

## MENTORING DIVERSE STUDENTS – BEST PRACTICES

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WHAT DOES MENTORING MEAN TO YOU?

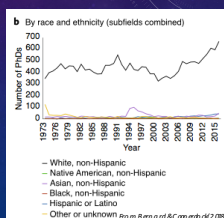
SOME EXAMPLES OF CHALLENGES YOU HAVE HAD

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR/WITH THIS PLANT?



Plant/Mentoring analogy from Benda Montgomery, Michigan State University

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?

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

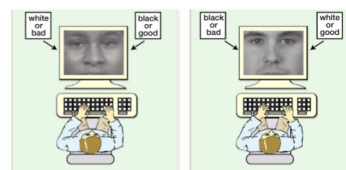
[Peer-to-Peer Mentoring](#)

### IMPLICIT BIAS

- Watch: Alan Alda as part of a Scientific American Video:
- <https://youtu.be/3N1M8c-wQ>



### How Do We Know We Have Bias?



Implicit Association Test (IAT)

@EPIP @NCRP #ImplicitBias

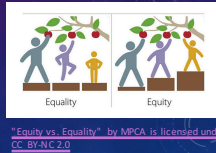
TAKE THE IMPLICIT BIAS TEST TO LEARN MORE!

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

A very important outcome of this research – biases are 'plastic' and can be remodeled, 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



### VALUE OF MENTORING IN ADVANCING DIVERSITY IN SCIENCE

- 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 give students a step ahead
  - Summer research experiences
  - 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 to other scholars & mentors
  - Pair newer and more advanced student together
  - Provide support for attendance to diverse meetings (e.g., SACNAS)
  - Provide support for membership to National Center for Faculty Diversity & Development

### BEST PRACTICES IN MENTORING FOR DIVERSITY

- Carefully consider language you use in letters of recommendation
- Consider how your research, teaching, or activities may exclude students of differing abilities, financial stability, or backgrounds (do a self-assessment)
- Bolster the feeling of "belonging"
  - Consider the messages you send in your own language, room décor, discussion facilitation
- Acknowledge that school (undergraduate, graduate) can be challenging to students from all backgrounds
- Assess your expectations and your student's expectations about mentoring

### MENTORING ASSESSMENT

### CONNECTIONS TO OTHER TOPICS/SESSIONS

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

## 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 responsibilities with career
  - When seeking advice on challenges in this career

## 'BEST PRACTICES' ARE COMPILED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES:

- <https://www.princeton.edu/reports/2013/diversity/report/PJ-as-port-best-practices-graduate-students.pdf>
- <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/3-myths-plus-a-few-best-practices-for-achieving-diversity/>
- <https://www.slideshare.net/utopgrad/mentoring-diverse-students>
- <http://homborh.co.uk/eendebias/>
- <http://www.theigad.org/research-literature/>
- <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- <http://web.ithu.edu/dlc/resources/diversity-wheel/>
- Successful STEM Mentoring: Initiatives for Underrepresented Students: A Research-Based Guide for Faculty and Administrators, Becky Wai-Ling Packard (2015). Stylus Publishing.