

Speaker Biosketches
National Diversity Equity Workshop (NDEW) 2013

Valerie Jones Taylor

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Valerie Jones Taylor received a doctorate in social psychology from Stanford University in 2009, where she was advised and mentored by Dr. Claude M. Steele. Upon completion of her graduate training, she was a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow (2009 – 2011) at Princeton University, under the guidance of Dr. J. Nicole Shelton. Dr. Taylor began her tenure as an assistant professor of psychology at Spelman College in the fall of 2011 and was awarded a Ford Postdoctoral Fellowship (2011 – 2012) to support her research at Spelman. Broadly, Dr. Taylor's research explores how and when identity threat (e.g., racial or gender stereotyping) may be advantageous or detrimental to people's cognitive and behavioral outcomes. In one line of research, she examines the conditions under which threatening academic and professional environments motivate members of negatively stereotyped and numerically underrepresented groups to work hard to succeed and to persist in these settings—rather than cause them to disengage or to give up. In a second line of research, she applies her work on threat and motivation to interpersonal interactions to explore how people manage interracial (vs. intraracial) interactions after witnessing same-race peers commit stereotype-confirming acts. Finally, Dr. Taylor's third line of research continues the development of stereotype threat theory by examining: (1) the conditions under which achievement gaps are induced and eliminated and (2) the cumulative effect of stereotype threat on stereotyped students' learning. Dr. Taylor was recently awarded a National Science Foundation Research Grant (2012 – 2015) to continue her work at Spelman College.