Welcome to New Student Orientation

Content description

This is the course title page, featuring the UVa logo, the course title, a "What Is It?" button to launch the course, and the Project Implicit logo.

Audio

Welcome to grounds. This part of your orientation to UVa is about something called implicit bias.

Just click on the "what is it" button, and we'll get started.



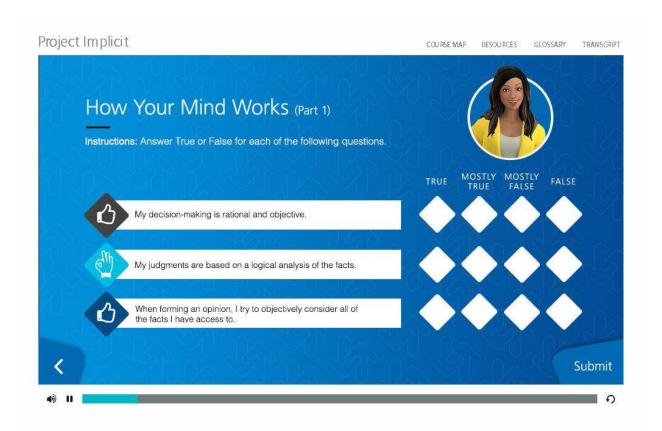
How Does Your Mind Work?

Content description

This is a three question self-evaluation, with the questions presented as statements you can respond to: 1. My decision-making is rational and objective. 2. My judgments are based on a logical analysis of the facts. 3. When forming an opinion, I try to objectively consider all of the facts I have access to. The responses are: True, Mostly True, Mostly False and False. When the learner has answered all the questions, a Submit button displays.

Audio

Oh, I'm Maya, by the way. Before we get started, I have a few questions I would like you to answer from your perspective.



How Your Mind Works

Content description

Maya, the host, explains that we aren't always aware of how our mind works. That your unconscious mind is controlling heartbeat, breathing and other muscles, freeing up your conscious mind to do other things...like take this training. Our unconscious mind affects the things we think, say and do without us being aware of it. We have attitudes, which are how we evaluate people, places, and even ideas. We also have stereotypes, or beliefs about groups of people. When we are aware of these attitudes and stereotypes, we call them explicit. But we also have implicit attitudes and stereotypes—these are known as implicit biases. Implicit biases may influence our thinking in ways you're not even aware of and can't totally control. Let's take a look.

Audio

Y'know, most people think their behavior is rational and objective. They think each decision is based on facts and reason. I know I do. I bet you do, too.

But we aren't always aware of all the ways that our minds are working. We often don't think about how much of our mental processing occurs outside of conscious awareness and control.

For instance, right now you're probably not aware that your mind is regulating your breathing and heart rate.

It's coordinating the muscles that keep your eyes open so you can see these images of the UVa grounds.

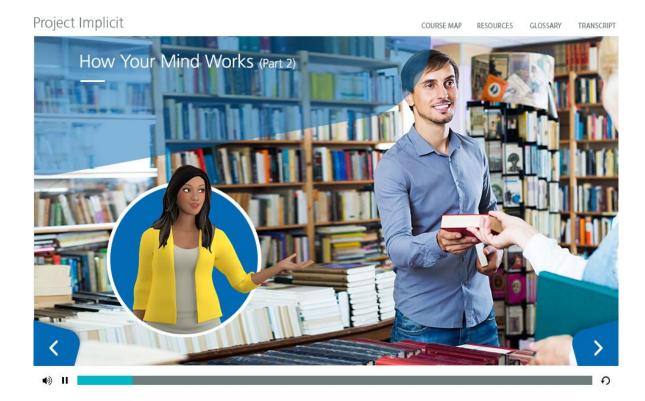
This frees up your conscious mind to focus on other things, like listening to what I'm saying.

But here's the important part. This mental processing that you're not consciously aware of also influences how you think about yourself and everyone around you.

We have attitudes, which are how we evaluate people, places, and even ideas. We also have stereotypes, or beliefs about groups of people.

