Mentoring Best Practices:
Attributes of effective mentoring relationships for mentors & mentees
Today’s Experts

Alece Alderson, M.A.

Davin Phoenix, Ph.D.

Brighitte Preciado, M.S.

Charles Lu, Ph.D.
Setting the stage: Mapping out strategies for effective mentoring relationships

Dr. Davin Phoenix, UC Irvine
Goals

Use evidence-based approach to:

- Identify impacts of effective mentorship on First Generation Students (FGS)
- Assess how effective mentorship is practiced…
  - By mentors
  - AND FGS mentees
- Address how mentoring relationships are shaped by race and gender identities
Impacts of mentorship on FGS

*World opening*
- Expands possibilities & life options perceived by FGS
- Validation of FGS’ value, facilitating persistence

*Mapping the world*
- Socializes FGS within new environment
- Builds ability to address stressors
- Steers FGS toward beneficial resources
Mentorship as navigation aid

“It’s one thing to be told all you gotta do is this and that, and then like most people you’re pretty much left on your own to battle the battles and try to achieve some end. With the benefits of the program, it was more like the steps were already there and I was guided through them. I felt really prepared to start school, and it’s those basic tools that have brought me this far.” (in Wallace, Abel and Ropers-Huilman 2000)

Mapping the world

Transformational effect
“[My mentor] said that college is a once in a lifetime experience. You meet a whole bunch of people. You find who you’re gonna be later in life... You might not know exactly what you’re gonna do when you go in, but going out you might have a very positive idea about what you want to start.” (in Wang 2012)
4 Pillars of Mentoring

1. Orientation into the role
1. Socialization within the academic community
1. Development of relevant skills
1. Facilitation of maturation as a student and leader
Pillars of mentoring

Both mentors and FGS mentees have joint responsibilities to achieve these pillars:

- Being intentional about the mentor--mentee pairing
- Establishing clear goals at the outset
  - Time commitment
  - Communication intervals
  - Plan of action
- Provide reciprocal feedback
- Create a supportive environment
  - Building trust & listening
  - Promotes creativity & independent thinking
Categories of mentorship

**STRUCTURE**
Resources and guidance for meeting tangible goals
- Major, minor, & course selection
- Study aids
- Internship opportunities

**CONSIDERATION**
Addressing a student’s social & emotional needs
- Empathetic listening
- Encouragement
- Counseling

**WORLD MAPPING**

**WORLD OPENING**
# Categories of mentorship

**Questions for mentors**

- Am I positioned to provide one or both types of mentorship?
- Have I clearly communicated which forms of mentorship I’m able to provide?

**Questions for mentees**

- Have I thought clearly about which types of mentorship I can receive from this person?
- Am I limiting my mentor pool?
- Am I proactively seeking the kind of mentorship this person is best suited to provide?
- Am I overburdening one person, or am I seeking mentorship from multiple sources?
Types of mentorship students value

Study of FGS and CGS in McNair Scholars Program

- White students prioritized *structure* goals
  ○ elevating credentials, understanding research process, networking

- Black students prioritized *consideration* goals
  ○ personal support & encouragement

But, Black students who completed the program valued the structure goals, implying an evolution in student needs.
Mentoring across identities

Shared race mentorship can produce distinct benefits...

- Role modeling, relatability

And create distinct pressures on mentee...

- Perceived burden to measure up to mentor’s standard

FGS of color and women sometimes feel the weight of power imbalances with mentors across identity...

- Imposter syndrome, conflicting communication styles
Mentoring across identities

“It’s kinda like these people are a part of your family, and you don’t want to let anyone down because they’ve helped you so much so far that you just want to keep pushing.” (In Wallace et al 2000)

Important to mitigate potential challenges raised by relationships across both common and varying identities

- Establishing expectations for the partnership at the outset
- Regularly checking in on the relationship
Building effective mentor relationships

“It would be hard to point out just one person as a mentor because several people in the program have helped me so much.” (in Wallace et al 2000)

- Mentoring need not be purely a 1 on 1 dynamic.
- Multiple mentors can exist as part of a larger interconnected network, each node offering particular type of support.
Developing effective mentees

What specific insights can we instill in students seeking mentorship, to maximize the experience?

