

Psychology 335: Self and Identity

Fall, 2011; MW, 2:30-4:00 pm; KINSC S412

Instructor Information

- Jennifer Lilgendahl
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Course Description

Who am I? How do I feel about myself? What is the story of my life? The answers people give to these kinds of questions, the factors that shape their answers, and how their answers affect them, over time and across situations in their lives, are the issues that are at the heart of this course on self and identity. Through a combination of lecture and discussion, we will examine and evaluate the primary research literature on self and identity from multiple disciplinary perspectives (primarily developmental, personality, and social). Specific topics to be addressed include self-concept development in childhood and adolescence, self-esteem and its consequences, what it means to have a “healthy” or “mature” sense of self in adulthood, social-cultural variability in the motivational dynamics of the self, different levels of self-identification (personal, relational, collective), and various topics related to culture and self, including ethnic identity development, bicultural identity, and the impact of stigma and stereotyping on the self. We will conclude the course with a set of specific applied topics (see course schedule).

Readings

There is no textbook for this course – all readings are available on Blackboard and include both journal articles of original studies and review/theoretical articles. It is important to note that as a 300-level, this course will be very reading intensive and will require your active engagement with the readings. An important part of your participation will be to complete readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss and evaluate their methods, results, and broader implications.

Course Requirements

There will be no traditional exams in this course. The requirements include an individual presentation, a midterm paper, a final paper, and class participation. A brief description of each of these components is provided below.

- Individual presentation = 10%
- Midterm paper = 30%
- Final paper (research proposal) = 40%
- Class participation (including discussion questions) = 20%

Individual Presentation

Over the course of the semester, each student will be responsible for giving one 10-minute presentation on an article that you find that is related to the topic being covered that week. You will be required to summarize the hypotheses, methods, and findings, evaluate the strengths and

weaknesses of the study, consider its broader theoretical implications and applications, and answer any questions that your fellow classmates may have about the study.

Midterm Paper

The first major class assignment will involve a midterm research paper, due by 5 pm on Friday, October 7. For this paper, you will choose from among a few topics addressed in the first five weeks of class (possible topics will be provided). This 6-8 page paper will involve an exploration into a specific research topic and will require you to incorporate multiple primary sources, both from the class reading list and those you find on your own. More details regarding the specific nature of this assignment will be provided in a handout in class.

Final Paper

The culminating project for this course will be a final paper, due by noon on Friday, December 16 (end of exams). This paper will take the form of a 15-20 page formal research proposal, complete with literature review, rationale for your proposed study, and your proposed methodology. You will be able to choose your own topic for this research proposal, as long as it examines issues or applications of empirical research on self and identity. The key goal for this paper is to develop a novel hypothesis, along with a proposal for how to test that hypothesis empirically. You will develop your topic over the course of the second half of the semester, starting with a paper topic proposal (due date to be announced). More details regarding the specific nature of this assignment will be provided in a handout in class.

Class Participation

As a 300-level, seminar-style course, this course will rely heavily on active student participation in the classroom. Although class will contain some lecture in order to provide necessary background for various topics, my intention is to be in “discussion mode” the majority of the time. Class time will involve a variety of different types of activities, from traditional discussion, to small group discussion, to in-class exercises and demonstrations. An important part of your grade (20%) will be based on the extent to which you attend and actively participate in all of these activities. Although this class is expected to be large for a seminar-style course (up to 35 students), you will be expected to contribute to class discussion on a regular basis. I do understand that some students are more comfortable than others with speaking up in larger classroom setting, and I will take those normal individual differences into account. However, I also think that it is important for everyone to push themselves to contribute at least occasionally, both for your own sake and for the sake of having a dynamic, exciting class.

