How do our interactions with others cause and result from inequalities in society? This course explores how status and power dynamics shape social life, using theories and research from sociological social psychology. We will learn how status beliefs emerge from social differences in resources and power, and how they perpetuate inequalities over time by shaping our interpretations of social events and our behavior and emotions when we interact with others. We will explore why broad social inequalities are often durable, and how the dynamics of social interaction serve to sustain them. We will also consider the means by which these inequalities can be overcome.

The readings for this course will primarily be based in a sociological perspective known as symbolic interactionism, which interrogates many aspects of everyday life that we often take for granted as natural or normal. This perspective is the foundation of many modern theories in sociological social psychology, and in sociology more broadly. The course will introduce you to symbolic interactionist thought, and to a host of contemporary social psychological theories that help us understand the reciprocal relationship between individual action and broader social patterns and institutions. Our central focus will be on the relationship between self and society through interactions, so there will be little overlap with material you may have encountered in psychology courses.

You can expect to read about 150 pages of material each week. We will read articles that link social psychological theories with status and power dynamics in social interaction, and consider how these dynamics help to explain social inequalities based on race, class, gender, and sexuality. We will work to develop three skills that are essential tools for a thoughtful sociological scholar: (1) the ability to identify how we shape and are shaped by our social worlds, (2) the ability to engage in reasoned academic debates based in sociological evidence rather than personal opinion, and (3) the ability to sit with ideas that differ from/conflict with our own and to take the perspective of others with respect and empathy. By learning how we “participate in the construction of our own realities, we can take a more active and purposeful approach toward making this the sort of world in which we want to live” (O’Brien 2009: xi).

The required textbook for this course will be available for purchase at the Dartmouth Bookstore and Wheelock Books. It is also on reserve at Baker-Berry Library. Additional readings are available on our course Canvas site: [http://canvas.dartmouth.edu](http://canvas.dartmouth.edu).

Required textbooks:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation

Class attendance and participation will count for 10% of your final grade. Your participation grade will reflect your preparation for class, including the completion of any assigned homework and reading and active participation in class discussions and exercises. It will also reflect your adherence to the guidelines set forth in the sections on Academic Responsibility, Class Conduct, and Absences below. Please review these guidelines carefully to ensure that you understand my expectations and how you will be graded.

Examinations

You will have two exams this semester, each of which is worth 25% of your course grade. The exams will be comprised of short answer and essay questions that will require you to explain an issue or theory and/or critically analyze material presented in the readings or during lecture. It is important to be clear and concise in your writing, while thoroughly addressing all the elements of a question and demonstrating your knowledge of the course material. Please review my policies about make-up exams in the section on Late Work below. If you are concerned about your writing skills or the test format, or you will require testing accommodations, please arrange to meet with me early in the semester.

Discussion Leadership

You will lead class discussion on one occasion for approximately 30 minutes. As a discussion leader, you will design an exercise that relates to the assigned reading for the day and generates a relevant class discussion. To receive full credit, the exercise should be creative, engaging, and help students get a better grasp of the course material and you, as a leader, should be active in facilitating the participation of all students in the class. I will present the assigned readings before turning things over to you, but you will be responsible for fielding your classmates’ questions during the activity, so be sure to read carefully and come prepared. You will need to submit your plan for leading class and any relevant materials or handouts to Canvas at least 24 hours in advance of the class you will lead. Discussion leadership will account for 20% of your final grade.

Research Paper

You will write an 8 to 10-page research paper that uses one of the theories we cover in class to discuss how status and power dynamics lead to (and can help combat) social inequalities based on race, class, gender, or sexuality. The supplemental readings listed in the syllabus may offer a useful starting point to help you decide on your topic. You will review in depth the literature that relates to your chosen theory and research topic, including both course readings and readings you will identify through library research. Your paper will introduce the theory, explain how it applies to status and power dynamics in social interaction for the topic of your choosing, and review any relevant research findings on the subject. We will discuss my expectations for the organization and content early in the semester, and you will submit a one-page proposal that outlines your plan for the paper. Your paper will be due at the end of the term, and is worth 20% of your final grade.
are expected to use properly formatted citations and references, and exercise academic responsibility in completing your work.

**Final Grade**

Your final numeric grade in the course will be determined by your class attendance and participation (10%), the quality of your discussion leadership (20%), and your performance on the two exams (50%) and the research paper (20%). Your numeric grade will be converted into a letter grade using the scale below.

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COURSE POLICIES

Academic Responsibility

Dartmouth College is a community of scholars and learners committed to the principles of academic and personal honesty, responsibility, and respect for others. All students should conduct themselves in accordance with the Dartmouth community standards, particularly the academic honor principle. Cheating, plagiarism, use of the same work in multiple courses, and unauthorized collaboration will not be tolerated. Minor violations of the honor principle may result in loss of credit or failure for a given piece of work or in the course. Major violations may result in suspension or expulsion from the College. Guidelines for the proper use of sources and citations are available through the Institute for Writing and Rhetoric. They also offer writing and research support.

