Course description

The nature of prejudice has been a topic of study in psychology, sociology, anthropology and other sciences for over a century. The understanding of prejudice has changed drastically: first considered an unnatural anomaly and pathology, a form of ‘social cancer.” It is now thought to arise from processes as common and normal as the general human tendency to categorize and simplify in an attempt to make sense of experiences and observations. In this course, we will look at prejudice, its origins and consequences (discrimination), focusing on the empirical research in cognitive and evolutionary psychology, as well as on the social mechanisms that contribute to bias against others. At the end of the course, students should have a deeper understanding of how prejudice is born and promoted at both the individual (micro) level and at the (macro) level of societies and organizations. The course will also address current research on the topic of prejudice prevention.

Learning outcomes

During this course you will:

1. Learn to think about sensitive social issues such as prejudice and discrimination from a scientific perspective.
2. Develop an deeper, integrative understanding of how to approach the topics of prejudice and discrimination from various perspectives, including cognitive and social psychological perspective
3. Understand how and which psychological processes influence behavior and attitudes of members of different groups around us.
4. Learn how the perspectives presented in the course relate to both intergroup attitudes and behaviors, and to broader sets of behaviors generally.
Course requirements and examinations

Grades are based on your active attendance and participation in class, and on the midterm and the final paper. More details on all elements will be given during the first lecture and throughout the term.

Active participation and discussion moderation

For each discussion seminar (lecture 2-7 and 9-11), the student is to submit two discussion questions related to the week’s literature via Google Classroom. For each seminar a student will be assigned the roles of moderator of the discussion. Thus, once or twice each term, depending on class size, the student will moderate the seminar discussion. This involves gathering the questions submitted by all students and presenting them on-screen in chosen order. You are welcomed to look for, and present during class, any additional information that will help you discuss the topic. Feel free to include interactive elements, such as small in-class survey’s, exercises, role play, etc. The moderators will also make sure everyone gets space to speak, and that the discussion stays on-topic.

Examination: midterm and final papers

Midterm paper (2-3 pages): the purpose of the midterm paper is for you to practice seeing examples of prejudice and discrimination in everyday life, and start you thinking about how to view it in the light of what you learned. Your task is to discuss a news event from a perspective of a theory you encountered during the course. Due: deadline will be announced at a later day.

Final paper proposal (1 page): To make sure you are on the right track, you will submit a final paper proposal that outlines the topic and approach of your final paper. More details will be provided during class.

Final paper (10 pages): The final exam is as thorough examination of a phenomenon related to the classes topic that you find especially interesting. The paper includes a literature review and a proposal for a study design that could be used to study the phenomenon further. More details on the final paper will be provided later. Not turning in the final paper in time will lead to the lowering of the final paper grade by one step for each day of delay (1 day delay: A A-, 2 days delay: A B). Due: deadline will be announced at a later day.
Attendance

This course takes an interactive approach that requires engaged participation from all members of the class. Students’ presence is essential to the liveliness of the course; therefore, attendance is mandatory. One absence is permitted; each subsequent absence will lower the overall participation grade by one step (A – A-).

Everybody should behave respectfully in the classroom. This includes coming to class on time, giving speakers undivided attention, addressing classmates and the instructor with respect, and refraining from academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, taking credit for the work of others, etc.).

Calculation of the final grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active participation in seminars and discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moderation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper and presentation</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required readings

We will not follow a textbook during this course. Instead, we will read relevant publications that review topics of our interest and present important studies. The readings are diverse, but they are always related to the theme of the seminar, i.e., they address different approaches to understanding prejudice and varied perspective on consequences of prejudice and discrimination, as well as on relevant topics. The selected materials will be distributed on the web-page for the course.

The articles are listed in the syllabus but may be subject to change. The articles will be made available in the Classroom.
Course schedule

Students are expected to read course materials before each session and prepare for active involvement. In preparation for the discussion, the student will submit two discussion questions through Google Classroom 24 hours before the seminar. For each seminar a student will be assigned the roles of moderator of the discussion. Total time for each session is expected to be 3 hours. The course consists of three types of in-class activities:

1. **Thematic seminars** which cover specific topics. Reading course materials and preparation for discussion is required before the seminars. Each seminar is structured as follows:
   - An introduction to the week’s subject complementing the readings (instructor).
   - Lecture 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11: Discussion based on pre-submitted questions related to the literature or the topics (the discussion is led by students)
   - Summary and feedback
2. **Study visit** (lecture 8, subject to change).
3. **Final presentations** (lecture 12). Students’ work will be presented, discussed and graded. Active participation is required.

Syllabus

1. Time/Date: to be determined
   **Introduction: the changing perspectives on the nature of prejudice**
   Duckitt, J. (2010). Historical overview. In J. F. DovidioM. Hewstone, & P. Glick The SAGE handbook of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination (pp. 29-44). SAGE Publications Ltd, [https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446200919.n2](https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446200919.n2)

2. Time/Date: to be determined
   **Cognitive take on prejudice (and how to measure it)**

3. **Time/Date: to be determined**

**Personality and social perspective on prejudice (and how to measure it)**


4. **Time/Date: to be determined**

**Prejudice in the brain**


5. **Time/Date: to be determined**

**Prejudice on the macro scale: health care and cancer research examples**


6. **Time/Date: to be determined**

**Health consequences of discrimination and prejudice**


**Midterm exam, deadline:** will be announced at a later day.

7. Time/Date: to be determined
   Psychological Research methods – Visiting a research lab at Stockholm University
   Details will be provided at a later date.

8. Time/Date: to be determined
   Guns, germs and prejudice - Disease avoidance


9. Time/Date: to be determined
   Prejudice in social media: a COVID-19 example


10. Time/Date: to be determined

**Prejudice in pop-culture**


Rolli, B. *BTS Were Once Again The Subject Of Racist On-Air Remarks—And Received A Pathetic Non-Apology*. Forbes

11. Time/Date: to be determined

**Reducing Prejudice**


12. Time/Date: to be determined
   Final paper presentations

   Final exam, deadline: will be announced at a later day.