

Mentoring Graduate Students

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Defintion and Importance

- Mentorship—*a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together over time to support the personal and professional growth, development, and success of the relational partners through the provision of career and psychosocial support.*
- Mentorship for graduate students is the most important aspect of their training/ educational experience while also often being the most disappointing aspect of their experience.
- Mentoring is a major determinant in the likelihood of trainee/mentee success (Brunsma et al., 2017)

Uneven landscape of mentoring

- Mentoring quality and access vary by demographic group, discipline
- Students in STEMM report that their primary advisors are less supportive than those in social sciences and humanities (Noy & Ray, 2012)..
- Many faculty do not believe psychosocial functions are part of their mentorship role (Laursen et al., 2010)
- Many adopt a colorblind ideology in general (Prunuske et al., 2014)

Engaging difference in mentorship

- “Conversations about why we lack diversity are frequently left to minority researchers. For others, these conversations are often uncomfortable, (viewed as) distracting, irrelevant, or a waste of time.” (Racism in the Research lab, NY Times, 8/4/16 Colon-Ramos & Quinones).
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Reflection and Discussion questions

- What strikes you about the definition of mentorship?
- One facet of mentorship it includes that I appreciate is.....
- What is one current strength of mentorship in your dept./unit?
- What is one actionable to improve the culture of mentorship- its quality and provision- to graduate students, in particular, underrepresented students, including students of color, women, and LGBTQI students, you would like to see taken?