

GWA 430 L: Politics of Identity
Fall 2015 / T 6:00-9:50 / NW 135

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Office Hours: Tu 10:00a-11:30a; Th 10:00a-11:30a; and Fr 9:00a-11:00a

Objective:

This course is an exploration of the ways identity figures into politics and politics figures into identity. Through films, readings, projects, and discussions we delve into the generators and effects of the identity categories nation, ethnicity, religion, race, gender, class, and culture. By the end of the course you should be able to dissect many of the “us” versus “them” identity conflicts that go on every day and impact your day-to-day life without your even knowing it.

The course is also designed to stimulate your skills at academic inquiry. We will not be passive scholars! This means learning to read and understand advanced level social science texts, intelligently critique films as texts that fit into a society and have an impact, and apply commonly used research methods to answer a question of your choosing on the relationship between identity and politics.

Student Learning Outcomes:

This course is designed such that students who have immersed themselves in the material, attended lectures regularly, done the readings, completed all assignments diligently, and studied for exams, should be able to do the following by the end of the course (items in parentheses are the primary, though not exclusive, measures used to evaluate the extent of these learning outcomes):

- The student will understand how identity is theorized by political scientists (Exam 1).
- The student will identify significant debates over the meaning and politics of national, ethnic, gender, race, cultural, religion, and class identities (Exam 1, Exam 2, Book Review).
- The student will understand the ways in which identity politics impact their personal lives (Reading Summaries).
- The student will apply accepted social science research methods to study a particular category of politicized identity with primary self-collected evidence (Research Paper).

Requirements:

Though it may be altered slightly and/or clarified by professorial edict either in class or via email, consider this syllabus a contract between you and your professor that lists both what you can expect from class and what is expected of you. Check it regularly and bring it to class with your notebook. You are expected to read EVERYTHING assigned on the syllabus, which averages around 100 pages a week. You are also expected to attend EVERY lecture. Visiting me on occasion during office hours to discuss issues raised in class and/or paper topics will not hurt either. If you do these things you will do very well in the course. If you do not do these things you will not do so well in the course. Consider this fair warning up front.

You will be evaluated in this class based on your performance in 5 areas. These areas, along with their relative weights, are as follows:

Exam #1 (25%) – given out in-class on Tuesday 27 October. The exam will cover all material from the readings and in-class discussions for Weeks 1 through 7. If you miss a class over this period, it is your responsibility to get notes from one of your colleagues. The exam will include both short answer ($\frac{1}{3}$) and essay questions ($\frac{2}{3}$). There will be NO review sheet. Excused late or early exams will only be given in extreme circumstances and with adequate documentation as determined by your professor or prior permission (at least two weeks in advance) from the professor. Unexcused late exams will be penalized at a rate of 10 points per day. If you miss an exam it is YOUR responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to schedule a make-up.

Exam #2 (25%) – exactly like Exam #1 in format but covering material from Week 1 through Week 15. It will be administered during the assigned final exam period on Tuesday 15 December. A heavy emphasis will be placed on lessons covered after Exam #1.

Reading Summaries (10%) – There are assigned readings for ten of our meetings. For three of these meetings you should produce a reading summary and turn a hard copy in the box outside my office by 9am the morning the readings are assigned. You may choose the three sets of readings that best fit your interests and schedule. The only meetings that are off limits are the meeting at which you are responsible for handing in a book review. Reading summaries should be NO MORE than a page long (1 inch margins, TNR 12 point font, single-spaced). They should contain a thorough, but concise, abstract of the text(s), a personal evaluation of the text(s), an attempt to map the text(s) in the context of the course, and three questions related to the text(s) you would like to see answered during our class discussion. These assignments will be graded and should be written, rewritten, and thoroughly edited. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Book Review (10%) – Over the course of the semester we will read Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, Butler's *Gender Trouble*, and Fanon's *Black Skin, White Mask* in their entirety. You will be responsible for reviewing one book which you should choose before the end class during Week 2. If you have no preference a book will be assigned to you. Once you have been assigned a book, you will not be allowed to switch books without approval of the instructor at least a week before the book is covered in the classroom. Book reviews should be NO MORE than 3 pages long (1 inch margins, TNR 12 point font, single-spaced). You should identify the work's research question, thesis, and succinctly outline how the author's argument progresses from research question to thesis. You should also include a discussion of how the book fits into the literature on the politics of identity (this may require additional reading). Your thoughtful and appropriate personal evaluation of the text should comprise your conclusion. Book reviews are due the day we discuss the text in class via Blackboard/Turnitin. You should come to this class with five copies of your review and be prepared to lead a small group discussion of the text. Papers turned in after class has started will receive a 0 without prior approval from the professor. Papers whose authors do not present the material will also receive a 0. Since you are using this assignment in part to teach your colleagues, these harsh late and absentee penalties should serve as a reminder that it is disrespectful to the entire class not to take this assignment seriously.

