



Strategies for Effective Mentorship of BIPOC Students

Joia Freeman, MPH Student

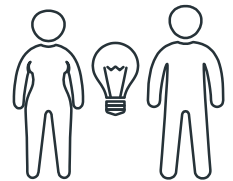
Summer Practicum 2021

THE EQUITY TASK FORCE & IT'S GOALS

- ◎ **Health Behavior Equity Task Force (ETF)**
 - Committed to promoting anti-racism & equity
 - Goal of cultivating a “learning environment in which ***ALL*** students and faculty can thrive.”
- ◎ As part of their efforts, drafted the ***Equity Action and Accountability Plan (EAAP)***
 - One of the steps in the EAAP is to, “Review mentoring practices, structures, and processes to better center the needs of BIPOC students and draft recommendations/guidelines that incorporate student input and best practices from the field.”
 - So, the ETF has been working to improve mentorships relations for BIPOC MPH students

Faculty Interviews & BIPOC Student Brainstorming Sessions

- ◎ To inform the development of strategies and tools for improving mentorship of BIPOC MPH students, faculty interviews & a BIPOC student brainstorming session were hosted
 - Wanted to attain direct input and ideas from faculty & students



INTERVIEWS & BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS: Questions Asked

Faculty Interviews:

- In your experience, what do you feel makes a faculty/student mentorship most effective? On the contrary, what creates obstacles and barriers?
- Describe your experience with mentoring BIPOC students?
- How can the department better support faculty mentors with executing effective mentorships with students?
- If you had an opportunity to reimagine the way the department executes faculty mentorship, what are things you would change? How would it look?

Student Brainstorming Sessions

- When reflecting upon your current relationship with your faculty mentor, what are its strengths? What are ways in which it could develop?
- How would you describe your ideal faculty/student mentorship?
- How does your concentration's current mentoring system work for you?
- If you had an opportunity to reimagine the way the department carries out faculty mentorship, what are things you would change? How would it look?

FEEDBACK & INPUT



Student: *“Important that there be a mutual understanding of expectations.”*

Faculty: *“...[for some BIPOC students] this is their first experience at a PWI...this can be overwhelming, intimidating and frustrating.”*

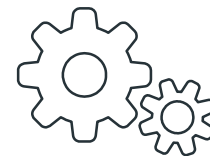
Student: *“[Given the power dynamic and not fully knowing what to expect] I would’ve appreciated the faculty mentor reaching out to me rather than the other way around.”*

Faculty: *“There hasn’t been explicit training around this [best practices for mentoring BIPOC students].”*

Faculty: *Can be difficult to approach these relationships, “coming from a position of power as a white woman and faculty member.”*



DEVELOPED TOOLS FOR USE



Tool #1

Strategies for Effective Mentorship of BIPOC Students

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP OF BIPOC STUDENTS

4 Things to Consider



EXAMINE YOUR POSITIONALITY & THE AREAS IN WHICH YOU HOLD POWER AS A MEANS OF NAMING, ACKNOWLEDGING AND BEING ABLE TO DISCUSS POWER DYNAMICS BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR MENTEE.

Be open to incorporating this into your first meeting(s) discussion to recognize that power is always operating and seek to manage those dynamics to create a more comfortable space for your mentee.

APPROACH RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIPOC MENTEES IN THE SPIRIT OF LEARNING AND INQUIRY; AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE WILL BE MOMENTS WHERE YOU WILL NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE EXPERIENCING.

Be willing to tap into other resources (other faculty, colleagues in the field, etc.) to ensure your mentee is able to receive the support they need.

IN MOMENTS OF RACE RELATED TRAGEDY AND TRAUMA, BE PRESENT AND LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR MENTEE NEEDS.

During these times, remember to take cues from your mentee on how to best support them.

IF YOUR MENTEE CONFIDES IN YOU ABOUT EXPERIENCING DISCRIMINATION/RACISM AT THE SCHOOL, LISTEN TO THEM, ACKNOWLEDGE THE INCIDENT AND AFFIRM THEIR FEELINGS. ALSO, ASK THEM HOW YOU CAN BEST SUPPORT THEM.

In these instances, it is important that your mentee feels that they have a trustworthy support system that centers their best interest and wellbeing.

WHAT SHOULD WE DISCUSS?

A BREAKDOWN BY SEMESTER



1st Year: Semester 1

- Mentorship Expectations/Boundaries
- Mentee Interest(s) & Goals (in & outside of school)
- Job/Research Opportunities
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates (classes)
- Life Updates
- Classes for Next Semester
- Summer Practicum

Summer Break

- Practicum Check-in(s)
- Job/Research Opportunities
- Life Updates
- Comp. Exam

1st Year: Semester 2

- Areas of improvement for mentor/mentee relationship
- Job/Research Opportunities
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates (classes)
- Life Updates
- Classes for Next Semester
- Summer Practicum

2nd Year: Semester 1

- Job/Research Opportunities
- Career Interests & Job Opportunities Post-Graduation
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates
- Life Updates
- Classes for Next Semester

2nd Year: Semester 2

- Career Interests & Job Opportunities Post-Graduation
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates
- Life Updates

Tool #2

A Breakdown of Things to Discuss with Mentees Each Semester

TOOL #1: Strategies for Effective Mentorship of BIPOC Students

Examine your positionality & the areas in which you hold power as a means of being able to discuss power dynamics between you & your mentee.

Be open to incorporating this into your first meeting(s) discussion to recognize that power is always operating and seek to manage those dynamics to create a more comfortable space for your mentee.

Approach relationships with BIPOC mentees in the spirit of learning & inquiry; and acknowledge that there will be moments where you will not understand what they are experiencing.

Be willing to tap into other resources (other faculty, colleagues, etc.) to ensure your mentee is able to receive the support they need.

In moments of race related tragedy and trauma, be present and listen to what your mentee needs.

During these times, remember to take cues from your mentee on how to best support them.

If your mentee confides in you about experiencing discrimination/racism at the school, listen to them, acknowledge the incident and affirm their feelings. Also, ask them how you can best support them.

In these instances, it is important that your mentee feel that they have a trustworthy support system that centers their best interest and wellbeing.

Tool #2: A Breakdown of Things to Discuss with Mentees Each Semester

- Areas of improvement for mentor/mentee relationship
- Job/Research Opportunities
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates (classes)
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- Job/Research Opportunities
- Career Interests & Job Opportunities Post-Graduation
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates
- Life Updates
- Classes for Next Semester

1ST YEAR: SEMESTER 1

1ST YEAR: SEMESTER 2

SUMMER BREAK

2ND YEAR: SEMESTER 1

2ND YEAR: SEMESTER 2

- Mentorship Expectations/Boundaries
- Mentee Interest(s) & Goals (in & outside of school)
- Job/Research Opportunities
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates (classes)
- Life Updates
- Classes for Next Semester
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- Practicum Check-in(s)
- Job/Research Opportunities
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- Career Interests & Job Opportunities Post-Graduation
- Opportunities to Network & Make Connections in Area(s) of Interest(s)
- Semester Updates
- Life Updates



Thank You!

Any questions?

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A decorative graphic in the top-left corner consisting of a network of interconnected nodes and lines. The nodes are represented by circles of varying sizes and colors, including light gray, dark gray, and blue. Some nodes are highlighted with a blue outline. The lines connecting the nodes are thin and light gray.

Special Thanks to...

The ETF

BIPOC Student Participants

The Faculty Participants

A decorative graphic in the bottom-right corner, mirroring the one in the top-left. It features a network of interconnected nodes and lines, with nodes in light gray, dark gray, and blue, and some nodes highlighted with a blue outline.