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Article in *Professional Psychology Research and Practice* · April 2009

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Tapping the Wisdom Tradition: Essential Elements to Mentoring Students of Color

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The relevance of race, ethnicity, and culture in the mentor–mentee relationship is the essence of this article. The authors argue that diversity education for those mentoring students of color merits an additional level of required expertise in the following key areas: culture and academia, shared/assumed existential posture, racial discrimination, race and ethnic self-awareness, and relationship and process. With support from APA publications, the authors highlight specific academic and professional concerns for students of color, to work toward effective mentoring of culturally diverse students. For prospective mentors of students of color, the authors make recommendations related to engagement, instruction, and integration of personal and professional identity. Further, the authors make recommendations for the management of experiences with discrimination and the recognition of racial identity and racial awareness in the mentor–mentee relationship.

Keywords: mentoring, students of color, graduate education, diversity education, racial and ethnic awareness

Editor's Note. This is one of 10 articles published in *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* devoted to mentoring in professional psychology.—MCR

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Do race, ethnicity, and culture matter in the mentor–mentee relationship? Is mentoring Sheila, an Asian American woman negotiating family obligations, any different from mentoring White students? In working with Jesse, a biracial Latino and African American student, as he wrestles with the issue of integrating ethnic identification with professional identity, what should a mentor consider? How can mentors support Teisha, an Alaska Native woman, as she balances the culture of academia and her culture of origin? The mentorship bestowed on students of color, such as Sheila, Jesse, and Teisha, has historically been a salient dimension of a successful career (Stricker et al., 1990; Waitzkin, Yager, Parker, & Duran, 2006). However, the professional role of mentoring is rarely conducted with any systematic guidance and is characteristically carried out without institutional support (Johnson, 2002; Vasquez & Jones, 2006; Walker, Wright, & Hanley, 2001). Kram (1985) outlined two primary functions of mentoring: *career*, namely a developmental emphasis on the sequential professional evolution of the mentee, and *psychosocial*, an emphasis on the mentee's personal and social development relative to career. However, because Kram's work appeared over 20 years ago, the demographic compositions of both psychologists and the communities they serve have diversified, and a focus on multicultural competency has emerged as a standard of care (American Psychological Association [APA], 2003). Therefore, in this article we argue that the mentoring needs of students of color, related to professional education, socialization, and development, are unique and should have more directed guidance.

In the interest of brevity, we focus our discussion on graduate students of color from the four historically marginalized sociocultural groups in the United States, that is, African Americans, Amer-

ican Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, and Latino/a Americans. For future mentors of students from these communities, two caveats merit attention. First, the issues raised in this article should serve as broad guidelines, and their applicability to specific students should be assessed by the mentor. Given the substantial between- and within-group differences (e.g., gender, socioeconomic status, age, sexual orientation, acculturation, ethnic identity, etc.) in these four respective communities, each student will attach her or his own meaning to race, ethnicity, and culture. Thus, it is important to recognize that other dimensions of a student's identity are equally important and may influence a student's experience of race and ethnicity. However, this article focuses on issues of race and ethnicity and leaves these dimensions to be addressed in more depth by other articles in this issue. Second, although the issues raised in the current article may not be exclusive to students of color, we believe that both the sociopolitical context and the incongruities between a student's culture of origin and the Eurocentric culture of academia make these concerns particularly salient and challenging for students of color. Thus, a primary theme in the current article is that the mentoring of students of color merits additional expertise in negotiating professional roles, managing discrimination and racial intolerance, assessing one's own racial and ethnic identity, and recognizing the impact of personal history on the mentoring process. In brief, the mentor-mentee relationship involving students of color is anchored in a sociopolitical, cultural, personal, and historical context.

