Social Psychology of Inequality  
Sociology 341: Spring 2022  
Tuesday and Thursday 9:30am to 10:15am  
Burnett Hall 120

Professor: Dr. Christina Falci  
Office Location: 714 Oldfather Hall, Sociology Office Phone: (402) 472-3631  
Student Office Hours: Tuesday from 1:30pm to 2:30pm & Thursday from 12:30pm to 1:30pm or by appointment which should be set up via email to determine time and mode (in-person or Zoom)  
Email: cfalci2@unl.edu

Advising and Career Office, UNL College of Arts and Sciences: https://cas.unl.edu/major-advisors  
Sociology Academic Advisor: Sarah Feit, email: sfeit2@unl.edu

Course Prerequisites: 6 hours of Sociology or junior/senior standing

Course Description: This course will provide a selective overview of the field of sociological social psychology with a special emphasis on social inequality. We will review key social psychological concepts (e.g., the self, cognition, perception) and apply contemporary theories (e.g., expectation states, implicit bias, social identity) to understand how and why inequality persists in the US. We pay close attention to how inequality is created, reproduced, and resisted during face-to-face social interactions. We will examine the common and unique mechanism of inequality across different social groups including race, class and gender.

Course Format: Weekly class meetings will consist of lectures and discussions. Lectures will review some of the key points from the assigned readings and incorporate material not included in the readings. I welcome questions and comments at any point during lecture. Your questions give me the opportunity to clarify ambiguities in the course material. Your comments will add to the intellectual breadth and depth of this course. Discussions will be completed either during class time in impromptu groups or on your own outside of class to provide students the opportunity to engage in active learning of the course material.

Course Goals

- understand and utilize social psychological concepts and theories to explain the creation, maintenance and resistance to social inequality
- develop a sociological social psychology perspective to identify social inequality within the self, during face-to-face social interactions, and across institutional contexts
- reveal the reciprocal relationship between the "self" and "society” encouraging students to think systematically introspectively about how:
  - your personal life experiences are shaped by society
  - you may unconsciously participate in or actively resist social inequality within society

Required Readings

Textbook - available at the bookstore

Book chapters from edited volumes – available on Canvas

  - chapter 5 (p. 87-106) “It’s your Choice: How Middle-Class Model of Independence Disadvantages Working-Class Americans” by Nicole M. Stephens, Stephanie A. Fryberg and Hazel Rose Markus
  - chapter 7 (p.131-151) “Class Rules, Status Dynamics, and Gateway Interactions” by Cecilia L. Ridgeway and Susan R. Fiske.

  - chapter 1 (p. 5-8) “Sociological Mindfulness” by Michael Schwalbe
  - chapter 3 (p. 18-23) “Islands of Meaning” by Zerubavel, Eviatar
  - chapter 6 (p. 37-48) “Young Children’s Racial and Ethnic Definitions of Self” by Debra Van Ausdale and Joe R. Feagin

  - chapter 6 (p. 125-154) “Constructing Difference” by Amy Wilkins, Stephanie Mollborn and Boróka Bó

Journal Articles and Reports - available on Canvas


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Course Requirements: I expect students to keep up with assigned readings, show up for class on time, attend class on a regular basis, participate in class discussions, take good class notes, and fully participate in impromptu group work completed during class.

1) Discussions (20%): Throughout the semester students will complete exercises on a particular course topic or discussions on a specified assigned reading. These assignments are worth 10 points each and will be completed during class within impromptu small groups, on your own outside of class, or a combination of both such as starting the assignment in groups during class but finishing the assignment outside of class on your own. If a student cannot attend class on the day an exercise or discussion is completed, then it is the student’s responsibility to make up this work on their own.

2) Quizzes (20%): There are a total of four quizzes in this class used to review main ideas, concepts and theories learned within certain sections of the course. These quizzes will be open note and open book. The quizzes will be timed and taken on Canvas. Each quiz will have roughly ten questions and
students will have 25 minutes to complete each quiz. These quizzes may consist of multiple choice, matching, true/false, and short answer questions.

3) **Exams** (30%): Students will take a midterm and a final exam. The midterm is worth 100 points and the final exam is worth 150 points. Students will have 60 minutes to complete the midterm exam and 90 minutes to complete the final exam. *The final exam will be cumulative.* These exams will be taken on Canvas.

4) **Final Paper** (30%): The final paper will have students apply a social psychological perspective to any form of inequality. Student paper topics need to be approved by the instructor. Students will write a paper topic proposal assignment worth 10 points to gain approval. The final paper will be worth 100 points. A separate handout with detailed requirements will be posted on Canvas.

**Grade Basis:** based on a percentage

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**Course Policies:** All UNL students should be aware of the following university-wide course policies and resources: [https://executivevc.unl.edu/academic-excellence/teaching-resources/course-policies](https://executivevc.unl.edu/academic-excellence/teaching-resources/course-policies). Additional class specific information is below.

