

The Psychology of Stereotyping and Prejudice

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Student hours: by appointment

Class location: Gest 103

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

It seems almost paradoxical that despite growing diversity in the United States and the world, group-based divides persist. This course focuses on the scientific research of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination to begin examining and explaining the underlying processes of why this might be. We will examine experimental evidence investigating phenomena and processes associated with beliefs about members of social groups (stereotypes), evaluative attitudes toward social group members (prejudice), and behavioral responses toward individuals due to their group membership(s) (discrimination). We will examine these processes from a variety of approaches, ranging from basic perceptual and categorical processes that start early in development (i.e., cognitive and developmental approaches), to motivational processes that widen intergroup divides (i.e., social psychological and sociological approaches). We will also discuss strategies for minimizing expressed bias in interpersonal situations as well as how to confront bias.

One important note is that we will go the most in depth on racism, both for historical and contemporary reasons. Of course, many of the processes and phenomenon discussed will generalize across other forms of bias (e.g., sexism, homophobia), but not every aspect will be the same. We will also try to employ an intersectional framework as much as possible in thinking about these various phenomena.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives are split into content related and life-skills related ones. The content-related learning objects are:

1. Be able to critically evaluate the current scientific literature on stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.
2. Be able to apply research in stereotyping and prejudice to predict how contexts or policies may influence intergroup bias in interpersonal or institutional setting

Life skill objectives include:

1. Be more comfortable speaking up and contributing to discussions
2. Learn how to respond to and iterate on feedback.
3. Gain confidence and practice in leading a meeting and discussion.

REQUIRED READING

Allport, G.W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*.

Currently available for ~\$15 on Amazon. There should also be one copy in the Science Library.

All article readings will be posted on Moodle

COMMUNITY GENERATED GUIDELINES

In this course, we will explore a variety of socially sensitive topics. For instance, we will consider and evaluate how specific group memberships influence psychological processes, and what it means to be a minority group member versus a majority group member. Thus, it will be important to follow the ground rules for these discussions:

1. **Listen actively and respectfully.** In this class, we will engage with sensitive social topics directly to explore important mechanisms and theories that underlie stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. To facilitate discussion, it will be necessary to listen actively and not interrupt others while they are making their point. By active listening, I mean truly paying attention to what the speaker is saying and considering their perspective. Oftentimes we are already thinking of our response while others are talking, which inhibits true conversation and communication.
2. **Critique ideas, not people.** We will examine the impact that important social policies have had, or are likely to have, on different groups in society. People from different background are likely to have different perspectives on these issues. The goal is to foster greater understanding – a goal which can only be accomplished when we do not attack the person.
3. **Step up and step back.** Part of an effective discussion is allowing all members of the group to speak and offer their perspective. Even though silences can feel a little awkward, sometimes people need the space to gather their thoughts before they speak. Allow them that space. We will endeavor to accomplish this goal by being aware of when we should step back from the discussion if we have made our point, as well as stepping up if we feel we have something important to add.

In addition to these guidelines, on the first day of class, we will brainstorm what makes for a good, inclusive discussion and add any ground rules we would like to add here.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

On absences and late work. Because this is a seminar course, your attendance is vital to the success of the class. Being absent from class will negatively impact your grade. For late work, you are allotted **5 days worth of grace days**. That is, you can take up to 5 days TOTAL for any assignment except exams, which will have their own deadlines.

On participation. I cannot stress enough how important it is to come to seminar having critically read the assigned readings and ready to contribute. Bring questions about the papers with you to class to assist in talking about the material. Most importantly, be prepared to ask and answer both specific and general questions about these papers.

On academic integrity. Students are required to abide by Haverford College's Honor Code and academic integrity policies, which can be found online at <http://honorcouncil.haverford.edu/the-code/>. **Use of any AI software (e.g., ChatGPT) is prohibited.** If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, speak with me before the assignment is due and/or examine the College's web site. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an exam (e.g., copying others' answers, providing information to others, using a cheat sheet) or plagiarism of a paper (e.g., taking material from readings without citation, copying another student's paper). Failure to adhere to this policy may result in a failing grade in the class and/or disciplinary action from the College.

Students with disabilities. I encourage students with disabilities, including non-visible disabilities like chronic diseases or learning disabilities, to meet with me early in the semester to discuss accommodations. You should also contact [Access and Disability Services as soon as possible to verify eligibility for academic accommodations](#).

EVALUATION – CLASS DISCUSSION

I have increasingly found that giving grades leads students to focus on the grade, and less on learning. To that extent, I plan on adopting an ungrading policy (check out [this blog](#) if you haven't heard of this before). The general philosophy here is that all the work I ask you to do for the class will contribute to your learning, both in terms of content and developing your skills. I will still give you feedback, but I want you to think deeply – something that I think is at odds with graded assessment. We will also take stock at multiple points throughout the semester to check in, see how things are going, and make a midterm assessment for yourself.

In general, the things that I will take into account when doing this more holistic assessments are:

Participation: I strongly encourage students to speak up and participate in discussion. I believe that this is a crucial skill for students to develop, though I know that there are differing levels of comfort with this. I am happy to help you prepare – if you want to send me an email with a thought, I can help surface it or direct a question your way that might align with a thought that you had.

