

**The Ohio State University
First-Year Seminar Program
Course Proposal**

Course Information

1. Attach a syllabus that includes the following (sample syllabi can be found at <http://firstyourseminars.osu.edu>):

- the course goals
- a brief description of the content
- the distribution of meeting times
- a weekly topical outline
- a listing of assignments
- grade assessment information (A-E or S/U)
- required textbooks and/or reading list
- the academic misconduct and disability services statements (sample statements can be found at <http://ascas.osu.edu/curriculum/asc-syllabus-elements>)

Instructor Information

2. Attach a brief biographical paragraph that includes the current research interests, teaching awards and honors, and undergraduate courses taught by the participating instructor(s).

David Melamed, Sociology

Proposer's Name and Primary Academic Unit (please print)

Professor

Proposer's Title

Melamed.9@osu.edu

Proposer's e-mail Address

2/13/2024

Submission Date

Kristi Williams

Approval of Department Chair of Academic Unit (please print)

Please return this form and any attachments to Todd Bitters, bitters.4@osu.edu, no later than MARCH 1.

What Happens in Small Groups

[Sociology XXXX] [Autumn 2024]

Course Information

- **Course times and location:** Class meets XXXX for 55 minutes, from e.g., 11am to 11:55am, in room 245 of Townshend Hall.
- **Credit hours:** 1
- **Mode of delivery:** Traditional Discussion: Reading assignments should be read before the class session, with discussion of the content occurring in class.

Instructor

- **Name:** David Melamed (Professor of Sociology)
- **Email:** melamed.9@osu.edu
- **Office location:** 122 Townshend Hall
- **Office hours:** I am available to meet outside of class time via zoom or in person. If you want to meet, please ask in class or send me an email.
- **Preferred means of communication:**
 - My preferred method of communication for questions is **email**.
 - My class-wide communications will be sent through the Announcements tool in CarmenCanvas. Please check your [notification preferences](https://go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) (go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) to be sure you receive these messages.

Course Prerequisites

None.

Course Description

This course focuses on the Group Processes tradition within sociology. This tradition explains individual reactions to group processes and collective outcomes. We will discuss theories of human behavior and explanations for emergent outcomes in small groups, including theories and research on status, power, collective action, emotions, and justice evaluations.

Applications of these theories will focus on traditional sociological dimensions of stratification, including race, gender and class (e.g., how do status theories explain gender stratification, for example). Because we will focus on small groups, many of the ideas will be illustrated with small classroom exercises. By the end of the course, you will have a mechanistic understanding of many processes that occur in small group settings, such as organizational



committees or other work groups. Additionally, the skills you learn will allow you to be more critical consumers of social science research.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should successfully be able to:

- Understand basics of dynamics and processes that emerge in small groups
- Employ explicit theories to explain individual behavior
- Apply theories to a range of relevant instantiations

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a 1 credit-hour course. According to [Ohio State bylaws on instruction](https://www.osu.edu/credithours) (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 1 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 2 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of [C] average.

Course Materials and Technology

Required Materials

All reading assignments will be made available to you as PDFs via Carmen.

Required Equipment

- **Computer:** to access Carmen and read PDF files
- **Other:** a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication

If you do not have access to the technology you need to succeed in this class, review options for technology and internet access at [go.osu.edu/student-tech-access](https://www.osu.edu/student-tech-access).

CarmenCanvas Access

You will need to use [BuckeyePass](https://buckeyepass.osu.edu) (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you do each of the following:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the [BuckeyePass - Adding a Device](https://www.osu.edu/add-device) (go.osu.edu/add-device) help article for step-by-step instructions.
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click **Enter a Passcode** and then click the **Text me new**



codes button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.

- [Install the Duo Mobile application](https://go.osu.edu/install-duo) (go.osu.edu/install-duo) on all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service.

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

Technology Skills Needed for This Course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- [Navigating CarmenCanvas](https://go.osu.edu/canvasstudent) (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- [CarmenZoom virtual meetings](https://go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings) (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)

Technology Support

For help with your password, university email, CarmenCanvas, or any other technology issues, questions or requests, contact the IT Service Desk, which offers 24-hour support, seven days a week.

- **Self Service and Chat:** go.osu.edu/it
- **Phone:** [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu



Grading

How Your Grade is Calculated

Assignment Category	Points
Participation	200
Developing Discussion Questions	100
Total	300

Descriptions of Major Course Assignments

Participation: The success of this course rests on the active participation of students. As such, participation in classroom discussions will be 40% of the course grade. Students are expected to participate weekly. About half the time we will discuss reading assignments and related topics. Students should contribute at least once to these classroom discussions. The rest of the time we will be doing small group exercises. Participation in these exercises and reporting back to the broader class constitutes full participation those days.