**Attendance and Engagement:** Your attendance is expected by university policy (see [Faculty Senate Class Attendance Policy](https://executivevc.unl.edu/academic-excellence/teaching-resources/class-attendance-policy)) and by me. I take attendance at every class, but I do not give a grade for attendance. If students are going to miss more than a single class due to illness or emergency, then get in touch with the instructor as soon as possible. Engagement in class is the best way to get the information you need to perform well in the class. Each student is responsible for any material missed from an absence.

**Tardiness:** While I expect students to show up for class on time, in my view, it is better to show up to class late than not to come to class at all. If you show up late on the day we have already started a methods exercise, then you will likely need to complete that exercise on your own. If for any reason you anticipate being late on a regular basis to class, then you need to inform the instructor to explain the situation.

**Participation:** Participation during class discussions and exercises requires being prepared to contribute relevant ideas, reactions, or questions. Completing the methods exercises will sometimes require having read a specified assigned reading before coming to class.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** An inclusive learning environment is where diverse perspectives are recognized and respected. Conversations in this course must be respectful and civil. According to our Student Code of Conduct, speech that is abusive, harassing, intimidating, or coercive is prohibited. Students who engage in such speech will be asked to leave the classroom and further disciplinary actions may be taken.

**Late Work and Make-Ups:** Assignments turned in late will lose points (half a letter grade for every weekday it is late) unless there is documentation of illness/emergency or other extenuating circumstances. Missed exams may only be made-up with documented evidence of illness or emergency.

**COVID Consideration:** The global pandemic has altered many aspects of our personal lives and education. We all know that situations can change rapidly and that we may find ourselves needing to adjust/adapt to those changes. Please feel free to reach out to the instructor at any time if you have concerns, questions, situations that are affecting your ability to engage in the class, or if you just want to check-in. In times like this, it becomes even more important for students to reach out to the instructor or
TA when they need help with anything, especially extensions on deadlines. At the beginning of the semester official policy is to require all persons on campus to wear a face covering. Failure to comply with this policy will lead to disciplinary charges for violating the student code of conduct. If this policy should change at any time this semester, then I respectfully request that you still join me in wearing a face covering during our classes.

**Taking the Class Pass/Fail:** Students may take this class pass/fail, but students must complete all course requirements to receive a passing grade. Furthermore, those taking the course Pass-No Pass will need a C or better to obtain a Pass (a C minus is a “No Pass”).

**Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. The University's Student Code of Conduct addresses academic dishonesty - [https://studentconduct.unl.edu/academic-integrity](https://studentconduct.unl.edu/academic-integrity). Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and the right to appeal any decision. I will take all necessary steps to enforce the Honor System for the sake of fairness to all students. Importantly, all paper assignments will be checked for plagiarism using the “Turnitin” feature in Canvas. Plagiarism is taking someone else’s ideas/work/words and using them as your own. To better understand how to avoid plagiarism by paraphrasing and using proper citation please take advantage of this UNL resource: [https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/integrity#plagiarism](https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/integrity#plagiarism).

**Accommodation:** The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 232 Canfield Admin. Bldg.; 402-472-3787.

**Classroom Visitors and Recordings:** According to the University’s Trespass Policy (Regents’ Policy 6.4.7) only the instructor and the students registered for the course are “authorized” to be in the classroom during the scheduled class period. Only the instructor has the discretion to allow visitors into the classroom. I invite all of you to join me in actively creating and contributing to a positive, productive, and respectful classroom culture. Each student contributes to an environment that shapes the learning process. Any work and/or communication that you are privy to as a member of this course should be treated as the intellectual property of the speaker/creator and is not to be shared outside the context of this course. Students may not make or distribute screen captures, audio/video recordings of, or livestream, any class-related activity, including lectures and presentations, without express prior written consent from me or an approved accommodation from Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have (or think you may have) a disability such that you need to record or tape class-related activities, you should contact Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Failure to follow this policy on recording or distributing class-related activities may subject you to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

**Student Wellness Resources:** UNL offers a variety of options to students to aid them in dealing with stress and adversity. *Counseling and Psychological & Services* (CAPS) is a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and counselors that works collaboratively with Nebraska students to help them explore their feelings and thoughts and learn helpful ways to improve their mental, psychological and emotional well-being when issues arise. CAPS can be reached 24/7 by calling 402-472-7450. *Big Red Resilience &
Well-Being (BRRWB) provides one-on-one well-being coaching to any student who wants to enhance their well-being. Trained well-being coaches help students create and be grateful for positive experiences, practice resilience and self-compassion, and find support as they need it. BRRWB can be reached by calling 402-472-8770. The Center for Advocacy, Response & Education (CARE) provides support for individuals who have experienced relationship violence or sexual assault. CARE Advocates are a confidential resource who can provide information about services and support decision-making. CARE can be reached by calling 402-472-3553. For after hours and weekend support, you can call Voices of Hope at 402-437-9302.