● **NOT** a one size fits all approach
  ○ Must seek multiple nodes of support

● **NOT** a one-time or sometime instance
  ○ It’s a process, requiring persistent investment, through ups and downs

● **NOT** a one-way street
  ○ Can’t just absorb, must also provide feedback, honesty & responsiveness to input
Developing effective mentees

Establishing productive mentoring relationships requires:

- Moving from safe space to **brave space**
  - Mentee needs to feel uninhibited by fear of disappointing the mentor
  - Must build the ability to not be afraid to fail

- Creating an effective **accountability** structure
  - Mentee must develop in practices of goal setting, envisioning and critical self-reflection
  - Ultimately, mentee must be accountable to her own goals, not the goals of the mentor
Developing effective mentees

Methods for creating brave spaces and accountability include:

- Story telling (sharing from mentor’s own experiences)
  - Increases relatability
  - Broadens mentee’s perspective

- Interrogation
  - Facilitates mentees’ thinking about fit between her decisions, actions and goals
  - Helps mentee take ownership of her navigation of academic environment
In summary

- Mentorship takes multiple forms
  - Meeting instrumental and psychological goals
  - Impacting students in tangible and intangible ways

- Students vary in initial expectations of mentorship
  - Expectations vary over time
  - May not provide ideal fit with available options
  - Expectations should be clearly established by both mentee and mentor

- Mentoring works better as a network than a dyad
  - Each mentor can play to her strengths
  - Mentees receive diversity of benefits
Developing a First Gen Mentorship Program & Engaging Faculty

Alece Alderson, UC San Francisco
The Vision

● Connecting First-Gen students to First-Gen faculty, staff, alumni, residents & postdocs

● Foundation and goal setting
  ○ A mentorship program that fosters equal investment from mentee/mentor

● Balance of autonomy and structure

● Timeline— October to June
The Vision cont’

- Identifying campus partners collaboration
  - Office of Career & Professional Development (OCPD)
  - Student Health & Counseling Services
  - Alumni Relations

- Visibility Campaign for UCSF First Gen Mentorship Program

- Communication logistics
We are First-Gen

Are you?

we’re first gen...

are you?

Find a mentor. Be a mentor. Connect. at firstgen.ucsf.edu

First Generation Support Services connects first-gen students with their first-gen peers, alumni, faculty, and staff. We invite you to be a part of this supportive community of trailblazers and out-of-the-box thinkers.

firstgen.ucsf.edu
First Gen Mentorship Program Participants

- 89 Mentors—faculty, staff, residents, post docs
- 20 Alumni mentors
- 51 Mentees
- 46 paired mentors/mentees
Engaging Faculty

• Connection with school leadership

• Early outreach to First Gen faculty and mentors

• Utilizing allies: VC of Student Academic Affairs & Dean of Graduate School

• Building of First Gen mentors prior to launch of program
Student Outreach

• First Gen Mentorship Program publicity
  First Gen Newsletter
  Welcome Back Reception

• October registration and rolling enrollment

• Collaboration with OCPD to provide workshops

• 85% of mentee participants were 1st year students
Making a Match

• Excel sheets—assisting with matching/progress tracking

• Outreach to mentor first to see if they accept the match

• Connecting mentee/mentor email utilizing template letter

• Outlining foundation

• Utilizing letter templates before match process
Support & Check-Ins

• Bi-monthly check ins—focused on faculty/mentors

• Color coding system for tracking progress

• Community Reception
Assessment

Jan Check In
• 20 Green (Communication and establishment of mentor/mentee development)
• 7 Yellow (Some communication and progression of mentor/mentee development)
• 8 Red (Little or no communication has been made between mentee/mentor)
• 11 Black (Paired after January)

March/April Check In
• 19 Green (Communication and establishment of mentor/mentee development)
• 15 Yellow (Some communication and progression of mentor/mentee development)
• 12 Red (Little or no communication has been made between mentee/mentor)
2017/2018 UCSF First Gen Mentorship Program Feedback

Feedback Participants:
- 20 Mentees
- 13 Mentors

How Often Matches Met:
- Weekly: 6%
- Monthly: 44%
- Every 2-3 Months: 13%
- Quarterly: 25%
- Once: 12%

How They Connected:
- In-Person: 17
- Email: 11
- Telephone: 2

Student Value of Program:
- Valuable: 8
- Very Valuable: 10
- Somewhat Valuable: 1

Mentor Value of Program:
- Valuable: 5
- Not Valuable: 3
- Very Valuable: 3
- Somewhat Valuable: 1

Match Perception:
- Students:
  - Perfect Match: 15
  - Could Have Been Better: 7
- Mentors:
  - Perfect Match: 3
  - Could Have Been Better: 5
Lessons Learned

• Event kick off for program
• Monthly check-ins with students
• Bi-monthly events for both mentee/mentor
• Provide additional support for mentees
• Structure for UCSF First Gen Alumni
• Balance between autonomy and structure
• UCSF First Gen Mentorship Program Guide Book
• Prepare how to help mentors/mentees identify and exit a pairing
A Brain, An Ear, and A Push:
Holistic Mentoring for Holistic Student Development

Dr. Charles Lu, UC San Diego
OASIS Overview

Equity Minded Education Training

Future Call to Action
OASIS Overview

2Excel  Hope Scholars  TRIO SSSP  Bridge

OASIS Learning Communities (OLCs)
Language Arts Tutorial Services (LATS)
Math & Science Tutoring Program (MSTP)
43% from underserved high schools (vs. 17% UCSD)