When we are aware of these attitudes and stereotypes, we call them explicit. But we also have implicit attitudes and stereotypes—these are known as implicit biases.

Implicit biases may influence our thinking in ways you're not even aware of and can't totally control. Let's take a look.



Which Club Would You Fund?

Content description

A self-assessment question. Maya tells the audience she is responsible for giving a student group additional funds and asks the learner which group she should fund. The options of clubs are: "Spanish Language Club", "Christian Fellowship at UVA", "Cavaliers for Sustainability" and "Wahoo Women in Tech".

Audio

Did I mention that I'm the grad student representative to student council. Just last week I had to decide which student organization should get an additional \$250 for the semester.

These are the clubs I had to choose from. Which would you pick?



Think About Your Selection

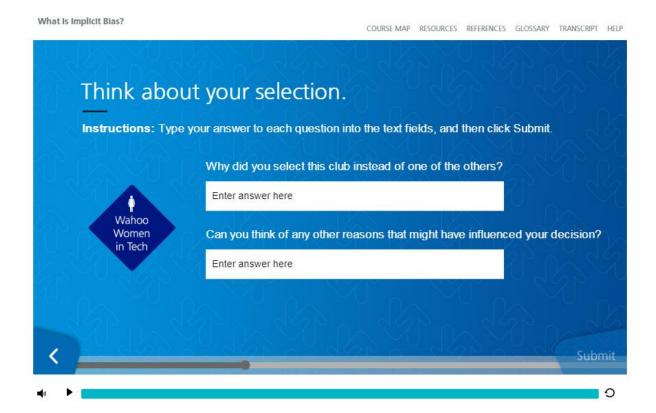
Content description

A probing self-assessment question. Maya asks the learner to think about their choice of group to fund. There are two questions that the learner types a response to in their own words: 1. Why did you select this club instead of one of the others? 2. Can you think of any other reasons that might have influenced your decision?

Audio

Let me pose a couple questions about your decision.

Answer each one to the best of your ability.



Influences on Decision-Making

Content description

Maya explains what goes into making a simple decision.

Audio

As you can see, a simple decision isn't necessarily all that simple. There's a lot that goes into our decision-making process.

Many of these processes happen quickly, automatically. We can't observe all the ways in which our minds operate. We'll talk more about this in a moment.

We do know that your expectations and past experiences play a big role in how you perceive things.

The mind automatically looks for evidence that supports those expectations.

Finally, implicit attitudes and stereotypes can predict your decisions and behavior. So a simple choice might be anything but.



What Emotion Is David Feeling?

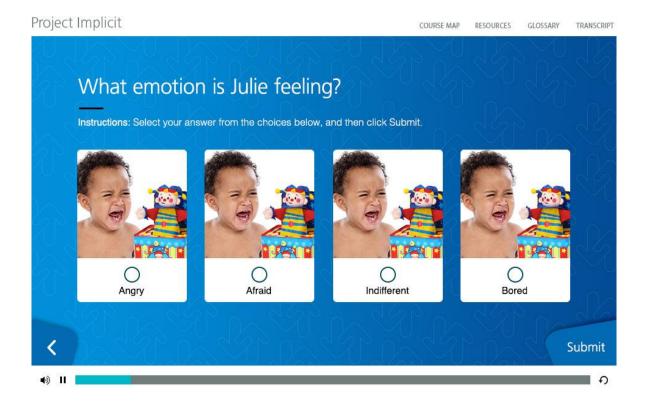
Content description

Maya presents David, a baby who is playing with a jack-in-the-box. Then the box pops open, he makes a face. Then she asks learner to select what emotion they think David is feeling: Angry, Afraid, Indifferent, or Bored.

Audio

Let me show you what I mean. Little David here was playing with a jack-in-the-box. When it popped out, he made this face.

What emotion do you think he's feeling?



Feedback

Content description

Maya tells the learner that the David question is part of a classic study. Then she explains that study, which reveals gender bias in the participants.

