

**LEADERSHIP IN A DIVERSE SOCIETY  
LEADERSHIP 386/ PSYCHOLOGY 359  
FALL 2025**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Crystal Hoyt      **OFFICE HOURS:** BY APPOINTMENT  
**EMAIL:** choyt@richmond.edu      **OFFICE LOCATION:** Jepson 244

**COURSE TIMES AND LOCATION:** Tuesday, Thursday 9am, Jepson Hall 107

**COURSE WEBSITE:**      <http://blackboard.richmond.edu>

*THIS SYLLABUS IS INTENDED TO GIVE STUDENTS GUIDANCE IN WHAT MAY BE COVERED DURING THE SEMESTER AND WILL BE FOLLOWED AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MODIFY, SUPPLEMENT, AND MAKE CHANGES AS COURSE NEEDS ARISE.*

**READINGS:**

A number of research articles (found on BlackBoard) are assigned for this course. *The readings may change slightly, and other readings may be assigned during the semester.* The assigned readings provide the background and context for classroom lecture and discussion therefore, you should read the readings **before** coming to class.

**DESCRIPTION AND GOALS OF THE COURSE:**

The goal of this course, broadly, is to understand how diversity affects social relations and permeates our daily lives. To this end, we will examine diversity primarily through the lens of social psychology focusing on prejudice, discrimination, stigma, and intergroup relations. Our focus will be on exploring inequalities and biases associated with difference; we will focus primarily on large societal groups that differ on cultural dimensions of identity such as race & ethnicity and gender identity. Traditional approaches to understanding diversity often locate the root of inequality in overt negative attitudes. However, contemporary research into prejudice reveals that it is also often expressed in much more nuanced and subtle ways, and it persists because it remains largely unrecognized. Our explorations will be based on theory and empirical evidence, and we will apply this theoretical and empirical work to current events and relevant policy issues. After establishing a *context* for studying diversity we will explore *underlying beliefs and motivations* associated with diversity dynamics. Next, we will turn to a *spotlight on several social identities* followed by an exploration of *interaction dynamics and interventions*. Finally, we turn to investigating *how bias matters for policy issues* including criminal justice, educational, and health contexts.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- **Content Knowledge and Social Scientific Reasoning.** Use major concepts, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings in the study of diversity (prejudice, discrimination, stigma, and intergroup relations) to explain thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- **Psychological Literacy.** Locate, read, and accurately summarize scientific literature relevant to the psychological study of diversity (prejudice, discrimination, stigma, and intergroup relations).
- **Application.** Articulate how empirical evidence can be applied, creatively and practically, to understand and resolve personal, social, organizational, and societal issues related to prejudice, discrimination, stigma, and intergroup relations.

- **Communication Skills.** Communicate effectively about diversity in a variety of formats (e.g., written papers, oral presentations, interpersonal conversations) and for a variety of purposes (e.g., explaining, learning, persuading, defending).
- **Personal and Professional Development.** Demonstrate enhanced understanding of your own identity, recognition of your impact on others, and appreciation of your role within an interdependent, intercultural community. Exhibit respect for human diversity and informed concern about contemporary social issues.

#### **Social Inquiry Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of theories and/or patterns of human behavior appropriate to the discipline.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to use appropriate methods to analyze human behavior.
3. Students will assess the limitations of the theories, explanations, and methods they study.

#### **Power, Equity, Identity, and Culture Outcomes:**

1. Students will analyze the origins and dynamics of structural inequities and power imbalances in specific societal contexts.
2. Students will analyze how attitudes, experiences, and/or beliefs are shaped both by context and/or cultural identity.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the effects of inequities and power imbalances on a society, and the historical or current efforts, successful and unsuccessful, used to reduce such effects.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**1. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (PAPER: 30%; REACTION PAPERS: 10%):** You will be required to write one individual paper and submit reaction papers to the readings for 7 class sessions. There will also be written components to the group project (see below). Details for the paper will be provided in the course.

