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Francena F.L. Turner

Fayetteville State University, fturner1@uncfsu.edu

HyeJin (Tina) Yeo

Eboni M. Zamani-Gallagher

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A HANDBOOK FOR SUPPORTING TODAY'S GRADUATE STUDENTS



Edited by **David J. Nguyen**
and **Christina W. Yao**

Foreword by **Ann E. Austin**

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MENTORING DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS OF COLOR

Francena Turner, HyeJin (Tina) Yeo, and Eboni M. Zamani-Gallaher

While access to college is critical in today's global knowledge economy, completing postbaccalaureate education has become increasingly necessary for career advancement. College degrees allow for greater earning potential; however, graduate study generally offers significant opportunities for career and economic upward mobility. In fact, increases in jobs requiring master's degrees and doctoral degrees for entry-level and advanced positions are projected to grow. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019) growth in postbaccalaureate degrees between 2018 and 2028 is expected to increase 13.7% for master's and 9.0% for doctoral degrees. Across degree completers, graduate degree holders earn a median income of \$80,000, reflecting the highest earnings of any group (Carnevale et al., 2017). It is not surprising that trends in graduate school enrollment illustrate growth in master's degree (+1.4%) and doctoral degree programs (+4.1%) between 2017–2018, yet the number of international graduate students has declined during this same period (-4% in applications and -1% enrollments; Okahana & Zhou, 2019). Okahana and West (2019) contend although enrollment growth in master's and doctoral programs is modest, the U.S. labor market demand for graduate degree holders is steady.

International students compose 5.5% of all U.S. higher education student populations. Out of the total 1,094,792 international students from 223 countries, 43% (382,953) are graduate students (Institute of International Education, 2018). The majority of international students are from non-White,

non-Eurocentric, and non-English-speaking countries. These students boost financial revenues, exchange knowledge/skills, and promote global competence. They bring a wide and valuable worldview, contributing to linguistic, social, cultural, political, religious, and ethnic diversity (Greenblatt, 2005; NAFSA, 2017). However, there has been little examination of the mentoring experiences of international Graduate Students of Color (GSoC). Hence, this chapter endeavors to include international graduate students into the broader consideration of mentoring GSoC.

Overall, the graduate school attendance patterns for racially minoritized students have increased, including a significant increase in the number of participating Women of Color. According to the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), there was notable growth in the number of underrepresented racialized minorities (URM) though they remain proportionally underrepresented. Little over one-fifth (22.5%) of first-time U.S. citizens and permanent resident graduate students in fall 2015 were underrepresented minorities (i.e., 0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native, 11.8% Black/African American, 0.2% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and 10% Hispanic/Latino; Okahana et al., 2016).

For the purposes of this chapter, the term *racially minoritized* is used to reflect GSoC. More specifically, *GSoC* refers to those graduate students who have historically experienced race and ethnicity-based marginalization, isolation, and erasure while trying to pursue graduate degrees. The term *GSoC* arguably could include international Students of Color from countries outside the United States with various racial/ethnic, historical, social, cultural, political, linguistic, and religious backgrounds (Yeo et al., 2018). However, international GSoC may not be underrepresented but in fact overrepresented and de-minoritized in higher education, whereas the term *racially minoritized* primarily addresses U.S.-born, non-Asian (with the exception of Southeast Asians) racial/ethnic minoritized groups that have been historically underserved and continue to be underrepresented (Yeo et al., 2018).

Typically, Black/African American, Indigenous Native American/American Indian, Hispanic/Latinx, and Asian/Asian American students constitute the GSoC demographic though the distinction of being underrepresented generally does not apply across the board with Asian American students (e.g., overrepresentation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—STEM fields, underrepresentation in the humanities). Due to historical discrimination and its present-day effects, many GSoC are first-generation college graduates and/or the first in their family to pursue graduate degrees. Their age, gender, sexual identity, nationality, economic status, and (dis)ability status also further complicate their identities. Since U.S. higher education was created for the sons of White, wealthy men (Zamani-Gallaher et al.,

2016), GSoC deal with many layers of political, cultural, social, linguistic, and educational differences. Add to this being first-generation U.S. citizens or being an international GSoC, as well as other intersectional identities and nuances such as lack of familiarity with the context of U.S. schooling that disrupts navigating graduate study. Thus, the barriers facing GSoC necessitate a further discussion on the importance of mentoring to support GSoC in graduate education.