Beyond standard in-class participation, your participation grade will be assessed in terms of two additional elements: 1) contributing discussion questions for use in class, and 2) completing the occasional informal “homework” assignment. Regarding the former, the class will be broken down into 2 groups, and each group will have a set of dates for which each individual in that group will be responsible for turning in an engaging discussion question based on the readings. Discussion questions will be due by 8 am the morning of class in order to give

me time to read through and organize them. Failure to turn in your required number of discussion questions (by the designated time) will negatively affect your participation grade. Details regarding the exact schedule for discussion questions will be provided in class. Finally, regarding informal homework assignments, I may occasionally email the class requesting that you do something in advance of class that will fuel discussion that day. Examples could include completing a questionnaire I send you, interviewing a friend about something, looking something up on the internet, etc. I won't do this every week, but when I do, expect you to follow through. Your treatment of these informal assignments will be reflected in your participation grade.

Class Policies

- Attendance: Good attendance is expected in this course and will obviously influence your class participation grade. In general, I will not penalize you for the occasional missed class (e.g., 1 or 2); however, it is best to email me to let me know ahead of time if you are going to miss class because you are sick or have some kind of conflict. In addition, you are responsible for announcements made in class.
- Turning in work: All formal written work (i.e., papers) must be submitted to me in hard copy form; I will not accept electronic submissions except in special circumstances and when prior arrangements have been made. Discussion questions will only be accepted via email.
- Late work: My policies regarding turning in work late are as follows:
 - Papers: For the midterm paper (due at 5 pm before Fall Break), your grade will be reduced one step (e.g., 4.0 to 3.7) if it is turned in after 5 pm on that day and an additional step for each day late after that, unless prior arrangements are made with me involving unavoidable scheduling conflicts, etc. If you think you have an unavoidable conflict, please talk to me as far in advance as possible. Exceptions to this policy may be made at my discretion. Please do not hesitate to talk to me regarding any issues that may affect your ability to turn in your paper on time. Note: Because the final paper is due at the very end of the term (noon on Dec. 16), late papers will only be accepted if formal arrangements have been made through your Dean.
 - Discussion questions: Discussion questions will not be accepted late. If you do not turn in your discussion question for that day by the specified time, you will not receive credit for a discussion question that day.
- Plagiarism/academic dishonesty: It goes without saying that any form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If I suspect any such behavior may be occurring, I am obligated to report such suspicions to the Haverford Honor Council. It is very important, particularly in the age of the internet, to educate yourself on what constitutes plagiarism. A detailed discussion is available on p. 86 of the Haverford Student Guide (<http://www.haverford.edu/deans/files/studentsGuide1011.pdf>), and I am available to talk at any time if you have any questions or concerns about this very important issue.
- Permissions: All of the materials made available to you in this course, including the syllabus, handouts, and PowerPoint slides, are my intellectual property as the professor of

this course and should not be shared with anyone or posted anywhere without my permission. Also, lectures should not be recorded without my permission.

