

Course title: Identity in the 21st century

Language of instruction: English

Professor: David Block

Professor's contact and office hours: Office 20.256; meeting by appointment

Course contact hours: 45

Recommended credit: 6 ECTS credits

Course prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course

Language requirements: Recommended level in the European Framework B2 (or equivalent : Cambridge Certificate if the teaching language is English, DELE or 3 semesters in the case of Spanish)

Course focus and approach:

This course is interdisciplinary, drawing on political economy, politics, sociology, sociolinguistics, anthropology, geography, history and philosophy. It focuses on phenomena and events of the late 20th and early 21st centuries; how we inhabit and are ascribed identities that are gendered, racialized, sexualized, inflected by nationalism, mediated by age and so on; and how we are situated in terms of class in contemporary society.

Course description: This course is about identity in the 21st century. While not ignoring the long history of identity as a concept and construct, it focuses primarily on phenomena and events of the past five decades and their impact on the way we live now: how we inhabit and are ascribed identities that are gendered, racialized, sexualized, inflected by nationalism, mediated by age and so on, and how we are situated in terms of class. It is also concerned with meta issues such as (1) how the construct identity articulates with notions of self and subjectivity and belonging; (2) the impact of technology on the construction of identity; (3) intersectionality, as the way in which gender, race, sexuality and class overlap and interrelate in the systemic oppression and exploitation experienced by people not in positions of power; and (4) the interrelationship between social structures and individual agency in the shaping of identities in fields of social activity. Finally, the course will explore ways of researching identity, examining how Positioning Theory might be embellished so as to capture the myriad issues at work in the ongoing construction of identity. The course is appropriate for students interested in identity across of range of social sciences and humanities disciplines.

Learning objectives:

The key aims of this course are:

- to understand key concepts and issues related to identity in the 21st century;
- to gain insight into a wider range of perspectives on identity in the 21st century;
- to develop the capacity for the analysis, evaluation and synthesis of primary and secondary sources;
- to develop the capacity for sustained and independent argument; and
- to develop the capacity for critical self-reflection

By the end of the course, participants should be able to:

- contribute to conversation and debate revolving around the concept of identity in the 21st century;
- link material covered during the course their day-to-day professional and personal activities;
- make use of relevant literature sources;
- critically analyse texts focusing on identity;
- demonstrate a variety of ways in which concepts, analytical frameworks and evidence illuminate an understanding of issues; and
- present arguments, both in writing and orally, to fellow students and professional colleagues.

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Course workload:

- Reading per week: 2-4 journal article/chapter length publications
- Other: where appropriate, fieldwork and online research

Teaching methodology:

This course will be treated as a seminar. In advance of each session, students will be expected to have read assigned readings and prepared answers to questions provided on worksheets. Sessions will then be devoted to group discussion of responses to questions, which will then lead into a plenary sessions of varying length during which the course leader will interact with students while also, at times, lecturing. Students will also, on occasion, give presentations.

Assessment criteria:

- Class participation: 10%
- Group project (based on fieldwork research) and presentation (final week of course): 45%
- Written paper (submitted at end of course): 45%

General assessment criteria for the group project presentation and the written paper:

- 1) Text organisation and internal coherence
- 2) Use of resources/evidence of reading
- 3) Insightfulness of analysis

- 4) Originality of ideas
- 5) General readability/comprehensibility

BaPIS absence policy

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. Missing classes will impact on the student’s final grade as follows:

Absences	Penalization
Up to two (2) absences	No penalization
Three (3) absences	1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Four (4) absences	2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Five (5) absences or more	The student receives an INCOMPLETE (“NO PRESENTADO”) for the course

The BaPIS attendance policy **does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences**. The student is deemed responsible to manage his/her absences.

Only absences for medical reasons will be considered justified absences. The student is deemed responsible to provide the necessary documentation. Other emergency situations will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Director of the BaPIS.

The Instructor, the Academic Director and the Study Abroad Office should be informed by email without any delay.