Nevertheless, as professors, supervisors, editors, and community elders serve as mentors and keepers of the educational flame, the following question remains: How do mentors work with students of color, such as Sheila, Jesse, and Teisha, as they negotiate the intersections of their personal, cultural, and professional identities? It is clear that psychologists must respond as part of a collective profession, rather than as individuals, and that the response must tap into their collective wisdom in passing on the educational flame. To contribute to the passing on of this wisdom tradition and educational flame, we examine the demographic shifts and professional standards that underscore the need to mentor students of color. We follow this with a discussion of specific challenges in mentoring students of color and conclude with illustrative case studies.

Demographic Shifts

The elders and leaders of professional communities of color have long observed three primary issues in psychology: (a) the underrepresentation of persons of color in psychology (APA Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training in Psychology Task Force [CEMMRAT2] and the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs [OEMA], 1997); (b) the need to attend to diverse cultural differences in research, teaching, and practice (Hall, 1997); and (c) the growing multicultural paradigm that influences all areas of psychology (APA, 2003; Sue, Bingham, Porche-Burke, & Vasquez, 1999). As a discipline, psychology is facing demographic shifts in the community at large as well as within the profession itself. With respect to the demographic pressure from the community at large, census data have indicated that the percentage of White Americans has declined every decade since 1940 and is expected to decrease to 50% of the population by 2050 (U.S.

Census Bureau, 2004). In contrast, Latino and Asian American communities are expected to triple by 2050. Hence, as the demographic profile of the country shifts, it seems reasonable to expect that psychologists will be more likely than ever before to come from and work within communities of color.

However, despite the growth of communities of color, the end of the graduate educational pipeline continues to be notably constricted with respect to emerging psychologists of color (Maton, Kohout, Wicherski, Leary, & Vinokurov, 2006). Despite general growth from 8% in 1989 to a peak of 15.7% in 2000, there has been no sustained growth in the percentage of students of color—particularly among African American and Latino students—who earned 'doctoral degrees in psychology since the peak in 2000. Although the data suggest that students of color are initially interested in psychology at the undergraduate and master's level, these trends are less likely to continue at the level of the doctorate or the professoriate. Hence, as noted by these demographic trends, the need for mentors for students of color is self-evident.

Ethical and Professional Standards

In addition to the demographic pressure, the need to mentor and retain students of color is also consistent with psychology's standards of ethical and professional conduct. Although the APA's "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" (APA, 2002) are not explicit about mentoring students and professionals of color, it does provide a solid foundation regarding supervision, professional consultation, psychotherapy practice, and scholarship of psychologists that can be applied to the mentoring relationship. For instance, Principle E, Respect for People's Rights and Dignity, stipulates that "psychologists are aware of and respect cultural, individual, and world differences, including those based upon . . . race, ethnicity, culture, natural origin, religion, . . . and consider these factors when working with members of such groups" (p. 1063). In effect, mentorship within these ethical guidelines requires psychologists to be aware of themselves, their mentees, and the biases they both may bring to the mentoring relationship.

Complementing the APA ethics code, APA's (2003) "Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists" provides additional guidance for psychologists in their work as mentors to students of color. Specifically, these guidelines promote the need for psychologists to be aware of the social, political, historical, and economic contexts that influence an individual's behavior. Although the mentoring process is not specifically discussed in these guidelines, they have clear implications for psychologists' cultural self-awareness as well as for their awareness of the roles of culture, race, and ethnicity in shaping their work with individuals and organizations within the scope of research, clinical practice, and teaching. In short, the breadth and spirit of these guidelines are inclusive of and applicable to the mentoring relationship. For instance, under Guideline 1, "psychologists are encouraged to recognize that, as cultural beings, they may hold attitudes and beliefs that can detrimentally influence their perceptions of and interactions with individuals who are ethnically and racially different from themselves" (APA, 2003, p. 382). As it applies to mentors, this guideline suggests that mentors may need to be aware of their own cultural and racial socialization and its impact on their

mentees. In short, the guidelines challenge psychologists—and, by extension, the mentees who work with them—to incorporate principles of cultural awareness and sensitivity into the courses they teach, the research projects they design, and the clinical interventions they implement.

