

## Belonging in a Diverse Society (Psych 11N)

Instructor:	Greg Walton Building 420, Room 246 Phone: 650-498-4284 Email: <a href="mailto:gwalton@stanford.edu">gwalton@stanford.edu</a> Pronouns: He/him
Website/Forum:	On Canvas
Class Meets:	Monday/Wednesday 1:30-2:50, in 200-217
Office Hours:	By appointment.
Class Size:	Limited to 12, with preference to first-year students.
Ways Certification:	Social Inquiry

### Welcome!

One of the most important questions people ask themselves when they enter a new setting, whether a school, a workplace, or a country, is “Do I belong here?”.

This question of belonging can be particularly potent when settings are diverse—when people come to a setting from diverse backgrounds; when some groups have historically been excluded from that setting or face negative stereotypes or underrepresentation in it; or when people have different implicit cultural models that clash with a dominant context.

The fundamental question we will ask in this course is this: ***How can we create diverse school, work, and other settings in which all people can genuinely and authentically belong and work toward their goals?***

In this course, we will:

- Consider the roles of group identities and social backgrounds, including race-ethnicity, social class, gender, and national origin.
- Focus on how people make sense of their belonging, especially when belonging is at risk.
- Consider the consequences of feelings of belonging, and nonbelonging, for individual and institutional outcomes.
- Learn what changes can support belonging for diverse groups.

To do so, we will learn from diverse methodologies, including qualitative methods and laboratory experiments. However, we will focus on intervention field-experiments, so we can learn what kinds of changes can matter in consequential real-world settings.

In learning about this research, you will discover more about basic psychological processes, how basic research helps clarify these processes, how they contribute in complex field settings to social problems, and how they can be altered.

### Land

I recognize that Stanford sits on the ancestral land of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. This land is of great importance to the Ohlone people, and has been since time immemorial. Consistent with our

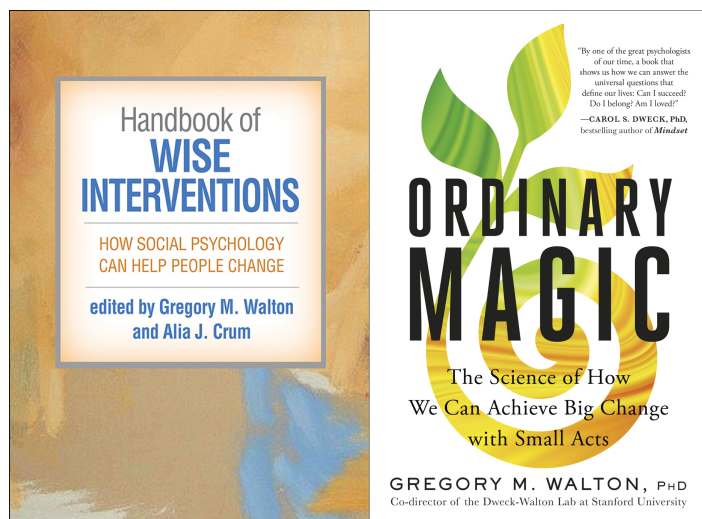
values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge, honor and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples.

## Ways You Will Learn

### Course Readings and Discussion

Reading, analyzing, and discussing readings are a key way you will learn. Everyone is expected to carefully read the assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss them. All materials are posted on Canvas. Because learning from each other is essential in this course, you will earn a participation grade for your contributions to class discussions.

Several of the readings are drawn from two books: *The Handbook of Wise Interventions* (2020) and *Ordinary Magic: The Science of How We Can Achieve Big Change With Small Acts*, which is to be published next year.



### Reflections

You will be asked to complete five 5-page reflections (~1250 words max). In all these assignments, the depth and precision of your psychological analysis is key.

### Final Presentation

Read your Reflection #4 to the class, answer questions, and lead a brief discussion.

