

SYLLABUS

Identity and Differences

SOC- 363

The American University - Central Asia
Department of Sociology

Instructor: Associate Professor Galina L. Gorborukova,

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Class: W.: 10.50, F.: 10.50

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Office Hours: By appointment

Credits: 3.0

ID: 1763

Course Description

The course explores the sociological thinking on the origins of identity, its construction and political implications. It will review the classical conceptualizations and then examine the shift to the contemporary understandings that defines identity as dynamic, fluid and fragmentary. The main focus will be on the issues of how people learn to produce and reproduce themselves through the engagement in social interaction processes and how the interactional dynamics shape their sense of who they are.

Course Aims

Importance of this course: The Identity and Differences is focused on the relationship between theories and debates about identity and the lived experience of identity as a social, symbolic, psychological, and material process. The objective of Identity and Difference is to explore the sociological thinking on the origins, construction and implications of identity both as a concept and a lived experience. This course will review theoretical perspectives and discussions in the conceptualization of identity politics and categories. The unit aims to explore the political and experiential intersections between the identity categories of race, ethnicity, gender, sex, and sexuality.

Learning Outcomes

I anticipate that you will:

1. Gain an understanding of selective but central concepts in defining identity and self;
2. Examine the merits and demerits of different methodologies that are used to clarify complicated and abstract ideas (i.e., understand what is gained from introspection, theory-building, observation, experimentation);
3. Develop expertise in a specific domain of interest related to self and identity that will be documented in a scholarly paper;
4. Improve your scholarly writing skills;
5. Gain experience reviewing papers and revising manuscripts; and
6. Document what you have learned in a short piece that will supplement your scholarly paper.

Data	Outline of Topics	Readings
Week 1	Introduction to the course. Discussing the syllabus	
Week 2	Defining Identity – Who am I? What is real? Where and whom do I belong to? What is identity?	Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke Identity Theory The 1 part – Agency and Social Structure
Week 3	Socialization Social and not social components in life. The question of social-cultural ethnocentrism in positioning experiences. Socialization: lessons from measurable another to another. Internalization, consciousness and opening itself. Different societies, different identity. G. Mead, C. Cooley	
Week 4	Social identity: Sociological Approach to Self and Identity. Setting the scene: some of the big questions - the looking-glass self and the 'I' and the 'Me'. Concepts of identity Z. Freud.	Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke and K. Woodward Understanding Identity
Week 5	The life cycle: epigenesis of identity – Erikson. Social interaction and social personality types. Specificity of human activity. The complexity of this phenomenon. The main types of activity (ego-activity - work for yourself, alter activity - activity for others, serving, activity for activity - the game). Functions of the varieties of human life. Basic personality types (harmonious personality type, ego-activist, server, player), and their varieties.	Ericson E., <i>Identity and youth and crisis</i>
Week 6	Self, society and everyday life. Symbolic interactionism, the presentation of self: E. Goffman.	I. Goffman
Week 7	Identity and late modernity. Identity as a discourse - M. Foucault.	M. Foucault
Week 8	Structure of social identity - factors of development – strategies of change and preservation of social identity. Identity as a practice - P. Bourdieu.	P. Bourdieu
	Midterm test - March 7, 2014	
Week 9	Analysis of gender identity representation policies. Gender socialization in childhood, adulthood and old age. Analysis of the influence of social identity development factors throughout different age phases. Culture and gender socialization – gender stereotypes - gender display - male / female studies.	Understanding Identity, chapter 5, <i>Embodying identity,</i>