Similarly, APA's *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology* (APA Committee on Accreditation, 2002) also has implications for mentor–mentee relationships. One accreditation guideline states that programs recognize “the importance of cultural and individual differences and diversity in the training of psychologists” (APA Committee on Accreditation, 2002, p. 12, Domain D). Psychology graduate programs are required to systematically and competently recruit and retain diverse students by providing a “supportive and encouraging learning environment” (APA Committee on Accreditation, 2002, p. 12) for a diverse student body. In effect, psychology as a discipline and APA as an organization have already established the requisite standards needed to guide its professionals in their role as mentors to students of color. From the APA's ethics code to their multicultural guidelines to their accreditation guidelines, the ethical and professional imperatives are clear—professional competence is marked by an awareness of and sensitivity to culture, race, and ethnicity into all aspects of one's work—including the mentoring relationship.

Challenges and Issues in Mentoring

In light of demographic shifts and professional standards that underscore the need for mentoring, central questions still remain. How does one serve as a mentor? What challenges are there in mentoring students of color? To equip psychologists to better address these questions and to better serve as mentors to students of color, the following section addresses key elements of mentorship: (a) culture and academia, (b) shared/assumed existential posture, (c) discrimination, (d) racial and ethnic awareness, and (e) relationship and process (see Table 1).

Culture and Academia

Differences between students' cultures, their communities of origin, and the culture of academia may pose significant challenges for students of color. Because many students of color may have attended schools within their cultural communities, entering graduate school or college may be their first exposure to being in the minority in a school environment. For instance, American Indian/Alaska Native students may come from remote, isolated reservation and nonreservation communities or villages where they were surrounded by supportive extended families and may be away from that support for the first time. In addition, American Indian/Alaska Native students may come from a family or community that experienced the boarding school era and, therefore, may have less familial and cultural support for pursuing higher education (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998). Indeed, many students are the first in their families to engage in higher education (Zalaquett, 1999), and because of this role, they may experience additional stress to achieve as well as feelings of isolation and inadequacy (Lippincott & German, 2007).

Students of color also face the challenge of learning to negotiate an academic culture that has radically different social expectations than students experienced in their traditional cultures. For example, cultural values of deference to and respect for authority (McGregor, 2006) can contribute to being silent when in class or in lab meetings and may prevent students from actively seeking out help and mentoring from faculty. The prevailing educational model in which students actively engage in questioning course material and in critical discourse in the presence of professors may be perceived as rude and disrespectful by students of color, thus placing them at a disadvantage for receiving attention in the classroom or research laboratory. These behaviors may be misinterpreted by majority faculty as disinterest, poor understanding of material, and lack of assertiveness skills. As a result, minority students often are ignored and therefore inadvertently punished by faculty for a perceived lack of active participation. To adequately mentor students of color, faculty mentors will likely need to proactively engage students in discourse, be aware and respectful of diverse cultural behaviors, and be aware of the potential history and consequences of discrimination and internalized oppression (Steele, 1997; Thomason, 1999).

Other cultural differences can cause stress for students and can puzzle mentors unfamiliar with students' cultures. Language may be a barrier for some students if English is a second language. Time management, priority setting, and understanding a Western perspective on the academic calendar may be a challenge for some students, who may be coming from communities with a different view of the flow of time (Gloria & Castellanos, 2006; Lowe, 2005). Styles of social interaction in the academic community will likely be much different from those students experience at home. Because of these differences, the likelihood that students will face cultural insensitivity is high, and this represents a potential barrier to achieving educational goals (Castellanos, Gloria, & Kamimura, 2006; Walker et al., 2001). Mentors who are unfamiliar with the challenges facing students of color in developing competence with the unfamiliar culture of academia may not know how to respond to help such students.