**Reaction papers:** You will be assigned to either Group A or Group B and will submit a short reaction paper (1/2 page, single-spaced or 1 page double-spaced; ~250 words) on BlackBoard **before the start of class on 7 of the 8 days** identified on the class schedule. In these reaction papers, you should attempt to analyze the readings for the day. **Do NOT summarize the reading as part of your reaction paper. The idea is for you to provide *analysis* of the topics.** Reaction papers will be graded as: submitted with excellent effort, it is clear you read and thought about the readings (3), submitted with good effort, you somewhat demonstrate you read and thought about the readings (2), submitted with minimal effort (1) or not submitted (0).

Some potential discussion points might be (in no particular order):

- Discuss connections across the readings. How does the research that you are reading relate to previous topics that we have discussed? How are the themes in these readings similar or different to other class readings?
- Discuss alternative explanations for the findings. Do the explanations provided by the researchers make sense to you? Are there other explanations that seem compelling?
- Under what conditions would different results be found? What are the "boundary conditions" of these ideas/findings? How might other variables (e.g., race, gender, status) qualify or change these findings?
- How can these readings be applied to real life? Do they explain why a social phenomenon or problem exists?
- What are the implications of this research - for social interactions, for public policy?
- What additional research questions does this work stimulate? What questions need exploration?

**2. EXAMINATION (25%):** Your progress toward the goals of the course will also be assessed through an in-class midterm examination. The exam will be designed to test your factual, applied, and conceptual understanding of the material. You will be allowed to use paper notes on the exam, so you might consider taking such notes as you engage in the course readings and classes.

**3. GROUP PROJECT (25%):** You will complete a project designed to deepen your understanding of the relationship between science and “the real world”—including the strengths and the limitations of using psychological science to explain and predict real-world phenomena; how to effectively engage in scientific communication; and how you personally might use the knowledge you have gained for the public good. For this project, small groups will identify, investigate, and analyze an issue or arena in which our course topics may be relevant. Your main assignment is to approach that issue as a team of publicly-engaged scientists would by creating a stand-alone product to communicate scientific information about that issue to the public (more externally focused) that is well-supported by a research synthesis of the issue (more internally focused). Groups may choose and research any topic that they would like, ideally choosing a topic that is meaningful to you and of considerable complexity. Topics might address public policy, a specific domain of interest, current events, issues of local concern, or some combination thereof (e.g., immigration, police-citizen interactions, multiracial identity, debates over rezoning schools to increase racial diversity, bias in medical care, monuments and other public symbols, etc.). You may create (almost) any kind of public communication that you would like (e.g., op-eds, Instagram campaigns, a podcast, an X thread, a brochure, etc.). Specific topics and communication plans will need to receive approval in advance. Additional details will be provided in the course.

**4. DISCUSSION LEADERS AND CLASS PARTICIPATION (10%):**

This course is predicated on the active participation of all members. You are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and fully engage in discussions and activities. The emphasis is on quality of class participation rather than quantity. Class discussions and activities are highly dependent upon the assigned reading for the day. You must come to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings. A student who receives an “A” for class participation comes to every class with questions about the readings in mind. An “A” student engages others with ideas, respects the opinions of others, and consistently elevates the level of discussion. Finally, when we turn to examining how bias matters for policy issues, you and a small group of other students will lead the class sessions as **discussion leaders**. More information about this will be given in the course.

**Restricted Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools**

In this course, you are allowed to use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT to (1) brainstorm initial ideas and/or (2) request feedback on ways to improve your writing. However, you may NOT use them to conduct a literature review for your paper, summarize articles (rather than reading them for yourself), generate initial drafts of your writing, or generate full drafts from an outline; doing so will be considered a violation of the Honor Code. Note, too, that the use of generative AI tools may contribute to poorer quality work, as the material generated may be inaccurate, incomplete, or biased. Perhaps most importantly, relying on these tools to a great extent will likely stifle your own learning and creativity.

## Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Aug 26     **Introductions and All That Jazz**

### PART 1: ESTABLISHING A CONTEXT FOR STUDYING DIVERSITY

Aug 28     **Diversity Science: Taking a Sociocultural/Socioecological Perspective**

- Plaut, V. C. (2010). Diversity science: Why and how difference makes a difference. *Psychological Inquiry*, 21, 77–99.
- Trawalter, S., Bart-Plange, D. J., & Hoffman, K. M. (2020). A socioecological psychology of racism: Making structures and history more visible. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 32, 47–51.

Sep 2     **Social Science: How and Why?**

- Whitley, B. E., & Kite, M. E. (2006). *The psychology of prejudice and discrimination*. Chapter 2: How psychologists study prejudice and discrimination. Canada: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Nelson, T. (2002). *The psychology of prejudice*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, pp. 116–127.

### PART 2: BELIEFS, COGNITIVE PROCESSES, AND MOTIVATIONS

Sep 4     **Ingroups and Outgroups**

#### **Group A Paper Due**

- Brewer, M. B. (1999). The psychology of prejudice: Ingroup love or outgroup hate? *Journal of Social Issues*, 55, 429–444.
- Greenwald, A. G., & Pettigrew, T. (2014). With malice toward none and charity for some: Ingroup favoritism enables discrimination. *American Psychologist*, 69(7), 669–684.

Sep 9     **Ideologies and Beliefs**

#### **Group B Paper Due**

- Pearson, A. R., Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2009). The nature of contemporary prejudice: Insights from aversive racism. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3, 314–338.
- Rios, K. (2022). Multiculturalism and Colorblindness as Threats to the Self: A Framework for Understanding Dominant and Non-Dominant Group Members' Responses to Interethnic Ideologies. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 26(4), **pgs 315-327 only**.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/10888683221093130>

Sep 11     **The Role of Motivation and Justification**

#### **Group A Paper Due**

- Jost, J. T. (2020). *A theory of system justification*. Harvard University Press. Chapter 1.
- Jost, J. T., & Hunyady, O. (2005). Antecedents and consequences of system-justifying ideologies. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 260–265.

Sep 16     **Social Cognitive Perspectives on Stereotyping and Discrimination**

#### **Group B Paper Due**

- Biernat, M. (2003). Toward a broader view of social stereotyping. *American Psychologist*, 58, 1019–1027.
- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J. C., & Glick, P. (2007). Universal dimensions of social cognition: Warmth, then competence. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11, 77–83.

Sep 18     **Not Your Grandparents' Bias: Implicit Prejudice and Stereotyping**

#### **Group A Paper Due**

- Banaji, M. R., & Greenwald, A. G. (2013). *Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People*. Preface and Chapters 1 & 2.
- Payne, B. K., & Hannay, J. W. (2021). Implicit bias reflects systemic racism. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 25(11), 927–936.

- Sep 23 **Expectations Produce Reality**  
**Group B Paper Due**
- Word, C. O., Zanna, M. P., & Cooper, J. (1974). The nonverbal mediation of self-fulfilling prophecies in interracial interaction. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 10, 109–120.
  - Walton, G. M. (2014). The new science of wise psychological interventions. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23, 73–82.
- Sep 25 **Whistling Vivaldi: Understanding Identity Threat**  
**Group A Paper Due**
- Steele, C. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: And other clues to how stereotypes affect us*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company. Chapters 1–3, pp. 1–62.
- Sep 30 **Understanding Identity Threat Regulation and Management**  
**Group B Paper Due**
- Knowles, E. D., Lowery, B. S., Chow, R. M., & Unzueta, M. M. (2014). Deny, distance, or dismantle? How White Americans manage a privileged identity. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9(6), 594–609.
- Oct 2 **Race and Culture in America**  
**Group A Paper Due**
- Richeson, J. A., & Sommers, S. R. (2016). Race relations in the 21st Century. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 67, 439–463.
  - Takaki, R. (2008). *A different mirror: A history of multicultural America*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company. Chapter 1.

