

Greg Walton

Greg Walton is the Michael Forman University Fellow and Professor of Psychology at Stanford University. Much of his research investigates psychological processes that contribute to major social problems and how “wise” psychological interventions that target these processes can address such problems and help people flourish, even over long periods of time. Often, these interventions are conducted in education contexts, with both students and educators, and serve to improve patterns of interaction and support students’ sense of belonging in school. In doing so, these interventions can raise students’ grades, reduce conflict (e.g., disciplinary citations, suspension rates), and promote progress through college. Because the psychological and relational patterns these interventions target are rooted in inequality, often these exercises function to reduce inequality in school success. Other interventions aim to sideline intergroup biases to promote more prosocial patterns of interaction, to promote sustainability, to strengthen close relationships, and to improve civic behavior.

In all these cases, Dr. Walton focuses on fundamental ways in which people make sense of themselves, other people, and social situations; how meanings people draw can be counterproductive and self-reinforcing (e.g., “People like me don’t belong here”); and how they can be altered to cause lasting benefits to individuals and to society.

Dr. Walton’s research has been published in leading journals in science (e.g., *PNAS*, *Nature*, *Science*), psychology (e.g., *JPSP*, *Psych Science*), and education (e.g., *Review of Educational Research*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*). It has been covered in major media outlets including the *New York Times*, *Harvard Business Review*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Huffington Post*, *NPR*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Washington Post*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Onion*.

He has received awards from numerous organizations including the American Education Research Association, American Psychological Association, Society for Experimental Social Psychology, and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. He was identified as a “Rising Star” by the American Psychological Society in 2011; selected for the Career Trajectory Award from the Society for Experimental Social Psychology in 2022; and received the Cialdini Prize from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology in 2017 and 2022.

His research has been supported by the Institute for Education Sciences, the National Institute of Health, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Jeff and Tricia Raikes Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and Character Lab.

He has presented at major universities and to educators and policymakers including at the White House. He co-organized the preparation of two *amicus* briefs on the implications of identity threat for affirmative action for the United States Supreme Court.

In addition to his scholarship, Dr. Walton is a committed teacher and mentor. At Stanford, he teaches courses on psychology and social problems, including one entitled “Wise Interventions.”

Dr. Walton earned his A.B. in Philosophy from Stanford in 2000 and a PhD in Psychology from Yale University in 2005. After graduate school, he worked for a year as a fellow in the Office of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and then completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Waterloo before joining the Stanford faculty in 2008.