Classroom norms:

- No food or drink is permitted in class.
- Students will have a 5-minute break at the halfway point of each 2-hour session
- Students should bring an electronic device to all sessions - laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc. – as some activities will require its use.

Weekly schedule:

WEEK	Content	Reading
01 SS 1 & 2	Introduction to course The past and present of identity: What is identity?	Block, D. (2022). <i>Issues and Challenges in Identity Research</i> . London: Routledge. Chapters 1-2. + others TBD
02 SS 3 & 4	A Marxist approach to identity? Class (and class struggle and class warfare) Structure and agency tensions in language and identity research	Block, D. (2022). <i>Issues and Challenges in Identity Research</i> . London: Routledge. Chapters 3-4. Block, D. (2018). <i>Political Economy in Sociolinguistics: Neoliberalism, Inequality and Social Class</i> . London: Bloomsbury. Chapter 4. + others TBD

03 S 5	Power and intersectionality	Block, D. (2023). Reflecting on intersectionality. Unpublished manuscript. Collins, P. H. et al (2021). Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory. <i>Contemporary Political Theory</i> , 20: 690–725. Salem, S. (2018). Intersectionality and its discontents: Intersectionality as traveling theory. <i>European Journal of Women’s Studies</i> , 25 (4) 403-418. + others TBD
04 SS 6 & 7	Researching identity: narrative, positioning theory (adapted) and critical discourse analysis	Block, D. (2022). <i>Issues and Challenges in Identity Research</i> . London: Routledge. Chapters 5-6 + others TBD
05 SS 8 & 9 SS 10	Infoselves and digital identities: social media, celebrity, influencers, etc. FRIDAY 1: General discussion: identity online and offline	Block, D. (2022). <i>Issues and Challenges in Identity Research</i> . London: Routledge. Chapter 7. Franck, G. (2019). The economy of attention. <i>Journal of Sociology</i> , 55(1) 8-19. Garbasevsci, D. (2021). <i>Infoselves: The Value of Online Identity</i> . Oxford: Wiley. Jerslev, A. & Mortensen, M. (2020). Celebrity in the social media age. In A. Elliott (ed.). <i>Routledge Handbook of Celebrity Studies</i> (pp. 157-174). London: Routledge. + others TBD
06 SS 11 & 12	Political identities (labels and activity)	Heywood, A. (2021). <i>Political Ideologies: An Introduction</i> , 7th edition. London: Bloomsbury. + others TBD
07 SS 13 & 14	Elites (global, mobile and dominant); neoliberal citizens (new ways of being governed)	Block, D. (2018). <i>Political Economy in Sociolinguistics: Neoliberalism, Inequality and Social Class</i> . London: Bloomsbury. Chapters 5 & 6. + others TBD
08 SS 15 & 16	Language and identity (multilingual identities, English-mediated identities)	Selected readings from: Ayres-Bennett, W. & Fisher, L. (eds) (2022). <i>Multilingualism and Identity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
09 SS 17 & 18 SS 19	Return to identity dimensions (race, gender, class, age, nationality, etc.) Issues arising Written assignment FRIDAY 2: Group presentations 1	TBD
10	Group presentations 2 & 3	

SS 20 & 21	Final thoughts	
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Required readings:

Block, D. (2022). *Issues and Challenges in Identity Research*. London: Routledge.

+ Multiple additional readings provided as the course proceeds.

Recommended bibliography:

Allen, K. A. (2021). *The Psychology of Belonging*. London: Routledge.

Alperstein, N. M. (2019). *Celebrity and Mediated Social Connections: Fans, Friends and Followers in the Digital Age*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Anthias, F. (2021). *Translocational Belongings: Intersectional Dilemmas and Social Inequalities*. London: Routledge.

Appiah, K. A. (2018). *The Lies That Bind: Rethinking Identity*. London: Profile Books.

Ayres-Bennett, W. & Fisher, L. (eds) (2022). *Multilingualism and Identity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bhattacharya, T. (ed.) (2017). *Social Reproduction: Remapping Class, Recentring Oppression*. London: Pluto Press.

