A Training Manual for PNMGC
Mentors and Mentees

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INTRODUCTION

This training manual is designed to serve as a resource for our PNMGC participants. The intent is to provide the tools and strategies necessary to become effective mentees and mentors, while developing successful peer-to-peer relationships throughout the process.

We are continuously working towards improving the training of our members. If you have any comments and/or suggestions, please contact us via email at gradpeer@unm.edu.

2018-2019 PNMGC Team:  
Left to Right Jaen Ugalde, Theresah Napetey, Brandon De Flon, Mark Narvaez, Glenda Lewis, and Alex Kreisel
PART ONE - THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING

MENTORING PHILOSOPHY: A BRIEF HISTORY

PNMGC began in the 2002-2003 academic year by a group of graduate students of color who came together to establish a program dedicated to promoting and supporting the academic success of students and scholars at the University of New Mexico. Representing a cross-section of academic disciplines, PNMGC’s founding graduate students identified a need to engage and support underrepresented students across diverse backgrounds, identities, and academic interests. Over time, the program originally named Peer Mentoring Graduates of Color (PMGC) evolved into the Project for New Mexico Graduates of Color (PNMGC).

PNMGC serves underrepresented students—both undergraduates and graduates—utilizing peer mentorship approaches in creating academic, social, and cultural communities of support, as well as other useful opportunities and resources.

The mentoring philosophy, used by PNMGC, reflects the diversity of the organization and the broad spectrum of students we serve:

PNMGC believes in the power of peer support relationships to help students of all backgrounds succeed academically, professionally, and personally. Through peer mentorship, we positively engage students’ identities, strengths, and interests to create leaders on campus and in the community.

The foundational intent of PNMGC's mentoring program is in establishing, developing, and maintaining mentee-mentor partnerships in which underrepresented graduate students’ particular concerns, issues, and experiences may be expressed and addressed. These concerns, issues, and experiences may vary for each individual participant, and may be the result of a diversity of factors including culture, family background, socio-economic status, sexual identification, etc. Matching mentees with graduate student mentors who understand the challenges which underrepresented students face can lead to the academic success of these students in graduate school. Our program is not a one-size-fits-all mentoring model, but instead, reflects the individualized and dynamic needs, issues, experiences, and concerns of the particular mentees and mentors involved.
WHY MENTORING MATTERS?

Mentoring has always played an important role in higher education—often in the form of faculty-student, hierarchical, relationships. However, the benefits and different forms of mentoring that take place at universities and colleges are generally not a priority for administrators, faculty, or students. As a result, mentoring in higher education is usually not implemented as a campus-wide resource, and thus is limited to “at-risk” populations, and often requires little to no training for its prospective mentors and mentees.

Although mentoring often lacks institutional support and is stigmatized as a practice that only benefits “at risk” or “minority” students, the positive advantages of mentoring—including increased retention, higher GPAs, less time to completion, and preparation for post-university life—extends across academic disciplines, cultures, backgrounds, and genders.

2019 Faculty of Color Awards:
Left to Right Mark Narvaez, Brandon De Flon, Dr. Virginia Necochea (Mentoring Award), Dr. Fares Qeadan (All Around Award), Jaen Ugalde, and Glenda Lewis
PART TWO - THE PRACTICE OF MENTORING

THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

PNMGC utilizes a ‘peer mentoring’ approach, creating relationships that are, first and foremost, academic in nature. Peer mentoring is used as a tool to support degree completion for underrepresented students and increase the number of faculty and administrators who are people of color, first-generation, from low socio-economic backgrounds, or who have diverse identities. In this way, peer mentoring is one approach used to address educational justice and access to higher education.

Additionally, PNMGC uses the terms ‘mentor’ and ‘mentee’ to help participants think about their roles and expectations, while making it clear that peer mentoring relationships are mutually beneficial, and that both partners will both mentor and be mentored. PNMGC believes that regardless of age, degrees, or academic interest areas, all students can draw upon their backgrounds and experiences to help each other succeed. Another key component of the PNMGC Peer Mentoring Program is flexibility. We encourage mentors and mentees to seek-out and utilize a variety of avenues to communicate with one another—scheduled face-to-face interactions, via social media or text, video conferencing, email, or other means, as convenient.

As students, PNMGC understands that flexibility is the key to success and, as such, we strive to continually engage with students in troubleshooting communication and other mentorship issues in order to better support their peer mentoring efforts. Our program also works to help students become more fully integrated within the UNM campus community. Studies indicate that students who are actively engaged on campus benefit from a more enriched college experience, demonstrate better academic performance, and meet with greater professional success and sense of well-being following graduation (2013 Gallup-Purdue Index Survey).