Research Project (30%) – As a class we will conduct several research projects using self-collected primary data via a survey, personal interviews, direct observation, etc. By Week 4 the class will be divided into groups of between 3 and 6 students. You may create these groups yourself, or if you are not in a group by the end of Week 3, I will assign you to a group. Once in groups, you will

decide on a research question that deals with one of the identities we discuss in class and craft research methods to help you answer this question.

On Tuesday 10 November you will, as a group, present your findings to the class. Your group work and presentation will be graded and worth a fifth of your research project grade. In addition to the fact that the presentation is graded, this presentation should be taken seriously as it is an excellent opportunity for feedback from your professor and colleagues before your research project paper is due.

Four-fifths of your research project grade will be based on a paper you will write as an individual. This paper should be NO MORE than 15 pages long (1 inch margins, TNR 12 point font, double-spaced) and include an (1) introduction, (2) a literature review, (3) a summary of your group's methods, (4) a reporting of your group's data, (5) a conclusion that includes a thoughtful critique of your group's work, and (6) a works cited page. Papers are due by noon on Monday 23 November via Blackboard/Turnitin. Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 10 points per day.

Important Due Dates:

Exam #1	27 October
Exam #2	15 December
Book Review	
<i>Anderson</i>	29 September
<i>Butler</i>	20 October
<i>Fanon</i>	3 November
Research Project	
<i>Class Presentation</i>	10 November
<i>Paper</i>	23 November @ noon

Grading:

The course letter grade will be determined according to the following scale:

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Quality Points</i>	<i>Numeric Scale*</i>
A	4.0	93-100
AB	3.5	88-92
B	3.0	83-87
BC	2.5	78-82
C	2.0	73-77
CD	1.5	68-72
D	1.0	60-67
F	0.0	Below 60

*I will round up at the .5 and NOT before. For example, if you earn an 87.49 you will receive a B for the class. If you earn an 87.5 you will receive an AB. The only exception to this rule concerns the line between a D and an F. If you make below 60 points, even if it is by the smallest fraction of a point, I will NOT round up.

Required Texts:

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Mask*.

Nussbaum, Martha (ed). *For Love of Country*.

Taylor, Charles (ed). *Multiculturalism*.

(☞) Article or chapter available through UT Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule is subject to change at the professor's sole discretion. Any changes will be announced in class, via email, and/or via Blackboard.

Week 1 (August 31 – September 4)

Tuesday Introduction
Readings: ☞ Syllabus
Movie: *The Great Match* (2006)

Week 2 (September 8 – 11)

Tuesday Cosmopolitanism
Readings: *Nussbaum* (Introduction, Nussbaum chapter, and three selected response chapters)

Week 3 (September 14 – 18)

Tuesday Multiculturalism
Readings: *Taylor* (Gutman's introduction, Taylor's chapter, and one response each from part one and two)

Week 4 (September 21 – 25)

Tuesday Group Project Meeting I

Week 5 (September 28 – October 2)

Tuesday Nationality
Readings: Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York, NY: Verso.
Movie: *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002)

Week 6 (October 5 – 9)

Tuesday Ethnicity
Readings: ☞ Isaacs, Harold R. 1975. "Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe." In *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, ed. N. Glazer and D. P. Moynihan. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; and ☞ Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4):529-45.
Movie: *Sometimes in April* (2005)

Week 7 (October 12 – 16)

Tuesday Group Project Meeting II

Week 8 (October 19 – 23)

Tuesday Gender

Readings: Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Movie: *Ma vie en rose* (1997)

Week 9 (October 26 – 30)

Tuesday **EXAM #1**

Week 10 (November 2 – 6)

Tuesday Race

Readings: Fanon, Frantz. 1967. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York, NY: Grove.

Movie: *Do the Right Thing* (1989)

***** 9 November is the last day to withdraw from 14 week courses *****

Week 11 (November 9 – 13)

Tuesday **PROJECT PRESENTATION**

Week 12 (November 16 – 20)

Tuesday Culture

Readings: Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72 (3):22-49; Barber, Benjamin R. 1992. "Jihad vs. McWorld" *Atlantic Monthly* 269 (3): 53-65; and Said, Edward W. 1979. "Introduction." In *Orientalism*. 1st Vintage Books ed. New York: Vintage Books.