## Grades, Policies, and Resources

### Grades and Due Dates

	<i>% of Final Grade</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Class Participation	20%	Ongoing
Reflections (5)	80%	Oct 4, Oct 18, Nov 1, Nov 22, Dec 6

### Late Policy

Without an adequate excuse, late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a grade point each day (a perfect assignment 1 day late receives an A-; 2 days late a B+, etc.).

### Attendance

As this is a discussion-based course, students are expected to attend every class session with full engagement and attention.

### Feedback

If you have any feedback or suggestions for how I or we can make this course better, please share with me at any time.

### Online Repositories of Psychologically Wise Interventions

You may find it helpful as we proceed through the course to review entries for interventions you are learning about in class at either [wiseinterventions.org](http://wiseinterventions.org), which summarizes more than 300 interventions drawn from Walton & Wilson (2018).

## Reflections

### Reflection #1: Another Student's Experience of Belonging at Stanford

Find one student at Stanford willing to talk with you about their experience of belonging at Stanford. If the first person you talk with does not share sufficiently, please feel free to talk with another student. This person should be a sophomore, junior, or senior.

Tell your conversation partner that you'd like to talk with them about their experiences of belonging coming (perhaps virtually) to and attending Stanford, including experiences with peers, instructors, and others, in residences, classrooms, or other. Emphasize that the experiences they describe need not be objectively "large," but must have meant something important to them. Ask for "moments" and "stories." Then ask them these four questions (feel free to send these questions in advance):

- *What was a time or experience in which you felt you really belonged at Stanford? What was this time? What happened? What did it mean to you? Why did you feel like you really belonged?*
- *What was a time or experience in which you felt that maybe you did not belong at Stanford? What was this time? What happened? What did it mean to you? Why did you feel like maybe you did not belong?*
- *How has your experience of belonging at Stanford changed over time, from when you began at Stanford through the present.*
- Ask any additional follow-up questions if needed.

Be sure to take notes or record (with your interviewee's permission) the interview. Also, ask your interviewee if they would like to remain anonymous (i.e., you know their name but won't share it out).

Write up what your interviewee told you. Describe their experiences, how they understood them, what you learned from talking with them, and what more you would like to learn. *As you do so, consider the readings, and our course discussions, as these may serve as tools to help you understand and analyze your interviewees' experience. Make sure that you explicitly connect your interviewee's experience to the readings and themes in the class.*

Due **October 4 at 5 pm** through Canvas.

### **Reflection #2: Your Experience of Belonging at Stanford So Far**

Almost everyone worries at first about whether they belong when they come to college. However, the specific kinds of worries students have, and the specific triggers for these worries, can vary.

Reflect on your own experience coming to college. Consider your background, the community you came from, your family, your experience in high school, and your various identities (racial-ethnic, social-class, gender, other).

- *What are ways you have experienced belonging so far at Stanford?*
- *What are ways you have experienced worries about belonging so far at Stanford?*
- *What triggers for these worries have you experienced? Why were you sensitive to these triggers? What do these specific triggers tell you about the nature of your belonging worries?*
- *Why might these worries about belonging be normal and reasonable and experienced by other people too, maybe more than would seem? How might they relate to your background and identity?*
- *How might these worries change over time? What can you do to help them change for good?*

Due **October 18 at 5 pm** through Canvas.

### **Reflection #3: Do Something to Support Your Belonging at Stanford**

This reflection has three parts. Be sure to do all three parts in order.

1. Reread your Reflection #2. Identify *one specific thing* you could do to grow your belonging at Stanford. It could be:
  - Start a conversation with someone you'd like to get to know better, such as a potential friend or mentor.
  - Do something to connect your interests, values, identity, and/or background to your courses and academic direction.
  - Participate in or help organize a social event on campus, or an event related to something that matters to you.
  - Get more involved in a student group on campus related to something you enjoy, care about, or that connects to your identity.
  - Tell your own story (How? To whom?)
  - Something else

Whatever you do, it should be intentional and discrete and not something you have done previously.

In Part A of your writing assignment, describe what you will do.

