

## **Graduate Research Workshop on Psychological Interventions Psychology 274/Education 287**

### **Instructors**

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### **Class Meetings**

Wednesday, 1:30-3:30 (workshop days may run longer, but not past 4:00)

### **Course Readings**

Readings will be made available each week.

### **Enrollment**

The course is designed as an advanced seminar. Priority will be given to doctoral students in psychology or in education. The enrollment will be limited to 10-12 students.

### **Course Objectives**

The power of “psychological interventions” has garnered increasing attention in discussions of social problems and social policy, particularly in education but also in health and economics. The course is intended to provide students with an opportunity to design and refine their own intervention experiment grounded in psychological theory. It is based on a workshop model, in which each student will present a proposed experiment and then receive intensive and constructive feedback on its aims and the procedures for accomplishing them. The expectation is that students will end the course with a proposed experiment that is of high quality, that they feel confident in, and that they plan to conduct.

Given these objectives, and the limited time frame of the academic quarter, it is expected that all students begin the course with an idea of the problem they wish to study and the intervention they wish to test. It is also expected that students have prior coursework in social psychology and experimental methodology.

The workshop is intended to be not evaluative but constructive—a space where participants from different disciplines or intellectual backgrounds can collaborate with one another with the goal of advancing their learning and the quality of their work. While all students are expected to invest a great deal of thought and effort in their initial proposals, the expectation is that all the proposals will be works in progress and thus improvable.

Some of the initial classes will be dedicated to discussing psychological interventions and the intellectual and applied traditions that provide a foundation for them. Potential topics include the *importance of the social situation as determinant of human cognition, affect, and behavior; the role of the actor’s subjective construal of the situation in moderating these effects; the experimental*

*tradition in social psychology; the notion that human affairs take place in a dynamic tension system of interacting forces; the role of recursive processes in magnifying differences among individuals and groups and in carrying forward effects of social intervention; the notion of psychological hubs that affect a diverse array of outcomes; the science and art of designing effective intervention delivery systems; the problem of bringing psychological interventions “to scale.”*

To facilitate discussion, we request that students refrain from using laptops and other portable devices unless necessary (if necessary, please see one of us). If you are presenting and wish to use a laptop to take notes, this is acceptable.

### **Research Proposal**

Both the initial proposal and the final proposal should describe an original randomized experiment testing the effect of a psychological intervention on an important outcome. Your experiment must have at least one experimentally manipulated independent variable (i.e., the intervention) and the proposal should follow the standard format of a research proposal. It should contain an introduction describing the theoretical background and rationale, a methods section, a predicted results section, and a discussion section highlighting implications and limitations.

The initial proposal should be a shortened version of the final proposal, approximately 10 pages in length (double-spaced, about 2500 words). The final proposal should expand and improve upon the initial proposal. The initial proposal should be written in a way that conveys in sufficient detail the rationale for your study and the experimental procedures so that a naïve reader can follow your logic. This is essential to receive constructive feedback.

The initial proposal is due the Monday before your scheduled workshop at 5 pm. The final proposal is due Friday, June 7 at 5 pm.

Both instructors will be available to consult on possible topics throughout the quarter

### **Course Requirements and Grades**

All students are expected to attend all classes, to participate in class discussion, and to thoughtfully read all readings and research proposals. To facilitate discussion of readings, please come prepared with a comment or question on the readings for that day. To facilitate workshops, please review each proposal as you would review a paper submitted for publication or grant proposal submitted for funding.

Grades will be based on a combination of class participation (25%), the initial research proposal (25%), and the final research proposal (50%). You can enroll in the class for a grade or credit/no credit.

## Preliminary Schedule

Each week a selection of readings will be drawn based the direction of class discussion and student interest from the set of readings noted under the relevant date.

Wed, April 3, Introductions and course overview

Wed, April 10, Background 1

*Foundations of the Social Psychological Approach to Intervention*  
*Methodological Contributions*

Wed, April 17, Background 2

*Recursion and Effects Over Time*  
*Psychological Hubs*

Wed, April 24, Workshop 1

Presenter: *Rohan Rahm, Michelle Hutton*

Wed, May 1, Workshop 2

Presenters: *Hyemin Han, Janet Bill*

Wed, May 8, Workshop 3

Presenters: *Daniel Zychlinski, Yael Wulfovich*

**\*\*Tues, May 14 at 6 PM\*\***: Workshop 4

Presenters:

Wed, May 22, Workshop 5

Presenters: *Engin Bumbacher, Joe Powers*

Wed, May 29, Workshop 6

Presenters: *Alyssa Wisdom*

Wed, June 5, Scaling up and course wrap up

Presenter:

## Potential Readings

Each week a selection of readings will be drawn based the direction of class discussion and student interest from the set of readings noted under the relevant date.

