

## LIBERAL EDUCATION 2000-A: IDENTITY AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

*The University of Lethbridge sits in the heart of traditional Siksikaitapii (Sik-si-gay-ts-i-da-bee) territory that encompasses land from the Saskatchewan River in the north to the Yellowstone River in the south, east to the Sand Hills and west to the Rocky Mountains. The University of Lethbridge acknowledges, recognizes, and deeply appreciates the Siksikaitapii people's connection to the land, Kitaowahhsinnoon (Gee-toch-si-noon)- What Feeds Us. We acknowledge that we, as people living and benefiting on and from these lands, must respect the laws, protocols, and traditional knowledge of those who have cared for this land since time immemorial. It is our duty to continue learning how to honour this responsibility and relationship. We also recognize the diverse population of Indigenous people who attend the University of Lethbridge and the contributions that Indigenous people make in shaping and strengthening this community, past, present, and future.*

### INSTRUCTOR:

Brendan Cummins [brendan.cummins@uleth.ca](mailto:brendan.cummins@uleth.ca) 403-332-5281

Office Hours: A812H and on Zoom (link on Moodle)

Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-2:00 pm, Wednesday 1:00-3:00

### CLASSROOM COVID POLICY

The University of Lethbridge has instituted a mandatory mask policy in all indoor spaces where social distancing is not possible or feasible and mandatory rapid testing for those who have not been fully vaccinated, choose to not be vaccinated, or choose to not share their vaccination status. Individuals with legitimate medical or other protected reasons for not being vaccinated or tested can request accommodation. For up-to-date information on where you can receive a COVID vaccine, where to be tested, and all campus COVID related information please refer to the emails from the Return to Campus group, <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/covid-19>, or <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>.

It has been an extraordinary year and a half. We have worked hard to get to where we can share space and interact again in the real world. The measures implemented by the University of Lethbridge are not difficult to follow. When we cannot distance in the classroom, when we do group work, when we enter and exit the classroom, **please wear a mask**. It's not a lot to ask for relatively small moments of your life.

If you are uncertain about receiving a vaccine and want to talk with me about that, I would be happy to have that conversation. I can also tell you about how I made my decision to be vaccinated if it would be beneficial to you to hear it.

**Be kind.** I'll be happy to discuss and address your concerns *outside of class time*. But I ask that you put aside any disagreement with these policies or how these policies are being enforced during the time we spend together in the classroom; you, me, and your colleagues. It's a small thing to ask to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

For more information see the course schedule section of this outline. **There will be Zoom options for those who may have to isolate or are otherwise unable to attend.**

**Wednesday 5:00-7:45**

**C756**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Who am I? Who are you? How do we decide? What is identity? How is it shaped? We like to think we have a distinct and individual identity, but how are they shaped? Do we really have unique identities?

These are some of the questions that form the theme of this course. Through academic examinations of identity, a memoir of self-discovery, and class discussions the concept of identity will be carefully and critically considered.

**COURSE READING MATERIALS**

Required Text: Westover, Tara. *Educated: A Memoir*. Toronto: Harper Collins, 2018.

This book contains graphic descriptions physical and emotional domestic violence. If you anticipate any issues with the material, or experience any issues while working with it, please talk to the instructor.

**There will also be required reading posted on Moodle.**

**PREREQUISITE**

LBED 1000 or four courses (12.0 credit hours) in Arts and Science.

Students who complete BOTH Liberal Education 1000 and LBED 2000 or LBSC 2000 may reduce the Liberal Education List Requirement by one course from each of the three lists.

**LIBERAL EDUCATION AT THE U OF L**

The foundational philosophy of the U of L is based on Liberal Education; an education that “liberates” the mind from assumptions, dogma, stereotypes, and artificial boundaries. Our four-pillar model starts with breadth across disciplines, so that students are exposed to multiple ways of viewing and analyzing the world around them. Next, we aim for connection and integration of ideas and approaches across disciplines. Like all disciplines, we develop critical thinking skills, how to ask good questions, unpack assumptions, collect data and evidence, reason carefully, and formulate and communicate conclusions and decisions. Lastly, all of this is intended to produce good citizens; people who can actively engage in their communities, at all levels from the local to the global, and work to make the world better. More information on this model, and lots of additional resources, are available on the U of L School of Liberal Education website, at [uleth.ca/liberal-education](http://uleth.ca/liberal-education).

