

# THEORIES OF IDENTITY

## COURSE SYLLABUS

PSCI 3294: Spring 2022

T/Th 3:30-4:45PM | HUMN 135

INSTRUCTOR: Owen Fite

OFFICE HOURS: Thursdays 1:15-3:15pm @ Ketchum 234, by appointment

CONTACT: [owen.fite@colorado.edu](mailto:owen.fite@colorado.edu)

## CLASS DESCRIPTION

What is identity? How does it shape politics, and vice-versa? What are identity politics, and how do they shape the current political landscape? This course uses political theory, law, and case studies to give a three-part introduction to related core concepts: modern and contemporary theories of identity; the legal construction of identity in the United States; and the relationship between identity, policy, and activism in U.S. history and contemporary politics.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

The readings for this course will be primarily provided via Canvas as pdfs. Those not on Canvas will be accessible over the internet.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule is subject to change. If there are any changes to the schedule, I will communicate these to you in class and via email. Readings must be completed by the start of each class.

**Tuesday, 1/11: Welcome**

**Thursday, 1/13: Identifying Yourself (Part 1)**

- Explore and try to fill out at least four forms from different continents through the Census Forms Database, National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis, <http://www.waikato.ac.nz/nidea/research/ethnicitycounts/census-forms>
- Laris Karklis and Emily Badger (2015). "Every term the Census has used to describe America's racial and ethnic groups since 1790". *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/11/04/every-term-the-census-has-used-to-describe-americas-racial-groups-since-1790/>

- Mary C. Waters, "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?" in *Women's Lives: Multicultural Perspectives*, ed. Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey. New York: McGraw Hill, 2013.

### **Tuesday, 1/18: Identifying Yourself (Part 2)**

- Tressie McMillan Cottom, "The Logic of Stupid Poor People." [tressiemc.com](https://tressiemc.com/uncategorized/the-logic-of-stupid-poor-people/), October 29, 2013.
- Adam Linn, "The Blind Man's French Dog Problem" *The New York Times*, October 18, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/18/opinion/blind-french-guide-dog.html>
- Adrienne Rich, "Notes toward a Politics of Location," in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1986.
- Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, "Trayvon Martin and I Ain't Shit." *New York Magazine*, July 26, 2013. <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2013/07/questlove-trayvon-martin-and-i-aint-shit.html>
- David Foster Wallace, "The View from Mrs. Thompson's." *Rolling Stone*, October 25, 2001. <https://www.rollingstone.com/feature/david-foster-wallace-on-9-11-as-seen-from-the-midwest-242422/>
- Mitsuye Yamada, "Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster: Reflections of an Asian American Woman" in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, eds. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa. Watertown, MA: Persephone Press, 1981.

### **Thursday, 1/20: Identity and Others**

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality".

### **Tuesday, 1/25: The Master-Slave Dialectic**

- G.W.F Hegel, "The Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Masterdom and Slavery" in *Phenomenology of Spirit*. (p.111-117)
- Frantz Fanon. *Black Skin, White Masks*. (chapter 7 and conclusion)

### **Thursday, 1/27: The Other (Part 1)**

- Frantz Fanon. *Black Skin, White Masks*. (introduction and chapter 5)
- Benedict Anderson (1983). *Imagined Communities*. (introduction)

### **Tuesday, 2/1: The Other (Part 2)**

- Simone de Beauvoir. *The Second Sex*. (introduction)
- W.E.B. Du Bois. *The Souls of Black Folk*. (p. 7-15)

### **Thursday, 2/3: Identity and Recognition**

- Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition" in *Multiculturalism*, ed. Amy Gutmann. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.

