

## HUMANITIES 101 WINTER 2017 COURSE: *Categories of Identity: Who decides who we are?*

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The Humanities 101 class *Categories of Identity: Who decides who we are?* is a 12-week, university-level, non-credit course in the Humanities and Social Sciences for people who have a passion for learning but who have encountered barriers to education.

**Course Description** – We will explore a wide range of topics around the theme of identity, how the many parts that make up identity are categorized, and the impacts these categories can have. Each week we will take a closer look at one topic using the theories and approaches of different social science disciplines. We have two principal goals: 1) to critically explore the history of how pre-determined categories of identity came about and how they shape how we move through and are moved through systems today, and 2) to work in small groups with HUM volunteers to explore how the topics we discuss can be seen in our day-to-day experiences and then to present and share this knowledge with our larger class.

Over the next few months we will study topics that include both the history of categories of identity and how these categories affect us today. Have we always been individuals? Have categories like age, gender, money, or race defined who we are in the past, or is this just a modern idea? Taking a historical perspective will shape how we see our current categories of identity. There seems to be no escaping the boxes that have to be checked: boy/girl, age, sex, education, income, religion, race, citizenship, language spoken, it goes on and on and on. What do these boxes tell us about ourselves, about others? Why is this information important? Who uses it? Who owns it? Why? Why? Why?

We are all coming to the course with different ideas and theories about the many categories that make up our identity, and we each have different lenses through which we have understood many of the ways these categories have shaped our social world. Each of our own stories and life experiences are important, and will play an important role in our learning this semester. Each week the course instructors will share different perspectives and ideas relating to categories of identity. Our hope is that we will learn together as individuals and as a class in a welcoming, collaborative, and supportive setting. There is no way we will agree on everything, and we do not need or want to, but it is important that we respect the unique perspective of each participant in the space.

Every class there will be an activity that will contribute to our final goal: a knowledge share! There will be space for all forms of expression, and we will work together to decide what knowledge will be shared, and what this will look like. Each class we will spend time working towards this final goal. We will also have two classes where we work through a case study, applying our knowledge and challenging our ideas. We will also be having out of class events that will relate back to our theme that you are encouraged, but not required, to participate in. **These activities and events are part of the class learning and will therefore be offered at no financial cost to the learner.** Learners are expected to share their ideas and course reflections either with the class or the class facilitator.

**Course Objectives** – The objectives of the course are to:

- Sharpen our critical thinking skills
- Learn different ideas about categories of identity that shape our day-to-day lived experiences
- Use a historical perspective to inform our understanding of current events
- Become more familiar with the social sciences
- Create, collaborate, document, and share our learning experience through a collective knowledge share
- Participate in discussions and activities with classmates and instructors
- Experience a university-level classroom setting
- Explore your passion for learning

**Course Format and Activities** – Students can expect presentations, class discussions, small group work, and one-on-one assistance. We will discuss ideas, talk through readings, and explore different ways to present our ideas. Students are expected to participate in the following activities:

- Discuss ideas and participate in activities with classmates and instructors
- Respond to readings shared out loud in class
- Participate in guided assignments
- Share reflections on their work

Each class will include time to work on course assignments.

**Materials** – Students will be provided with all required materials, including pens/pencils, paper, folders, etc.

**Class Location, Time and Schedule** – Classes will be held at **The Humanities Centre, Room 4-29** on Tuesdays, coffee and wafers at 5:30, classes from 6:00 – 8:30 PM.