Issues in Mentoring

Some scholars and practitioners erroneously conflate advising and mentoring. *Mentoring* is a reciprocal process (Chan et al., 2015) by which “a student or mentee is positively socialized by a faculty or mentor for the purpose of learning the traditions, practices, and frameworks of a profession, association, or organization” (Brown et al., 1999, p. 106). In contrast, *advising* focuses on ensuring that students meet academic requirements and milestones. Montgomery et al. (2014) posit that mentoring of graduate students includes advising but advising does not equate to mentoring. Advisors often think they are mentoring their graduate students, but are not providing the “psychosocial support, career support, and role modeling inherent in mentoring” (Jones et al., 2013, p. 328). Eby et al. (2000) argue that “[c]urrent conceptualizations of mentoring may be too narrowly focused on the positive aspects of the relationship rather than considering the full scope of experiences, both positive and negative, that are likely to occur” (p. 14). This refusal to discuss negative experiences has the potential to adversely affect future mentoring experiences. GSoC may enter graduate school with myriad ways of knowing, backgrounds, and skills that do not readily align with the institutional culture, graduate school processes, or their individual colleges and academic departments (Antony, 2002). Graduate mentoring aids in socializing GSoC into graduate school culture and, eventually, the professoriate—both of which are Western-oriented and White normed.

Similar to racially minoritized U.S. born graduate students, international students also struggle with identity formation and concepts of self, due to racial, cultural, and linguistic conflicts in their academic and social spheres given the lack of familiarity and experiences with the U.S. sociopolitical context (Knox et al., 2013; Yeo et al., 2018; Zhang, 2016). Dealing with different academic and social cultures, international graduate students may face challenges in forming a scholarly identity, building rapport with an advisor, and/or establishing a mentoring relationship with persons most likely from a different background (Kim, 2007; Nguyen & Larson, 2017;

Zhang, 2016). In addition, international graduate students encounter difficulties of interaction and socialization with American advisors due to different communication and social relationship culture. For example, Korean, Chinese, and Japanese students influenced by Confucianism frequently practice a high-context communication style that employs delicate indirect verbal and nonverbal cues rather than direct literal speech (Park & Kim, 2008). This communication style could be complicated with professors or mentors lacking understanding of non-Western communication styles and the hierarchical relationship culture (Kim, 2007; Zhang, 2016).

GSoC who do not want to assimilate or who have a hard time assimilating into graduate school culture are often tacitly deemed unreceptive to mentoring. These students can go through their entire graduate school experience without one meaningful mentoring experience (Brunsma et al., 2017). We mention this point with caution as there are certainly GSoC who navigate graduate school terrains well-mentored and without problem and we do not wish to essentialize struggles with mentoring to all GSoC.

As previously stated, both domestic and international GSoC are often *first-generation graduate students*. This term means there are generally no family members with whom to discuss the rules governing graduate studies, navigating graduate school expectations, how to secure funding, or access to necessary informal networks that lead to mentorship (Mackey & Shannon, 2014). Most GSoC attempt to find mentors who look like them or share their racial, gender, cultural, or international background, but GSoC outnumber both domestic and international Faculty of Color (Brunsma et al., 2017; Dancy & Brown, 2011; Harris & Lee, 2019; Jones et al., 2013; Pope & Edwards, 2016; Tillman, 2018). Subsequently, Faculty of Color are taxed with advising and mentoring disproportionate numbers of GSoC.

Mentoring is considered service within the tenure and promotion hierarchy, but service trails behind research and teaching in importance. The tenure and promotion process minimizes the time, effort, and energy involved in mentoring students (Montgomery et al., 2014). While Faculty of Color may want to aid GSoC, they often have to make tough choices to protect their time during pre-tenure stages (Brunsma et al., 2017; Pope & Edwards, 2016). Moreover, junior Faculty of Color may not yet have access to informal mentoring networks and thus the social capital they are expected to share with GSoC (Tillman, 2018). *Social capital* refers to the social networks and connections developed as one progresses in the academy (Yosso, 2005). White male tenured faculty members have more access to important professional networks, and therefore power. Mentoring—as currently constructed—favors those (usually White male graduate students) mentored by a similar race and gender faculty demographic (Mackey & Shannon, 2014).