### Wed, April 3, Introductions and course overview

### Wed, April 10, Background 1

#### *Foundations of the Social Psychological Approach to Intervention*

Cialdini (1980). Full-cycle social psychology.

Lewin (1958). Group decision and social change.

Garcia & Cohen (2010). A social psychological perspective on educational intervention.

Miller & Prentice (2010). Psychological levers of behavior change.

Ross & Nisbett (1991). *Selections from* The person and the situation.

#### *Methodological Contributions*

Aronson, Fried, & Good (2002). Reducing the effects of stereotype threat on African American college students by shaping theories of intelligence.

Bond et al. (2012). A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization.

Grant & Hoffman (2011). It's not all about me: Motivating hand hygiene among health care professionals by focusing on patients.

Hulleman & Cordray (2009). Moving from the lab to the field: The role of fidelity and achieved relative intervention strength.

Lewin (1958). Group decision and social change.

Lilienfeld (2007). Psychological treatments that cause harm.

Paluck (2009). Reducing intergroup prejudice and conflict using the media: A field experiment in Rwanda.

Paluck & Green (2009). Prejudice reduction: What works? A review and assessment of research and practice.

Robinson (2010). Stealth interventions for obesity prevention and control: Motivating behavior change.

Walton & Cohen (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students.

Woodhead, M. (1988). When psychology informs public policy. The case of early childhood intervention.

Yeager et al (2012) Implicit theories of personality and the transition to high school: Longitudinal effects on stress, health, and academic performance.

Yeager & Walton (2011). Social-psychological interventions in education: They're not magic.

Yeager et al. (in press). Breaking the cycle of mistrust: Wise interventions to provide critical feedback across the racial divide.

### \*\*\*Tuesday, April 16\*\*\*, Background 2

#### *Recursion and Effects Over Time*

Axson & Cooper (1985). Cognitive dissonance and psychotherapy. The role of effort justification in inducing weight loss.

- Blackwell, Trzeniewski, & Dweck (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention.
- Brannon & Walton. (in press). Enacting cultural interests: How intergroup contact reduces prejudice by sparking interest in an outgroup's culture.
- Caspi & Elder (1989). Continuities and consequences of interactional styles across the life course.
- Caspi, Elder, & Bem (1988). Moving away from the world: Life-course patterns of shy children.
- Cohen, Garcia, Purdie-Vaughns, Apfel, & Brzustowski (2009). Recursive processes in self-affirmation: Intervening to close the minority achievement gap.
- Cook et al. (2011). Chronic threat and contingent belonging: Protective benefits of values affirmations on identity development.
- Dimidjian et al. (2006). Randomized trial of behavioral activation, cognitive therapy, and antidepressant medication in the acute treatment of adults with major depression.
- Elder (1998). The life course as developmental theory.
- Finkel et al. (2013). A brief intervention to promote conflict reappraisal preserves marital quality over time.
- Freedman & Fraser (1966). Compliance without pressure: The foot-in-the-door technique.
- Garcia & Cohen (2010). A social psychological perspective on educational intervention.
- Langer & Rodin (1976). The effects of choice and enhanced personal responsibility for the aged: A field experiment in an institutional setting.
- Lewin, Kurt. (1943). Defining the "field at a given time."
- Logel & Cohen (2011). The role of the self in physical health: Testing the effect of a values-affirmation intervention on weight loss.
- Obradovic, Burt, & Masten (2010). Testing a dual cascade model linking competence and symptoms over 20 years from childhood to adulthood.
- Rokeach (1971). Long-rang experimental modification of values, attitudes, and behavior.
- Schultz (1976). Effects of control and predictability on the physical and psychological well-being of the institutionalized aged.
- Schultz & Hanusa (1978). Long-term effects of control and predictability-enhancing interventions: Findings and ethical issues.
- Walton & Cohen (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students.
- Woodhead, M. (1988). When psychology informs public policy. The case of early childhood intervention.

### *Psychological Hubs*

#### The Self and Self-Integrity

- Armitage, Harris, & Arden (2011). Evidence that self-affirmation reduces alcohol consumption: Randomized exploratory trial with a new, brief means of self-affirming.
- Bryan, Walton, Rogers, & Dweck (2011). Motivating voter turnout by invoking the self.
- Grant & Hoffman (2011). It's not all about me: Motivating hand hygiene among health care professionals by focusing on patients.
- Greenberg (2008). Understanding the vital human quest for self-esteem.
- Sherman & Cohen (2006). The psychology of self-defense.

Belonging

Cho, Hallfors, & Sanchez (2005). Evaluation of a high school peer group intervention for at-risk youth.

