Mentoring Across Gender and Ethnicity: What Mentees say about Mentors

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NSF ADVANCE
Institutional Transformation Award

- Nationwide initiative (19 schools)
- Increase participation of women in S&E workforce by increasing S&E women faculty

NIDA SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH, PRE AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS
Faculty Composition 2004

Faculty Composition by Rank
Graph I, as of October 1, 2004

Professor           Associate          Assistant            Senior              Instructor
Professor          Professor          Instructor

Female  Male
Transformation Requires Dual Actions

• Actions for groups and individuals
• Individual development opportunities
• Empowerment of women faculty
• Action to enhance individual academic career and performance

• Actions aimed at policies and structures
• Collective development opportunities
• Leadership development for university administrators
• Actions for system-wide change
Mentoring

• Shares opportunities, contacts, and resources; sponsors and champions protégé
• Intelligent mentoring networks combine the skills, abilities, and availability of several people (de Janasz, Sullivan, & Whiting 2003)
• Increased workloads, tenure demands, and reduced resources make mentoring networks a viable option for improving performance of junior faculty (de Janaz & Sullivan, 2002)
Features of Mentoring Committee

- Meets 2-3 times per year
- Conference call or in person
- A “flexible” template

Content for discussion

- Career vision, plans, goals, progress
- Ongoing research – progress, challenges, successes
- New research – design, funding, proposal writing, co-investigators
- Teaching/service responsibilities - workloads, concerns or problems
- Work-life integration issues - setting priorities, action plans
Science Department Case Study

Purposes

• Identify work environment factors that facilitate high quality science and inclusion

• Generate theory about how these factors create the enduring culture of a work group

• Identify how a productive and inclusive work environment is created and sustained

(Bilimoria & Jordan, 2005)
Findings - A Model of a Productive and Inclusive Science Culture
Findings - Inclusive Scientific Identity

Values
• “Good Science” (significant, trustworthy)
• Doing science cooperatively (vs. competitively)

Beliefs
• Interaction is part of doing good science
• Anyone can do good science if they can learn quickly, are well-trained (developed), are excited about science and willing to work hard
Findings – Participative Activities

• Team teaching with participation across ranks
• A variety of social events (different contexts, time of day, informal)
• Participative meetings
• Regular meaningful seminars and presentations
Findings – Constructive Interactions

Four Types

• Collegial Interactions: respectful, civil
• Tacit Learning Interactions: information sharing, modeling behaviors
• Relational Interactions: personal interest, caring
• Generative Interactions: problem solving and resource generating
Findings – Integrative Leadership Practices

- Treating everyone fairly and equitably
- Seeking input in decision-making
- Promoting meaningful opportunities for interaction
- Performing the role of mentor as a service to the scientific community
Findings – Learning and Inclusion Processes

• Transparent decision-making

• Open and inclusive recruitment processes

• Formal and informal information dissemination processes
Conclusions

• Creating top-quality, inclusive, science culture requires attention to a set of factors – values and beliefs, interactions, activities, leadership, processes.

• Implementation does not need a particular leadership style

• A key advantage of such a culture is its attractiveness to a wider range of scientists, both female and male, which has implications for recruiting and retaining faculty, post-docs, and students.
• Recognize hesitation of some Mentees.
• Disclose own failures and confusions
• Address critical incidents experienced by Mentees/damage control.
• Recognize cumulative disadvantages of “outsiders”
• Help Mentees learn self-promotion
• Undertake instrumental, proactive mentoring
• Switch to “I” messages when arguing
• Rise above stereotypes
• Avoid temptation to clone
Typical Stressors

- Lack of Collegiality
- Negativity
- Unrealistic expectations
- Not enough time
- Slow starters
- Balancing life and work
Bad Mentors

- Selfish
- Overworked, overloaded
- Goals without mentoring
- Holding back – Overprotective
- Cookie cutter
- No access
- Untrained
- Biased, prejudiced
Positive

- Exposed to new worlds
- Would not be on the same path without mentoring
- Multidisciplinary experience
- Curiosity and passion in lab
- Put tenure track into language I understood and pushed me to do what needed to be done
- Allowed secondary data analysis
- Expectation of high level of commitment
- Valued all lab members; Recognition of personal and professional accomplishments
- Trust, trustworthiness
- Good morale, collaborative, cooperation
Thank You

• National Institute on Drug Abuse

• National Science Foundation

• Maternal and Child Health Services Bureau