Class Conduct

The materials we will read and class discussions we will undertake this semester deal with issues that may in some cases be sensitive and personal to students in the class. These materials are important in helping us to expose the ways in which inequalities of power, status, and resources affect social life, come to understand our own experiences and the experiences of others through a sociological lens, and develop a class dialogue about how we can strive to overcome inequalities and understand our own privilege.

All students are expected to have a voice in our class dialogue. Speaking often does not necessarily mean you are present and engaged with your classmates. Class participation is about thinking carefully, listening, and posing questions to others as much as it is about sharing your ideas. This requires us to be present, set aside distractions, and focus our attention on engaging with one another. To help us accomplish this goal, laptops and tablets may be used in class expressly for note-taking, and must be disconnected from the internet. No cell phones may be used in class. Violations of this policy will impact your final grade in the course.

The tone with which we engage one another is also extremely important, and should come from a place of mutual respect and understanding. You are free to disagree with the views raised in the material or by others in the class, but must do so with a reasoned critique based on a complete consideration of their argument. Your own argument should be supported by sociological evidence rather than personal opinion or anecdotes. Disrespectful behavior such as talking while others are talking, dominating the floor, or engaging in personal attacks will not be tolerated. You are expected to treat one another and me with respect at all times.

Absences

Attendance and participation are essential components of this course. My expectations for participation are described above, in the section on Class Conduct. Chronic absences will cause a significant loss of points from your grade, as will routinely showing up to class late or leaving early. It is your responsibility to keep up with any material that you miss because of an absence, including announced changes to the schedule. Class policies on late and missed work are outlined in more detail below. If you anticipate missing class meetings because of athletic team participation, religious observances, or some other reason, please arrange a meeting with me at the start of the semester, and bring documentation of the expected conflicts.
**Late Work Policy**

Lots of unexpected things will come up over the course of the semester. To make sure you don’t wind up in a difficult position, plan ahead: start your assignments early and finish them well in advance of the deadline. Speak with me at the beginning of the semester if you anticipate any circumstances that might affect your ability to get your work in on time. Homework assignments are designed to help you prepare for in-class activities, so we can make the most of our time together.

*They will not be accepted late.* Homework assignments that come in after the submission deadline will be given a zero. Graded assignments that come in late will be penalized one letter grade per day. This includes exams, your research paper, and your discussion leadership materials. If the deadline has arrived and your assignment still isn’t complete, it’s best to turn in whatever you have finished.

Extensions will only be given on graded assignments if missed due to extreme circumstances beyond your control. For example: severe illness requiring a doctor’s visit or hospitalization, death in the family, or college-excused events (which must be approved ahead of time). Generally not feeling well, forgetting about the deadline, having computer problems, needing to help your friend or family member with something, and scheduling conflicts with appointments, interviews, or exams in other classes are not considered extreme circumstances. If you believe you are eligible for an extension, it is your responsibility to *notify me before missing the deadline, and explain in writing* why you feel your circumstances warrant an exception. Failure to follow this policy will result in denial of an extension. Students who have been granted accommodations by Student Accessibility Services should arrange to meet with me early in the semester so we can plan ahead.

**Canvas and Course Assignments**

Canvas and email are important forms of communication for this class; be sure to check both regularly to stay informed. Readings and assignments that are not in the required textbook will be posted on Canvas, which can be accessed at: [https://canvas.dartmouth.edu](https://canvas.dartmouth.edu). Canvas is also the main forum by which most of your assignments will be submitted. If you have any difficulties accessing the site, or are unsure of how to use its necessary features, please contact me as soon as possible. Confusion about the use of Canvas is not a valid excuse for the late submission of assignments.

**Re-Grading of Assignments**

If you believe that I have made an error in grading an assignment, please provide me with a written explanation of why your grade should be changed, not to exceed one page, along with a clean (unmarked) copy of the work in question. Based on your rationale and my careful examination of your work, *your grade may go up, go down, or remain the same*. You have one week from the date the assignment is returned to you to request that it be re-graded.

**Accommodations**

Students desiring academic accommodations, modifications, or auxiliary aids should contact [Student Accessibility Services](mailto:Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu) at either Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu or 603-646-9900. Once your accommodations have been established with SAS, we should arrange a private meeting early in the semester to discuss how I can best support you in the course.
CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1: The Social Construction of Reality

Monday, March 28
Webster and Sell, Why Do Experiments?
Schwalbe, Making Sense of the World Differently

Wednesday, March 30
O’Brien, What is Real?
O’Brien, Shared Meaning is the Basis of Humanness

Friday, April 1
Berger and Luckmann, Society as a Human Product
Zerubavel, Making Distinctions in Everyday Life

Additional reading
House, The Three Faces of Social Psychology
Mead, The Self, the I, and the Me
Cooley, The Looking-Glass Self

Week 2: Impression and Emotion Management

Monday, April 4
O’Brien, Meaning is Negotiated through Interaction
Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (selections)