“The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves.”

Steven Spielberg
In establishing, developing, and maintaining a successful and meaningful mentoring partnership, be mindful of the following tips:

1. **Know your population**—Who are the students you are working with? What are their backgrounds and specific needs? Do not assume what your mentee is like or what their needs are or will be. Underrepresented students, in particular, may experience unique obstacles that you should make yourself aware of at the outset of your relationship-building.

2. **Be a friend**—Don’t act like an advisor, professor, boss, or parent. Often, these are persons who are associated with setting rules or being critical. Your role is to be a positive figure and influence in the student’s life. If your mentor/mentee thinks you will be critical or judgmental, they may not open up to you. Focus on establishing a bond—a feeling of partnership—while mutually enjoying and benefitting from your time together.

3. **Don’t preach about values**—Be careful not to tell your assigned mentor/mentee how to think or act. Instead, listen, lead, and teach by example.

4. **Have realistic goals and expectations**—Setting goals is essential to mentoring. Discuss personal, professional, and relationship goals in your initial meetings. Building a trusting relationship is a process that requires time and commitment.

5. **Establish boundaries**—Have an open and honest discussion about boundaries—how often will you communicate, by what means, and when? If you have family obligations each weekend, let your mentee know that at the outset. If you would rather not receive phone calls or texts in the evening, communicate that. A mentoring relationship does not require that you compromise your free time, or that it interferes with your job, family, or other personal obligations. Discussing and establishing boundaries is vital to successful relationship-building.

6. **Have fun together**—Fun is not trivial or superfluous. Creating opportunities to have fun is important to building and maintaining a relationship, and to “re-charging.”

7. **Give your mentor/mentee voice and choice**—Communicate to your mentor/mentee that you value them and respect their input. Reinforce the development of decision-making, communication, and active listening skills. If your mentor/mentee is shy, offer a variety of options for activity.

8. **Be positive**—Be direct in letting your mentor/mentee know that you are not there to judge, but to offer honest and supportive feedback. Offer concrete assistance when possible through sharing of your own experiences. Always remember, you are there to add value, while being a positive influence and resource.

9. **Be an active listener**—Engaged listening allows your mentor/mentee to vent, which may often be their principal need. When listening, you are signaling that you are a friend, not an authority figure. Give advice sparingly and make sure it is *solution-focused*, not judgmental. If you must convey concern, do so in a way that is reassuring and accepting.

10. **Take responsibility for the relationship**—Maintain positive communication and consistent contact, even if it is just to say that you will need to miss a scheduled meeting. Provide feedback.
According to the spring 2018 data from the UNM Office of Institutional Analytics, 53.7% of UNM undergrads finish their degree within 6 years. The remaining 46.3% either take longer than six years to complete their baccalaureate, transfer to other schools, or drop out.

Students who are mentored are more likely to:

- Remain in college and graduate (Ashtiani & Feliciano 2012; Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling 1996; Campbell and Campbell 1997; O’Brien 2014);
- Graduate with a higher GPA (Ashtiani & Feliciano 2012; Coles 2011; Campbell and Campbell 1997);
- Be better prepared for life outside of college, which includes their general wellness, job placement after graduation, and workplace engagement throughout adult life (2014 Gallup-Purdue Index Report; O’Brien 2014).

2019 Black History Month Read-In
WHAT IS YOUR MENTORING PHILOSOPHY?

Based on your personal experiences with mentoring, and your academic values, what is YOUR mentoring philosophy?

What are your desired outcomes and expectations as a mentee/mentor?
   In your mentor/mentee relationship?
WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF A MENTEE & MENTOR?

A mentee is a student who has recognized that they could benefit from the guidance of a mentor and may have an idea of what they would like to achieve through a mentorship relationship. They are committed to their education, open to receiving constructive and supportive feedback, and ready to meet new people or have new experiences. Ultimately, a mentee must be able to communicate well with others, be willing to engage in thoughtful discussion, and be committed to actively participate in their mentoring partnership.

A mentor is a friendly and relatable resource to help support and guide students through their time at UNM. Peer mentors will help demystify the undergraduate & graduate school experience, while offering encouragement and constructive feedback. Peer mentors can provide insight into: classes, professors, campus and/or community resources, research opportunities, thesis and dissertation information, developing professional or academic leadership, and important degree milestones and timelines. Peer mentors are knowledgeable in the student experience, outside of research and coursework; they are likely aware of what is required in dealing with the confusion, uncertainty, and stress of undergraduate and graduate life. Additionally, a peer mentor can expand a mentee’s social and resource network at UNM.