**LETTER GRADE CUTOFFS:**

|            |            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| A+ 95-100  | B+ 79-84.9 | C+ 67-69.9 | D+ 56-59.9 |
| A 90-94.9  | B 74-78.9  | C 63-66.9  | D 50-55.9  |
| A- 85-89.9 | B- 70-73.9 | C- 60-62.9 | F Below 50 |

## **COURSE POLICIES**

Throughout this course we will be considering and discussing sensitive issues. You are responsible for your words and actions. All ideas are welcome, but all ideas must be communicated in a respectful and collegial manner. By staying in this course, you agree to respect others, even if you disagree with their views, and to handle sensitive issues in a considerate manner.

## **ONLINE MATERIAL**

All course material generated specifically and uniquely by the instructor or the participants in this class, for example recorded or links to recorded discussion material, discussion forum posts, or chat room threads, are solely for the use of the participants in this class. None of this material is to be shared or disseminated without the express consent of the instructor and the participants. Recorded lecture material, on Moodle or on Zoom, is the intellectual property of the instructor. It may not be used, shared, or disseminated for any other purpose than engaging in this course.

## **LATE POLICIES**

Late assignments during the semester will be docked 5% the first day after the designated assignment dropbox closes, an additional 1% for every day after up to one week. After one week the assignment earns an automatic 0. Any assignment can be handed in early at any time.

**The final assignment will only be accepted up to three days after the drop box closes. It will be docked 5% for every day for all three days up to 15%. After three (3) days the final paper will be given a 0**

## **PLAGIARISM POLICIES**

Plagiarism, representing the words or ideas of someone else as your own, is a serious academic offence.

If you are found to have plagiarized or cheated in any way on an assignment in this course, you will earn an automatic 0% on that assignment. If you plagiarize or cheat again you will receive an F in the course. A letter will be sent to the Dean of Arts and Science that will be included in your file in the Office of the Registrar. Further disciplinary action may also be taken.

**It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these academic responsibilities and regulations.** Read the University Calendar *Student Discipline Policy*. (pg. 62, 2021-2022 Calendar) for this and other academic disciplinary issues (cheating, duplication, confidentiality, and misrepresentation). The full policy is also available here:

<https://www.uleth.ca/policy/resources/student-discipline-policy-academic-offences-undergraduate-students>

**For more information on plagiarism and citation methods see the University Library website**

**EVALUATION**

**All assignments are to be submitted through the Moodle assignment drop boxes. Written assignments should be double-spaced, with no extra spaces between paragraphs, using standard 1" (2.5 cm) margins and a standard 12 pt. font. All written submissions must be in either PDF or Word documents. Oral submissions should be discussed with the instructor**

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| <b>PARTICIPATION</b>          | 20% |
| Forum and Class Participation |     |
| <b>CRITICAL REFLECTIONS</b>   | 45% |
| 3 submissions @ 15%           |     |
| <b>FINAL PROJECT</b>          | 35% |
| Due Dec. 10                   |     |

**PARTICIPATION 20%**

The learning in this course comes from discussion about the topics with the instructor and your colleagues. You are expected to be involved in these conversations and there are different ways to do that.

There are two discussion forums (instructor and student) on Moodle. The student forum is where you can post and answer questions or comment and start a conversation. In the instructor forum there will be one or two questions specifically about the week's material that you can discuss. Using these forums to engage with the material and your colleagues is a good way to participate, particularly if you struggle with speaking in class.

The participation mark is also assessed through active engagement with in-class discussions on the topics and themes. That can come in the small or large group discussions. Active engagement does not mean speaking in every class. This is not about quantity; it is about quality.

You might speak a lot in class and rarely use the forums or you may use the forums regularly and rarely speak in class. All three will be considered. The assessment for this portion will be ungraded. This means that you will be expected to think critically about your contributions. You will get a feedback report halfway through the semester indicating what you do well and what can be worked on. At the end of the semester, you will write one or two short paragraphs indicating what you think your participation grade should be and why. You may be asked to meet with the instructor to discuss your reasoning. The instructor has the final decision, it may go up or down from your assessment, but you will be provided with the reasons. There will be more details as the course progresses.

