



The University of Western Ontario
Department of Sociology
SOCIOLOGY 3321G-001
Identity & Society
Winter 2026

Delivery Method: In Person

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This is a DRAFT copy only. Please see the course site for the final version.

Course Description:

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

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

Anti-requisite(s): N/A

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the social psychological research and theories of identity across multiple levels of analysis.
- Identify the historical roots, strengths, and limitations of contemporary “identity politics” discourse.
- Apply conventions of scholarly analysis, criticism and argumentation in online and classroom discussions about current issues in the field of identity studies.
- Summarize and critically analyze a book-length work of social scientific research on identity.

Course Material:

Reading assignments will consist of articles, book chapters, and knowledge mobilization resources. The main reference text for this course is:

Cote, J.E., & Levine, C. (2015). *Identity Formation, Youth, and Development: A Simplified Approach* (1st ed.). Psychology Press.

Links to PDFs, websites, and library resources will be provided via Perusall.

You will also be required to review one of four books for the Course Paper assignment (see below).

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course [OWL Brightspace](#) site on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students enrolled in the course.

Course Schedule and Readings:

The reading list and weekly schedule is available on the course Brightspace site.

Method of Evaluation:

Participation: 15% (5% Class Activities, 10% Perusall Participation)

Participation will be assessed cumulatively throughout the term in two forms:

1. 5% of the course grade will be based on evaluation of a Class Activity, each worth 0.5% of the course grade and due no later than 5:20pm (unless otherwise stated). This mode of evaluation will begin in Week 2. Students who attend fewer than 60% of class meetings may be required to submit a written report demonstrating that they have obtained sufficient knowledge of the course materials to justify a passing grade.

2. 10% of the course grade will be based on student's participation on the Perusall software platform. During each week's readings, students will use Perusall to comment on key passages, pose questions about the readings, and interact with peers who are doing the same. The deadline for these weekly "assignments" will be 1:30pm on the day in which the readings are covered (unless otherwise indicated). Thus, students should arrive in class having completed all readings and prepared to participate actively in lecture and discussions.

Each assignment will be graded individually using the platform's proprietary algorithm which ensures fairness and consistency. Students' grades in this section of the course will be based on the consistency, quantity, quality, depth, and completeness of your engagement with the week's materials. I will provide further explanation of these standards on Week 1.

Students will be expected to participate in at least eight (8) of the eligible "assignments." That is, the grade will consist of each student's top eight Perusall marks in the term and the 10% Perusall Participation grade will be based on the average of those marks.

Midterm Exam: 22% of course mark

The Midterm Exam will take place during class time on **February 26**. The exam may consist of multiple choice, concept identification, short answer questions, case studies, argument summaries, and/or short essays. Students should be prepared to demonstrate their knowledge

of materials covered in Weeks 1-6 as well as the main concepts and thesis presented by the author of their essay books. A more detailed breakdown of the Midterm Exam content will be provided in class prior to the exam.

Use of electronic devices and other written aids (notes, outlines, etc.) will not be permitted during the examination unless otherwise stated.

Students must complete the Midterm Exam to pass the course. Accommodations for the make-up exam date will be provided only with approval from an Academic Counsellor. Students with an approved absence from the Midterm will be required to write a makeup exam during the departmental Midterm make-up midterm exam period (location and date TBD). The course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Final Exam: 23% of course mark

The Final Exam will be worth 23% of the final mark. It will be administered during the Final Exam period. Students may choose between two formats in which to complete the Final Exam:

- A. **Written Exam.** Students may elect to demonstrate their knowledge of course materials by individually completing a pen and paper exam on the designated Final Exam date.
- B. **Oral Exam.** Students may elect to demonstrate their knowledge of course materials by completing an in-person oral examination as part of a small group on the designated Final Exam date. Exam length and group composition will be determined in class based on how many students are interested in this option, but students can expect approximate groups of 4 (composed of students covering similar book topics) and a meeting of 20-30 minutes. All Oral Examinations will be audio recorded and saved for no less than one year, per Department protocol. All students in the group will receive the same mark.
Note: All group members bear responsibility for knowing the course content. In the extenuating circumstance that a group member requires Academic Accommodation for the Final Exam, the remaining group members will still be expected to complete the examination. Students receiving academic accommodation will be expected to complete a "Make Up" oral exam. Depending on the circumstances, this may be completed virtually or in person, at the Instructor's discretion.

Exam questions for both exams will test depth of knowledge, understanding, and critical insight on comparable content. Evaluation of both exam formats will be conducted according to equivalent standards, commensurate with a 3000-level university course. **Students will submit their intent to write the Final Exam in Written or Oral format by March 19, 11:59pm.**

Students must complete the Final Exam to pass the course.

Note: Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Scaffolded Book Review Assignment(s): 40% of course mark

The course paper will take shape through a series of scaffolded assignments centred around the review of a book-length work of social science scholarship related to identity. Students will develop their paper around one (1) of the following texts:

Elite Capture: How the Powerful Took Over Identity Politics — Olúfémi O. Táíwò

Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era — Michael Kimmel

Doppelganger: A Trip into the Mirror World — Naomi Klein

The Art of Loving — Erich Fromm

The assignment will consist of three parts:

1. A personal reflection on the factors motivating your choice of book (Pass/Resubmit). This assignment will be marked on a “Pass” or “Resubmit” basis. The straightforward mode of evaluation for this component is intended to encourage sincere reflection rather than writing as obligation or “for grades.” The deadline of **January 31** will also serve to promote proactive selection and reading of your book. Students who do not complete a “passing” assignment on this component of the paper will be penalized 10% from the final Course Paper mark.