**Group Work Guidelines**

**Basic Principles**

A) Courtesy: engage in common courtesy.
   i. Listen. Even if you think what they’re saying is wrong or off topic. Cutting someone off is rude, and not worth whatever small time gain you might make. Don’t finish someone’s sentences for him or her; they can do it for themselves. And remember: talking louder or faster doesn’t make your idea any better.
   ii. Phrase alternative ideas as questions. If someone expresses what you feel is a "bad" opinion, try to criticize it constructively rather than putting down the person. Instead of "I think we should do A, not B," try "What if we did A, instead of B?" That allows people to offer comments, rather than defend one choice.
   iii. Praise each other. Find something nice to say, even if it’s a stretch. Even the worst of ideas has a silver lining inside it, if you just look hard enough. Focus on the good, praise it, and then raise any objections or concerns you have about the rest of it.
   iv. Help team members who are struggling - everyone needs to understand the problem

B) Cooperation: is also a key factor in teamwork
   i. There is no “I” in group work. Don't let one group member have too much responsibility. Conversely, do not let any group member get out of doing their fair share of the work. Each group member needs to take initiative to participate in and complete the task.
   ii. Inclusion. All members should have a chance to express themselves and to influence the group's decisions. Go around the group and hear everyone's ideas (before discussing them) or encourage divergent thinking by brainstorming. All contributions are listened to carefully, and strong points acknowledged. Be sure to include everyone when considering ideas about how to proceed as a group.
   iii. Conflict. If you notice a problem in your group, discuss it right away. Don't let the problem escalate. Apologize for upsetting your peers, even if you think someone else was primarily at fault; the goal is to work together, not start a legal battle over whose transgressions were worse.

**Group Member Roles:** As a Participant, all students are required to provide input, ideas, or suggestions into the task at hand. To facilitate student engagement, students should occupy these kinds of member roles as necessary:

- Moderator – solicit ideas from or ask questions of another group member
- Presenter – summarize the group’s thoughts about how to tackle a specific task or summarize the group’s answer/response to the task
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<tr>
<th>Week: Dates</th>
<th>Class Schedule</th>
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| 1: Jan. 18 & 20 | **Introduction**  
*Discuss:* Sociological Mindfulness | Textbook Chapter 1  
Cahill Reader #1 |
| 2: Jan. 25 & 27 | **Symbolic Interaction Theory**  
*Discuss:* Standpoint Theory  
**Quiz #1:** open 1/28 to 1/31 | Textbook Chapt. 3 (p.39-48)  
Bowell (2011) |
| 3: Feb. 1 & 3 | **The Self**  
*Discuss:* Children’s Racial & Ethnic Self | Textbook Chapt. 3 (p.48-58)  
Cahill Reader #6 |
| 4: Feb 8 & 10 | **Self-Concepts**  
*Discuss:* Passing as Black  
**Quiz #2:** open 2/11 to 2/14 | Textbook Chapter 4  
Khanna and Johnson (2010) |
| 5: Feb. 15 & 17 | **Emotion and Cognition**  
*Discuss:* Islands of Meaning | Cahill Reader #3  
Textbook Chapter 7 (p.163-187) |
| 6: Feb. 22 & 24 | **Perception**  
*Discuss:* Envy Up, Scorn Down | Textbook Chapter 5  
Fiske 2010 |
| 7: Mar. 1 & 3 | **Perception continued**  
**Social Interaction**  
**Quiz #3:** open 3/2 to 3/5 |
| 8: Mar. 8 & 10 | **Social Difference**  
**Midterm Exam:** open 3/20 to 3/23 | Handbook (ch. 6) Wilkins et al.  
March 14 to 18 - Spring Break |
| 9: Mar. 22 & 24 | **Stratification and Legitimacy** | Textbook Chapter 9 (p.231-235)  
Textbook Chapter 10 |
| 10: Mar. 29 & 31 | **Status Processes**  
**Quiz #4:** open 4/1 to 4/4  
**Proposal Paper Assignment:** due 4/14 | Textbook Chapter 8 |
| 11: Apr. 5 & 7 | **Social Class**  
*Discuss:* It’s Your Choice | Handbook (ch. 22) Milkie et al.  
FSC (ch. 5) Stephens et al. |
| 12: Apr. 12 & 14 | **Social Class / Race**  
*Discuss:* Gateway Interactions | FSC (ch. 7) Ridgeway & Fiske  
Textbook Chapter 12 |
| 13: Apr. 19 & 21 | **Race**  
*Discuss:* Black Lives Matter  
*Discuss:* Racializing the Glass Escalator | Ghandnoosh (2015)  
Wingfield (2009) |
| 14: Apr. 26 & 28 | **Race / Gender**  
*Discuss:* Cultural Foundations of Tokenism  
*Discuss:* The Mark of a Woman’s Record | Turco (2010)  
Quadlin (2018) |
| 15: May 3 & 5 | **Gender**  
*Discuss:* Fatherhood Bonus/Motherhood Penalty  
*Discuss:* Why Are Some STEM Fields More Gender Balanced?  
**Final Paper Due:** 5/6 | Budig (2014)  
Cheryan et al. (2017) |

**Final Exam** - open 5/11 to 5/13