Herein lies the equity imperative in establishing effective formal mentoring opportunities for GSoC. Studies have found that White faculty, staff, and administrators simply do not possess the skills and culturally relevant knowledge to provide holistic mentoring of GSoC and in some cases may refuse to mentor them (Luedke, 2017; Park-Saltzman et al., 2012).

Mainstream graduate students see themselves as viable parts of the academy or as future knowledge producers in fields outside the academy through their mentoring experiences (Brunsmas et al., 2017). As such, White domestic and international students rarely have to divide themselves to be accepted into the fold (Lewis, 2016). Domestic and international GSoC may not enter graduate school with working knowledge of how the U.S. academy functions, but they do not enter as empty vessels. Instead, they arrive with a host of life experiences, academic experiences, and worldviews. Regardless of the salient identities of available mentors, GSoC must have access to formal mentoring experiences that allow them to gain access to the inner workings and varied cultures of their future career fields without having to deny parts of who they are (Chan et al., 2015; Mackey & Shannon, 2014; Park-Saltzman et al., 2012; Zhang, 2016).

Cross-Cultural GSoC Mentoring Experiences

GSoC come from cultures that value communal or collective ways of being that are in direct contrast to the solitary and individualistic nature of mentoring in graduate school (e.g., cultural values, racial/gender norms, and power dynamics that moderate cross-cultural mentoring relationships; Triandis, 2018). Hence, there is variation in mentoring and the extent to which equitable student outcomes are realized within and across cultures for GSoC (Park-Saltzman et al., 2012; Ramaswami et al., 2014). The cultural mismatch and lack of mentoring leads to students feeling like imposters (Chan et al., 2015; Dancy & Brown, 2011; Mackey & Shannon, 2014), feeling disconnected, confused, and uninformed (Pope & Edwards, 2016; Tillman, 2018), or feeling disillusioned with their chances of successfully completing their graduate degrees or procuring work in the academy (Brunsmas et al., 2015).

GSoC often experience difficulty finding mentors who can help them develop research agendas and frameworks that are not marginalized in the academy (Grant & Ghee, 2015; Kochan, 2015; Luedke, 2017; Welton et al., 2015). Mentoring provides socialization and normalization into academia, and given the hyper-focus on publishing, power dynamics and issues of supervision embedded in advising relationships also shape mentoring in

significant ways, some of which are to the detriment of graduate students' preparation (Mackey & Shannon, 2014; Manathunga, 2007). Finding an understanding, accessible, and caring mentor who is knowledgeable of their unique needs and challenges is difficult for international graduate students as nation of origin further complicates their experiences (Zhang, 2016).

GSoC experiences are consistently oversimplified and referred to as *imposter syndrome*. Clance and Imes (1978) define *imposter syndrome* as "deep feelings of intellectual and professional phoniness in high achieving individuals" characterized by GSoC, "maintaining thoughts and feelings of phoniness despite much evidence that they are outstanding academics and professionals" (as cited in Dancy & Brown, 2011, p. 616). However, imposter syndrome and recognizing systemic inequity are nuanced and not comparable concepts.

Race Matters

Even though studies show that GSoC are inclined to seek out mentors who share their racial identity, there are not enough domestic or international Faculty of Color to meet the demand (Turner & Gonzalez, 2014). Race and national origin do not always signify relatedness between GSoC and Faculty of Color. If not careful, Faculty of Color can reinscribe the same systemic inequities that the academy already inflicts on GSoC. It is unfair to both GSoC and the Faculty of Color to make the work of mentoring GSoC the job of an already overtaxed and underappreciated faculty member. Overworked mentors become ineffective mentors and GSoC deserve to work with faculty who have the time, energy, training, and desire to help them achieve their highest potential.