Movie: *Namesake* (2006)

Week 13 (November 23 – 24)

Monday **RESEARCH PAPER due by noon**

Tuesday Religion

Readings: Weber, Max. 2001. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by T. Parsons. New York, NY: Routledge Classics, 3-50; and Eickelman, Dale F., and James Piscatori. 1996. *Muslim Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 3-79.

Movie: *Paradise Now* (2005)

Week 14 (November 30 – December 4)

Tuesday Class

Readings: Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1989. "Death Without Weeping." *Natural History* 98 (10): 8-16; "The Mountain Man and the Surgeon." 2005. *The Economist*, 24 December; and Marx, Karl, and

Freidrich Engels. 1848. "Bourgeois and Proletarians." In *Communist Manifesto*.

Movie: *Bus 174* (2002)

Week 15 (December 7 – 11)

Tuesday Beyond Humans: Future Identity Clashes?

Readings: Rowe, Stan. 2001. "From Shallow to Deep Ecological Philosophy." *The Trumpeter*; Singer, Peter. 1989. "All Animals Are Equal." In *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*, eds. T. Regan and P. Singer. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, and Bostrom, Nick. 2003. "Human Genetic Enhancements: A Transhumanist Perspective." *Journal of Value Inquiry* 37 (4): 493-506.

******* EXAM #2 in class from 6:00pm to 10:00pm on Tuesday, 15 December *******

General Information:

These are a few things every student should know.

Emergency Conditions - In case of any adverse condition or situation which could interrupt the schedule of classes, each student is asked to access www.ut.edu for information about the status of the campus and class meetings. In addition, please refer to Blackboard for announcements and other important information. You are responsible for accessing this information.

Special Needs - If there is a student who has special needs because of any disability, please go to the Academic Success Center in North Walker Hall for information regarding registering as a student with a disability. You may also call (813) 257-5757 or email disability.services@ut.edu. Please feel free to discuss this issue with me, in private, if you need more information.

Classroom Disruption Policy – The University of Tampa has a policy covering disruptive classroom behavior. The policy will be applied in this course and is detailed in the Faculty Handbook Chapter 6 Section XI (available online at www.ut.edu/provost).

Mental Health Counseling – College can be a stressful time in a young person's life. The American Psychiatric Association published a recent study of college students observed over the course of a single academic year. Over 60% of students reported feeling things were hopeless one or more times, almost 40% of the men and 50% of the women reported feeling so depressed that they had difficulty functioning one or more times, and 10% of the students reported seriously considering attempting suicide at least one time. If at some point during your time at UT you begin to feel depressed or out of control for any reason you should realize that you are not alone and there is help available to you. Your professors are happy to counsel you on the problems you are having coping with academic life, but there are dedicated mental health counselors available to you through UT's Health and Counseling Center located at 111 North Brevard Ave. (behind Austin Hall) who you may feel more comfortable disclosing certain types of non-academic problems to. The time to deal with mental health issues is when they arise and not after your grade has been destroyed. Their email is healthcenter@ut.edu and their phone numbers are 813-253-6250 (during business hours) and 813-257-7777 (outside of business hours for emergencies).

Academic Assistance – The Academic Center for Excellence (ace@ut.edu) in North Walker Hall offers free peer tutoring, credited academic skills courses, national testing services, and services for students with disabilities. The Saunders Writing Center (323 Plant Hall, x6244) aids students with their writing projects. You pay for these services through your tuition and there is no shame in using them if you need help with your course work. I am more than happy to discuss any academic issues you might have during office hours but if I think one of these services can help you be more successful I will not hesitate to recommend it.

Academic Integrity – The University of Tampa is committed to the development of each student to become a productive and responsible citizen who embraces the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. The scholarly community at The University of Tampa strives to instill values that uphold academic integrity and promotes an ethical standard that does not condone academic misconduct. Violation of academic integrity and academic misconduct tarnish the reputation of the University and discredit the accomplishments of past and present students. Sanctions for violation of academic integrity and academic misconduct include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the University. I take integrity very seriously and will monitor all submissions and exams for violations of the academic integrity policy. I also expect professional behavior in class that fosters an environment encouraging not

only your learning but the learning of your peers. Students are held responsible for knowing and observing the University's Academic Integrity Policy (available online at www.ut.edu/provost). If you have any questions about the policy, please feel free to talk with me.

Class Rules, Etiquette, and Advice:

I like my job a lot. There are few things I can imagine doing more satisfying than providing inquisitive minds with an atmosphere conducive to thinking more critically about their own assumptions and the world in which we live. The image of students leaving my classroom just a bit more prepared to make their society better is sustaining. Following is a list of things you can do to help me maintain this image as well as some things you can do to reveal it as a mirage. Doing more of the former and less of the latter will make me happy whereas the converse will make me sad!