- Accommodating student needs/disabilities: Students who think they may need accommodations in this course because of the impact of a disability are encouraged to meet with me privately early in the semester. Students should also contact Rick Webb, Coordinator, Office of Disabilities Services (rwebb@haverford.edu, 610-896-1290) to verify their eligibility for reasonable accommodations as soon as possible. Early contact will help to avoid unnecessary inconvenience and delays.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Dates	Topics and Activities	Readings
1	8/29-8/31	Intro to course: Theoretical and conceptual foundations	W: #1-McAdams (2001) W: #2-Heatherston, et al. (2004) W: #3-Excerpts from Markus & Nurius (1987)
		Self and identity development across the lifespan: General patterns and processes	
2	9/7	Self-concept development in childhood: Emergence and early development	W: #4-Stipek, et al. (1990) W: #5-Bird and Reese (2006) W: #6-Wang (2004)
3	9/12-9/14	Self and identity development during adolescence and emerging adulthood: The formation of identity	M: #7-Harter & Monsour (1992) M: #8-Grotevant (1987) W: #9-McLean & Pratt (2006) W: #10-Luyckx, et al (2007)
4	9/19-9/21	Self and identity development in adulthood	M: #11-Lodi-Smith & Roberts (2010) M: #12-Pasupathi & Mansour (2006)
		What constitutes a healthy self-concept? Individual differences	
4	9/21	Introduction to self-esteem: Conceptual issues, general patterns, gender differences, and the dynamics of low self-esteem	W: #13 Brown & Marshall (2006) W: #14: Robins & Trzesniewski (2005) W: #15: Brown & Dutton (1995)
5	9/26-9/28	Self-esteem unpacked: Consequences and complexities	M: #16: Donnellan, et al (2005) M: #17: Sargent, Crocker, & Luhtanen (2006) W: #18: Kernis (2003) W: #19: Jordan, et al (2005)
6	10/3-10/5	Beyond self-esteem 1: Authenticity and self-complexity <i>**Midterm paper due by 5 pm on 10/7**</i>	M: #20-Schlegel, et al. (2009) W: #21-Linnville (1987) W: #22-Diehl & Hay (2007)
		<i>**Fall Break**</i>	
7	10/17-10/19	Data Blitz and Jennifer Beer's visit	
		The situational, relational, and cultural dynamics of self and identity	
8	10/24-10/26	Introduction to the social dynamics of self / the relational self	M: #23-Brewer & Gardner (1996) M: #24-Deaux, et al (1995) W: #25-Gabriel, et al (2007) W: #26-Slotter, Gardner, & Finkel (2009)
9	10/31-11/2	Relational self, continued / Origins and development of ethnic/racial collective identities	M: no new readings W: #27-Pfeifer, et al W: #28-Either & Deaux
10	11/7-11/9	Ethnic identity development, continued / The psychological dynamics of bicultural identity	M: #29-Ghavami, et al (2011) M: #30- Syed & Azmytia (2010) W: #31-Haritatos & Benet-Martinez (2002) W: #32-Kiang & Harter (2008) W: #33-Yip (2009)

11	11/14 -11/1 6	Hyphenated identities in the context of socio-political conflicts / What does it mean to be "American"	M: #34-Sirin & Fine (2007) M: #35-Hammack (2010) W: TBA
12	11/21	Stigmatized identities, stereotype threat, and the self	TBA
12	11/23	**Class cancelled for Thanksgiving**	
		Applied Topics in Self and Identity	
13	11/28	Topic determined by class vote	TBA
13	11/30	Topic determined by class vote	TBA
14	12/5	Topic determined by class vote	TBA
14	12/7	Course-wrap up / **Final papers due Friday, 12/16 by noon**	

Example titles:

McAdams, D. P. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, 5(2), 100.

Harter, S., & Monsour, A. (1992). Development analysis of conflict caused by opposing attributes in the adolescent self-portrait. *Developmental Psychology*, 28(2), 251.

Brown, J. D., & Dutton, K. A. (1995). The thrill of victory, the complexity of defeat: Self-esteem and people's emotional reactions to success and failure. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 68(4), 712.

Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "We"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 71(1), 83.

Slotter, E. B., Gardner, W. L., & Finkel, E. J. (2010). Who am I without you? The influence of romantic breakup on the self-concept. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(2), 147-160.

Pfeifer, J. H., Ruble, D. N., Bachman, M. A., Alvarez, J. M., Cameron, J. A., & Fuligni, A. J. (2007). Social identities and intergroup bias in immigrant and nonimmigrant children. *Developmental Psychology*, 43(2), 496.

Huynh, Q. L., Nguyen, A. M. D., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2011). Bicultural identity integration. *Handbook of identity theory and research*, 827-842.

Hammack, P. L. (2010). Narrating hyphenated selves: Intergroup contact and configurations of identity among young Palestinian citizens of Israel. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34(4), 368-385.

Thompson, E. M., & Morgan, E. M. (2008). "Mostly straight" young women: Variations in sexual behavior and identity development. *Developmental Psychology*, 44(1), 15.