- *What do you plan to do?*

- *Why do you plan to do this?*
  - *How do you hope it goes?*
2. Now go do it.
3. In Part B of your writing assignment, reflect on what you did and how it went.
- *How did it go? What did it feel like?*
  - *Did it go the way you expected or were there surprises? Were your expectations well-calibrated, or systematically off?*
  - *How might what you did have consequences (good or bad) for you over time, or not?*
  - *What did you learn?*
  - *What might you do next?*
  - *Consider the role of intentionality in belonging. How much can we set belonging as a goal and work toward achieving it? How much control do we have? How reliant on others are we?*

In your write up, be sure to identify Part A and Part B explicitly.

Due **November 1 at 5 pm** through Canvas.

#### **Reflection #4: Write a Letter to a Stanford Administrator**

Imagine a person who helps to create the college experience for students, especially the experience in the transition to college. Give them some feedback. What is Stanford doing well to support students belonging on this journey? Where could Stanford improve?

Please consider specific populations of students, specific experiences, and/or specific contexts where it's likely that students will question their belonging at Stanford and what Stanford does or what Stanford could do to help. Consider as well the potential consequences of these questions about belonging if they aren't well addressed.

**Important:** Your analysis should be precisely psychological. It should directly address how students think or feel (make sense of or “construe”) something. You want to identify a circumstance in which people, or some group of people, reasonably make sense of something in ways that will threaten their belonging at Stanford. Then develop and describe a way to prevent that construal, to offer people an alternative and legitimate way of making sense of that thing that will help support their belonging. So, it should not be a kitchen-sink program. But it might be a new way to welcome people to Stanford, or to represent courses or other experiences at Stanford.

In describing this, you should say **who** (person or group at Stanford) should say or communicate **what** (content of the intervention) differently **when** (optimal timing) and **why** this should support belonging (your psychological theory) among **whom** (the group or kinds of students you think will benefit). *Be sure to cite and describe the relevant psychological literature throughout your response.*

Due **November 22 at 5 pm** through Canvas.

**Reflection #5: Your Take Aways**

Reflect on your learning in this course. Synthesize what you've learned and where you'd like to go next. Be sure to address these specific questions:

1. What does belonging mean to you now? Define it. Why do you understand belonging this way?
2. Why does belonging matter to you and to communities or groups you are part of?
3. What would you like to do with your learnings? Consider either aspects of your personal life and/or your where you'd like to go as a student or professional at Stanford or beyond.
4. What questions are you leaving the course with? Where would you like to dig deeper and learn more?

Consider and share any relevant personal experiences and particular take aways you are drawing from specific readings (be sure to cite them) and/or discussions we've had in class.

Due **December 6 at 5 pm** through Canvas.

## Course Schedule

A general reading tip: Read older papers first. Sometimes more recent papers refer to prior papers and, when this is the case, you'll know what they're talking about.

Note: We may revise reading assignments as class proceeds.

Class and Readings		
<b>Week 1: Introduction</b>	<b>Sept 23</b>	<b>Introduction</b> ➤ Introductions ➤ Personal reflection ➤ Course overview
	<b>Sept 25</b>	<b>What is Belonging?</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Walton (2021). Stop telling students “You belong!” ○ Walton & Brady (2017). The many questions of belonging.
<b>Week 2: Social-Belonging in the Transition to College</b>	<b>Sept 30</b>	<b>Belonging Uncertainty and the Social-Belonging Intervention</b> ➤ Reading: ○ <i>Ordinary Magic</i> (Chapter 3)
	<b>Oct 2</b>	<b>Cultural Fit and Misfit</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, & Covarrubias (2012). Unseen disadvantage: How American universities’ focus on independence undermines the academic performance of first-generation college students. <b>**Due Oct 4 at 5 pm: Reflection #1**</b>
<b>Week 3: Family, Identity, and Voice</b>	<b>Oct 7</b>	<b>Family Achievement Guilt (Guest Leslie Remache)</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Covarrubias, De Lima, Landa, Valle, & Flores (2021). Facets of family achievement guilt for low-income Latinx, Latinx, and Asian first-generation students.
	<b>Oct 9</b>	<b>Identity and Voice</b> ➤ Reading: ○ <i>Ordinary Magic</i> (Chapter 5)
<b>Week 4: Identities as Strengths</b>	<b>Oct 14</b>	<b>Pride and Prejudice</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Bauer, Boemelburg, & Walton (2020). From weak victims to resourceful actors: Reframing refugees’ stigmatized identity enhances long-term academic engagement. ○ Brannon (2023). Pride-and-prejudice perspectives of marginalization can advance science and society.
	<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Ethnic Studies</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Bonilla, Dee, & Penner (2021). Ethnic studies increases longer-run academic engagement and attainment. <b>**Due Oct 18 at 5 pm: Reflection #2**</b>
<b>Week 5: Inclusion in Politics and College</b>	<b>Oct 21</b>	<b>Inclusive Politics</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Williams (2017). <i>White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America</i> (Chapters 1, 8, and 9).

