

**Revised 11/28**

GE/PS 832 | Politics of Identity | Fall 2016 | Anderson 8 | TR 11-12:20 pm

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Office/Hours W 1-3 pm + by appointment

Office: Gladfelter Hall 447

**Course Description** | What does identity have to do with politics? We take up this question from the perspective of the scholarly debates that have shaped and continue to shape political practice in the United States. Which theories (or models) best capture the relationship between personal and public conceptions of familiar modern identities such as race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender expression, age, and ability? How might we best portray the intersections that exist between and among such identities? Our ideas about “the political” will also come under scrutiny as we study formal political venues such as political representation, social movements, and law and public policymaking, as well as informal and emergent political realms such as film/video and social media. In addition to textual analysis we will discuss a range of real-world examples or “case studies” that are meant to bridge the theory/practice divide. The sources of these case studies include newspaper and magazine articles, personal memoir, film, and the experiences you bring to the classroom.

This course fulfills a General Education race and diversity or “RS” core requirement. It requires no previous coursework in the subject matter, only a basic interest in the material and the willingness to explore it with an open mind.

**Course Objectives**

This course is designed to help students:

1. Develop their critical thinking and analytical skills through careful reading, reflection, class discussion and course assignments.
2. Expand their knowledge of the subject matter - what identity is, how it is formed and how it impacts the social and political behavior of individual groups.
3. Apply these issues to their own lives and relate them to their own ongoing process of identity formation.

**Expectations**

To succeed in this course you should:

1. Attend class regularly, be on time, and remain the entire period.
2. Do the readings *before* class and arrive prepared to discuss the material. This will greatly enhance your comprehension, ability to engage in class discussion, and grade on exams.
3. Participate in structured class discussions
4. Be respectful of your instructor and fellow students. Some of the material we’ll be discussing is controversial and may provoke strong feelings. Remember this is an academic classroom. Please listen to and respond to the opinions of others with courtesy, even and especially when you strongly disagree with them.

**Readings** | All readings for the course are posted on Blackboard under “Course Documents.” You do not have to purchase any additional material for this course.

**Notes** | It is tempting to let note-taking fall by the wayside. Resist this temptation! To help you stay on track with note taking I have posted a template on our BB site that is meant to guide your reading and help you determine what sort of information and evaluation should be included in your notes. The template, which you can download and print or fill out on your computer, is designed to make this crucial part of the course easier, so please give it a try, **even if you are skeptical. [2% bonus toward your final grade for completing templates for each of readings due on 9/6 and 9/8. To receive this bonus credit you must turn in your completed templates by 11:00 am on the day the readings are due. You must either bring hard copies of your work to class or email them to me by the due date and time.]**

## Requirements and Grading

**1. Quizzes** | There will be several quizzes given at the start of class throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of 4 short questions: 2 based upon the reading assignment due that day and 2 based upon the previous class discussion (this includes everything: mini-lectures, debates, and general discussion). You are permitted to use your notes to answer these questions, but not the text or the Internet. The purpose of the quizzes is to reward those who complete the reading assignments, and to encourage good note taking. Each quiz will be graded as follows: 4 correct answers=100; 3 correct answers=90; 2 correct answers=80; 1 correct answer=70; 0 correct=50; absent=0. *I will drop your 2 lowest scores when calculating your final grade.*

**2. In-class Discussion Groups** | You will be assigned to a small group discussion “team.” In most, but not all, class meetings you will work together with your team to complete the worksheet handed out for that day. I will collect these worksheets at the end of each class. *Completion and your individual efforts will count toward your participation grade.*

Resonant Cultural Artifact Submission | On some days, I will select one team to submit cultural artifacts that are connected in some way to the reading assigned for that day. This might be a brief YouTube video of a movie or television scene, a news article, an artistic image, song lyrics, a poem, a photograph, an object, or anything else that they’d like to share with us. Each member of the team is responsible for submitting their own cultural artifact. Please post these to our discussion board on Blackboard. Be creative! Cultural artifacts must be posted by 8:00 pm on the day before the assignment is due.

*Completing this assignment counts toward your participation grade.*

**3. Exams** | There will be two written exams. Both exams will be cumulative. I will provide you with the format prior to each exam.

## Final Grade Breakdown

Quizzes	15%
Participation	15%
Exam #1	30%
Exam #2	40%

**Letter Grade Equivalencies\***

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 and below

\*I use these to assign your final grade.

**Attendance** | I will not keep track of your attendance. Your success, however, depends on your being present and actively engaged. Do not expect to pass this course if you never attend class, or visit us sporadically. Also, be advised that there will be no make-up quizzes, and that these count for a significant percentage of your final grade (15%).

**Disability Statement** | This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their situation as soon as possible. They should also contact the Office of Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex.

**Statement on Academic Freedom** | Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. We are all free to express our opinions and values without fear of reprisal, so long as we remain within the bounds of civility, common sense, public law and university policy. To learn more about Temple's Policy (# 03.70.02) on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities, go to [http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy\\_no=03.70.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02).

**Course Schedule and Reading Assignments**

\*I reserve the right to make changes to our reading assignments. But I will always give you notice of at least one week in advance of any changes.

**Week 1 |**

8/30: Introduction (no reading assignment)

9/1: No Class Meeting

**Week 2 |**

9/6: Lawrence Wright, "One Drop of Blood"

9/8: French, "Identity Politics are Ripping us Apart"

**Week 3 |**

9/13: K. Anthony Appiah, "Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity"

9/15: Rawls, A Theory of Justice (film: Eye of the Storm)

**Week 4 |**

9/20: Young "The Basic Structure Seriously"

9/22: Waldron, "Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom"

**Week 5 |**

9/27: Brown, "Regulating Aversion"

9/29: No Class

**Week 6 |**

10/4: EEOC, "What You Should Know About Religious Discrimination"

10/6: Emily's List + Concerned Women for America websites

**Week 7 |**

10/11: Review for Midterm Exam (in class)

10/13: Midterm Exam (in class)

**Week 8 |**

10/18: Ann McGuinly, "Masculinity, Labor, and Sexual Power"

10/20: Markovits and Bickford, "Constructing Freedom" + Nelson, "The Conservative Answer to Feminism"

**Week 9 |**

10/25: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: Identity Politics—read entry #5: "From Gay and Lesbian to Queer"

10/27: Burgess, "Gender and Sexuality in the James Bond Film Series: Cultural Origins of Gay Inclusion in the US Military"

**Week 10 |**

11/1: The Americans with Disabilities Act

11/3: Leonard Kriegel, "Beloved Enemy: A Cripple in a Crippled City"

**Week 11 |**

11/8: Hamraie, "Collective Access: A Feminist Disability Theory of Universal Design"

11/10: NPR, "Autism Can Be an Asset in the Workplace"

**Week 12 |**

11/15: Paul Tough, "The Class Consciousness Raiser"

11/17: Williams, "What so many people don't get about the U.S. Working Class"

**Week 13 |**

11/22: Reading assignment TBD

11/24: **Break (No Class)**

**Week 14 |**

11/29: Lilla, "The End of Liberal Identity Politics"

12/1: Davis, "Sex-Classification Policies as Transgender Discrimination"

**Week 15 |**

12/6: Scott Stossel, "Surviving Anxiety"

12/8: **Review for Final Exam (in class)**

**Final Exam: 12/20 at 10:30 am (same classroom)**