"An identity is questioned only when it is menaced, as when the mighty begin to fall, or when the wretched begin to rise, or when the stranger enters the gates, never, thereafter, to be a stranger: the stranger's presence making you the stranger, less to the stranger than to yourself."  James Baldwin, *The Devil Finds Work*

Social scientists often treat ethnicity, nationalism and race as descriptive categories or variables, while avoiding actually defining these categories, or thinking about how they should be used. When they do pause to think about group membership, it is often characterized as shaped by ‘interests.’ Does this characterization fit group categories like nationalism, ethnicity, citizenship and even party membership? How do these social groups work? Are they social constructions? If constructed, how? What constrains/structures these constructions? Are some constructions better representations of identity than others, and what does this mean? How should we go about applying these categories in social analysis?

**Course Requirements**

This is a graduate level course, taught in seminar format. Each class meeting will revolve around a discussion of the readings. Class participation and writing assignments will be organized as follows:

**Option 1:** For this course you will write a short reaction memo each week, two 10-15 page essays, and help lead at least one class discussion. Read the course material carefully and be prepared to participate in class discussion. Attendance, preparation and participation are expected and will be taken into account in assigning final grades.

The reaction memos should be about a page in length and present your response to the readings for that week. You need not cover each and every reading for the week in these papers. The point is to focus on and analyze what you see as important, interesting issues in the reading. The memo should be analytical, not a summary. These are due via email by midnight on the Tuesday evening before class.
The two longer essays will be due at approximately the middle and end of the semester. These can be a critical paper or an analytical literature review. Literature review papers should go beyond the required readings listed on the syllabus and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the research, and offer an assessment of possible directions for future research.

Finally, each student is responsible for opening up class discussion on one or more week’s readings. While this might involve some summarizing of key arguments, the intent is to generate discussion around key issues. You should focus on what you find to be particularly interesting, problematic or persuasive in the reading and expect to take about 10-15 minutes. Do not present long summaries of materials.

**Option 2:** Those students who choose to may wish to write an original research paper, a detailed research design or another type of empirical paper. The general points above still apply, but the written requirements would be the reaction memos, a mid semester 1-2 page update on your research progress, and your research paper due at the end of the course. You will also lead class discussion as outlined above. If you are interested in this option, come by during office hours or set up an appointment within the first three weeks of the semester.

**Materials**

Required readings will be available on reserve in the Government reading room in Olin Library (room 405). Articles will be available on Dropbox. You may want to consider purchasing some of the books on your own.


Course Outline and Reading Assignments

1. January 23  
   Introduction

2. January 30  
   The Problem of Group Identities
   Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature, and 
   Publications: 51-75.
   Connor, Walker. 1978. “A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group is 

   Recommended:
   Moe, Terry M.. 1980, The Organization of Interests: Incentives and the Internal 
   Dynamics of Political Interest Groups (Chicago: University of Chicago. 
   Introduction, ch 1-3 and 5.
   Olson, Mancur, The Logic of Collective Action (Cambridge: Harvard University 

3. February 6  
   The Social Construction of Identity
   introduction, pp. 1-38.
   Patterson, Orlando. 1975. “Context and Choice in Ethnic Allegiance: A 
   Theoretical Framework and Caribbean Case Study.” In Nathan Glazer 
   Brubaker, Rogers and Frederick Cooper. 2004. “Beyond Identity,” in Ethnicity 

   Recommended:
   Pyrenees. Berkeley: University of California Press. Introduction, ch. 4, 7, 
   8.


4. **February 13**

Situational and Multiple Identities


Recommended:


5. **February 20**

Nationalisms


Recommended:


6. **February 27**  
**Boundaries of the Nation**  
*Read all.*

7. **March 6**  
**Boundary Crossing: Assimilation**  

8. **March 13**  
**Boundaries of the Nation II**  
*Read all.*

**March 20**  
**Spring Break**

9. **March 27**  
**Questioning Group Identity**  
*Read all; skim ch. 1.*

10. **April 3**  
**Questioning Group Identity II**  
*Read all, except ch. 6.*
11. April 10  Identity by Choice?
*Read all; skim ch. 4,5 and 7.*

12. April 17  Contesting Citizenship I
*Read all.*

13. April 24  Contesting Citizenship II
*Read ch. 1 2 and 8*

14. May 1  Transnational Citizenship
*Read all.*

Recommended:
Bosniak, Linda. “Citizenship Denationalized.”