Audio

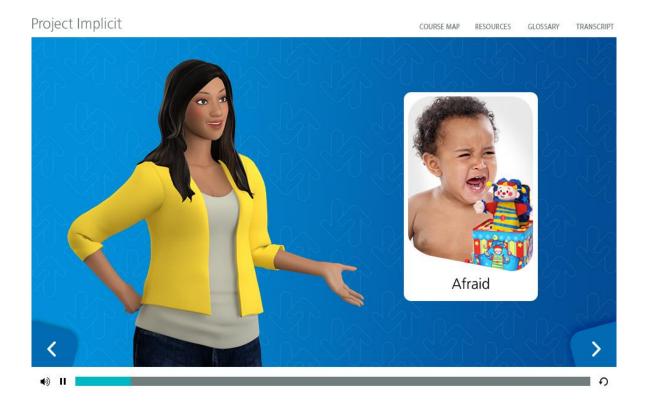
Here's the emotion you selected. This exercise came from a classic study. In it, two different groups of college students watched a video of the exact same baby and jack-in-the-box.

One group was told the baby had a male name. David. These students were more likely to believe that the baby was angry.

The other group was told the baby had a female name. Dana. They were more likely to believe that she was afraid.

As you can see, the study shows us something about the participants' gender bias and stereotypes, or expectations for what girls and boys typically feel.

Although these participants probably didn't think their behavior was biased, this study shows one way that implicit attitudes and stereotypes can influence decisions without our even knowing it.



Color Race: Round One

Content description

Maya provides instructions for the color race test as well as a Begin button to start the test. In the test, learners must read the ink color of twelve words out loud (or to themselves) and then click on the onscreen timer to complete the test. The twelve words are as follows: green, blue, red, yellow, blue yellow, red, blue, green, yellow. The ink is the same color as the word - that is, the green word is written in green ink, the red word in red ink and the yellow word in yellow ink. Each word appears three times in the list. When they click Begin, the screen changes and the list of words appears. Maya repeats the instructions and tells the learner to click the timer to begin reading, then to click it again when they've read through the list.

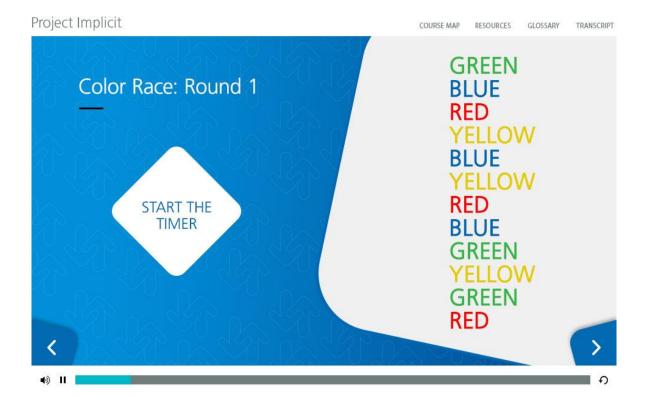
Audio

Here's another way to look at how our mind processes information automatically. In the screen behind me you'll find a list of words. They are printed in different colors of ink. Behind this instruction screen is a timer that'll start when you click the START THE TIMER button.

Read the color of each word out loud, or mouth it silently to yourself. Don't read the word, read the color—so you'd say green then blue then red and so on. Go as fast as you can.

When you've said the whole list out loud, click on the timer to stop it and see how fast you were.

Click START THE TIMER and begin reading.



Color Race: Round Two

Content description

Maya provides instructions for the second part of the color race test as well as a Begin button to start the test. In this version of the test, learners must again read the ink color of twelve words out loud (or to themselves) and then click on the onscreen timer to complete the test--only this time the list has changed. The twelve words are as follows: yellow, green, red, yellow, blue, red, yellow, blue, green, red, blue, green. In Round 2, the words are typed in a different ink color than their word meaning - that is, the yellow word is typed in green ink, the green word is typed in blue ink, the blue word is typed in red ink and so on. When they click Begin, the screen changes and the list of words appears. Maya repeats the instructions and tells the learner to click the timer to begin reading, then to click it again when they've read through the list. Once the exercise is completed, Maya tells the learner that Round 2 was harder because your brain had to perform competing tasks.