All faculty (the default should not be Faculty of Color) need to be open to mentoring the GSoC in their departments. Hence, majority faculty especially have to do the internal work it takes to expose their implicit biases and discomfort working closely with GSoC, and the research agendas and frameworks GSoC choose to explore during their studies. Whereas organically formed mentoring relationships are most desirable, arbitrary or forced assignment of a mentor to a student should not occur, though is found to be routine (Tillman, 2018). All students deserve to have a mentor who welcomes working with them. Administrators and faculty should reevaluate the departmental culture if faculty members readily seek to opt out of mentoring and examine that culture alongside their admissions decisions, especially when assigning advisors and mentors for GSoC in historically White contexts.

Even as the extant literature acknowledges varying mentoring experiences by race, ethnicity, and nationality as well as power differences in mentoring relationships, less research has interrogated whiteness, White privilege, and race matters relative to mentorship (McIntyre & Lykes, 1998; Powell, 2000). Research has demonstrated that White mentors are often uncomfortable discussing issues of race, gender, power, and privilege—issues that materially affect GSoC's daily experiences and their approaches to knowledge production (Harris & Lee, 2019; McCoy et al., 2015). Because of this discomfort, White mentors of domestic and international GSoC often focus on academics and neglect the other facets of mentoring (Luedke, 2017).

The passivity, explicit and conscious racial colorblindness, and ideology of avoidance hamper the ability to develop relationships between GSoC and White mentors and can adversely influence their outcomes in terms of program satisfaction and career advancement given the necessary conditions to produce sufficient mentoring situations were inhibited. The powerlessness of GSoC and superficial mentoring offered is often exacerbated by nationality. Domestic and international students experience racial microaggressions when working with American students and faculty members. However, international GSoC also experience microinsults due to their accents, frequently feel ignored for their academic contributions, or find their needs and values are deemed invalid (Kim & Kim, 2010; Yeo et al., 2019). By not appreciating the individual differences of their GSoC mentees, introducing their mentees to their professional networks, offering them collaborative copublishing projects, or working to provide them aid in securing funding, these mentors allow their implicit or explicit biases to limit the career possibilities and career trajectories of GSoC (McCoy et al., 2015). Such mentor neglect was the single most frequently reported negative experience among the mentees in the existing literature (Eby et al., 2000; Park-Saltzman et al., 2012; Zhang, 2016). Such benign neglect affects the interpersonal relationships among GSoC and between GSoC and White graduate students (Tillman, 2018).

Strategies for Improving Mentoring Experiences for GSoC

Effective mentoring is too important a component of the graduate school experience to leave to chance. As such, formal mentoring programs are needed to ensure that no GSoC completes their graduation education without mentoring. However, just merely assigning students to a faculty member does not equate to effective mentoring. Tillman (2018) provides a framework for such a program for Faculty of Color with steps for each level of governance to ensure that a culture of data-supported mentoring—based in

the experiences of GSoC and the expectations of the careers in knowledge production—is established and supported at the institutional, college, and department level. In the next section, we adapt her framework for GSoC with added recommendations at the faculty level as well.

Institutional and College Level

Each institution of higher education's central administration must evaluate the mentoring experiences and needs of GSoC and collect demographic and cultural information before creating a mentoring philosophy or plan. Interested parties must (a) conduct needs analysis of GSoC, (b) review and examine the current institutional policies and practices, and (c) develop or revise policies and practices in a data-informed manner. At the very minimum, a formal mentoring plan should include implicit and explicit bias training, mentor/mentee training workshops, and mentoring handbooks for faculty and graduate students. Such handbooks should explicitly address differences in cultural and academic practices between the United States and the sending countries for international students and between the academy and GSoC for domestic students, using strengths-based perspectives. A mentoring plan should also include a funding commitment to ensure that a lack of fiscal resources does not allow GSoC to go without mentorship (Park-Saltzman et al., 2012; Tillman, 2018).