### **Tuesday, 2/8: Producing Identity**

- Kwame Anthony Appiah, “The Demands of Identity” in *The Ethics of Identity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

#### **Thursday, 2/10: Structures of Identity (Part 1)**

- Charles Mills (1997). *The Racial Contract*. (p. 106-133)

#### **Tuesday, 2/15: Structures of Identity (Part 2)**

- Clarissa Rile Hayward, “Introduction: Comme Il Faut,” and “Black Places” in *How Americans Make Race: Stories, Institutions, Spaces*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

#### **Thursday, 2/17: Structures of Identity (Part 3)**

- Cheryl I. Harris, “Whiteness as Property,” *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 106, No. 8. (June 1993). (p. 1709-1757)

#### **Tuesday, 2/22: Structures of Identity (Part 4)**

- Cheryl I. Harris, “Whiteness as Property,” *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 106, No. 8. (June 1993). (p. 1757-1791)

#### **Thursday, 2/24: Gender Identity (Part 1)**

- Judith Butler (1996). *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. (chapter 8)
- Meijer, Irene Costera, and Baukje Prins. “How Bodies Come to Matter: An Interview with Judith Butler.” *Signs* 23, no. 2 (1998): 275–86. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175091>.

#### **Tuesday, 3/1: Gender Identity (Part 2)**

- Anne Fausto-Sterling (1993). “The Five Sexes,” *The Sciences*.
- Anne Fausto-Sterling (2000). “The Five Sexes, Revisited,” *The Sciences*.
- Michaele Ferguson (2017). “Trump is a Feminist, and Other Cautionary Tales for Our Neoliberal Age,” *Theory and Event*.

#### **Thursday, 3/3: Abjection (Part 1)**

- Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: Vol. 1989: Issue 1, Article 8, p. 141-160.
- Audre Lorde, “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” in *Sister Outsider*. Ten Speed Press, 2007.

#### **Tuesday, 3/8: Abjection (Part 2)**

- Tobin Siebers (2008). *Disability Theory*. The University of Michigan Press. (p. 3-11, 187-196)
- Jasbir K. Puar (2017). *The Right to Maim*. Duke University Press. (p. ix-xviii, 1-17)

### **Thursday, 3/10: Abjection (Part 3)**

- Lisa Marie Cacho (2012). *Social Death*. New York University Press. (p. 1-33, 147-168)

### **Tuesday, 3/15: Respectability and Uplift (Part 1)**

- Helen Heran Jun (2011). *Race for Citizenship*. New York University Press. (p. 15-31)
- Kenji Yoshino, "Gay Covering" in *Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights*. New York: Random House, 2006.

### **Thursday, 3/17: Abjection and Respectability (Part 2)**

- Cathy Cohen (1997). "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?", *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*.
- Frederick C. Harris (2014). "The Rise of Respectability", *Dissent*.  
<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/the-rise-of-respectability-politics>

### **SPRING BREAK (No classes)**

### **Tuesday, 3/29: National Identity (Part 1)**

- David Miller. *On Nationality*. (p. 17-27)
- Mae Ngai (2004). *Impossible Subjects*. Princeton University Press. (p. 17-55)

### **Thursday, 3/3: National Identity (Part 2)**

- Nikhil Pal Singh (2004). *Black Is a Country*. Harvard University Press. (introduction)
- Jasbir K. Puar (2007). *Terrorist Assemblages: homonationalism in queer times*. Duke University Press. (chapter 1)

### **Tuesday, 4/5: Colonial Identity (Part 1)**

- Maria Lugones. *The Coloniality of Gender*.
- Qwo-Li Driskill (2010). "Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critiques: Building Alliances between Native and Queer Studies," *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*.

### **Thursday, 4/7: Colonial Identity (Part 2)**

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Genealogies of Community, Home, and Nation" in *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" and "La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness" from *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987.

### **Tuesday, 4/12: Multicultural Identity/Identities**

- Will Kymlicka, "Introduction" and "The Ties that Bind" in *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

### **Thursday, 4/14: Solutions, Redistribution, and Recognition**

- Nancy Fraser, "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation" in *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2003, 7-9, 16-30, 37-42, 72-78.

### **Tuesday, 4/19: Rights and Identity**

- Dean Spade, "What's Wrong With Rights?" and "Rethinking Transphobia and Power – Beyond a Rights Framework" in *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015.

