

**Cover Page**

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**Development of The Science of Intergroup Relations Writing Intensive Course**

**February 1, 2016**

**Chair**

*Moshe Naveh-Benjamin*

**Moshe Naveh-Benjamin**

**Dean**

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**Michael J. O'Brien**

**Faculty**



**B. Ann Bettencourt**

***Brief Summary of Project***

The goal of the proposed project is to develop a new writing intensive (WI) course, entitled “The Science of Intergroup Relations.” For over 50 years, social psychologists have studied the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination – all of which can influence intergroup relations. The WI course will be designed to allow students to gain a comprehensive understanding of the theory and empirical research on intergroup relations. In doing so, the students will critically evaluate the strengths and weakness of theoretical and methodological approaches to this research. The objectives of the proposed project are to select foundational and recent journal articles that report studies of intergroup relations, select relevant book chapters on intergroup relations, and select on-line resources as to develop writing assignments and class activities. I propose to design the course during the Summer of 2016, to offer it in the Fall of 2016, and thereafter, to offer it one or two times yearly. The course will provide an additional WI offering as well as a potential offering for the Multicultural Certificate and the proposed Diversity Course Requirement. It will fill a gap in the offerings of the Department of Psychological Science, which currently offers no course on this or related topics.

February 1, 2016

Dear Members of the Campus Writing Board,

I support Dr. Ann Bettencourt's application for the Writing Intensive Program Awards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Moshe Naveh-Benjamin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Dr. Moshe Naveh-Benjamin, Ph.D.  
Chair and Professor  
Department of Psychological Sciences

## **Goals, Objectives, and Purposes of Project**

### ***Goal, Objectives, Purpose of Project***

The primary goal of the project is to develop a new WI course that focuses on an array of scientific studies on stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination (i.e., intergroup relations). The course (to be taught for the first time during AY 2016/2017) will provide students an overview of theory and research on intergroup relations.

The objectives of the proposed project are:

1. to review and select appropriate journal articles that report studies on intergroup relations,
2. to review and select books focused on social psychological approaches for understanding intergroup relations – chapters may provide course readings,
3. to review and select sources for videos, audios, or interviews that feature intergroup researchers,
4. to develop writing assignments and class activities that foster critical thinking about the scientific study of intergroup relations.

The overall purpose of the course is to provide students with an opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of social psychological research on intergroup relations as well as to become acquainted with variety of social psychological theories regarding intergroup relations. The course will enhance students' ability to think critically about research, in general, and about intergroup relations research, in particular.

### ***Strategies for Carrying Out Project***

*Readings.* Although there are psychology textbooks on the topic of intergroup relations, my goal is to expose students to original published research articles. I have used this approach in a different WI course that I offer, called the Science of Mindfulness. Exposing students to the original literature appears to have the benefit of allowing students to think more deeply and critically about primary scientific studies on the topic. The course readings will include journal publications and some published chapters, the latter of which highlight theoretical approaches.

To develop a WI course, I will need to conduct an extensive review of the current literature on intergroup relations. The subtopics to be included in the course will be those that have sufficient research evidence to provide an understanding the specific phenomenon under study. If the literature on a subtopic is inadequate, it will be excluded and others will be considered.

With the help of a graduate assistant, I will review the following intergroup relations subtopics. I will add additional topics for review, as needed.

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|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Stereotyping & Categorization | 7. Development of Prejudice in Children           |
| 2. Stereotype Threat             | 8. Generalization of Prejudice across Groups      |
| 3. Social Identity               | 9. Individual Differences & Prejudice             |
| 4. Prejudice                     | 10. Developments in the Neuroscience of Prejudice |
| 5. Consequences of Stigma        | 11. Reducing Prejudice                            |
| 6. Discrimination                | 12. Improving Intergroup Relations                |

*Assignments.* I will develop writing assignments and in-class activities to enhance student learning and improve critical thinking skills. The first set of assignments will help student learn how to read journal articles and critically evaluate theories, methods, results, and conclusions. I anticipate that writing assignments will include reaction papers, formal research proposals, in-

class writing, and informal writing (e.g., journal, weblog posts). Consistent with the approach of the CWP, the writing assignments will be designed to:

1. Improve students' ability to clearly summarize the findings of articles on intergroup relations.
2. Develop students' ability to critically evaluate the strengths and weakness of empirical research.
3. Develop students' ability to pose testable hypotheses for two study proposals (one project for Midterm and a separate project for Final).
4. Improve students' writing skills as well as provide constructive peer feedback.
5. Develop students' written presentation and verbal presentation skills.