Active engagement in any or all of these paths means, thinking about the themes, being willing to grapple with the ideas, asking questions when something is unclear or you would like to start a conversation, and coming to class prepared. Active engagement includes active listening and consideration of other thoughts and opinions.

**CRITICAL RESPONSES****45%**

Critical responses are your careful examination and analysis of our material and a reflection on our discussions that should be used to develop a theme for your final paper. They are not a summary but should single out an issue or concept you would like to explore in a limited space. Your critical response should keep these questions in mind as you critically consider the issue or concept you decide to discuss: **What does the concept have to say about identity? Why do you think it is important? Why should your reader care?** These questions are guidelines only and should not be answered literally.

These assignments are meant for you to thoughtfully reflect on what we have discussed, what challenges you may see in the material, and how it might be applied to your understanding of the way identity is shaped and shared in a broader context. While working through this material, you should also be thinking about a theme or idea you can use for your final paper. These reflections should form the foundation and outline for that final assignment.

**There will be three windows to submit your assignments. Assignments can be submitted early at any time on any of the material in the specified window. For example, if the window is Sept. 15-Oct. 6, you can submit a critical response on any of the articles in that window. The responses must 2-3 pages in length and follow the written assignment format.**

**Due Date Windows****Critical Response 1**

Sept. 15-Oct. 6 15%

*The Newsroom/I Am Canadian* “Classification” “Bases of Identity”**Critical Response 2**

Oct. 7-Nov. 3 15%

“Narrative Identity” “There is No Justice in History” “Like Marrow in our Bones,”  
“Language,”**Critical Response 3**

Nov. 4-Dec. 1 15%

*Educated*

Critical responses will be evaluated on writing quality (grammar, sentence structure, etc.) as well as clarity and effectiveness of the argument. Each response is worth 15% for a total of 45% of your final grade.

**More instructions for the critical responses are on Moodle.**

**FINAL PROJECT****35%**

Examine identity in an example, topic, or theme of your choice. You will be expected to analyze your example using the frameworks of identity from course material including our discussion and analysis of Tara Westover's *Educated*. This is not just a re-examination of class material, but a more in-depth discussion and assessment of something you have been considering through the course. This is also not an analysis of *Educated*; it is a source that could be used for examples to illustrate your topic, but you do not **have** to connect to the book.

This project is meant for you to examine and illustrate your theme or topic and the connection to identity. As such, there are multiple ways to submit your work. You could do a presentation, a short film, and audio presentation, a multi-media work or a traditional paper. The parameters for your submission and what you plan to do **MUST** be discussed with the instructor no later than **November 24**.

**The project is due Friday, Dec. 10.** It will be evaluated on clarity and effectiveness of the argument connection to course material. The essay will be worth 35% of your final grade.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

Week 1-Sept. 8

Course Introduction- First Thoughts

Week 2-Sept. 15

*The Newsroom/I Am Canadian*

Lecture: "Classification," Kwame Appiah

Week 3-Sept. 22

"Classification," Kwame Appiah

Lecture: "Bases of Identity," Burke, Stets

Week 4-Sept. 29

"Bases of Identity," Burke, Stets

Week 5-Oct. 6

Lecture: "Narrative Identity," McAdams, McLean

**Final Due Date Critical Response 1**

Week 6-Oct. 13

"Narrative Identity," McAdams, McLean

Lecture: "There is No Justice in History," Harari

Week 7-Oct. 20

"There is No Justice in History," Harari

Week 8-Oct. 27

“Like Marrow in our Bones,” L. Whitney Clayton

“Language,” *Fry’s Planet*

Week 9-Nov. 3

Lecture: *Educated*, Westover

**Final Due Date Critical Response 2**

***Fall Break Nov. 8-12 No Classes***

Week 10-Nov. 17

*Educated*, Westover

Week 11-Nov. 24

*Educated*, Westover

Week 12-Dec. 1

Intersections, last class

**Final Due Date Critical Response 3**

***Final Project due Friday Dec. 10***

***Every effort will be made to adhere to the contents of this outline, however there may be changes in scheduling, assignment structure, and/or reading material. Students will be given ample notice of any changes to this outline.***