Cultural values regarding family may also conflict with the expectations of higher education. Many students of color will have prescribed roles and responsibilities within their families that greatly vary from majority culture expectations (Castellanos et al., 2006; Thomas & Schwarbaum, 2006; Thomason, 1999) and may impact educational goals (McGregor, 2006). There will likely be different expectations with regard to negotiating the balance between academic responsibilities and the needs of family. Hence, students may find it challenging to acknowledge and accept academic environments that prioritize academic commitments over familial and cultural obligations (Patchell, 2005; Waitzkin et al., 2006). Similarly, mentors may underestimate family responsibilities and may act insensitively when students prioritize family obligations above academics. This tension will likely impact how students are perceived and evaluated, decisions for retention, the volume of research that is generated, and students' professional involvement. Therefore, mentors should show sensitivity to cultural considerations when students of color appear to prioritize family obligations above academics.

Financial barriers also are important to consider when mentoring students of color. Ethnic minority students are much more

likely to be economically disadvantaged than White students (Wentling & Waight, 2001). Many students of color, especially those returning to school after having been in the workplace, have the dual role of student and breadwinner for their extended family. Mentors of students of color must recognize that financial considerations may be an unspoken distraction in the educational experience of students, and flexibility on the part of mentors is needed. Therefore, successful mentorship includes sensitivity to financial concerns and the provision of support to disadvantaged students through assistantships and other appropriate funding sources.

Shared/Assumed Existential Posture

It is natural for individuals with similar worldviews and beliefs systems to affiliate themselves with one another (McGoldrick, Giordano, & Pierce, 1996; Tatum, 1997). Oftentimes, these affiliations are based on ethnic identification, skin color, facial features, and shared second language. This issue of affiliation and connection can be especially evident for people of color when developing professional roles (i.e., mentoring) with students (Lowe, 2005; Thomas & Schwarbaum, 2006). Mentors and mentees may tend to select each other on the basis of shared ethnic and cultural values. Although there are many positive aspects to this mutual sharing, there can also be an overidentification with students and their research and practice interests. Thus, mentors may need to strike a balance between providing support to students of color and maintaining professional boundaries.

It is incumbent on the mentor to model a value system that is inclusive and respectful of differences while avoiding ethnocentric power dynamics. This modeling could be critical in helping mentees identify their values. Modeling can also impact a subsequent mentor–mentee relationship and can influence mentees as they continue to develop their own ideas about a professional role for themselves. In addition, prior work (Castellanos et al., 2006; Gonzalez-Figueroa & Young, 2005; Lowe, 2005; Thomason, 1999; Walker et al., 2001) has recognized that sociocultural and language similarities may provide important opportunities for mentors to facilitate and nurture relationships with and between students of color.

Racial Discrimination

In addition, students of color often enter higher education with a basic distrust of educational institutions as a result of historical abuses by educational institutions against people of color and personal experiences of prejudice and discrimination (Cohen & Steele, 2002; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, & Bylsma, 2003). Racial microaggressions, or social interactions that denigrate students of color (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007), both within and outside of academia, contribute to additional stress for students and may undermine their sense of fit within graduate school. Indeed, insofar as the faculty and curriculum operate exclusively from a Eurocentric paradigm, such a disconnect from students’ culture of origin may contribute to their alienation from the department and from the profession as a whole.

