MENTORING DIVERSE STUDENTS – BEST PRACTICES
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WHAT DOES MENTORING MEAN TO YOU?

SOME EXAMPLES OF CHALLENGES YOU HAVE HAD

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR/WITH THIS PLANT?

WHAT DO WE GAIN BY MENTORING A DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE GROUP OF STUDENTS?

EFFECTIVE MENTORING INVOLVES UNDERSTANDING STUDENT’S IDENTITIES, COMMUNITIES, AND GOALS

- First generation?
- Underrepresented?
- Women in STEM?

Plant/mentoring analogous image. Montgomery, Michigan State University.
YOU HAVE RECRUITED STUDENTS FROM A DIVERSE ARRAY OF BACKGROUNDS.

NOW, HOW TO MAKE SURE THEY FEEL WELCOME, SUCCESSFUL, VALUED AND MENTORED!

MENTORING IS ALL ABOUT RETENTION

"There just came a day when I had to ask myself, Why am I here? Is it worth it? Hardly anyone talks to me. I know most of them (student and teachers) don't think I'm as smart as they are. They don't think I earned my place here. Maybe they don't even like me. Do I have to take this crap?" (Johnson-Bailey, 2004)

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RETENTION
- Negative classroom interactions
- Family responsibilities
-Insensitive institutional atmosphere
- Class schedule
- Support structures centered on traditional students
- Apathetic advisor

IMPORTANCE OF A PEER NETWORK
Mentoring is NOT just about the faculty-student relationship

You do not need to be, nor should you be, all things for your mentee

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

IMPLICIT BIAS

Watch: Alan Alda as part of a Scientific American Video:
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ

How Do We Know We Have Bias?

TAKE THE IMPLICIT BIAS TEST TO LEARN MORE!
- https://www.bvh.com/implicitbias

A very important outcome of this research – biases are “plastic” and can be remodelled, with work
VALUE OF MENTORING IN ADVANCING DIVERSITY IN SCIENCE

• In a recent study of leadership in the medical field, it was found that metrics of success correlated well to opportunities provided by a mentor/sponsor (Patton et al., 2017).

• "For both men and women in academic medicine, being sponsored was associated with success defined by typical metrics emphasized in the academic promotions process, like publications, grants, and leadership positions."

• Men reported higher levels of mentoring/sponsorship.

• Another study tracked women economists for 3-5 years who were either in a structured mentoring program or a 'control group'.

• The study found significant gains for those who received mentoring in: total number of publications, publications in "top tier" journals, and number of federal grants awarded. (Blau et al., 2010)

BEST PRACTICES IN MENTORING FOR DIVERSITY

• Consider, and accommodate, needs of family (family-friendly policies)

• Offer additional mentoring or opportunities that best students a step ahead
  - Summer research experience
  - Connect students with campus-wide resources or programs for diversity

• Discuss challenges that face diverse groups
  - Imposter syndrome
  - Implicit bias and stereotype threat

• Encourage strong building of networks
  - Connect similar scholars/mentors
  - Pair newer and more advanced students together
  - Provide support to attend conferences (e.g., SACNAS)
  - Provide support to membership at national Center for Faculty Diversity & Development

MENTORING ASSESSMENT

• Safety in the field
• Campus resources for sexual harassment and mental health
• Others?

CONNECTIONS TO OTHER TOPICS/SESSIONS
EXTRA SLIDES

WHEN IS MENTORING IMPORTANT?
(TESSA Posted this question on Twitter)

• A suite of responses, including:
  • In early stages of scientific career when students are trying to make decisions about their future
  • During "transition" phases from one step to another
  • Dealing with harassment or negative academic culture
  • When trying to juggle family life and responsibilities in career
  • When seeking advice on challenges in career

‘BEST PRACTICES’ ARE COMPILED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES:

• [Website] [Princeton University - Diversity Report - Best Practices for Graduate Students]
• [Website] [Scientific American - 3 Myths Plus a Few Best Practices for Achieving Diversity]
• [Website] [Slideshare.net - UTEP Graduate Mentoring - Diverse Students]
• [Website] [Tom forth.co.uk - Gender Bias]
• [Website] [The IAGD - Research Literature]
• [Website] [Implicit.harvard.edu - Implicit]
• [Website] [JHU - Diverse Wheel]

Successful STEM Mentoring Initiatives for Underrepresented Students: A Research-Based Guide for Faculty and Administrators, Becky Wai Ling Packard (2015), Syner Publishing.