### **Thursday, 4/21: Identity and Norms**

- Michael Warner, "What's Wrong With Normal?" in *The Trouble With Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

### **Tuesday, 4/26: Identity and Policy (Part 1)**

- Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy," *The American Political Science Review*, Volume 87, No. 2 (June 1993) 334-347.
- Suzanne Mettler and Joe Soss, "The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 2 No. 1 (March 2004) 55-73.

### **Thursday, 4/28: Identity and Policy (Part 2)**

- Dara Strolovitch, "Do Interest Groups Represent the Disadvantaged? Advocacy at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender." *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (November 2006) 894-910

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **QUIZZES – 10 PERCENT**

As completion of readings is imperative to the productivity and utility of this course, students will be expected to complete a total of 6 quizzes. Quizzes will be announced in class and conducted on Canvas during class. These quizzes are meant to check reading comprehension and encourage students to keep up with the material. I will be dropping the lowest quiz score. All quizzes will be open book.

### **PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE – 30 PERCENT**

Attending and participating in class is extremely important. Attendance and active participation in class discussions is expected. Students participate in class by answering questions, posing questions, and participating

in class discussions and activities. Though not a replacement for in class participation, office hour visits and interaction with Canvas discussion board posts may contribute positively to your participation grade.

## PAPERS – 60 PERCENT

Students will have three essays during the semester. For each paper, students will choose from a series of prompts provided by the instructor. Papers will be approximately 1000-3000 words in length, with precise information specified by the instructor and the essay guidelines. Additional instructions will be provided prior to the assignment's due date.

Paper 1 = 15 percent (due 2/17 @ 3:30pm MT)

Paper 2 = 20 percent (due 3/31 @ 3:30pm MT)

Paper 3 = 25 percent (due 5/1 @ 11:59pm MT)

## COURSE POLICIES

### Attendance

Students may miss up to five classes without providing an explanation, excuse, or documentation from a healthcare professional. Please communicate to your instructor when you are facing prolonged absences. For various reasons, students experience life disruptions, and for this reason, it may be more appropriate for a student to miss class that day. However, students who experience extraordinary life disruptions – sickness, sudden changes in family situation, etc. – should speak with the instructor about how to best meet the class requirements. Students should seek additional support from the university whenever they feel it may be warranted, including CAPS, Student Support and Case Management, Legal Services, and a host of other resources. For additional information, please see the instructor.

### In-Class Expectations

- Arrive to class on time. Persistent tardiness will negatively affect participation grades.
- Turn off and put away your cell phone. No recording will be permitted without the instructor's expressed consent ahead of time.
- Everyone deserves to be treated with respect, regardless of their identity or views. This doesn't mean you must agree with their views or even respect these views, but you must respect their right to hold these views.
- You can express political views, but be prepared to be challenged.
- Challenging and engaging someone's views means striving to understand why they embrace this perspective. Do not dismiss, interrupt, disrespect, or demean others' ways of believing.

### Late Assignments

- **Any essay submitted late will be subject to a 10 percent reduction off of the original grade for every 24 hours of lateness.**
- **No essay that is submitted more than 72 hours after the due date will be accepted.**

Assignments may be accepted late for full credit in two cases: in the event of extraordinary circumstances and with prior approval by the professor, OR in the event of documented personal, family, or medical emergencies.

## Grade Appeals

Students who wish to appeal a grade may submit an appeal no earlier than 24 hours after receiving the grade and no later than 7 days after receiving the grade (with the exception of the final essay). Appeals must be submitted in writing, outlining the student's concerns and providing a detailed response as to why the student believes the grade is unfair or incorrect. However, in all cases of grade appeal, the instructor reserves the right to raise, maintain, lower the grade after review.

## Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your instructor in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

## Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct.

## Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the instructor. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the Honor Code Office website.

## Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, exploitation, harassment, dating or domestic violence, and stalking), discrimination, and harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127

or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, anonymous reporting, and the campus resources can be found on the OIEC website. Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

## Religious Holidays

Extraordinary circumstances include a conflict due to religious observances. Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that instructors make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, you must notify me of any such conflicts by the end of the first week of classes so we can work out alternatives.

\*Thank you to Professor Tamar Malloy for allowing me to use and adjust their course design and syllabi.