Table 1
Essential Elements in the Mentoring of Students of Color

Culture and academia	Shared/assumed existential posture	Racial discrimination	Racial and ethnic self-awareness	Relationship and process
Cultural values distinct from academia’s values and expectations	Overidentification with mentee and his/her research/practice interests	Awareness that discrimination may affect mentee both within and outside of academia	Recognition of sociopolitical, cultural, and contextual factors	Respect for and discussion about ethnic/cultural similarities or dissimilarities between mentor and mentee
Sociocultural environments (e.g., rural, inner city, urban background) that differ from predominantly White higher education environments	Modeling a worldview that is inclusive and respectful of difference while avoiding ethnocentric power dynamics	An understanding of mentees’ distrust of educational institutions	Recognition of one’s racial and ethnic identity development and its professional impact	An understanding of the influence of the racial and ethnic identities of the mentor and mentee on their relationship
Pressures on the first generation in higher education	Allowing sociocultural and language similarities to be relevant points of contact and not assumptions that can bias the mentor–mentee relationship	Recognition that discrimination may contribute to psychological distress and influence academic retention	Belief about ethnic and racial match between mentor and mentee	Modeling that considers ethnic/cultural/linguistic background of mentee
English as a second language and challenges in communication		Willingness to help mentee negotiate and cope with experiences of discrimination	Awareness of one’s experiences of marginality and discrimination	Psychoeducation about the mentoring process
Maintaining balance between family responsibilities and academia			Learning to manage discrimination and microaggressions in the academic environment	
Coping with financial stressors and resources				

Additionally, both negative and seemingly positive stereotypes, such as the model-minority assumptions about Asian Americans, can distort how students of color are perceived and evaluated and can adversely impact the resources and support that they may be provided. To further complicate matters, research has identified that the internalization of stereotype threats associated with academic expectations may cause increased performance-related stress that results in students not achieving their full capabilities (Steele, 1997). Beyond stress, the overwhelming evidence has indicated that racial discrimination is significantly associated with higher levels of psychological distress, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and social isolation (Carter, 2007), all of which may have implications for the retention of students of color. Thus, mentors may play a critical role in helping students of color to negotiate and cope with their experiences with discrimination.

Racial and Ethnic Self-Awareness

From multicultural guidelines to ethical standards, the need for self-awareness, particularly with regard to issues of race and culture, has been a consistent professional dictum. For mentors, this process may begin by reflecting on questions such as the following: How do I think about myself racially and culturally? How have I been socialized and what assumptions do I make about my mentee's community? What is my understanding and experience with oppression? Given that mentors are in a position of power, their reflections on such questions are integral in determining the extent to which issues of race, ethnicity, and culture can be openly addressed and incorporated into the relationship. Moreover, this racial and ethnic assessment is critical in any relationship regardless of whether or not the mentor and mentee are from the same racial or ethnic groups. Although a mentor and mentee may be phenotypically similar in terms of race and ethnicity, the psychological meaning that these individuals attach to these reference groups may be quite distinct and may influence the mentoring relationship. Hence, racial and ethnic identity theories may be especially helpful in providing mentors with a conceptual framework for gaining insights into their personal racial and ethnic development.

Broadly speaking, racial and ethnic identity theories address one's psychological identification with race and ethnicity and the behavioral manifestations that stem from that identification (Helms, 1995; Phinney & Ong, 2007). It stands to reason that the racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation level of a mentor may be a significant factor in shaping the mentoring relationship. For instance, mentors who strongly identify with their own race or ethnicity may reflect that identity in numerous aspects of their professional life, such as their research projects and publications, the policy issues for which they advocate, their membership in professional associations, and so forth. As a result, a student working with such a faculty mentor will be exposed to a socialization process that may emphasize and value the role of race, culture, and ethnicity in one's professional identity. Conversely, mentors who minimize race and ethnicity as key aspects of their personal and professional identity may provide mentees with a qualitatively different mentoring experience.

Moreover, racial identity theories may be effective in providing mentors with a conceptual framework for understanding

their own experiences with discrimination as well as their ability to discuss such experiences with their mentee (Helms, 1995). Given that students encounter racism inside and outside of educational settings, the experience of discrimination clearly has implications for the quality of students' educational experiences and ultimately for their retention in the educational pipeline. Insofar as mentors are able to discuss such experiences comfortably and openly, it seems more likely that they can be a source of support for students of color as they grapple with their own experiences with discrimination inside and outside of academia. Indeed, given the power dynamics inherent in mentoring relationships, mentors' ability to foster a sense of safety around discussions of race, ethnicity, and discrimination is a key foundation of the mentoring relationship.