In conclusion, the mentee-mentor relationship is a dynamic and organic partnership that will change and grow over time. While both the mentee and mentor have proscribed roles based on their expressed preferences and needs, they also share a unique and individualized relationship which is non-hierarchical, reciprocal, and mutually-beneficial. That is to say that, at times, and as their experiences, needs, and circumstances change through the semester, each may serve and support the other with suggestions, shared perceptions, insights, and information. On behalf of PNMGC, we wish you a wonderful mentorship experience, and stand ready to assist you along the way.

“Student mentoring contributed to a 97% retention rate for first year students in the academic scholarship program.”
– Gates Millennium Scholars Program, 2013
PART THREE – PARTICIPANT TOOLS & RESOURCES

QUICK GUIDE: A PARTICIPANT NAVIGATION TOOL

1. **Beginning-of-Semester Application Access**
   
   **Note:** This is a requirement for both mentees and mentors.

   A. **Sign Up**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Peer Mentorship Program > Mentee or Mentor Application

2. **Mentorship Tracking Form Access**
   
   **Note:** This is a requirement for mentors only.

   A. **Logging Monthly Mentorship Sessions**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Peer Mentorship Program > Mentoring Session Tracking Form

3. **End-of-Semester Scholarship Access**
   
   **Note:** This is optional for both mentees and mentors who completed the program requirements.

   A. **Fill Out Application**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Peer Mentorship Program > Scholarship Application

4. **Other PNMGC Resources**

   A. **Programmatic Information**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > About Us
   B. **Alumni Spotlight**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Alumni Spotlight
   C. **Mentorship Articles**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Articles
   D. **Funding Resources**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Funding
   E. **Events Calendar**
      - pnmgc.unm.edu > Workshop & Events
SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFICATION CRITERIA CHECKLIST

☐ A Single Orientation:

☐ At Least Two Workshops:

☐ At Least One Social Dialogue:

☐ At Least One Monthly Mentee & Mentor Session:

☐ At Least 250 Words on the End-of-Semester Evaluation:

☐ Must be a Registered Full-time Student:

https://pnmgc.unm.edu/mentorship/Peer%20Mentorship%20Program.html
PNMGC ALUMNI & PARTICIPANT QUOTES

- “PNMGC was foundational to my success and my career trajectory... The measurable outcomes are all over this institution, our state, and across the country working and making the difference.” (Eric Castillo, PhD., Assistant Dean and Campus Director, Springfield College, Houston, Texas)

- “The program does an excellent job of creating a sense of connectedness to the campus.” (Kelli Lycke, Student Mentor)

- “I am a product of PNMGC and my academic success is credited to the support I received from this outstanding student-led organization.” (Joseph P. Sanchez, PhD., MBA, Program Operations Director, University of New Mexico College of Nursing)

- “I really liked the atmosphere at PNMGC activities, it made me feel welcome and safe. It allowed me to be vulnerable... it is inspiring... nice people.” (Karlina Wiederhold, Student Mentee)

- “As a student, PNMGC gave me support and community during a time when I felt isolated and disconnected from my department. PNMGC students became my campus family and my well-being was transformed after mentoring and being mentored... I believe PNMGC set me up for success as a higher education professional.” (Stephanie M. Sanchez, PhD., Program Specialist, University of New Mexico Graduate Resource Center)

- “PNMGC holds important workshops and social dialogues that are pertinent to our students of color... I learned many things to help my personal and academic growth... ” (Zhao Ding, Student Mentee)

- “Fortunately, spaces like PNMGC exist. The opportunity to be a mentor last semester was both interesting and amazing. I felt that having the privilege to share my experiences and expectations with another student was empowering for us both.“ (Glenda Lewis, Student Mentor)

- “PNMGC workshops were helpful and informative. I think the workshops covered some topics that I don’t learn in a regular classroom, but which are important for the real world.” (Cynthia Perez, Student Mentee)
RELEASE FORM

I, hereby, grant permission to the Project for New Mexico Graduates of Color (PNMGC) to use any statements, quotes, and/or photos referencing or attributable to me for purposes of organizational promotion and education in print, social media, or on the organization's website.

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Email Address ____________________________________________

Signature __________________________ Date ____________

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RESOURCES & WORKS CITED