Week 10	Gender practices in personal relationships. Gender stereotypes about people's behavior (friendship, acquaintance, courtship, sexual relations) and a real reflection of these stereotypes on their behavior. Personal relationships between a man and a woman: equality or inequality? The study of gender and sexual identity. The gender order - concepts and approaches. Strategies for research. Theoretical and methodological problems of gender studies. Methodology for feminist and gender studies. The biographical study.	Social Identity. Multidisciplinary approaches. Chapter 3, <i>Gender</i>
Week 11	Gender and Sexuality. The body and difference. The birth of modern conceptions of sexuality. Simone de Beauvoir.	Social Identity. Multidisciplinary approaches. Chapter 4, <i>Sexuality</i> .
Week 12	Gender and Power. Production of identity in texts. Method of text analysis - analysis of the categorization of interactions. Analysis of qualitative interviews.	Connell R. <i>Gender and power</i>
Week 13	Ethnic identity types: The certainty-uncertainty of ethnic identity. The reasons for the growth of ethnic identity in the modern world. Politicization of ethnicity. Ethnicity and power. The role of elites in various stages of ethnic mobilization. "Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture"	Joane Nagel, Jon E. Fox <i>Everyday nationhood</i>
Week 14	The social construction of race and ethnicity. Institutional, personal and group levels of inter-ethnic relations. The role of historical, political, cultural, psychological and situational factors in ethnic relations. Features of the formation of ethnic attitudes in the sphere of everyday behavior, at home, business sphere, while communicating with family and friends.	S. B. Heath and M. W. McLaughlin <i>Ethnicity and Gender in Theory and Practice: the Youth Perspective</i> R. Brubacer, <i>Ethnicity, race and nationalism</i>
Week 15	Does identity exist?	R. Brubacer, <i>Outside of identity</i>
Final Exam May 7, 2014		

If schedule allows we will view the following films, among others:

- **Cannibal Tours (1988, directed by Dennis O'Rourke, 70 min)**
- **Dirty Pretty Things (2002, directed by Steven Frears, 97 min)**
- **Paris is Burning (1990, directed by Jennie Livingston, 71 min)**
- **Persepolis, (2007, directed by Parounnaud & Satrapi, 96 min)**
- **Hotel Rwanda (2006, directed by Terry George, 121 min)**

The final assessment will be based on the following work of students:

- ✓ **Regular course attendance, participation:** Seminars are discussion-based courses; missing class not only detracts from your own experience, but deprives your classmates of your insights into the material. With this in mind, I expect you to attend all class meetings, do all readings, and actively participate in class. If you have trouble thinking of things to say, take notes on the readings ± this practice will often bring you to class with thoughts or questions that can then be used to start the discussion. Missing more than three classes will have a negative impact on your grade. Being more than five minutes late to class will count as an absence
- ✓ **Tests** - midterm and final will be held in the form of essay questions.

- ✓ **Class Presentation** - You will be asked to choose one week's topic/readings, to present the main themes in the readings, pose questions for class discussion and moderate the discussion. Weeks where there are two topic/themes there are two moderators. You are encouraged to use handouts and multimedia aids (i.e. relevant and interesting web sites) and to post to the course web site threaded discussion group questions that will focus class discussion.
- ✓ **Participation in Computer-based Virtual Community.** We will attempt to get onto the Wikispace site to extend class interaction and discussion beyond the time/space boundaries of the class period itself. The virtual community will be a forum for the students to develop positions, ask questions, comment on the readings, lectures or class discussion outside of class using e-mail, chat rooms, and threaded discussion groups and make your own **"identity_profile"**. It is also meant to provide those students who feel initially uncomfortable with expressing themselves in class with another venue and mode of participating in class discussion. Your own "identity_profile" will include **a map of identity** – creating the map of your identity. It's a way to capture and articulate how you see yourself. You can clearly look at your obvious, surface-level identity and then begin to dig deeper. This can be very useful in exploring how others perceive you as a leader – who will feel more with you, who will give your words more weight, and so on.

Policy on late assignments. The granting of extensions is entirely at the discretion of the professor and usually is restricted to documented personal illness or bereavement in the immediate family. Late term papers will be penalized at 3% per day.

Plagiarism during preparing all types of written assignments is considered as an extremely serious violation of academic discipline, and will be severely penalized within the course frame. Plagiarism is writing offs, cheating on examinations, and borrowing of parts of texts or ideas without identifying the sources in all types of written works. Penalties for plagiarism range from receiving an "F" for a specific written work to receiving an "F" for the entire course. In extremely serious cases of plagiarism, in accordance to the rules of AUCA a student can be expelled from the university.

System of estimation:		Assessment scale:			
• Attendance and participation	10%	A	91 and above	C+	66 - 70
• Student's profile	30%	A-	86 - 90	C	61 - 65
• Class Presentation	10%	B+	81 - 85	C-	56 - 60
• Midterm exam	20%	B	76 - 80	D	51- 55
• Final exam	20%	B-	71 - 75	F	50 and below

"I" – a grade, which can be put in case of availability of officially documented reasons, for example, illness or family emergency situations.