



Using the “Insider/Outsider” Approach to Establish Inclusive Classroom Guidelines

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Introduction

Introductory social psychology students participated in an ice-breaker activity the first week of class to identify attitudes and behaviors related to inclusion and exclusion. This activity was used to develop a rubric for class participation and group assignments. Another goal was to provide students with actionable items to practice inclusion throughout the semester. Pre-post semester measures assessed pilot data, including students' identification with the psych major, identification with other psych students, and the extent to which they were infused with the goal of practicing inclusivity.



The Insider/Outsider Activity

The goals of the Insider/Outsider activity (Stringer, 2014), available for download on BreakingPrejudice.org (Kite, 2014), are to (1) engage students in conversations about firsthand experiences with feeling included and excluded, and (2) link the importance of group membership to social identity development and intergroup behavior (Batson et al., 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Students introduced themselves using descriptors associated with feeling excluded (e.g., lonely, unmotivated) then created lists of observable behaviors associated with being an insider and an outsider (see Figure 1). Following the activity, students identified what aspects they liked most and least about participating in classes. These aspects were linked to the insider/outsider concepts to generate a list of “best practices” for participation and discussion in the social psychology course.

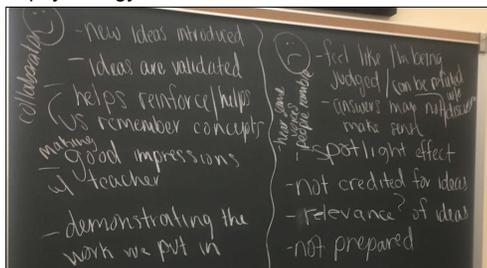


Figure 1. Students' connected feelings of inclusion and exclusion to their classroom experiences.

My Student-Generated Classroom Guidelines

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?

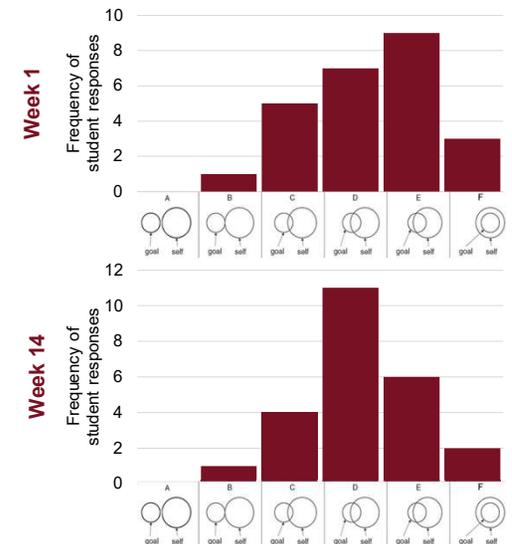
- Use a “Yes, and...” approach to discussion (meaning, acknowledge and validate others' contributions before making your own)
- Stay on top of readings and work
- Make it a goal to participate regularly
- Don't fear asking questions (falling prey to pluralistic ignorance)
- Address everyone by name and 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, 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 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. 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. Participation and assignment guidelines will follow these best practices created by our own class to make for a successful Fall 2019 course.

Preliminary Outcomes

There were no significant differences between exploratory pre-post measures of:

- Student's identification with the Psych major (Smith & White, 2001), $t(23) = -.32, p = .753$
- Student's identification with their classmates (SISI, Postmes et al., 2013), $t(23) = .37, p = .714$
- The extent to which students were fused with the goal of practicing inclusion (Hatvany et al., 2018), $t(23) = -1.24, p = .229$ (See Figures 2-3)



Figures 2-3. Pre-post measures of the extent to which students were fused with the goal of practicing inclusion.

Discussion

Setting guidelines early in the semester sets a model for classroom behavior and improves students' ability to engage with more difficult or controversial topics (Saunders & Kardias, 1997). Student-generated rubrics also enhance the development of meta-cognitive skills (Skillings & Ferrell, 2000). My social psychology students positively responded to this activity, and used the class guidelines when evaluating themselves and their group members during projects. This activity did not appear to enhance inclusive-goal setting; explicit measures connecting the rubric to student discussion outcomes are necessary to assess its effectiveness.

Week 1/Week 14 Pre-Post Survey

Directions: Using the following scale, please indicate the number that best describes how much you agree with each of the statements below.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

1. _____ I learn things quickly in Psychology classes
2. _____ Psychology is one of my best subjects
3. _____ I get good grades in Psychology
4. _____ I have always done well in Psychology
5. _____ I'm hopeless in Psychology classes
6. _____ I do badly in tests of Psychology

Directions: Using the following scale, please indicate the number that best describes you for each of the statements below:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		Very Much

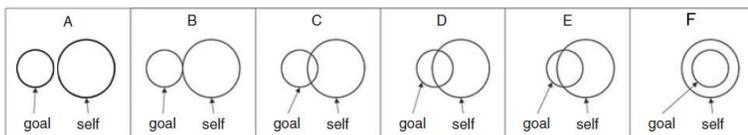
7. _____ How much do you enjoy Psychology-related subjects?
8. _____ How likely would you be to take a job in a Psychology related field?
9. _____ How much is Psychology important to the sense of who you are?
10. _____ How important is it to you to be good at Psychology?

Directions: Using the following scale, please indicate the number that best describes how much you agree with the following statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither Disagree or Agree			Strongly Agree

11. _____ I identify with my fellow Psychology classmates.

Directions: Pick the picture that best represents how much the goal of *practicing inclusivity with your psychology peers* (i.e., including people who would otherwise be excluded) is a part of who you are.



Modified Insider/Outsider and Collaborative Guidelines Procedure

Estimated Time: 20-40 minutes for both activities (each can be done in 10-20 minutes)

Group Size: Adjustable. I have conducted these activities in a 200-level class of 35 (current case study), a 300-level class of 20, and a 400-level class of 14.

Suggested Materials: White/chalk boards to record student responses, document projector, google forms sheet for distributing the collaborative guidelines based on the activity's outcomes

Instructions:

- Insider/Outsider Demo
 1. Collect outsider emotions by asking students to think of a time when they were excluded, ostracized, or left out of a group. Students should think or write down two words that describe how they felt.
 2. Students should then introduce themselves to as many people in the room not using their names, but the feelings they used to describe themselves
 3. Record outsider emotions on the board (under "feeling different" heading) by asking students to call out what feelings they heard.
 4. Collect insider emotions by asking students to think of a time when they were included in a group.
 5. Skip the re-introductions (students can have the option to talk with a partner nearby before sharing) and have students call out the feelings they experienced. Record insider emotions on the board (under "feeling similar" heading).
 6. Ask students to identify how people act (through observable behaviors) when they feel similar to others. Repeat for how people act when they feel different. Record actions on the board.
- Follow-up Collaborative Guideline Questions
 1. Ask students what aspects of class participation make them feel included or similar to other students (using previously recorded feelings), and record responses.
 2. Ask students what aspects of class participation make them feel excluded or ostracized from other students (using previously recorded feelings), and record responses.
 3. Ask students to identify how they can participate (through observable behaviors) in the classroom in ways that encourages feelings of inclusion and discourages feelings of exclusion. Record responses.
 4. Communicate with students that this activity will be the rubric for class participation and group-based assignments. I recommend creating a syllabus that allows room to link this supplementary document to classroom conduct policies and/or grading evaluations for relevant assignments within Week 1 of the semester.

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