83% Pell Recipient (vs. 29% UCSD)

73% First-Generation College Student (vs. 28% UCSD)

57% Mexican-American
15% Asian/Pacific Islander
10% African-American
8% Filipin@
5% Other Latinx
5% White

SOURCE: STUDENT RESEARCH AND INFORMATION, INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
Figure 1: The Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) Model of College Success
OUR PRACTICAL FOUNDATION

Academic Knowledge
- Academic Courses, Workshops, and Study Jams
- College Success Strategies and OASIS Learning Communities

Non-Cognitive Skills
- Alumni Mentors, Graduate School Presentations, Leadership Development
- Equity Minded Education, Cultural Treasures, and Diversity Workshops

Professional Development

Socio-Cultural Competence

The Training Process:
Equity Minded Education + Mentor Practicum
Equity Minded Education Course

- Racism
- Sexism
- Classism
- Ableism
- LGBTQIA+ Perspectives
- Multiracial Perspectives
- Strategies for Change
Mentor Practicum

Suspending Judgement

Locus of Control

Intrapersonal Awareness

Asset-Based Thinking
YOUR THESIS COMMITTEE

Also known as: an impossibly difficult group to get together in one room but who nevertheless hold your future in their hands depending on their ability to reach a civilized consensus.

Your Professor
Simultaneously your biggest ally and your worst enemy. Will be the first to suggest you do more work.

The Guru
Only here for the free cookies. Don't forget to bring cookies.

Adversary
Has bitter rivalry with your Professor and will argue the exact opposite view. Work this to your advantage.

The Strawman/woman
Nice guy. No opinions.

The Assistant Professor
Still doesn't believe just a few months ago they were on the other side just like you. Pretends to be an adult.

NONE OF THEM WILL ACTUALLY READ YOUR ENTIRE THESIS.
Future Call to Action
Tell me and I forget
Teach me and I may remember
Involve me and I will learn

-Benjamin Franklin
Connect undergrads with faculty and graduate students in intended field.

Participants work with mentors to create an internship.

Mentors are responsible for developing a strategy to expose students to relevant activities and experiences.

No prescribed activities; interns and mentors collaboratively create the internship content.
Study Findings

- Deeper perspectives on self and discipline
- Developing needed advising skills for essential for future careers
- An opportunity to contribute to diversity in academia through mentorship
- Awareness of the reciprocal nature of mentoring relationships
- 72% of students were first-generation and/or underrepresented
- Over half matriculated into graduate school

Reddick, Griffin, & Cherwitz, 2011
"There's evidence to suggest that the 'cultural taxation' that African American faculty often face can be alleviated because white faculty have found ways to successfully connect to and assist African American undergraduate students. White faculty can be effective in this role as well, especially if they have had the experience of living as 'the other' or have close relationships with friends and life partners who have."

-Dr. Richard Reddick
Being intentional about developing a culture of mentorship

Brigitte Preciado, UC Riverside
The TRIO Scholars Program also known as the Student Support Services grant at UCR is funded by the U.S. Department of Education to serve 140 participants who are first generation, low income, and/or have a disability and demonstrate an academic need. The goal is to increase retention and graduation rates.

Benefits and Services

- Coaching/academic support
- Peer Mentoring
- Priority Registration
- Computer lab access and printing
- Workshops/ cultural events/ graduate school visits
- Tutoring
- Career and Graduate School Guidance
- Graduate School Exam Preparation Funding
When asked why I do what I do, my typical response has been “I was first-generation, low-income”. It was only until recently that I reflected on the fact that I have been saying it wrong. It is not “was”, but rather “am”. My background and upbringing will always inevitably impact my opportunities, actions, and decisions. I am now more prepared and familiar with what I am doing but I still do not know what I do not know. I am still the first. While I feel confident in guiding students through college into their first professional job or graduate school, I am still learning to navigate the professional world as a first-generation staff member. I’ve come to terms that I will continue to deal with the impostor syndrome as well as figuring things out as I go as I attempt to accomplish many other educational and professional milestones.
First-generation students at UC
The Eight Hallmarks of a Mentoring Culture

Accountability
Alignment
Communication
Value and Visibility
Demand
Multiple Mentoring Opportunities
Education and Training
Safety Nets

*In a Mentoring Culture Employees Learn with Each Other. Yuri_Arcurs/E+/Getty Images

By Lois J. Zachary, Ed.D.
Competitive Preference Priority

CPP #1: Influencing the Development of Non-Cognitive Factors/ Brief Social Belonging Intervention

CPP #2: Coaching strategy/ Individual counseling
The TRIO Scholars Mentoring Program

- Peer mentors are volunteers
- Peer mentors must be in good standing and have junior or senior standing
- Selection process involves application, interview and matching process
- Each mentor has 1-2 mentees; meetings occur 3 times per quarter
- Each mentor meets with TRIO Staff supervisor once a month
- All incoming participants (freshman and transfer students) are assigned a mentor on or soon after attending Orientation
- All participants sign a participation agreement
- Assignments occur based on
  - Major
  - Interests
  - Postsecondary plans
  - 16 personalities assessment
- Mentors and mentees are encouraged to attend events together
- Mentors provide advice, resources, and share their own experiences
- Recognition efforts
- All participants complete a survey about their experience
The Mentor Experience

Which aspects of the role of a peer mentor were the most beneficial to your personal and professional growth?