***Project's connections to Campus Writing Program (CWP) Mission as Primary Agents in Educating Students***

Students will be required to reason critically about the theories and studies of intergroup relations. In their weekly reaction papers, students will critically evaluate research, which is reported in published articles. The midterm and the final assignments will require students to write original research proposals. Students will receive written feedback explaining how to improve their writing skills. In learning about social psychological studies of intergroup relations, arguably, some students may reflect on their own prejudices as well as stigmatization toward their own group memberships as well as toward other groups. During the semester or at any point in their lives, students may use the background and their understanding of the phenomena investigated to better understand events in everyday life that affected by intergroup relationships.

***Ways project demonstrates the pedagogical theories of writing to learn and learning to write***

Each week, students will be required to write a reaction paper about one of the assigned readings. They will be asked to briefly summarize the study and to critically analyze it. Over the course of the semester, students will be required to write two research proposals (in part, writing a review of the relevant literature). By writing these papers, students will learn content about intergroup relations research and develop critical thinking skills about theory and research. Students will also be required to write an APA style paper for their midterm and final. Each student will write a peer review of the midterm and final drafts for another student in the class. Instructor feedback on students' written work will help students learn about effective writing skills. Finally, all students will present their finally research proposal to the class. This assignment will advance students' skills in writing PowerPoint presentations and in verbally presenting their work.

***Psychological Science Department WI courses (Rationale for 3000 level).***

The department strives to offer two or three WI courses each semester (over and above the WI Capstone courses in the department). Dr. Miller (Director of Undergraduate Studies) encouraged me to develop the course because the department typically has difficulty meeting demand for WI courses. Also, the department has offered courses related to intergroup relations, but these courses have not been offered in the last 5 years. Also, because the department serves over 1,200 majors and hundreds of minors, he anticipated that the department would like the course to be offered twice each academic year.

Because the department has a difficult time meeting the demand for 3000- and 4000-level courses, Dr. Miller urged me to offer the class at the 3000 level. Also, offering the course at the 3000 level would allow me to require Psych 3010 as a prerequisite (the latter is a required psychology methods course). Given that students in the proposed class will be reading journal articles, 3010 will provide the necessary foundation for student preparation. It is important to note that *all* WI courses in Psychological Sciences are capped at 20 students. Obviously, this departmental policy offers an optimal student-to-instructor ratio. As noted in the proposal, the Department of Psychological Sciences limits writing intensive classes to 20 students (the department provides teaching assistants and seeks no T.A. funding from the CWP). Because of the great demand for writing intensive courses in the department, I expect that the course will serve 40 students, annually. Also, the proposed course will provide an offering for students seeking to earn the Multicultural certificate. As well as for student seeking to fulfill the proposed Diversity Course Requirement.

### ***Timeline***

- June 2016: Conduct database searches on specific subtopics of intergroup relations. Search Ellis Library and other outlets for relevant books. Purchase relevant books, and review chapters for potential readings. Begin selection of readings for the course.
- July 2016: Continue selection of readings for the course. Review on-line products for appropriate video and audio recordings. Draft syllabus.
- August 2016: Design writing assignments and prepare thorough explanations of them. Finalize syllabus. Upload all readings, assignments, and syllabus on Blackboard.

## **Budget**

### ***Detailed Request from CWP***

Faculty Compensation, Summer 2016. This amount is less than 1/9 of salary, but given the financial limits of the grant, this sum is budgeted. Also note, I am planning to develop this course during three months of Summer 2016. Database searches, select readings, design assignments, prepare syllabus.