### PART 3: SPOTLIGHT ON IDENTITIES AND PROCESSES

- Oct 7 **Who Is Seen and Who Is Rendered Invisible**  
**Group B Paper Due**
- Fryberg, S. A., & Eason, A. E. (2017). Making the invisible visible: Acts of commission and omission. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 26(6), 554–559.
  - Sesko, A. K., & Biernat, M. (2010). Prototypes of race and gender: The invisibility of Black women. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46, 356–360.
- Oct 9 **How the Rich Are Different from the Poor**
- Kraus, M. W., Piff, P. K., Mendoza-Denton, R., Rheinschmidt, M. L., & Keltner, D. (2012). Social class, solipsism, & contextualism: How the rich are different from the poor. *Psychological Review*, 119, 546–572.
- Oct 14 **FALL BREAK**
- Oct 16 **Study Day**
- Oct 21 **Midterm Exam**
- Oct 23 **Gender Inequality**  
**Group A Paper Due**
- Glick, P. M., & Fiske, S. T. (2001). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. *American Psychologist*, 56, 109–118.
  - Van Der Toorn, J., Pliskin, R., & Morgenroth, T. (2020). Not quite over the rainbow: The unrelenting and insidious nature of heteronormative ideology. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 34, 160–165.

- Oct 28 **Gender and Leadership**  
**Group B Paper Due**
- Hoyt, C. L., & Simon, S. (2024). Social psychological approaches to women and leadership theory. In S. Madsen (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Gender and Leadership* (pp. 65–83). Edward Elgar.
- Oct 30 **Bamboo Ceiling and Leadership**  
**Group A Paper Due**
- Lu, J. G. (2022). A social network perspective on the Bamboo Ceiling: Ethnic homophily explains why East Asians but not South Asians are underrepresented in leadership in multiethnic environments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 122(6), 959–982.
- Nov 4 **Discussion Leader Group Work**

#### PART 4: INTERACTION DYNAMICS AND INTERVENTIONS

- Nov 6 **Intergroup Interactions and Contact**  
**Group B Paper Due**
- Richeson, J. A., & Shelton, N. (2007). Negotiating interracial interactions: Costs, consequences, and possibilities. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 16, 316–320.
  - Tropp, L. R., & Pettigrew, T. F. (2005). Relationships between intergroup contact and prejudice among minority and majority status groups. *Psychological Science*, 16, 951–957.
- Nov 11 **The Paradox of Intergroup Interactions and Contact**  
**Group A Paper Due**
- MacInnis, C. C., & Page-Gould, E. (2015). How can intergroup interaction be bad if intergroup contact is good? Exploring and reconciling an apparent paradox in the science of intergroup relations. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(3), 307–327.
- Nov 13 **Institutional Interventions**  
**Group B Paper Due**
- Onyeador, I. N., Hudson, S. T. J., & Lewis, N. A. (2021). Moving beyond implicit bias training: Policy insights for increasing organizational diversity. *Policy Insights from Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 8, 19–26.
  - Dover, T. L., Kaiser, C. R., & Major, B. (2019). Mixed signals: The unintended effects of diversity initiatives. *Social Issues and Policy Review*.

#### PART 5: Discussion Leaders

#### THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN DIVERSITY AND POLICY ISSUES

- Nov 18 **Promoting an Equitable Justice System**  
**Student-Led Reading Selection:**
- Eberhardt, J. L., Davies, P. G., Purdie-Vaughns, V. J., & Johnson, S. L. (2006). Looking deathworthy: Perceived stereotypicality of Black defendants predicts capital-sentencing outcomes. *Psychological Science*, 17, 383–386.
  - Spencer, K. B., Charbonneau, A. K., & Glaser, J. (2016). Implicit bias and policing. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 10(1), 50–63.
  - Kahn, K. B., & Martin, K. D. (2020). The social psychology of racially biased policing: Evidence-based policy responses. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 7, 107–114.
  - Hennes, E. P., & Dang, L. (2021). The devil we know: Legal precedent and the preservation of injustice. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 8, 76–83.
  - Correll, J., Hudson, S. M., Guillermo, S., & Ma, D. S. (2014). The police officer's dilemma: A decade of research on racial bias in the decision to shoot. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 8, 201–213.

