

## Quick Summary on Inclusive, Intentional Mentoring

Becky Wai-Ling Packard, bpackard@mtholyoke.edu

1. Daily mentoring interactions validate & recognize students and increase sense of belongingness
  - a. Emphasize your accessibility, trustworthiness, resourcefulness
  - b. Emphasize the student's progress or connection to the field
  - c. Mentoring can be burdensome if carried alone by one or two "supermentors"
2. Value of candid, buffered, specific feedback- don't back away from those difficult conversations
  - a. Separate the plan from the student; encourage high standards and mechanisms to reach
  - b. Reference past students as examples rather than yourself; group sessions set norms
3. Walk the campus and/or view the campus from the underrepresented student lens
  - a. Just as is practiced by accessibility studies, consider walking the campus with firstgen students and students of color as your guide.
  - b. Who is doing honors work? TAs? Do students have to ask for access (e.g., books)?
4. Feasibility and recognition/validation are both important factors for the persistence of first generation college students, women, and students of color
  - a. ... above and beyond self-efficacy, interest, ability, or prior performance.
  - b. For example, one cannot assume a lack of interest in a summer program just because a student does not apply. It might be that the student cannot figure out how to financially make the program work- even when the program awards a stipend.
5. Students of color, first-generation college students, women, and other underrepresented students experience micro-aggressions including invalidations that threaten belonging.
  - a. Small negative interactions are often invisible to others, but they add up and contribute to self-doubt. You cannot see if this was the first or the 10th instance this week.
  - a. Students might not show their best work, they might appear sensitive.

### Suggested readings

- Burgstahler, S. (2008). *Universal design in higher education: From principles to practice*. Boston: Harvard Education Press.
- Carlone, H.B., & Johnson, A. (2007). Understanding the science experiences of women of color: Science identity as an analytic lens. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 44(8), 1187-1218.
- Cohen, G. L., Steele, C. M., & Ross, L. D. (1999). The mentor's dilemma: Providing critical feedback across the racial divide. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 1302-1318.
- Crosby, J.R., & Monin, B. (2007). Failure to warn: The effect of race on warnings of potential academic difficulty. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 43, 663-670.
- Harper, S. R., & Hurtado, S. (2007). Nine themes in campus racial climates and implications for institutional transformation. *New Directions for Student Services*, 120, 7-24.
- Rattan, A., Good, C., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). "It's ok — not everyone can be good at math": Instructors with an entity theory comfort (and demotivate) students. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(3), 731-737.
- Schwartz, J. (2012) Faculty as undergraduate research mentors for students of color: Taking into account the costs. *Science Education*, 96(3), 527-542.
- Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race Gender and Sexual Orientation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Or read this blog: <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2009/02/microaggression.aspx>

### Example Scripts for Faculty/Advisors/Mentors:

- I really want to see you set up to succeed. So I am going to tell you what I am worried about.
- That sounds like a lot. I'm sure over a few semesters you could do all of those things. Let's generate scenarios where you can do these things and are likely to succeed.
- I remember a past advisee who is now in a Ph.D. program. This is what she ended up doing that worked out well. What do you think?
- I have never had that happen to me before. I can't say I know how you feel. But thank you for telling me about it. How can I help? Would it be okay if we call someone or find someone for you to talk to about that?
- I know you are capable of better work, and I take your goals seriously. That is why I am giving you this feedback.
- I'd love to see you grow in this. My past students and colleagues use the QR Center or the Learning Commons. Let's try that to learn more about what you need to succeed.
- I can see why you are excited about this opportunity. Let's map out what you can say about yourself, what I can write about you, and what the case will be. We can then develop an action plan to address any gaps.

### Example Scripts for Students:

- To a Peer: It's cool you did that. How did you get involved?
- To an Advisor: I enjoyed when I did that experience. Do you have any ideas about other experiences that I should be thinking about?
- To a Professor:
  - o I'd really like to meet someone in international public health. Do you know anyone or have ideas of how I could find someone in that field?
  - o I'd love to hear more about your life and how you were able to get to this point. Would you tell me more about it sometime?
  - o Let me think about who I can contact about this. I know someone in that department and I'll put in an email to see who you should visit.
  - o The alumni association keeps pretty good tabs on previous internships. Try this email script with three alums. We can review some next steps if you are interested.

### Techniques that can help (you can generate more!):

- Books on reserve; demonstrate sample notes (search on AAC&U Transparent Teaching)
- Norms: Explain how to best reach you; assignment expectations; productive studying
- Help students to prepare for class- for example, "Two Comments and a Question"
- Establish groups; rotate students through office hours; ask students what they care about
- Try "Quick writes" at beginning or end of class to gather questions