Walton & Cohen (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students.

Executive Resources

Baumeister, Gailliot, DeWall, Oaten (2006). Self-regulation and personality: How interventions increase regulatory success, and how depletion moderates the effects of traits on behavior.

Jaeggi, Buschkuhl, Jonides, & Perrig (2008). Improving fluid intelligence with training on working memory.

Job, Dweck, & Walton (2010). Ego-depletion—Is it all in your head? Implicit theories about willpower affect self-regulation.

Karniol, Galili, Shtilerman, Naim, Stern, Manjoch, Silverman (2011). Why superman can wait: Cognitive self-transformation in the delay of gratification paradigm.

Lydon & Zanna (1990). Commitment in the face of adversity: A value-affirmation approach.

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Cook et al. (2011). Chronic threat and contingent belonging: Protective benefits of values affirmations on identity development.

Crum & Langer (2007). Mind-set matters: Exercise and the placebo effect.

Crum, Corbin, Brownell, & Salovey (2011). Mind over milkshakes: Mindsets, not just nutrients, determine ghrelin response.

Kaptchuk et al. (2010). Placebos without deception. A randomized controlled trial in irritable bowel syndrome.

Wilson, Damiani, & Shelton (2002). Improving the academic performance of college students with brief attributional interventions.

Stress Reactivity

Adam, Sutton, Doane, & Mineka (2008). Incorporating hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis measures into preventive interventions for adolescent depression: Are we there yet?

Boyce & Ellis (2005). Biological sensitivity to context: I. An evolutionary-developmental theory of the origins and functions of stress reactivity, 301.

Cicchetti & Gunnar (2008). Integrating biological measures into the design and evaluation of preventive interventions.

Crum, Achor, Salovey, & Rothstein. Rethinking stress: Changing mindsets to harness the enhancing effects of stress.

Sterling (2004). Principles of allostasis: Optimal design, predictive regulation, pathophysiology, and rational therapeutics.

Yeager, Spitzer, Johnson, & Dweck (2012). Changing adolescents' implicit theories of personality reduces stress and improves achievement.

**Wed, April 24, Background 3 and Workshop 1***Sensitive Periods*

Bronfenbrenner (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development.

- Chen, Miller, Walker, Arevalo, Sung, & Cole (2009). Genome-wide transcriptional profiling linked to social class in asthma.
- Fuligni, Telzer, Bower, Irwin, Kiang, & Cole (2009). Daily family assistance and inflammation among adolescents from Latin American and European backgrounds.
- Heckman (2006). Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children.
- Woodhead, M. (1988). When psychology informs public policy. The case of early childhood intervention.

#### *Timing and Choice Points*

- Berger & Fitzsimons (2008). Dogs on the street, pumas on your feet: How cues in the environment influence product evaluation and choice.
- Bettinger, Long, Oreopoulos, & Sanbonmatsu (2010). The role of simplification and information in college decisions: Results from the HMR Block FAFSA Experiment
- Bryan, Walton, Rogers, & Dweck (2011). Motivating voter turnout by invoking the self.
- Carter, Ferguson, & Hassin (2011). A single exposure to the American flag shifts support toward Republicanism up to 8 months later.
- Cin, MacDonald, Fong, Zanna, & Elton-Marshall (2006). Remembering the message: The use of a reminder cue to increase condom use following a safer sex intervention.
- Sethi-Iyengar, Huberman, & Jiang (2004). How much choice is too much? Contributions to 401(k) retirement plans.
- Gawande (2007). The checklist: If something so simple can transform intensive care, what else can it do?
- Iyengar & Lepper (1999). Rethinking the value of choice: A cultural perspective on intrinsic motivation.
- Thaler & Sunstein (2008). *Selections from Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness.*

#### *Science special issue*

- Barnett (2011). Effectiveness of early educational interventions.
- Clements & Sarama (2011). Early childhood mathematics intervention.
- Diamond & Lee (2011). Interventions shown to aid executive function development in children 4 to 12 years old.
- Gromley (2011). From science to policy in early childhood education.

### **Wed, May 1, Background 4 (Case Studies) and Workshop 2**

#### *Conceptual change*

- Au, Chan, Chan, Cheung, Ho, & Ip (2008). Folkbiology meets microbiology: A study of conceptual and behavioral change.
- Zamora, Romo, & Au (2006). Using biology to teach adolescents about STD transmission and self-protective behaviors.

#### *Self-affirmation and expressive writing*

- Armitage, Harris, & Arden (2011). Evidence that self-affirmation reduces alcohol consumption: Randomized exploratory trial with a new, brief means of self-affirming.
- Harris & Epton (2009). The impact of self-affirmation on health cognition, health behaviour, and other health-related responses: A narrative review.