**Course Schedule:**

5:30-6:00 – Arrival, coffee, tea, water, and wafer time

6:00-7:00 – First half of class

7:00-7:30 – Break – food, coffee, chit-chat

7:30-8:30 – Second half of class, activity

**Semester Schedule:**

<b>Day and Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Tuesday, January 24 *Lisa and Kelsi	Introduction and Course Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction to course goals and structure</li> <li>- Develop class guidelines</li> <li>- Discuss end of term knowledge share</li> </ul>
Tuesday, January 31 *Lisa and Kelsi	Introduction to Categories of Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of class guidelines</li> <li>- Quick overview of course goals and structure (syllabus)</li> <li>- Introduction to key terms</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exploring the language of identity</li> </ul>
<p>Tuesday, February 7 *Kelsi</p>	<p>Identities and Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How long have we each had our own identity?</li> <li>- Do we have identity without categories?</li> <li>- What motivates the “need” to categorize identity?</li> <li>- How are categories created?</li> <li>- Who is deciding what counts?</li> <li>- When did identity begin to be documented?</li> <li>- What is credentialism?</li> </ul>
<p>Tuesday, February 14 *Kaylyn</p>	<p>Living in the Binary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are contemporary categories of identity?</li> <li>- Is this the best way to identify people?</li> <li>- What is a binary and how do we fit?</li> <li>- Are there other ways we can identify ourselves? And if so, what are some?</li> <li>- Finally, why does it matter?</li> </ul>
<p>Tuesday, February 21 * Jesse</p>	<p>Media and Identity (past through present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How have people gotten their knowledge in the past?</li> <li>- How are people getting their knowledge now?</li> <li>- Are we living in a time of post-truth?</li> <li>- How does media inform our identity?</li> <li>- Does media solidify existing categories, or open up new spaces for identity?</li> </ul>
<p>Tuesday, February 28 *Amy</p>	<p>Race and Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When did people begin to be categorized by race?</li> <li>- How have ideas of race changed through history?</li> <li>- Why have or have not ideas of race changed?</li> <li>- A brief history of immigration</li> <li>- Is there still such a thing as race, was there ever?</li> </ul>
<p>Tuesday, March 7 *Daria</p>	<p>Identity and Culture: A contemporary personal history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does culture shape identity when it is under attack?</li> <li>- Daria will explore how war and famine have shaped cultural identification in current day Ukraine.</li> <li>- Is immigration a betrayal?</li> </ul>
<p>Tuesday, March 14 *Katie</p>	<p>History of Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is class?</li> <li>- Has wealth always meant the richest?</li> <li>- How have ideas of class changed through history (if they have) and why?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How are knowledge, class, and power intertwined (assuming they are)?</li> </ul>
Tuesday, March 21 *Katie	<p>Current look at Class and Wealth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What does class look like in our contemporary North American lives?</li> <li>- What and who are the 1%?</li> <li>- Do we all have a shot at reaching the top rung?</li> <li>- What is wealth, how is it measured, is measured the same way for everyone?</li> <li>- Is the following statement true: money can't buy happiness?</li> </ul>
Tuesday, March 28	Work Class
Tuesday, April 4	Work Class
Tuesday, April 11	Knowledge Share and Graduation!

**Course Feedback** – No grades are assigned in the course. If you would like additional feedback on your course work speak to Lisa or Kelsi.

### **Certificate Requirements**

In order to receive the certificate indicating successful completion of Humanities 101, students must meet the following criteria:

- Complete all in-class assignments
- Attend at least 7 of the 11 “regular” classes (this excludes open house and graduation party)
- If you are having difficulty meeting these requirements, please speak with Lisa or Kelsi as soon as possible

**Course Contacts** – Lisa Prins or Kelsi Barkway, University of Alberta; hum@ualberta.ca or call 587-709-5472. Please note that it may take a day or two to return messages.

In addition to the above scheduled classes there will be several other events to compliment our in-class learning. These events and activities will be offered at **no cost to you and transportation to and from will be provided.**

There is a wide range of events that take place at the university each semester, hosted by all different departments. We will do our best to let you know about the talks and events that are free and open to all as they come up! If you hear of something interesting that is happening on campus please let us know and we can share it with the class. We will also post upcoming free, public events and activities on our Facebook page so follow us!

The following are some confirmed scheduled dates and events. As more details are ironed out and new activities planned you will be the first to know.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
TBA	AGA	TBD
March 9	Movie Night	TBD
TBA	Drama/Storytelling Workshop	TBD

### **Emergency Procedures:**

In the very unlikely case that there is an emergency either in class or on campus the following is important information:

- If it is happening and is an emergency phone 911.
- There is a free phone on main floor just outside of the doors that lead to HUB mall.
- If you have concerns about something happening on campus that is not a critical emergency call the University of Alberta Protective Services at 780-492-5050, they are open 24/7.
- There is a defibrillator on the bottom level outside of the southeast doors.