Wednesday, April 6
Hochschild, Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure
Hochschild, The Managed Heart (selections)

Friday, April 8
Green, The Interactional Basis of Systems of Sexual Stratification
Wingfield, Racialized Feeling Rules in Professional Workplaces

Additional reading
Grazian, The Performance of Masculinity as Collective Activity
Power et al., The Price of Breaking Social Class Feeling Rules
Cahill and Eggleston, Managing Emotions in Public

Week 3: Affect Control Theory

Monday, April 11
CSPT Chapter 7, Affect Control Theory

Wednesday, April 13
Rogalin, Sobooff, and Lovaglia, Power, Status, and Affect Control
Lively and Heise, Sociological Realms of Emotional Experience

Friday, April 15
Smith-Lovin and Douglass, An Affect Control Analysis of Two Religious Subcultures
Boyle and McKinzie, Responses to Deflection Produced by Unwanted Sexual Experiences

Additional reading
Smith-Lovin and Robinson, Gender and Conversational Dynamics
Lively and Powell, Emotional Expression at Work and at Home
Kroska and Harkness, Stigma Sentiments and Self Meanings
Week 4: Identity Theory

Monday, April 18  CSPT Chapter 5, *Identity Theory*

Wednesday, April 20  Stets and Harrod, *Verification across Multiple Identities: The Role of Status Cast, Power and the Ability to Define the Situation*

Friday, April 22  Stets, *Status and Identity in Marital Interaction*
Rupp et al., *Queer Women in the Hookup Scene*

Additional reading  Stets and Burke, *A Sociological Approach to Self and Identity*
Stets and Cast, *Resources and Identity Verification from an Identity Theory Perspective*
Stets, *Emotions in Identity Theory: The Effect of Status*

Week 5: Expectation States Theory

Monday, April 25  CSPT Chapter 12, *Expectations, Status, and Behavior*
Due: Exam 1

Wednesday, April 27  Berger et al., *Status Inconsistency in Task Situations*
Berger et al., *The Legitimation and Delegitimation of Power and Prestige Orders*

Friday, April 29  Foschi, *Double Standards for Competence*
Correll, *Gender, Status, and Emerging Career Aspirations*

Additional reading  Correll and Ridgeway, *Expectation States Theory*
Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin, *The Gender System and Interaction*
Anderson et al., *The Origins of Deference*

Week 6: Status Construction Theory

Monday, May 2  CSPT Chapter 13, *Status Construction Theory*

Wednesday, May 4  Ridgeway and Erickson, *Creating and Spreading Status Beliefs*
Johnson, Dowd, and Ridgeway, *Legitimacy as a Social Process*

Friday, May 6  Ridgeway, *Gender, Status and Leadership*
Brezina and Winder, *Status Generalization and Negative Racial Stereotyping*

Additional reading  Ridgeway et al., *How Do Status Beliefs Develop?*
Ridgeway, *The Social Construction of Status Value*

Week 7: Social Exchange Theories

Monday, May 9  CSPT Chapter 2, *The Social Exchange Framework*
Due: Research Paper Memo

Wednesday, May 11  Molm, Quist, and Wiseley, *Imbalanced Structures, Unfair Strategies*
Molm, Peterson, and Takahashi, *Procedural Justice in Social Exchange*

Friday, May 13  Molm, *The Structure of Reciprocity*
Molm, Melamed, and Whitham, *Behavioral Consequences of Embeddedness*

Additional reading  Molm et al., *Building Solidarity through Generalized Exchange*
Houser and Lovaglia, *Status, Emotion, and the Development of Solidarity*
Week 8: Social Exchange Theories (continued)

Monday, May 16  CSPT Chapter 11, *The Affect Theory of Social Exchange*

Wednesday, May 18  Lawler and Yoon, *Commitment in Exchange Relations*
  Lawler, Thye, and Yoon, *Social Exchange and Micro Social Order*

Friday, May 20  Thye, *A Status Value Theory of Power in Exchange Relations*
  Willer et al., *How Do the Powerful Attain Status?*

Additional reading  Thye, Lawler, and Yoon, *Group Formation in Networks of Competition*
  McPherson and Smith-Lovin, *Cohesion and Membership Duration*

Week 9: Social and Personal Change

Monday, May 23  O'Brien, *Boundaries and Contradictions*
  **Due:** Exam 2

Wednesday, May 25  Francis, *Ideology and Interpersonal Emotion Management*
  Britt and Heise, *From Shame to Pride in Identity Politics*

Friday, May 27  Burke and Cast, *Stability and Change in the Gender Identities of Newly Married Couples*
  Cohen and Lotan, *Producing Equal-Status Interaction in the Heterogeneous Classroom*

Additional reading  Granberg, *Possible Selves, Self-Change, and Weight Loss*
  Miller et al., *Social Movements and the Construction of Queer Identity*

Research Paper due by 5:00 pm on Saturday, June 4