

**PSYC 235: Social Psychology I – Fall 2019**  
**Best practices for discussion: Created by the class August 26th - 30th**

**What do we like about class participation?**

- Collaboration in class
- New ideas are introduced in lecture
- Shared ideas are validated
- Helps reinforce and remember class concepts
- Demonstrates the work we put in as students
- Makes a good impression on the teacher

**What don't we like about class participation?**

- Feel like we're being judged
- May hear the same voices with no new input or ideas introduced
- Answers and contributions may not make sense
- Can be refuted/shut down without further opportunities for discussion

**What can we do to work toward productive and rewarding discussions in 235?**

- Use a "Yes, and..." approach to discussion (meaning, acknowledge and validate others' contributions before making your own)
- Stay on top of readings and work
- Make it a goal to participate regularly
- Don't fear asking questions (falling prey to pluralistic ignorance)
- Address everyone by name and acknowledge their contributions to discussion
- Speak to a variety of people and neighbors seated around you
- Invite peers to participate in discussion
- Check in regularly with the pacing of course content and learning goals

On the second day of class (August 28th), we identified feelings and behaviors associated with being an insider and an outsider. When people are outsiders, they feel sad, alone, confused, hurt, annoyed, frustrated, ostracized, disrespected, ignored, short, silenced, and uneasy. Together, we identified that when people feel like outsiders they tend to work less (due to a lack of motivation), isolate themselves, do not share personal things, second-guess their self and ideas, "shut down," and distance themselves (to find another group). However, when people are made to feel like insiders, they feel confident, comfortable, cared for, joyful, enthusiastic, accepted, happy, visible, appreciated, supported, warm and soft, fuzzy, and important. Feeling like an insider makes people act more vocal, put in their best effort (due to higher motivation), are more energetic, have open body language, are friendlier, more comfortable expressing themselves, and share personal stories and experiences.

In Psyc 235: Social Psych, we will strive toward an inclusive discussion environment where people's opinions and research are heard, respected, and they are encouraged to participate further to make class productive. As announced in class, participation and assignment guidelines will follow these best practices created by our own class to make for a successful Fall 2019 course.

**PSYC 327-01: Social Psychology II – Spring 2019**  
**Best practices for discussion: Created by the class January 29th - 31st**

**What do we like about class discussions?**

- Allows for face-to-face contact with peers
- More intimate and open when they are small (3-5 people)
- Allows for different perspectives and experiences
- Increases the diversity of opinions expressed
- Makes readings and content easier to remember

**What don't we like about class discussions?**

- Unprepared participants (Debates can be emotionally charged; taking a “side” can be stigmatizing)
- Same voices monopolize room
- Responding specifically to questions can restrict discussion / questions can be leading
- Can drag on for too long (e.g., when participants have overlapping or repetitive ideas) or be unfocused (e.g., when there are no starting points to talk or when participants don't prepare)

**What can we do to work toward productive and rewarding discussions in 327?**

- Be open to criticism (i.e., say “correct me if I'm wrong...”) and be mindful of others' viewpoints
- Ensure confidentiality - what happens in the classroom stays in the classroom. Anonymize students if class topics are brought up outside class
- Address everyone by name and acknowledge their contributions to discussion
- Stay on topic/self-regulate ideas and comments
- Be willing to take on challenging or difficult positions; if playing devil's advocate preface motivations or announce such a position before making comments
- Be willing to ask for clarification from others and to clarify your own comments when asked

In Psyc 327, we will strive toward an inclusive discussion environment where people's opinions and research are heard, respected, and they are encouraged to participate further to make class productive. As announced in class, discussion leaders and participants (Dr. Bell included) will follow the guidelines outlined by the class to make for a successful spring 2019 course.

*Note.* Unlike, the other examples, the prejudice (insider-outsider) activity was not conducted prior to creating this contract.

**PSYC 490-03: Psychology of Prejudice – Spring 2019****Best practices for discussion: Created by the class January 29th - 31st****What do we like about class discussions?**

- Clarifies the readings and solidifies ideas for students
- Allows for different perspectives and experiences
- Increases the diversity of opinions expressed
- “Shakes up” class; makes for a lively and exciting course
- Makes readings and content easier to remember
- Knowledge is better integrated and connected to course assignments

**What don't we like about class discussions?**

- Debates can be emotionally charged; taking a “side” can be stigmatizing
- Pluralistic ignorance; i.e., we assume others' interpretation of the material is “right” or “correct”
- Can drag on for too long (e.g., when students have overlapping or repetitive ideas) or be unfocused (e.g., when students don't prepare)
- Students may talk without substance, only be motivated to obtain credit or feel pressure to talk just to talk
- Discussion does not go beyond surface of the article
- Culture among discussants and attributions to the larger campus is assumed
- Narrow-minded discussants who are unable to acknowledge their own biases
- Fear of offending others

**What can we do to work toward productive and rewarding discussions in 490?**

- Be open to criticism (i.e., say “correct me if I'm wrong...”) and be mindful of others' viewpoints
- Ensure confidentiality - what happens in the classroom stays in the classroom. Anonymize students if class topics are brought up outside class
- Address everyone by name and acknowledge their contributions to discussion
- Stay on topic/self-regulate ideas and comments
- Be willing to take on challenging or difficult positions; if playing devil's advocate preface motivations or announce such a position before making comments
- Be willing to ask for clarification from others and to clarify your own comments when asked

Through the activity in class 01/31, we identified feelings and behaviors associated with being an insider and an outsider. When people are outsiders, they feel sad, intimidated, anxious, alienated, misunderstood, isolated/alone, embarrassed, disappointed, prideful, tired, like crap, dehumanized, unimportant, shocked, and surprised. This leads to acting distant and quiet, with closed body language (e.g., no eye contact) and intentionally withholding emotions, or acting fidgety, or laugh; they are less willing to talk and prefer to stay observant or work on other things and not participate, or retaliate. However, when people are made to feel like insiders, they feel welcomed, relaxed and comfortable, confident, liberated, respected, seen, in the right (validated), like at home, peaceful, full of meaning, excited, authentic, understood, appreciated, and heard. Feeling like an insider makes people able to enjoy the situation, speak honestly, be more open to suggestions, open up about the

self, be willing to take risks and “be weird” and engaged; make friends and willing to learn about others, ask more questions and listen, act confident, and speak/act smoothly.

In Psyc 490, we will strive toward an inclusive discussion environment where people’s opinions and research are heard, respected, and they are encouraged to participate further to make class productive. As announced in class, discussion leaders and participants (Dr. Bell included) will follow the guidelines outlined by the class to make for a successful spring 2019 course.