At the campus level, there should be active aligning of the informed mentoring philosophy established by central administration. At the college and department level, faculty should receive credit for their mentoring work in the tenure and promotion process (Montgomery et al., 2014). Next, colleges should strongly consider providing substantive funding for one major conference per year as a part of mentoring practice. Conference presentations and attendance are important in aiding GSoC in finding additional mentoring, networking, collaboration, and publishing opportunities (Tillman, 2018). Lastly, offering for-credit seminars or courses about U.S. racial inequity and racism will help international GSoC have a better understanding of a racialized learning environment, cope with their experiences within one of the minoritized groups in the United States, and seek out adequate support mechanisms.

Department Level

The two most important actions a department might take toward the improvement of mentoring experiences for GSoC are to develop a culturally sensitive mentoring model to fit their context and culture and to teach mentor training as dedicated courses. Culturally sensitive mentoring begins

with acknowledging diverse backgrounds of GSoC and understanding the cultural values and norms of the mentor and the mentee (Park-Saltzman et al., 2012). Without a consistent, long-term method for culturally sensitive mentoring, the quality of mentor/mentee relationships would vary solely based on an individual mentor's capacity. Part of the reason so many GSoC have unfulfilling mentoring experiences is that there is little formal training in how to mentor graduate students, much less GSoC.

Each department should make a commitment to providing mentoring opportunities to each GSoC it admits (e.g., offer mentoring seminars, networking socials, handbooks, etc. to both faculty and students). More specifically, formal and informal opportunities for newly admitted domestic and international GSoC could provide a more customized and personalized experience at the master's and doctoral level. In addition, any formal mentoring plan should have a protocol for ending mentoring relationships that are not working for either the mentor or the mentee.

Faculty Level

An effective mentor recognizes their limitations as a mentor. Faculty members should examine their capacity to mentor GSoC. If the reasons they may find mentoring GSoC to be difficult relate to the student's race, gender, sexual identity, nation of origin, or other parts of the student's salient identities, the faculty member should make use of racial equity and intersectional consciousness training and scholarship. Seeking out other mentors or resources both in the United States and abroad for mentees could be an active effort to meet graduate students' needs. Likewise, faculty mentors need to be amenable to open and direct communication that allows them to learn from and about GSoC during the mentoring process.

Advocate-Mentors

Harris and Lee (2019) argue that GSoC need more than mentors; they need advocates. *Advocate-mentors* are tenured faculty who "commit to challenging the department or institution to be accountable for and to their increasingly diverse student body, subsequently promoting equity, inclusivity, and systemic change" (p. 107). An advocate-mentor would fight for their students in closed-door decision-making processes and in public by introducing their students to their networks and providing them with publishing and copublishing opportunities. This advocate-mentoring is exceedingly vital for international GSoC because of their sociocultural barriers and vulnerabilities related to the realities of their foreign national status (e.g., losing a visa and power relationships as a form of economic colonization or cultural

imperialism between the United States and the home countries of international students).

Learner-Centered Mentoring

Developed from an evaluation of an urban teacher preparation program, *learner-centered mentoring* (LCM) could be adapted to GSoC and would require vulnerability and reflexivity on the part of the GSoC and the faculty mentor. According to Kolman et al. (2017), a department commitment to LCM when used with GSoC:

1. focuses on [GSoC] needs, readiness, and purposes for learning,
2. understands the [GSoC] within a developmental trajectory,
3. provides conditions for [GSoC] development and autonomy,
4. positions the [faculty mentor] as learner, observer, & supporter, and
5. draws on observations of each [GSoC] to develop [research, teaching, and service] experiences meant to foster individual growth (p. 94)

At regular intervals, a GSoC and their mentor would collaboratively develop plans centering the GSoC's diverse culture, needs, and skill sets.

Curriculum Homeplacing. Pope and Edwards (2016) offered a mentoring philosophy based in Black feminist thought as a way to provide culturally sensitive mentoring spaces for Black women graduate students and their Black women faculty mentors. We argue that such spaces could also be created in formal department-supported peer mentoring networks among Black women graduate students or GSoC. Specifically, *curriculum homeplacing* “[p]laces Black women and Black women’s ways of knowing at the center. Curriculum homeplacing further asserts the humanity of Black women and consciously resists institutional frames that would seek to invalidate their position as knowers, theorists, and scholars” (p. 770). When adapted to GSoC, this conceptualization of mentoring would involve creating counterspaces where domestic and international GSoC and their cultural ways of knowing, research frameworks, and knowledge production are nurtured and celebrated.