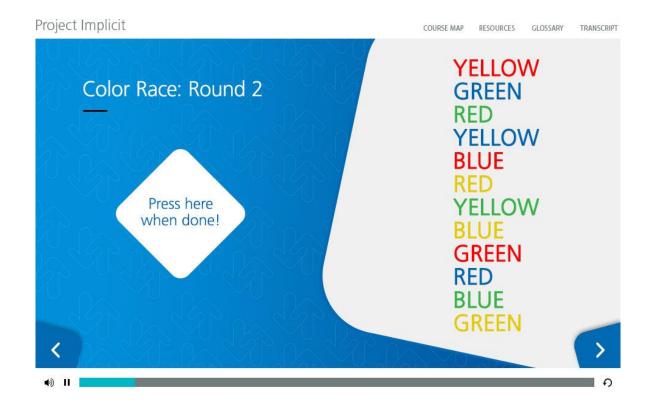
Audio

Now do the same thing for round two. The list has changed, but the instructions are the same.

Say the color of each word out loud. Ignore the word itself; just say the color. Go as fast as you can.

When you've said the whole list out loud, click on the timer to stop it.

Click START THE TIMER to begin.



Final audio

Round two was harder, wasn't it? Here's why.

You had competing tasks. You consciously focused on identifying the color. But you also read the word, even though I told you to ignore it. That's because reading is automatic—it happens even if you're trying not to do it.

This is a good thing. It allows you to do things like read road signs while you're driving.

But sometimes it doesn't work the way we want it to, like here. The point is: it just happens—we can't always consciously control the automatic processes of our minds.

Which Tabletop Looks Longer and Thinner?

Content description

There are three different exercises for this screen. In the first, Maya asks you to select the table that is longer and thinner. One of the tables obviously looks longer and thinner than the other table. In the second exercise, the learner is told that the tables are the same size--they are told to drag and drop measuring rulers onto the tables to prove this. Then, Maya explains that perception and reality are not always the same thing. Sometimes context (past experiences and beliefs) make us perceive things differently.

Audio

Ready for another example of how implicit processes work? Answer this question.

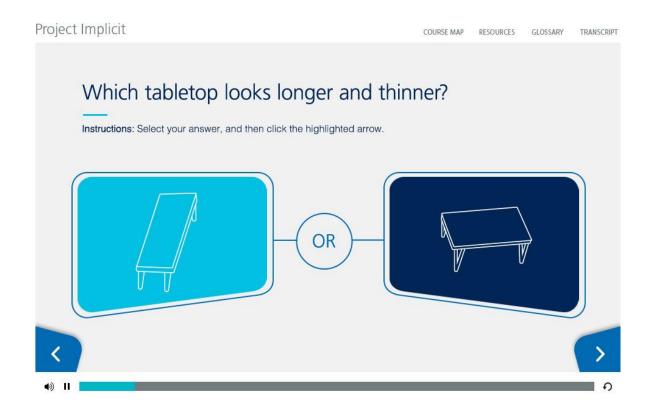
Actually, the two tables are the same shape and size. Don't take my word for it; use this drag-and-drop angle ruler to measure them for yourself.

Simply click on the ruler and drag it to the tables.

They look the same size now, don't they? You see, the eye only perceives two dimensions, and the placement and perspective of the table legs fooled your mind into "seeing" the table on the left as longer as and thinner than the one on the right. We learned that our expectations and past experience influence our decision-making as well as our perceptions.

This illustrates a potential problem. We tend to automatically accept that the world is the way we perceive it, but reality and our perception of reality are not always the same thing.

The same thing is true of the tables. We see them as different because of the context we see them in. We also can experience the same event differently, depending upon who performs it.