Nov 20      **Disparities in Educational Contexts**

**Student-Led Reading Selection:**

- Okonofua, J. A., Walton, G. M., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2016). A vicious cycle: A social-psychological account of extreme racial disparities in school discipline. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 11, 381–398.
- Okonofua, J. A., Paunesku, D., & Walton, G. M. (2016). Brief intervention to encourage empathic discipline cuts suspension rates in half among adolescents. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113, 5221–5226.
- Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students. *Science*, 331, 1447–1451.
- Hughes, T., Raines, T., & Malone, C. (2020). School pathways to the juvenile justice system. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 7, 72–79.
- Jacoby-Senghor, D., Sinclair, S., & Shelton, J. N. (2015). A lesson in bias: Consequences of implicit racial bias in pedagogical contexts. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 63, 50–55.

Nov 25      **Group Project Work**

Dec 2      **Social Disparities in Health**

**Student-Led Reading Selection:**

- Raifman, J., Moscoe, E., Austin, B., & McConnell, M. (2017). Difference-in-differences analysis of the association between state same-sex marriage policies and adolescent suicide attempts. *JAMA Pediatrics*.
- Leitner, J., Hehman, E., Ayduk, O., & Mendoza-Denton, R. (2016). Blacks' death rate due to circulatory diseases is positively related to Whites' explicit racial bias. *Psychological Science*, 27(10), 1299–1311.
- Major, B., Mendes, W. B., & Dovidio, J. F. (2013). Intergroup relations and health disparities: A social psychological perspective. *Health Psychology*, 32(5), 514–524.
- Richman, L. S., & Hatzenbuehler, M. L. A multilevel analysis of stigma and health: Implications for research and policy. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 1, 212–221.
- Penner, L. A., Hagiwara, N., Eggly, S., Gaertner, S. L., Albrecht, T. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (2017). Racial healthcare disparities: A social psychological analysis. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 24, 70–122.

Dec 4      **Course Wrap-Up**

**FINAL EXAM TIME: Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 9am-noon**  
**Presenting Final Group Projects**

## **RESOURCES AND SUPPORT**

### **OFFICE HOURS**

I encourage you to come see me during office hours as many times this semester as you need or want (email me to schedule). Office hours offer a great opportunity to clarify material, talk about upcoming assignments or those handed back, chat about careers, life, or anything else.

### **Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors**

The Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors (PSMAs) are available 24/7 at (804) 346-7674 while in-person instruction is ongoing. PSMAs are students who offer confidential support to students who have been impacted by violence (such as sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and interpersonal violence), whether they're a survivor, an accused person, or a friend or family member. We can be reached by emailing [psma@richmond.edu](mailto:psma@richmond.edu) or calling/texting (804) 346-7674. For more resources, please <https://prevent.richmond.edu/get-help/index.html>.

If you experience difficulties in this course, do not hesitate to consult with me. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

**Academic Skills Center** ([asc.richmond.edu](http://asc.richmond.edu)): Assists students in assessing their academic strengths and weaknesses; honing their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, and related techniques; working on specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encouraging campus and community involvement. Tutors will be available virtually. The on-call peer-tutors available for these appointments are listed in the Box file: [On-Call Online Tutors](#) (<https://richmond.box.com/s/dpe37chr2zodr3o1amtj8omjk72v2ktb>). Email [Roger Mancastroppa](mailto:rmancast@richmond.edu) ([rmancast@richmond.edu](mailto:rmancast@richmond.edu)) and [Hope Walton](mailto:hw Walton@richmond.edu) ([hw Walton@richmond.edu](mailto:hw Walton@richmond.edu)) for appointments in academic and life skills to request a Zoom conference.