DO read the assigned texts – The amount and content of the reading assignments are well within the realm of reasonable for a class at this level. I have looked at syllabi from many different institutions of higher learning to come confidently to this conclusion. Do the assigned readings before each class and you will get the most out of the lectures. Though there are some things covered in the assigned readings that will not be covered in lecture, and vice versa, the lectures and readings build off each other. I will not hesitate to pull exam questions from readings not covered in class and from lectures not covered in the readings.

DO engage in class discussions in an intelligent way – There will be lots of opportunities for you to contribute to conversations in the classroom. Most of my lectures have a built in component for student input because I think it is important that you not only read and hear the information, but have to reconstitute and challenge it. I am also delighted to entertain questions when you have them and follow tangents that you would like to explore. Class periods when students are engaged and contributing seem to go by much faster than class periods when students are checked out. Students who regularly contribute to the classroom conversation do significantly better than students who do not on exams. So pretend the information we are covering is really interesting and jump at the opportunity to challenge the material. After a while you will find that you do not have to pretend any more. If you are shy this is good practice for you. Use the class to build your confidence and public speaking skills. If you are worried about your peers' impressions of you forget about it. Those who value education will find your contributions useful and those who roll their eyes are dull and uninteresting.

DO NOT ask if it is on the exam – I do not give out study guides. This is a university class and when I attended university ages ago study guides, like the iPod and indoor plumbing, were not yet invented. This experience taught me that learning things the readings and lectures cover that are not on the exam can be just as important and enlightening as learning things that will appear on the exam. Anything in the readings or lectures is fair game for an exam. Things covered in both readings and lectures, which I post online in the form of Powerpoint slides, are slightly more likely to show up on the exam.

DO NOT ask for extra credit – Rarely I give out extra credit opportunities. When I do, the opportunity is initiated by me and open to all students in class. I have never given an extra credit assignment to a student who initiated the request. Giving out extra credit opportunities to select students makes grades for my courses unreliable measures of student success and your goal should be to master the material assigned on the syllabus.

DO understand what your grade represents – I assume every student who enters my class wants to take away a greater understanding of the world and that the grade (s)he receives is but a formal, and somewhat abstract and imprecise, reflection of the knowledge (s)he has gained. The average student in my courses typically earns a low B (3.0) or a high C (2.0). This grade represents both effort and skill so students that put in more effort than average and/or are more skilled than average will do better than this, whereas students who put in less effort than average and/or are less skilled will do worse. It is not easy to earn an A in my course and few will. On the other hand it is even more difficult to earn an F in my course but a few students every semester put in nearly no effort and/or do not have the skills necessary for a college-level course in Government and World Affairs. I have given failing marks to students who I think are wonderful people and given A grades to students who I would rather never see again. Grades are not personal statements on your character, they are a professional opinion of the work you submit.

DO NOT send me an email without putting yourself in my shoes first – I respond to most student emails (this does not mean ALL student emails and it does not guarantee an IMMEDIATE response) but ask that you follow four simple rules before hitting send. First, DO NOT ask me a question via email that will take more than a few sentences to answer. With three classes and nearly 100 students I just do not have the time to provide these detailed answers online. Besides accurate answers to questions like “What should I write my paper on?,” “How can I make better grades?,” “Can you tell me what we did in last Wednesday’s class?,” or “I’m having a life crisis can I make up the exam?” require some student feedback that emails lack. Therefore, if you find yourself in need of an answer to a question of this nature please feel free to come by my office hours or talk to me after class and I will be happy to help you to the best of my abilities.

Second, DO NOT email me assignments unless specifically told by me or the syllabus to do so. I will neither grade nor respond to these emailed assignments. Emails get lost, attachments are sometimes difficult to open, and dealing with hard copy or Turnitin assignments and emailed assignments simultaneously creates logistical problems. If you will not be in class but owe me a hard copy of an assignment turn it in via the “Drop Off” box outside my office door.

Third, before you hit send on an email to me with a question about assignments, or deadlines, or readings check your syllabus and our Blackboard site to make sure the answer is not there. If this were an occasional issue I would not hesitate to re-answer questions addressed elsewhere. It is, unfortunately, a frequent problem.

Fourth, Blackboard, Turnitin, and Spartan Mail are subscription services provided by the University of Tampa. I administer none of these sites and have no formal training in problem solving in these platforms. So if you lost your password or cannot seem to get one of these websites to work, please seek help from one of your computer savvy colleagues or UT’s computer helpdesk.