This also means posting a thought or question to the discussion board to help drive conversation. This will also include exit tickets where you describe your main takeaway from the class and any lingering questions you might. These could be areas of confusion, or a thought that you had (that might be a good inspiration for a longer Reading Reaction).

Facilitating Class Discussion: For the last few weeks of the course, you will take greater ownership of the course and run class discussion in the same vein that I will have run class in the preceding two-thirds of the course. Depending on the size of the class, you will run a class discussion by yourself, or with one other person. This will involve presenting an additional study that complements the readings for that class session.

Reading reactions: Three throughout the semester, you will need to turn in a reading reaction by **Friday at midnight** for the week's readings. The reading reactions should only be roughly 2 pages double spaced and should reflect your reactions to that week's broad topic.

Final paper: I will provide you with a list of 3 questions that are pretty broad in scope. You will pick one of those and write a final paper that incorporates readings from at least **6 weeks** worth of readings. This is NOT to say you have to incorporate every reading from 5 different weeks, but rather you should be making connections across weeks. Your final paper should be at least 5, but no more than 10 pages.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below you will see our tentative course schedule. Generally speaking, I see the course as covering three broad topics.

Weeks 1-5 cover the *cognitive* aspects of stereotyping and prejudice. What is happening in the mind? After seeing another person, how do we engage in processes of categorization that activate negative feelings and lead to discriminatory behavior?

Weeks 6-11 cover the *emotional & motivational* aspects of stereotyping and prejudice. Why do we hate others? What motivates us to activate these attitudes (or not)? What are the broader social forces and structures that influence how we think about others?

Weeks 12-15 cover how we address bias. Are we capable of changing our patterns? What is necessarily to make those changes? What are interventions we can think of?

Note – It is possible that we may go slightly slower or more quickly through the material depending on the pace of our class. As such, I may not adhere stringently to the schedule of topics. Additionally, it is always possible that I will switch out certain readings for ones I decide will be better for our class given student interest and recent publications.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1	Sept. 3	Syllabus, Overview, Skill & Community Building	(in class) Sue 2013
	Sept. 5	The starting point: Categorization	1. Chapters 1-2, 10
Week 2	Sept. 10	Categories as us vs. them	1. Chapter 3 2. Reimer et al., <i>in press</i> (read to p. 13) 3. Bennett & Sani, 2008
	Sept. 12	Learning categories: developmental	1. Chapters 8 & 18 2. Hilliarn & Liben, 2010 3. Roberts et al., 2016
Week 3	Sept. 17	Learning categories: Parental	1. Vittrup & Holden, 2011 2. Skinner & Meltzoff, 2018
	Sept. 19	Learning categories: sociocultural	1. Chapter 14 2. Nelson, Adams, Salter, 2012 3. Butz & Yogeewaran, 2011
Week 4	Sept. 24	From categories to stereotypes	1. Chapter 11 & 12 2. Fiske et al., 2002 3. Charlesworth & Banaji, 2019
	Sept 26	Complicating categories: motivation	1. Richeson & Sommers, 2016 2. Krosch et al., 2013
Week 5	Oct. 1	Complicating categories: intersectionality	1. Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008 2. Ghavami & Peplau, 2013 3. Livingston et al., 2012
	Oct. 3	Complicating categories: revisiting development	1. Lei et al., 2020 2. Lei & Rhodes, 2021 3. Lei et al., 2022
Week 6	Oct. 8	Prejudice as emotion: attitudes in context	1. Chapter 5 2. Cesario et al., 2010
	Oct. 10	Prejudice as emotion: conditioning	1. Chapter 19 2. Greenwald et al., 1998
Week 7	FALL BREAK		
Week 8	Oct. 22	Dehumanization	1. Kteily & Landry, 2022 2. Kteily & Bruneau, 2017
	Oct. 24	Ryan out for conference	
Week 9	Oct. 29	Personality approaches: RWA & SDO	1. Chapter 25

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Atemeyer, 1998 (p. 47-60) Womick et al., 2018
	Oct 31	Personality approaches: Egalitarianists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 27 Livingston & Drwecki, 2007
Week 10	Nov. 5	ELECTION DAY – GO VOTE	
	Nov. 7	Categories on the national stage – perceptions of changing racial demographics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Craig et al., 2018 Craig & Richeson, 2014
Week 11	Nov. 12	Intraminority intergroup relations - derogation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Craig & Richeson, 2018 Craig & Richeson, 2014
	Nov. 14	Intraminority intergroup relations - solidarity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Craig & Richeson, 2016 Cortland et al., 2017
Week 12	Nov. 19	Intergroup contact - benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 16 Pettigrew, 1998 Shook & Fazio, 2008
	Nov. 21	Intergroup contact – potential pitfalls	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dixon et al., 2010 Saguy et al., 2009
Week 13	Nov. 26	STUDENT CHOICE/FLEX DAY	
	Nov. 28	Thanksgiving	
Week 14	Dec. 3	Addressing bias – individual interventions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monteith et al., 2002 Czopp & Monteith, 2003 Johnson & Pietri, 2020
	Dec. 5	Addressing bias – structural interventions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 29 Tankard & Paluck, 2017 Murrar et al. 2020
Week 15	Dec. 10	Addressing bias – breaking the prejudice habit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 20 Devine et al., 2013
	Dec. 12	Addressing bias – starting early & wrap-up	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Scott et al., 2024 Perry et al., 2024

Final paper due during Final Exam Period.