Relationship and Process

Interpersonal dynamics. Although self-awareness is clearly a foundation for mentoring, an understanding of the interpersonal dynamics between mentors and mentees is equally critical. As with any relationship, the quality of the relationship is shaped by both the mentor and the student and by their respective understanding and sense of identification with race, ethnicity, and culture. To better understand these interpersonal dynamics, Helms's (1995) racial identity interaction theory may provide mentors with a conceptual framework for understanding the quality of their relationships with their students. According to Helms, relationships between individuals are reflective of the interaction between each individual's racial identity development. For instance, mentoring relationships in which mentors have a more mature understanding of racial issues than mentees have the potential to facilitate the consciousness raising of the mentees. In contrast, when mentors are less aware of racial issues than their mentees, there is a stronger likelihood that the mentoring relationship will be more challenging and conflicted for both individuals. In effect, Helms suggested that racial identity theory may provide mentors and mentees with insights not only into themselves, but also into the quality of their relationships.

Psychoeducation. Parallel with the emphasis that mentors should attend to their own expectations of the mentoring relationship, it may be equally helpful for mentors to engage their mentees in an explicit discussion about the mentoring relationship and what is involved. As Johnson (2002) observed, "graduate students are often unfamiliar with mentor relationships and may lack both an appreciation of the benefits of mentoring and an understanding of the mechanics of mentorship initiation and maintenance" (p. 92). Particularly for students of color, who may be the first generation in college or graduate school, the parameters of a mentoring relationship may be unfamiliar territory. Indeed, if students come from undergraduate experiences characterized by minimal and impersonal contact with faculty, the notion of developing a relatively intimate relationship with a faculty mentor may be in stark contrast to their prior experiences as well as to their cultural values around hierarchy and authority. As a result, the multiple roles that a mentor may play can elicit confusion about what is appropriate or inappropriate. To alleviate this confusion, mentors are in a key position to clarify and demystify the cultural norms and expectations

around mentorship. Indeed, insofar as mentees are unlikely to initiate such a discussion of their own accord, the responsibility of doing so lies with the mentor.

Mentoring Case Studies

We now return to our opening examples with the students Sheila, Jesse, and Teisha and present them as case studies to illustrate certain aspects of ethnic and cultural issues that have relevance to the mentoring relationship. These case studies are followed by brief assessments of the interpersonal, multicultural, and professional concerns that apply.

Sheila

Sheila is a 35-year-old Asian American woman who resides with her parents and a grandparent and periodically cares for her nieces and nephews. She is the youngest child in the family, and her siblings live in other communities. Sheila's advisor has high hopes that Sheila will pursue an academic career after graduation but recently has voiced concerns about her commitment because of her absence from the laboratory and her inconsistent management of responsibilities at school. Recently, her father expressed concerns about her school work interfering with family. Sheila does not want to be disrespectful to her family or her advisor, but she is finding it increasingly difficult to balance the demands of both her family and her academic obligations.

Sheila is clearly a competent student but is in a program that has not evolved to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Without the appropriate guidance and mentoring, Sheila is likely to take a leave of absence and will be challenged to return to the program as her family and financial obligations increase.

Jesse

Jesse is a 29-year-old adult male of mixed Latino and African American background. He has recently completed his clinical internship at a renowned medical center and will be graduating shortly with a degree in clinical psychology from a highly reputable university. A primary complaint for Jesse is that he has historically struggled with his own sense of ethnic identity. He indicated that he has never been mentored by a psychologist of color, which has added additional anxiety about how to integrate the psychological aspects of his identity with his career goals.

Jesse reported that he had worked well with ethnic minority communities during his practicum experiences and in his clinical internship. Paradoxically, his good professional performance with regard to ethnicity issues is in contrast with how he feels about himself. This situation is complicated by the fact that he has been unable to discuss this concern with any of his professors or supervisors. Jesse still reports distress about the lack of guidance, support, and mentorship available to him as he navigates these critical steps as an early career psychologist. Currently, he is anticipating taking a position as a young faculty member at a major medical center, where he has been recruited because of his work with ethnic minority communities.