Developing Discussion Questions: Students will be responsible for developing discussion questions for two different class sessions. During the first week of classes, students will select their top 5 choices for discussion questions. I will then make assignments for the remainder of the term. Students should prepare discussion questions based on the assigned reading and be prepared to engage their colleagues in a thoughtful discussion of the reading assignment.

Instructor Response Time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. Remember that you can call [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357) at any time if you have a technical problem.

- **Preferred contact method:** If you have a question, please contact me first through my Ohio State email address. I will reply to emails within **48 hours on days when class is in session at the university**.
- **Class announcements:** I will send all important class-wide messages through the Announcements tool in CarmenCanvas. Please check [your notification preferences](http://go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) (go.osu.edu/canvas-notifications) to ensure you receive these messages.
- **Discussion board:** I will check and reply to messages in the discussion boards weekly (at least).

Grading Scale

93–100: A
90–92.9: A-
87–89.9: B+
83–86.9: B
80–82.9: B-
77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C
70–72.9: C-
67–69.9: D+
60–66.9: D
Below 60: E



Week	Topic: Readings
1	Introduction to the course
2	Theoretical Methods: Markovsky, Barry. 2010. "Modularizing Small Group Theories in Sociology." <i>Small Group Research</i> 41(6): 664-687.
3	Theories of Identity: Stets, Jan and Peter J. Burke. 2000. "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory." <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 63(3): 224-37.
4	Affect Control: Robinson, Dawn T. and Lynn Smith-Lovin. 2018. "Affect Control Theory." Pp. 137-164 in <i>Contemporary Social Psychological Theories</i> edited by P.J. Burke. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
5	Status Generalization I: Berger, Joseph and Murray Webster Jr. 2018. "Expectations, Status, and Behavior." Pp. 268-300 in <i>Contemporary Social Psychological Theories</i> edited by P.J. Burke. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
6	Status Generalization II: Correll, Shelley, Stephen Benard, and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a Job: Is there a Motherhood Penalty?" <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 112: 1297-1338.
7	Status Generalization III: Melamed, David, Chris Munn, Leanne Barry, Bradley Montgomery, and Oneya Okuwobi. 2019. "Status Characteristics, Implicit Bias, and the Production of Racial Inequality." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 84(6): 1013-1036.
8	Status Construction: Ridgeway, Cecilia L., Elizabeth Boyle, Kathy J. Kuipers, and Dawn T. Robinson. 1998. "How Do Status Beliefs Develop? The Role of Resources and Interactional Experience." <i>American Sociological</i>



	<i>Review</i> 63(3): 331-50.
9	Power and Related Outcomes: Savage, Scott V. and Monica Whitham. 2018. "The Social Exchange Perspective." Pp. 29-53 in <i>Contemporary Social Psychological Theories</i> edited by P.J. Burke. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
10	Legitimacy: Walker, Henry A., Larry Rogers, and Morris Zelditch Jr. 1988. "Legitimacy and Collective Action: A Research Note." <i>Social Forces</i> 67(1): 216-28.
11	Justice: Hegtvedt, Karen A. 2018. "Justice Frameworks." Pp. 54-80 in <i>Contemporary Social Psychological Theories</i> , Edited by P.J. Burke. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
12	Cooperation/Social Dilemmas I: Simpson, Brent, and Robb Willer. 2015. "Beyond Altruism: Sociological Foundations of Cooperation and Prosocial Behavior." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 41: 43-63.
13	Cooperation/Social Dilemmas II: Simpson, Brent, Bradley Montgomery, and David Melamed. 2023. "Reputations for treatment of outgroup members can prevent the emergence of political segregation in cooperative networks." <i>Nature Communications</i> 14: 7721.
14	Balancing Processes: Estrada, E. and M. Benzi. "Are Social Networks Really Balanced?" <i>Arxiv</i> https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1406.2132
15	Reciprocity: Gouldner, Alvin. "The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 25(2): 161-78.



Other Course Policies

Academic Misconduct: It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Disability Services: The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are isolating while waiting for a COVID-19 test result, please let me know immediately. Those testing positive for COVID-19 should refer to the [Safe and Healthy Buckeyes site](#) for resources. Beyond five days of the required COVID-19 isolation period, I may rely on Student Life Disability Services to establish further reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Religious Accommodations: Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the [Office of Institutional Equity](#).

Policy: [Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances](#)

Mental Health: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower.

You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24 hour emergency help is also available 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Discrimination: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu.



David Melamed is a Professor of Sociology and Core Faculty in the Translational Data Analytics Institute. His research interests include status processes, social dilemmas, social psychology, and computational methods of analysis. At the undergraduate level, he teaches Statistics for Sociologists (SOC-3549) and Presenting Quantitative Information, i.e., Data Visualization (SOC-5650).