	<b>Oct 23</b>	<b>Inclusive Norms in College (Guest Kevin Kennedy)</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Campbell, Kennedy, Miller, & Brauer (in press). A brief pro-diversity social marketing intervention improves grades and well-being of students from marginalized groups.
<b>Week 6: Inclusive Environments for Learning and Working</b>	<b>Oct 28</b>	<b>Institutional Mindsets</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Canning, Muenks, Green, & Murphy (2019). STEM faculty who believe ability is fixed have larger racial achievement gaps and inspire less student motivation in their classes.
	<b>Oct 30</b>	<b>Inclusive Treatment at Work</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Muragishi, Aguilar, Carr, & Walton (2023). Microinclusions: Treating women as respected work partners increases a sense of fit in technology companies and quantitative performance.  <b>**Due November 1 at 5 pm: Reflection #3**</b>
<b>Week 7: Eliciting More Inclusion from Teachers</b>	<b>Nov 4</b>	<b>Wise Feedback</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Yeager, Purdie-Vaughns, Garcia, et al. (2014). Breaking the cycle of mistrust: Wise interventions to provide critical feedback across the racial divide.
	<b>Nov 6</b>	<b>Empathic Discipline</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Okonofua & Ruiz (2020). The empathic-discipline intervention.
<b>Week 8: Increasing Support for the Most Vulnerable Children / Masculine Defaults</b>	<b>Nov 11</b>	<b>Lifting the Bar (Guest Daveed Moskowitz, Sheri Lucas)</b> ➤ Reading: ○ <i>Ordinary Magic</i> (Spotlight: Improving School for the Most Vulnerable Children) ○ McAdam & Mirza (2009). Drugs, hopes, and dreams: Appreciative inquiry with young people using drugs and alcohol.
	<b>Nov 13</b>	<b>Masculine Defaults</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Cheryan & Markus (2020). Masculine defaults: Identifying and mitigating hidden cultural biases.
<b>Week 9: Contexts and Backlash</b>	<b>Nov 18</b>	<b>Diversity Rationales</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Starck, Sinclair, & Shelton (2021). How university diversity rationales inform student preferences and outcomes.
	<b>Nov 20</b>	<b>Backlash</b> ➤ Readings: ○ Brannon, Carter, Murdock-Perriera, & Higginbotham (2018). From backlash to inclusion for all: Instituting diversity efforts to maximize benefits across group lines ○ Okonofua, Walton, & Harris (2022). Sideline bias: A situationist approach to reduce the consequences of bias in real-world contexts  <b>**Due Nov 22 at 5 pm: Reflection #4**</b>
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Dec 2</b>	<b>Reflection #4 Discussions</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Reflection #4s scheduled for today.
	<b>Dec 4</b>	<b>Reflection #4 Discussions</b> ➤ Reading: ○ Reflection #4s scheduled for today.  <b>**Due Dec 6 at 5 pm: Reflection #5**</b>