Jesse is a young professional who is bright, ambitious, and wants to make a significant contribution to his discipline. He is also struggling with his own ethnic identification and how it impacts his career. Unfortunately, Jesse did not have the opportunity to learn about and integrate this salient aspect of his identity. Throughout Jesse's graduate school education and internship, this significant aspect of his personal and professional development has been ignored or perhaps never addressed by either Jesse or any of his faculty members or clinical supervisors. Often, psychology faculty will make assumptions about an individual's identity, namely that students' ethnicity is unimportant or has been fully developed and integrated (Castellanos et al., 2006; Thomason, 1999; Walker et al., 2001). It is interesting that Jesse will be in the position of mentoring other potential students and young professionals of color. Indeed, his colleagues may also assume that as a person of color, Jesse is in the best position to do so.

Teisha

Teisha is a 23-year-old Alaska Native woman who is studying psychology in Alaska. She was born and raised in a remote, isolated Alaska Native village that is accessible only by air. Teisha spoke her native language first, and English is her second language. Teisha was raised in a traditional manner; for example, she was taught that she should listen to her elders without speaking, that the good of her family and community is more important than her individual advancement, that it is disrespectful to stand out, and that subsistence is an important activity. Teisha's family is very proud of her academic accomplishments but also expects her to return home to help. One of her professors has noticed her quiet demeanor and her occasional absence and is following up with her to make sure she is getting the support she needs to continue her studies.

Teisha has chosen an undergraduate program that is understanding and supportive of a diverse student body. They will work together to develop a plan that will allow Teisha to continue her studies while fulfilling her obligations to her family and village. The university provides distance learning when Teisha returns to the village so that she is able to keep up with her course work. The university has made it a priority to recruit, retain, and graduate all students and to create a welcoming environment. Faculty members who serve as mentors are strongly encouraged to learn about the cultures of their students in order to better mentor them as they progress through their studies.

Recommendations for Mentors

This article has addressed several relevant dimensions significant for mentoring students of color. What follows are recommendations that provide a summary of the issues critical to successful mentoring for students of color.

1. Support the mentee in navigating two worlds. Mentors should (a) understand that there are multiple types of mentoring, including focusing on career development and fostering a close, personal relationship; (b) recognize that financial considerations may be an unspoken distraction for the mentee; (c) proactively engage mentees in discourse and be aware and

respectful of diverse cultural behaviors; and (d) be aware of the values of their mentees to better support the mentee's balance between academic commitments and familial/cultural obligations.

2. Teach mentees how to navigate relationships with faculty, supervisors, and peers by (a) increasing awareness of cultural proscriptions that impact power and authority, (b) clarifying the cultural norms and expectations in academia, and (c) providing psychoeducation about the mentoring relationship.

3. Integrate discussions of personal and professional identity. Mentors should (a) be aware that mentees may be struggling to integrate identities that are potentially in opposition to each other with respect to values, practices, and worldviews; (b) inform themselves of the guidance provided by professional standards (e.g., multicultural guidelines); and (c) seek consultation to best support mentees of color.

4. Teach effective management of experiences with discrimination. Mentors should (a) be prepared to self-assess for potential racist beliefs as well as acts of and experiences with discrimination; (b) be willing to acknowledge that racial discrimination is experienced by the mentee, historically as well as within and outside of academia; (c) be aware that stereotype threats may cause increased stress; and (d) be an advocate for mentees in the face of discrimination.

5. Recognize the role of racial identity and racial awareness in the mentor-mentee relationship. Mentors should (a) assess their awareness of and attitudes toward issues of race, ethnicity, and culture for both themselves and their mentees; (b) educate themselves about the culture of their mentees; and (c) be aware of each individual's point of racial identity development and its impact on the relationship.

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Received September 6, 2007

Revision received March 3, 2008

Accepted March 10, 2008 ■



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