\$8,000

Graduate Student Assistant Compensation, Summer 2014, 1/4 time, 2 months	\$1,769
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The graduate student will assist with searching databases and with reviewing studies and chapters for inclusion in the course. The student will be able to use the course design and materials to for future teaching.

Books, Films, and Other Resources	\$ 200
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I am requesting funds for books, videos, and other resources.

<b>Total Request for Writing Intensive Project Award</b>	<b>\$9,969</b>
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### ***Cost-Sharing from Department of Psychological Sciences***

Books, Films, and Other Resources	\$ 350
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I will use departmental miscellaneous account for additional materials

Attendance at the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues Conference	\$1,000
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One of the most researched and published social issues topics by members of

this Society is intergroup relations. I will apply to present a roundtable to discuss the course, June 2016.

**Total Departmental Cost-Share**

**\$1,350**

***Project benefits to CWP, MU, faculty, students, the academic and/or public community***

The proposed course is aligned with Mizzou Diversity Initiative. Also, the course will be appropriate for inclusion of available course for the multicultural certificate, which currently includes in its list “African-American Psychology” and “Stereotypes and Prejudice.” Neither of these courses, however, have been offered by the Department of Psychological Sciences for at least five years. Indeed, there is only one course in psychology – Cross-Cultural Psychology – that qualifies for the Multicultural Certificate. The proposed course will provide an additional WI course and an offering for students seeking to earn the Multicultural certificate. Also, if the Diversity Course Requirement is adopted, the currently proposed course will be a good candidate to add to the list of courses that may satisfy the requirement.

***Manner of CWP involvement in planning, assessing, and follow up***

In the past, I have consulted with Jonathan Cisco about preparing proposals for the Writing Intensive Project Awards. I will keep a teaching journal that highlights the components of the course that seem successful and those that do not; this will be made available for CWP’s review. I will analyze improvements in student writing and the results of the Psychological Critical Thinking Exam; these will be made available for CWP’s review.

***Manner in which the benefits will be demonstrated***

The department will keep a record of the number of students served and the number of courses offered per academic year. During the semester, I will track students’ individual improvements in writing effectiveness. At the beginning and end of the course, students will complete the Psychological Critical Thinking Exam.<sup>1</sup> In doing so, the students will be asked to evaluate claims presented in research scenarios presented in the exam. In their responses, students are asked to identify whether there is a problem with the claim and to explain it. This measure has been used in published studies of effectiveness of research-based courses on critical thinking. Once enough data has been collected on pre- and post-tests of the Psychological Thinking Exam and if the data is publishable, several outlets will be considered for publication, including the *Teaching of Psychology*. This journal has published articles on critical thinking in psychology courses, and it published the report of the validation of the “Psychological Critical Thinking Exam,” which I will use to assess the outcomes of my proposed course.

***Biography Relevant to Proposed Project***

In the past, I taught a WI course on intergroup relations as one of my primary offerings. But, I have not taught this course for over 8 years, and I did not adopt original journal articles as the primary readings for the class. Instead, I used a textbook for the course, and the assignments were different from that which I plan for the currently proposed class. In addition, I have taught a research-based capstone class for which the major assignments were written research reports. Also, I have taught a graduate course that required weekly reflection papers and two major research proposals. In the most recent three years, I have taught a WI course called “The Science of Mindfulness.” The general architecture of The Science of Mindfulness course is similar to that for my newly proposed WI course, but obviously, the content is very different. That all of my

classes have been writing intensive demonstrates my preference for this course format. One of my lines of research is related to intergroup relations, but it focuses on improving intergroup relations, in particular. As such, to develop the readings for this proposed course, my graduate student and I will need to conduct a comprehensive search of the literature on a variety of subtopics within the area of intergroup relations. I have received Research Board and National Science Foundation grant support for my research on improving intergroup relations.

### ***References***

<sup>1</sup>Lawson, T.J. (1999). Assessing psychological critical thinking as a learning outcome for psychology majors. *Teaching of Psychology*, 26, 209.