DO visit me during office hours – If you have a question about something we covered in class, need feedback on an assignment, want to discuss something you discovered outside of class that you think connects to course content in an interesting way, or just want to chat FEEL FREE to drop by my office during office hours. I keep five hours per week and these hours are for you. You are not pestering me or taking me away from something more important. It is nice to talk with students outside of our regular classroom setting.

DO NOT be tardy or leave class early – If you come in late to class enter quietly and sit somewhere where you will not disturb other students. Classes will begin promptly as scheduled so you will need to copy notes from one of your colleagues on lecture days if you feel like you have missed something important. On assignment days you will not be given extra time for your

tardiness. If you show up without an excuse 5 minutes before an exam is finished, you will only have 5 minutes to finish the assignment.

Class is done when I say something to the effect of “see you next class” and not before. I will do my best to end class on time if not a few minutes earlier. There will, however, be some class periods where I might need to go over time by a minute or two to finish an important point. Out of respect for your fellow classmates you should NOT begin filing papers into your book bags before class has officially ended. I realize that there will be classes where you have a job interview or a club activity or a plane you need to leave early for. By all means let me know before class that you need to leave early, arrange with someone in class to take notes for you, and do not miss your important event.

DO know my policy on “excused” absences – There are no excuses for late papers. You know about them well in advance and a last minute illness or death in the family should not affect your ability to turn in the assignment or have a colleague do so on your behalf. Excuses for missed exams or presentations are granted at the sole discretion of your professor. The best way to be granted an excused absence is with prior approval. If you will miss an exam or presentation due to a previously scheduled event, let me know at least two weeks in advance and you will almost always be allowed an early exam or presentation.

In the event that prior approval is not possible, you must provide acceptable documentation detailing the reasons for your excuse as soon as possible. These include a police report that indicates you were in their custody during the time of the exam/presentation, a doctor’s note that says explicitly you are contagious and/or physically incapable of attending the class (I will call!), or a copy of your friend/relative’s obituary with both the date of funeral visible and your name listed amongst the bereaved. A note from your parent or a receipt from Student Health are NOT acceptable documentation. For each assignment listed in this syllabus there is a detailed policy regarding late penalties. Many of these policies grant an exception for “excused” absences. Whether an absence is “excused” or not is up to the discretion of your professor based on the guidelines outlined above.

DO NOT use cell phones and computers in a distracting way – Turn your cell phone off or on silent mode when you enter the class. If there is a call you must take you should take it outside of class. Texting and cruising the Internet during class is rude and distracting so DO NOT DO IT. Computers can be useful for typing notes, working on papers in groups, and researching topics covered in class. They can also be significant distractions to you and your neighbors if you use them to check email, message friends, or cruise the web. If you must engage in any of this distracting behavior, do so from the comfort of your dorm room or home. This class has no attendance policy so if you have more important things to do during our class time than pay attention to lectures and engage in discussions there is no penalty.

If you choose to ignore this advice and engage in distracting behavior on your computer or cell phone in class you WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE and FORBIDDEN FROM RETURNING to future classes with your electronic device. You will not be permitted to use cell phones, computers, or any other electronic devices during exams or quizzes.

DO NOT tape or video record class without prior permission - Students are not authorized to make recordings during class without permission from the instructor. Exceptions to this rule will only be granted under extraordinary circumstances. If you are granted permission to record lectures that permission is only for your personal use and the recordings should not be shared with others to protect your colleagues’ ability to speak freely in class discussions.

DO learn how to question grades respectfully – I do my best to communicate expectations and make sure my comments on graded assignments pinpoint areas where you did well and areas where you needed to put in some more work. There will, however, occasionally be questions about the grade you receive. I will NOT change a grade or let you resubmit an assignment simply because you want a better grade. If, however, you think I have made a mistake I will consider changing a grade only after the following conditions have been met: 1) You must wait at least 24 hours but no more than ten days after receiving your graded assignment to file a complaint. 2) You must submit in writing (*typed* and *printed* out) an explanation of why you think you deserve a different grade. I will review your submission and give you my final decision within a week of receipt at which time I will consider the “negotiation” complete and any further appeals on the issue will be directed to the department chair. Challenges that resemble “I’m an A student so there is no way this paper is a B,” “I don’t like this grade can I have another?,” “I was making a good argument it just did not come across in my paper,” or “I need to pass this class to graduate” will be summarily dismissed for lack of justification.

DO understand that I am interested in discussing your progress in the course with you – If you have a parent, coach, drill sergeant, etc. who is interested in learning about your status in this course feel free to share it with them. I post grades on Blackboard and the syllabus explains in detail my weighting formula so you have access to all the information I do regarding your current standing in the class.