Networking with other students (mentors and mentees)

Helping others

Sharing my own experiences and struggles

Opening up to others in order to help them grow

Learning to communicate effectively

Career preparation

Time management

Check in meetings with TRIO Scholars professional staff to track my experience

Learning to prepare effectively for each session
The Mentee Experience

Which aspects of having a peer mentor were the most beneficial to your personal and professional growth?

Knowing I had someone I could trust
Developing and strengthening my academic planning and organization
Learning about campus resources
Having someone to talk to
Receiving advice
Having a safe space to ask any questions and talk about anything
“Being a TRIO Scholars Mentor has been one of the most engaging and rewarding experiences at UC Riverside. Mentoring students for the TRIO Scholars Program has enabled me to engage and learn from students with various experiences and from various backgrounds. I have been able to guide, support, and cultivate relationships with students as they continue to pursue their career paths at UC Riverside. It has been extremely gratifying to use my own experiences to guide students to continue pursuing higher education and ultimately accomplish all their goals and aspirations. Working with Daysia has been incredible and fulfilling; she is an intelligent, hardworking, and extremely inspirational student whom I have had the great privilege to guide her throughout her first year at UC Riverside.”

B.A. Sociology major
Class of 2018
I have many things to say about my mentoring experience. Not only has my mentor been the most supportive, but she has also taken it upon herself to check in on me with every opportunity she gets. Mirella has many amazing qualities about her, but the greatest of them all is her big heart. She has been there for me through some tough times and with no judgment or fear she has comforted me and told me everything will be okay. I am truly blessed and honored to have her as my mentor and as a friend.
Future goals

- Increase Peer Mentoring Program socializing opportunities
  Involve graduate students, staff, and faculty
- Increase training efforts
- Increase recruitment efforts to support 2018-2019 class of 60
  - Target Juniors to ensure longevity
Think of...
Unlocking the Power of Peers: Pedagogical Goals of The First Generation First Quarter Challenge

Dr. Davin Phoenix, UC Irvine
- Founded in 2015 in School of Social Sciences

- 10 week workshop & mentorship program for 1st year Soc Sci majors in first term

- Weekly workshop content created and led by advanced yr FGS

- Built on scaffolding, value affirmation, & narrative as pedagogy

- Co-curricular program
Components of workshops

Pitfall of the week
- Requires personal anecdotes
- Role models resilience...& humanity

Positive action of the week
- Emphasizes concrete strategies
- Adds to participants’ tool set

Challenge of the week
- Requires concrete action
- Provide tangible foundation on which to build
Challenge example

→ Record all your professors and TAs’ office hours for Weeks 6-10 in your workbook agenda.

→ Prepare at least 3 good questions in your workbook, and attend office hours with one of your professors before next week’s workshop. Get them to sign your workbook to confirm your attendance.

→ **TooEasy?** Invite a faculty member to have coffee --on us! We will provide you with a form explaining that your invitation is part of a first generation mentorship program, as well as a Starbuck’s gift card. You have until the end of Week 9 to complete this additional challenge....
Role of value affirmation

- Research shows values affirmation exercises help close achievement gaps
- Aids our goal to disrupt deficit model when serving FGS
- Creates buffer against imposter syndrome, dissonance of competing priorities
What strengths do we have in common?

Unique strengths of first gen students:

- Perseverance
- Courageous
- Resourceful
- Appreciative
- Humble
- Hard-working

Value Affirmation*

In your workbook, write for two minutes to answer the following questions:

- Why are you here (in the FGFQ)?
- What do you want from life?
- How will graduating from UCI help you get it?

Role of narrative as pedagogy

We teach 5 elements of storytelling:

1. Conflict
2. Narrative arc
3. Telling detail
4. A “So what?”
5. An “over to you...”
Assessing outcomes

Students express desiring more:

- Interaction with faculty & staff
- Social interactions across all workshop groups

How do we address attrition?
Summary

● Synergy between students, faculty & staff

● Advanced-year FGS entrusted to provide scaffolding to young FGS

● Prioritize asset-based model

● Much room to grow, within & beyond Soc Sci
Question and Answer