

Social Interaction and Social Structure

**Sociology 101
Principles of Sociology
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Elements of Social Structure

- **Statuses**
- **Roles**
- **Groups**
- **Networks**
- **Social Institutions**

Status and Role

Status: A socially defined position within a group or society

Role: A set of expectations attached to a particular status

You occupy a status, and you play a role

Ascribed vs. Achieved Status

Ascribed status: A social position determined by a quality over which the individual has no real control

e.g. race, age, gender

Achieved status: A social position determined by one's own efforts or choices

e.g. career, education, residence

Groups & Networks

Group: Any number of people with similar social and/or cultural characteristics (e.g. norms, values, beliefs) that interact with each other on a regular basis.

Network: Social relationships (contacts) that link one person directly and indirectly to others, opening up access to various resources.

Social Institutions

The means each society develops to meet its particular needs

Patterns of social behavior that have become routine and normal, allowing members of a society to coexist, function and thrive

The “Big 5”

- Family
- Religion
- Education
- Governance/Politics
- Economy