

# Decision Processes Colloquia

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Monday, April 11, 2022

Where: Zoom

When: 12:00 – 1:00 pm

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## Social Class Shapes Relationships: Implications for Understanding and Addressing Inequality

### ABSTRACT:

Over the past 50 years, economic inequality in the U.S. has grown at an alarming rate. Although the U.S. is historically idealized as the “land of opportunity,” the majority of people in the country today live paycheck to paycheck and have little opportunity to improve their financial, educational, or occupational standing. In the wake of this growing inequality, people’s experiences in life are increasingly determined by their social class—i.e., their access to material resources and their rank in society relative to others. Social class shapes not only health and happiness, but also the fundamental ways people understand themselves and act in the world. In my research, I examine social class as a significant cultural context that has a powerful influence on individuals, in large part, because of its influence on the nature of their social relationships. Across several studies, I will demonstrate how an understanding of how social class shapes relationships is critical to (a) understanding how social class shapes psychological tendencies (e.g., thoughts and behaviors) and (b) addressing the consequences of inequality.