**Boatwright Library Research Librarians:** ([library.richmond.edu/help/ask/](http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask/) or 289-8876): Research librarians help students with all steps of their research, from identifying or narrowing a topic, to locating, accessing, evaluating, and citing information resources. Librarians support students in their classes across the curriculum and provide library instruction, tutorials, research guides, and individual help. All research support will be provided online or by appointment and students can contact a librarian for help via email ([library@richmond.edu](mailto:library@richmond.edu)), text (804-277-9ASK), chat, or Zoom (by appointment).

**Career Services:** ([careerservices.richmond.edu](http://careerservices.richmond.edu) or 289-8547): Can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major or course of study, connecting with internships and jobs, and investigating graduate and professional school options. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor early in your time at UR.

**Counseling and Psychological Services** ([caps.richmond.edu](http://caps.richmond.edu) or 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include brief consultations, short-term counseling and psychotherapy, skills-building classes, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

**Disability Services** ([disability.richmond.edu](http://disability.richmond.edu)) The Office of Disability Services works to ensure that qualified students with a disability (whether incoming or current) are provided with reasonable accommodations that enable students to participate fully in activities, programs, services and benefits provided to all students. Please let your professors know as soon as possible if you have an accommodation that requires academic coordination and planning.

**Speech Center** ([speech.richmond.edu](http://speech.richmond.edu) or 289-6409): Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations. Remote practice sessions can be arranged; we look forward to meeting your public speaking needs.

**Writing Center** ([writing.richmond.edu](http://writing.richmond.edu) or 289-8263): Assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work.

# Common Syllabus Insert

## **Awarding of Credit**

To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities.

[registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html](https://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html)

## **Disability Accommodations**

Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams.

[disability.richmond.edu/](https://disability.richmond.edu/)

## **Honor System**

The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: "I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."

<https://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/index.html>

## **Religious Observance**

Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance.

[registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html](https://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html)

## **Addressing Microaggressions on Campus**

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.<sup>1</sup> Recent research has found that, when professors do not address microaggressions in class, microaggressions foster alienation of marginalized groups.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, both students and faculty that are exposed to microaggressions more often are more likely to have depressive symptoms and negative affect (a negative view of the world).<sup>3</sup> A comfortable and productive environment where meaningful learning happens can be collectively created through actions, words, or environmental cues that promote the inclusion and success of marginalized members, recognizing their embodied identity, validating their realities, resisting sexism, ableism, and racism.<sup>4</sup>

The University of Richmond is committed to building an inclusive community. To this end, the Student Center for Equity and Inclusion (SCEI) was created in 2021 and offers ongoing support and assistance for a diverse student body.<sup>5</sup> With this in mind, as a community member at the University of Richmond, I pledge to address microaggressions in the classroom by holding myself, other students, and faculty accountable for what is said and being receptive to criticism when perpetuating these slights, snubs, or insults.

<sup>1</sup>Sue, S., Zane, N., Nagayama Hall, G. C., & Berger, L. K. (2009). The Case for Cultural Competency in Psychotherapeutic Interventions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 525–548. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163651>

<sup>2</sup>Bergom, I., Wright, M.C., Brown, M.K. and Brooks, M. (2011), Promoting college student development through collaborative learning: A case study of *hevruta*. *About Campus*, 15: 19-25. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.20044>

<sup>3</sup>Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The Impact of Racial Microaggressions on Mental Health: Counseling Implications for Clients of Color. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(1), 57–66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00130.x>

<sup>4</sup>Rolón-Dow, R. (2019). Stories of Microaggressions and Microaffirmation: A Framework for Understanding Campus Racial Climate. *NCID Currents*, 1(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.106>

<sup>5</sup> <https://inclusion.richmond.edu/>