2. An applied discussion of the book’s main contents and subject matter (15%). Students will demonstrate comprehension of their book’s main ideas by completing a 4-5-page writing exercise connecting the book to a related piece of writing or media. This assignment will be worth 15% of the course grade. It will be due on **March 14**.

3. A written critical analysis of the book’s central arguments and sociological significance (25%). Students will write a 6-7-page response to an open-ended question that invites in-depth scholarly discussion of the author’s arguments and analyses. This assignment will be worth 25% of the course grade. It will be due on **April 3**.

Full instructions and grading rubric for this assignment will be provided on Brightspace.

You are encouraged to begin reading early and to consult with me often about the material. You are also encouraged to use course readings to augment your understanding of the author’s work, and vice versa.

A 36-hour grace period will be in effect to accommodate minor logistical problems. After that, late assignments will be deducted 5% per day from the original deadline. Assignments will not be accepted 7 days past the original deadline without official academic accommodation.

Important Notes:

- Factual claims, quotations, concept definitions, and paraphrased ideas *must* be supported with embedded citations and a complete References page in accordance with either APA or ASA style guidelines.
- Your overall assignment grade must receive at least 50% in order to pass the course.
- This is stated in the “Artificial Intelligence” section below but let me emphasize in this section as well: students will be expected to complete these assignments independently, without the aid of AI software, and to complete all written components using their own words. This course engages your capacity to wield *real* intelligence—creative, explanatory, theoretical, improbable. As [Chomsky, Roberts, and Watumull illuminate here](#), reliance on AI algorithms such as ChatGPT is often inimical to that pursuit.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

The faculty requires the following statement to appear on Course Outlines:

“Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Essays, written assignments and/or lab reports should reflect the student’s own thoughts and independent written work. Students should also generate their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allow them to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing the essays and other written assessments.”

To avoid confusion regarding interpretation of this policy, the following course-specific standards will be enforced:

- Use of AI-generated text in written assignments (including class participation activities, Perusall posts, and the Course Writing Assignment) is not permitted under any circumstances.
- Use of grammar and spellcheck programs like Grammarly are permitted for basic copyediting purposes *only*.

- The above statement about “information gathering and preliminary research purposes” applies to general inquiry only. Compilation of bibliographic sources and supporting evidence for written assignments should be conducted without the use of AI tools.
- You may use library resources or AI tools to assist in formatting the References section of your work to ASA or APA style guidelines; however, all in-text citations—*especially page number references*—should be done by you. You are responsible for cross-checking the accuracy and completeness of any references you cite in your work (as well as links and DOIs).
- Students should be aware of the propensity of generative AI to produce “hallucinations” such as fabricated information and sources. Submitting fabricated evidence in any course assignment constitutes a form of research falsification and will be subject to investigation for academic misconduct, per Senate policy. I reserve the right to request copies or direct links to any materials cited in the assignments you submit.
- If you believe you have a reasonable purpose for incorporating AI-generated content in some aspect of the coursework, I am open to hearing your thoughts, but please (i.e. *you must*) consult with me before proceeding.

Electronic Devices:

Use of electronic devices is permitted in class, but notifications and ringers should be turned off.

Per university policy, recording class proceedings is prohibited without special permission.

Academic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Copyright: Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf) – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request using the Student Absence Portal (SAP) https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html . Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness must include the completed Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf> or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Once the request and supporting documentation have been received and reviewed, appropriate academic consideration, if granted, shall be determined by the instructor in consultation with the academic advisor, in a manner consistent with the course outline. Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam, unless otherwise specified in the course outline. The course instructor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup text/exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test/exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test/exam.

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty Academic Counselling Office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Religious Accommodation: Students should review the policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf. Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning: In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence or University approved emergency during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL Brightspace for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Code of Student Conduct: It is the responsibility of every student to read the Code and familiarize him or herself with its contents. The Code is available at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf. Sanctions for non-compliance range from a warning or reprimand to expulsion from the University.

Student Responsibility: Students in a degree program must select courses in accordance with the published requirements. Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and

that they are aware of any antirequisite course(s) they may have taken. Students must familiarize themselves with the Student Responsibility for Course Selection policy https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/academic_counselling.pdf and the Registration and Progression policy https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/registration_progression.pdf. Students are responsible for the successful completion of the Graduation Requirements for their degree program https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/graduation.pdf.

Support Services:

Office of the Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

[Faculty Academic Advising](#) - Please visit your Home Faculty Academic advising webpage for information regarding adding/dropping courses, important dates, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html.

[USC services](#) offers information about student the health/dental plan, Bus Pass, food support services, Peer support Centre etc <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

[Mental health](#) – Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

[Health & Wellness Services](#) – Registered part-time and full-time students can book a physical health appointment at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html>. Additional on-campus services are also available <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/services/index.html>.

[Accessible Education](#) provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western, in all programs and faculties. Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

[Gender-Based and Sexual Violence](#) – Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experience GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: http://uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

[Western Libraries](#) – Visit the many library locations on campus. Western Libraries provide access to material in physical and digital formats <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/catalogue/index.html>. Research support is available <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/research/index.html>.

[Writing support](#) – Online writing resources, writing support and writing modules are available <https://writing.uwo.ca/undergrads/>

Bookstore: Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>