Block, D. (2006). *Multilingual Identities in a Global City: London Stories*. London: Palgrave.

Block, D. (2014 [2007]). *Second Language Identities*. London: Bloomsbury.

Block, D. (2014). *Social Class in Applied Linguistics*. London: Routledge.

Block, D. (2018). *Political Economy in Sociolinguistics: Neoliberalism, Inequality and Social Class*. London: Bloomsbury.

Block, D. (2022). *Issues and Challenges in Identity Research*. London: Routledge.

Caldas-Coulthard, C. R., & Iedema, R. (Eds.) (2008). *Identity Trouble: Critical Discourse and Contested Identities*. London: Palgrave.

Collins, P. H. (2019). *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory*. Duke University Press.

Collins, P. H. & Bilge, S. (2020). *Intersectionality*, 2nd edition. New York: Wiley.

Couldry, N. & Mejias, U. A. (2019). *The Costs of Connection: How Data is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating it for Capitalism*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Coulmas, F. (2019). *Identity: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Edwards, J. (2009). *Language and Identity: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elliot, A. (2019). *The Culture of AI: Everyday Life and the Digital Revolution*. London: Routledge.

Elliott, A. (2020). *Concepts of the Self*, 4th edition. Cambridge: Polity.

Evans, D. (ed.) (2016). *Language and Identity: Discourse in the World*. London: Continuum.

Floridi, L. (2014). *The Fourth Revolution- How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fuchs, C. (2020). *Nationalism on the Internet: Critical Theory and Ideology in the Age of Social media and Fake News*. London: Routledge.

Fukuyama, F. (2019). *Identity: Contemporary Identity Politics and the Struggle for Recognition: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment*. Profile Books.

Garbasevski, (2021). *Info-selves: The Value of Online Identity*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

- Georgalou, M. (2017). *Discourse and Identity on Facebook*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Haider, A. (2018). *Mistaken Identity: Race and Class in the Age of Trump*. London: Verso.
- Heywood, A. (2021). *Political Ideologies: An Introduction, 7th edition*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Higgins, C. (Ed.) (2012). *Identity Formation in Globalizing Contexts: Language Learning in the New Millennium*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Jenkins, R. (2014). *Social Identity, 4th edition*. London: Routledge.
- Kayi-Aydar, H. (2019). *Positioning Theory in Applied Linguistics: Research Design and Applications*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kramsch, C. (2009). *The multilingual subject*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Langmia, K. & Tyree, T. C. M. (eds). (2017). *Social Media: Culture and Identity*. London: Lexington Books
- Lawlor, S. (2014). *Identity: Sociological Perspectives, 2nd edition*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Lin, A. (ed.) (2008). *Problematizing identity*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- McNamara, T. (2019) *Language and Subjectivity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Mishra, S. (2021). *Digital Cultures*. London: Routledge.
- Moran, M. (2015). *Identity and Capitalism* . London: Sage.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and Language Learning Extending the Conversation (2nd edition)*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Novoa, A. (2019). *Mobility and Identity in Europe A Mobile Ethnographic Approach*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- O'Neil, C. (2016). *Weapons of Math Destruction*. New York: Crown.
- Overell, R. & Nicholls, B. (eds.) (2020). *Post-Truth and the Mediation of Reality: New Conjunctures*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Preece, S. (ed.) (2016). *Routledge handbook of language and identity*. London: Routledge.
- Reed, A. & Michaels, W. B. (eds). (2022). *No Politics but Class Politics* . London: Eris.
- Richmond, M. & Charnley, A. (2022). *Race , Class, Gender and the Hatred of Identity Politics*. London: Pluto Press.
- Seargeant, P. (2020). *The Art of Political Storytelling: Why Stories Win Votes in Post-truth*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Statham, S. (2022). *Critical Discourse Analysis: A Practical Introduction to Power in Language*. London: Routledge.
- Van Krieken, R. (2019). *Celebrity Society: The Struggle for Attention, 2nd edition*. London: Rotildge.
- Zuboff, S. (2019). *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*. New York: Profile Books.