

Psych 285A – How Can We Enforce Good Norms in Inclusive Ways?

Instructor: Greg Walton
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Website/Forum: On Canvas
Class meets: Thursdays 3-4:20, Econ 206
Grading: Letter grades
Enrollment: Capped at 12, preference to grad students in psychology.

Well-functioning groups and spaces are simultaneously inclusive and have clear norms that support people in pursuing goals they value. But often these qualities are in tension. Some spaces are permissive, but lack the norms that help people regulate their behavior. Others enforce norms, but in exclusionary or punitive ways. Are there third ways? How can we create and maintain good norms while being inclusive; respond to people when they violate norms in ways that stand up for the norm but without excluding them? Using classic and contemporary examples, this seminar will explore these questions in diverse contexts, from game theory to responses to interpersonal settings (e.g., couples, families) to institutional settings (e.g., school) to intergroup conflicts (e.g., restorative justice).

This class is based on student discussion and leadership. Please do not take this class if you will not be able to do all the readings and attend all the sessions. We expect a high level of involvement from all students. To receive credit for this class, you need to:

1. Attend all sessions, having done the readings and being ready to discuss them.
2. Lead or co-lead a session. This involves helping to moderate it, but also preparing a short opening that addresses how the readings speak to the nature and workings of belonging.

Please do not:

- * Summarize the readings
- * Critique the details of a paper (we can do that in discussion)
- * Use PowerPoint

You could:

- * Present background on the research
- * Describe other papers that complement or contrast with the assigned readings

The goal is to bring to the table findings and perspectives your peers may not know about; therefore this should entail some research on your part.

3. Post an inquiry paper on Canvas by the Sunday before the paper discussion to which you have been assigned. This 5-10 page paper should take off from the readings and our discussion to describe an approach to understanding belonging. Please address these questions explicitly:
 - Describe a problem space in which, at default, we often do not establish productive norms or patterns of interaction. Are norms “too strong” (e.g.,

punitive, controlling)? Are they “too weak” (e.g., overly permissive). Are they both, or confused? What costs does this have?

- Describe what a better state of affairs could be, and how you could get there. What kinds of changes or interventions could help make those patterns of interaction ideal?

All seminar members will read and discuss your paper.

Reading 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.

Week 1 – September 26: Introduction (No reading)

Week 2 – October 3: Classic Approaches to Cooperation

Axelrod (1984). *The Evolution of Cooperation*. Chapters 1, 2, and 4

Student Co-Leads:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Week 3 – October 10: Norms for Self- and Social Regulation

Braga, Schnell, & Welsh (2024). Disorder policing to reduce crime: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis. *Criminology and Public Policy*.

Kalkstein, Hook, Hard, & Walton (2023). Social norms govern what behaviors come to mind—And what do not. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Slater, J. (2024). How a Connecticut middle school won the battle against cellphones. *The Washington Post*.

Student Co-Leads:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Week 4 – October 17: Establishing and Maintaining Good Norms in Personal Relationships

Russell, Baker, McNulty, & Overall (2018). “You’re forgiven, but don’t do it again!” Direct partner regulation buffers the costs of forgiveness. *Journal of Family Psychology*.

Schumann & Dweck (2014). Who accepts responsibility for their transgressions? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

Student Co-Leads:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Week 5 – October 24: Effective Responses to Conflict and Harms in Institutional Contexts

Boothman, Blackwell, Campbell Jr., Commiskey, & Anderson (2009). A better approach to medical malpractice claims? The University of Michigan experience. *Journal of Health and Life Sciences Law*.

Okonofua, Paunesku, & Walton (2016). Brief intervention to encourage empathic discipline cuts suspension rates in half among adolescents. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*.

Pickard (2017). Responsibility without blame for addiction. *Neuroethics*.

Student Co-Leads:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Week 6 – October 31: Effective and Ineffective Ways to Contend With Bias

Campbell, Kennedy, Miller, & Brauer (in press). A brief pro-diversity social marketing intervention improves grades and well-being of students from marginalized groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

Okonofua, Harris, & Walton (2022). Sidelining bias: A situationist approach to reduce the consequences of bias in real-world contexts. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*

Onyeador, Hudson, & Lewis (2021). Moving beyond implicit bias training: Policy insights for increasing organizational diversity. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.

Student Co-Leads:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Week 7 – November 7: Student Paper Discussion

Student Papers:

1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____ 4. _____

Week 8 – November 14: Student Paper Discussion

Student Papers:

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

4. _____

Week 9 – November 21: Student Paper Discussion

Student Papers:

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

4. _____

Week 10 – December 5: Student Paper Discussion

Student Papers:

1. _____

3. _____

2. _____

4. _____