- Harris, Mayle, Mabbott, & Napper (2007). Self-affirmation reduces smokers' defensiveness to graphic on-pack cigarette warning labels.
- Klein & Boals (2001). Expressive writing can increase working memory.
- Logel & Cohen (2011). The role of the self in physical health: Testing the effect of a values-affirmation intervention on weight loss.
- Sherman, Bunyan, Creswell, & Jaremka (2009). Psychological vulnerability and stress: The effects of self-affirmation on sympathetic nervous system responses to naturalistic stressors.
- Stetler, Chen, & Miller (2006). Written disclosure of experiences with racial discrimination and antibody response to an influenza vaccine.

### *Affect*

- Brown, Ryan, & Creswell (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects.
- Frederickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel (2008). Open hearts build lives: Positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources.
- Jamieson, Mendes, Blackstock, & Schmader (2010). Turning the knots in your stomach into bows: Reappraising arousal improves performance on the GRE.
- Lyubomirsky & Della Porta (in press). Boosting happiness, buttressing resilience: Results from cognitive and behavioral interventions.
- Slovic (2007). "If I look at the mass, I will never act": Psychic numbing and genocide.
- Stone, Aronson, Crain, Winslow, & Fried (1994). Inducing hypocrisy as a means of encouraging young adults to use condoms.

### *Choice*

- Iyengar & Lepper (1999). Rethinking the value of choice: A cultural perspective on intrinsic motivation.
- Sethi-Iyengar, Huberman, & Jiang (2004). How much choice is too much? Contributions to 401(k) retirement plans.

### *Interpersonal support*

- Bolger & Amarel (2007). Effects of social support visibility on adjustment to stress: Experimental evidence.
- Marigold, Holmes, & Ross (2007). More than words: Reframing compliments from romantic partners fosters security in low self-esteem individuals.

### *Norms and identity*

- Berger & Rand (2008). Shifting signals to help health: Using identity signaling to reduce risky health behaviors.
- Braga & Bond (2008). Policing crime and disorder hot spots: A randomized controlled trial.
- Goldstein, Cialdini, & Griskevicius (2008). A room with a viewpoint: Using social norms to motivate environmental conservation in hotels.
- Keizer, Lindenberg, & Steg (2008). The spreading of disorder.

### *Teaching skills for coping*

- Kato, P. M., Cole, S. W., Bradlyn, A. S., & Pollock, B. H. 2008. A video game improves behavioral outcomes in adolescents and young adults with cancer: A randomized trial.
- Kulesza, Apperson, Larimer, & Copeland (2010). Brief alcohol intervention for college drinkers: How brief is?
- Morisano, Hirsh, Peterson, Pihl, & Shore (2010). Setting, elaborating, and reflecting on personal goals improves academic performance.
- Rosenkoetter, Rosenkoetter, & Acock (2009). Television violence: An intervention to reduce its impact on children.
- Strahan, LaFrance, Wilson, Ethier, Spencer, & Zanna (2008). Victoria's dirty secret: How sociocultural norms influence adolescent girls and women.
- Van den Boom (1994). The influence of temperament and mothering on attachment and exploration: An experimental manipulation of sensitive responsiveness among lower-class mothers with irritable infants.

#### *Inspiration and value*

- Grant (2008). The significance of task significance: Job performance effects, relational mechanisms, and boundary conditions.
- Grant & Gino (in press). A little thanks goes a long way: Explaining why gratitude expressions motivate prosocial behavior
- Hulleman & Harackiewicz (2009). Promoting interest and performance in high school science classes.
- Jang (2008). Supporting students' motivation, engagement, and learning during an uninteresting activity.

#### *Placebos*

- Crum & Langer (2007). Mind-set matters: Exercise and the placebo effect.
- Crum, Corbin, Brownell, & Salovey (2011). Mind over milkshakes: Mindsets, not just nutrients, determine ghrelin response.
- Kaptchuk et al. (2010). Placebos without deception. A randomized controlled trial in irritable bowel syndrome.

#### **Wed June 5, Scaling up and course wrap up**

- Bond et al. (2012). A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization.
- Bryk, Gomez, & Grunow (in press). Ruminations II: Getting ideas into action, building.
- Bryk (2009). Support a science of performance improvement.
- Evans & Clarke (2011). Disseminating orphan innovations.
- Hulleman & Cordray (2009). Moving from the lab to the field: The role of fidelity and achieved relative intervention strength.
- Paunesku et al. (2013). PERTS briefing, February 2013.
- Yeager & Walton (2011). Social-psychological interventions in education: They're not magic.