Stereotypes Are Often Implicit

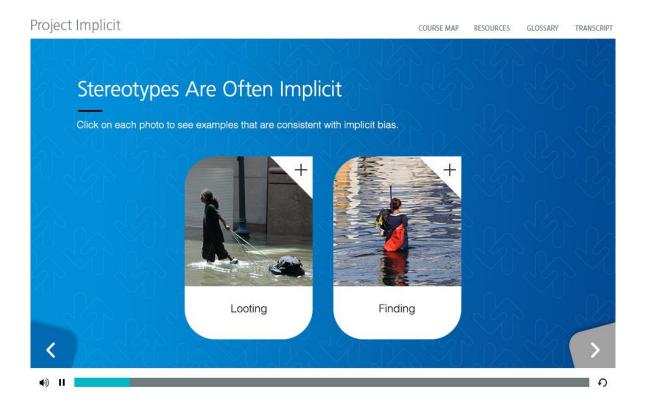
Content description

This exercise uses images to point out the impact of stereotypes on perception. Both an African-American man and a white woman are carrying supplies through floodwaters. When the images are clicked on it reveals that the news media reported the African-American man looted the supplies, whereas the white woman found the supplies. The media is perpetuating a stereotype.

Audio

That disconnect between perception and reality can also happen when we evaluate other people.

Photos like these—of people walking through floodwater—regularly appear in national news outlets after natural disasters. Click on each photo to see how implicit bias may have crept into the media coverage.



Final audio

The actions in both photos are identical. But this photo is of a black man, and there is a racial stereotype linking black men to crime.

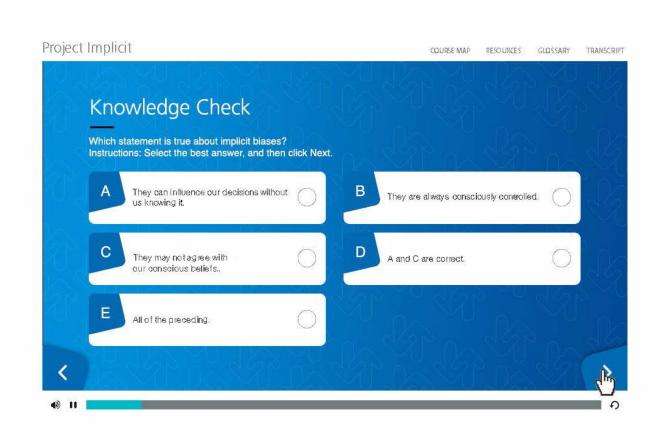
In this photo, the resident was reported to have found groceries. Expectations based on racial stereotypes seem to have influenced how the actions in these two photos were interpreted.

Because we're exposed to stereotypes in the media, and sometimes in our families and communities, we learn them, and they exist in our minds, even if we personally reject them.

Knowledge Check

Content description

This questions asks learners to select, "Which statement is true about implicit biases?" The choices are: A. They can influence our decisions without us knowing it.; B. They are always consciously controlled.; C. They may not agree with our conscious beliefs.; D. A and C are correct.; E. All of the preceding. The correct answer is D, which is supported by feedback.



Correct feedback

That's right. Implicit biases are mostly automatic and can influence the decisions we make without us even knowing it. Good Job!

Course Conclusion

Content description

Mayas summarizes the course into three simple ideas: Idea One: A lot of mental activity occurs outside of awareness. Idea Two: Mental activity that occurs outside of awareness can contradict your conscious beliefs. Idea Three: Action can be shaped by intended and unintended thoughts. She concludes with a brief description of what Module Two will teach the learner.

Audio

Everything we've talked about in this module boils down to three simple ideas:

One. A lot of what goes on in your mind happens outside of your conscious awareness.

Two. The things that happen outside of your awareness can differ from your conscious values and beliefs.

Three. Your actions can be shaped by thoughts that are intended and unintended.

In module two, you'll learn about the Implicit Association Test and have an opportunity to explore your own implicit associations.

