

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO BREAK THE BIAS HABIT

EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES TO REDUCE BIAS, CREATE INCLUSION, AND PROMOTE EQUITY

SPEAKER INFO

Dr. William Taylor Laimaka Cox is a scientist-practitioner with 20 years of experience in the realm of social justice. His work all serves the ultimate goal of understanding and reducing the injustice, human suffering, and disparities that arise from stereotyping and prejudice. Dr. Cox is the Founder/CEO of the Inequity Agents of Change, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization devoted to disseminating evidence-based approaches to reduce bias, create inclusion, and promote equity.

William T. L. Cox, PhD

☎ (352) 275-1223

✉ william.cox@biashabit.com

🌐 biashabit.com

📌 /ScienceCox

🐦 @ScienceCox

🌐 [linkedin.com/in/ScienceCox](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ScienceCox)

📺 bit.ly/CoxIntro

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EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES TO REDUCING BIAS

Increasingly, universities and other organizations have become concerned with identifying strategies to reduce rates of bias incidents and to promote equality. Abundant evidence indicates that, however well-intentioned, diversity and bias intervention efforts that are not based on scientific evidence at best *do not work* and very often *make bias problems worse* (e.g., Apfelbaum et al., 2012; Dobbin & Kalev, 2013; Legault et al., 2011; Paluck & Green, 2009). In response, nearly every major scientific organization (e.g., NIH, NSF, AAAS) has emphasized the need for evidence-based approaches to addressing bias and promoting diversity (e.g., Moss-Racusin, et al., 2014). The goal of understanding, predicting, and changing human behavior is best served by the scientific method, and addressing issues of bias, diversity, and inclusion is no exception; it requires a scientific, evidence-based approach to create change and demonstrate the effectiveness of efforts to reduce bias and enhance diversity.

THE BIAS-HABIT BREAKING TRAINING

The bias habit breaking training was the first and remains the *only* intervention that has been shown experimentally to produce long-term changes in bias (Cox & Devine, 2019; Devine, Forscher, Austin, & Cox, 2012). This training was built on more than 30 years of research on the prejudice habit model (Devine, 1989), which originated the very notion of “implicit bias” or “unintentional bias”. The habit model approaches bias as a type of mental habit. Whereas previous models of prejudice and bias suggested that prospects for true change were dim, the habit model proposes a clear evidence-based model for lasting, meaningful reductions in bias. The bias habit-breaking training translates this work into an empowerment-based training that treats bias reduction as a process of “breaking the bias habit,” which requires *motivation* to overcome bias, *awareness* of different ways bias manifests and is perpetuated, evidence-based *tools* to effectively reduce bias, and *effort* over time to retrain bias habits.

Over the past 15 years, this training has been administered with many different audiences, including public school teachers, professors, graduate students, lawyers, judges, doctors, police officers, tech companies, and others. Randomized-controlled tests have shown that the training causes long-term decreases in measured levels of implicit bias and increases in awareness and concern about racial and other forms of discrimination. The training equips people with tools to recognize and address bias, and experiments have shown that people who have completed the training are significantly more likely to speak up against bias and confront bias in the world around them, up to at least 2-3 years post-training. A gender version of this training directed at STEM faculty (Carnes et al., 2012) caused a 15 percentage point increase in hiring women as faculty in UW-Madison science departments (Devine, Forscher, Cox, Kaatz, Sheridan, & Carnes, 2017). In over a dozen randomized-controlled studies, our team has tested this training's replicability and long-term effectiveness, with effects lasting up to at least 2-3 years.

FOR THOSE REQUESTING THE TRAINING

If you would like the seminar for your group, we can arrange that with you. The interactive seminar is 3 hours (with short discussion breaks) and can be adapted to groups of varying sizes. Delivery can be either in person or remote (preferably Zoom Meetings). The meeting manager should plan to connect with Dr. Cox at least 30 minutes prior to the seminar, for tech checks and to go over details.

Contact Dr. Cox at william.cox@biashabit.com to discuss details, such as group size and pricing.

