychological theories of identity, with an emphasis on the social factors influencing the formation and maintenance of various forms of identity.

The first part of the course will be spent analyzing the major social psychological theories on identity formation and its maintenance. During the second part of the course, we will examine historical and contemporary social constructions of identity, engaging in rich discussions on: race and ethnicity; indigeneity, citizenship, and immigration; sex, gender identity/expression, and sexuality; and social and economic class. The last part of the course will draw on “intersectional” perspectives to examine the social realities and consequences of identity in society. Throughout the semester, we will critically engage with the latest in sociological research on identity, with a particular focus on queer, racialized, and feminist scholarship.

Prerequisite(s): Registration in third year or above.

Unless you have either the prerequisites or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Anti-requisite(s): None.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and evaluate major theories and debates in social psychological scholarship on identity.
- Deconstruct the social and historical contexts underpinning the formation and maintenance of identities in Western society.
- Produce insightful, critical reflections of academic works and actively participate in scholarly discussions concerning various topics on identity.
- Distinguish between personal opinion and critical analysis in argumentation.
- Critically analyze scholarly texts in essay format.

Course Material:

- **Required Text(s): None.** All required course readings are either available electronically through Western Libraries **OR** will be posted on OWL in the “**Resources**” folder.

Course Organization and Expectations:

Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to succeed in a third-year course. It is the student’s responsibility to regularly complete all coursework (i.e., finish readings, write weekly critical reflections, attend and take notes on lectures, stay on top of important deadlines and dates, etc.).

Although attendance is not an explicit part of the method of evaluation as listed below, if you do not attend class, you cannot demonstrate your understanding of the course material during in-class discussions and/or engage with your colleagues. To receive a passing grade in this course, you must attend a minimum of 80% of classes. This requirement will be waived only in exceptional circumstances with documentation.

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Office hours: I am available for **in-person** office hours. If you are looking to book an appointment with me outside of my office hours, please e-mail me at sghebrai@uwo.ca.

Be sure to use your UWO e-mail account when communicating with me. E-mails from other accounts will not receive replies. All e-mail correspondence should be professionally prepared, spell- and grammar-checked, and not written in “text message” format. The subject heading must include the course title. Begin your e-mail with a salutation such as “Hello Professor Ghebrai” or “Hi Professor Ghebrai”. Sign off the e-mail with your full name and student number. You can expect a response from me within 24 hours, between 9:00am-5:00pm on weekdays.

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Weekly critical reflections and in-class participation	Submit weekly critical reflections no later than 24 hours before class and actively participate in lecture.	30%
Midterm examination	In-class, on Thursday October 26.	25%
Essay outline	Due Thursday November 9 @ 11:59pm.	10%
Final essay	Due Thursday December 7 @ 11:59pm.	35%

Weekly critical reflections and in-class participation (10 x 3% = 30%)*

Weekly participation in this course is divided into two major components. First, students are required to submit one critical reflection to the “**Assignment**” tab on OWL **no later than 24 hours before each class** (except on weeks where there is no lecture). Critical reflections should be between **150-200 words**, including one discussion question at the very end. Secondly, students will be required to actively participate during lectures. The weekly

* See “Student Absences” section below for additional details.

sum of these two components will be worth 3% of your course grade. With a total of 11 substantive lectures, 10 of which are graded, students will be permitted to miss **ONE** week **WITHOUT** penalty. **Students who participate in all 11 classes will have their lowest weekly grade dropped.** Instructions and a grading rubric are available in the “**Resources**” tab in the “**Week 1: Introduction to the course**” folder on OWL.

Midterm examination (25%)

The midterm examination will take place **in-class**, on **Thursday October 26**. You will have 3 hours to complete the examination. The examination will cover all course material (i.e., readings, lectures, class discussions, videos, etc.) from **September 7 to October 19**. The examination may include multiple choice, true-and-false, matching concept-definitions, fill in the blank, and/or short answer questions. More details about the examination will be provided in lectures, especially leading up to the midterm date.

Essay outline (10%)

You must submit an annotated essay outline by 11:59pm on **Thursday November 9**. The outline should be no longer than 300 words, excluding references. In your outline, (1) present the main argument of your essay and (2) the headings that constitute the outline of your paper. Under each heading, provide a few sentences on what each section will entail, with supporting in-text citations. Note that this is not meant to be a draft of the final paper, but it must be thorough enough to indicate what your essay is about. Provide a title that accurately represents the content of your proposed paper. Guidelines for preparing the essay outline are available in the “**Resources**” tab in the “**Week 1: Introduction to the course**” folder on OWL.

Final essay (35%)

The final essay is due 11:59pm on **Thursday December 7**. The essay will consist of a critical analysis on a topic relating to identity. Assignments are expected to be roughly 2500 words, normal margins (2.54cm), 12-point Times New Roman font, and in APA-style formatting.

Full instructions about the assignment, including a detailed rubric and supporting documents, are available in the “**Resources**” tab in the “**Week 1: Introduction to the course**” folder on OWL.

Important Dates:

- Sept 7: First day of classes
- Sept 15: Last day to add/drop a course without fee penalty; courses dropped after this date will have “WDN” on transcript
- Sept 29: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Oct 9: Thanksgiving holiday
- Oct 26: In-class midterm
- Oct 30 – Nov 5: Fall reading week
- Nov 9: Annotated essay outline due before midnight
- Nov 13: Last day to drop course and receive “WDN” on transcript. After this date, withdrawals will receive an “F” on transcript
- Dec 7: Last day of class; final essays due before midnight

Student Absences:

If you know that you have a problem with a due date or an examination (scheduling conflict, illness, etc.), **please talk to me as soon as possible**. If you do not or cannot let me know ahead of time, you will be asked to go through the formal academic accommodation process (see below).

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade:

For work worth less than 10% of the total course grade (in this case, the weekly critical reflections), students will be permitted to miss **ONE** week **WITHOUT** penalty. If students miss more than one, they will receive a grade of “0” on the subsequent missed weeks. Exceptions will **ONLY** be made under extreme circumstances. If students submit all weekly critical reflections, their lowest grade will be dropped. **NOTE:** Missing a week **DOES NOT** exclude the student from being responsible for knowing the course material for that week.

Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Documentation (medical or otherwise) is required, and it can *only* be collected by the student’s Dean’s Office Academic Counselling unit, not the instructor.

For the essay outline and final essay, students who receive accommodation from the Academic Counselling Office will receive an extension. For the midterm examination, students with an approved absence will be required to write a make-up examination. The course professor or teaching assistant may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up examination. Students should be aware that the make-up examination will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original.

There will **NOT** be any opportunity to reweigh the essay outline, final essay, or midterm examination.

Course Schedule and Readings:

NOTE: A copy of the course schedule and reading list is available in a separate document under the “**Resources**” tab in the “**Week 1: Introduction to the course**” folder on OWL.

Academic Policies:

Please review the Department of Sociology “[Important Academic Policies](#)” document

https://sociology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/courses/Academic_Policies.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Scholastic Offences
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Academic Accommodation
- Accessibility Options
- Mental Health