Mentors who follow this framework would, instead of shying away from discussing seemingly obscure research methodologies, devote time to helping GSoC develop a thorough understanding of the research questions that they are grappling with while developing a means for answering or addressing these questions. Such a mentor might introduce the GSoC to scholars who are working with the same frameworks, methodologies, or global contexts. They would support their GSoC who may not want to

enter the academy and find them effective mentors to help them navigate nontraditional career paths. The unique needs of the GSoC would take center stage. In terms of peer mentoring, advanced GSoC could mentor incoming GSoC in literal and figurative spaces that are more welcoming to their ways of knowing and being than the academy, thereby strengthening and preparing them to advocate for themselves and effectively assert their autonomy in formal academic spaces.

Critical Collective Community. Montgomery et al.'s (2014) conceptualization of *critical collective community* (CCC) refers to “a collective of individuals similarly dedicated to providing honest structured guidance and supporting opportunities to enhance their individual cultural capital to sustain and expand all members for their future careers” (p. 5). Similarly, *cultural capital* is considered the abilities, skills, and knowledge one has accumulated often passed from one generation to the next, generally inherited by privileged groups but not solely possessed by dominant members of society (Yosso, 2005). GSoC often construct such communities among themselves on an informal basis, but there is merit in considering establishing and introducing GSoC to a department-supported version as a part of orientation. With a knowledgeable faculty member present, GSoC could ask any questions they may have and gain answers from both faculty and advanced GSoC. A department-supported CCC would eradicate the idea that only certain GSoC deserve time, effort, and care while others do not. CCCs have roles that the mentor would shift in and out of depending on the needs of the GSoC, to include: confronter, clarifier, comforter, and collaborator. Ultimately, departments should reconsider any faculty mentoring practices that impede GSoC's cultural desire to collaborate and commune with their fellow graduate students. Such practices make for poor interpersonal relations even as those GSoC become faculty members.

Graduate Student Level

GSoC should perform the same reflexive work that we suggest for potential faculty mentors. GSoC should identify their needs and examine their ability to approach mentors. For example, they should ask themselves questions such as, “How do I need to be treated for me to have the best experience in my mentoring relationships?” “What do I want to gain from mentorship?” “What do I want to feel in the presence of my mentor?” and “What can I commit to bringing to my mentoring relationships?” At the beginning phase of the mentoring relationship, GSoC should explicitly discuss their needs and expectations with their mentors. This helps avoid future dissonance due to a mismatch between mentors and mentees' role expectations,

especially due to a different culture of socialization. When formal mentoring networks are available, GSoC should take advantage of them as well as informal peer mentoring opportunities such as reading and writing groups.

It is never too early to begin developing a collaborative view of knowledge production. While mentoring training is not currently a consistent part of graduate education, GSoC might want to consider taking any workshops their campus holds on mentoring as well as electing to effectively mentor at least one Undergraduate Student of Color. Lastly, GSoC should consider mentoring opportunities outside their institution. Professional organizations often offer preconference mentoring opportunities during their annual meetings and GSoC could gain access to publishing opportunities and other forms of professionalization and networks by taking part in these activities.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to explore some issues related to the mentoring experiences of historically and racially minoritized graduate students (i.e., domestic and international GSoC), and strategies for creating effective, culturally responsive mentoring programs for GSoC. The terms *advising* and *mentoring* are not synonyms. Though there may be overlap in some of the activities involved the function and depth within each role differ as the assignment of a graduate faculty advisor occurs as one enters their postbaccalaureate program, which is typically based on student research and career interests that are matched with faculty expertise. Both faculty advisors and mentors can be formally assigned to a student, however advisors and not necessarily mentors are responsible for successfully guiding students through their graduate program. For example, mentors may not be expected to share course scheduling and discuss offerings, know deadlines for registration, course drop dates, approved internships, processes for filing theses/dissertations, or required forms to participate in commencement (Blanchard & Haccoun, 2019). Graduate faculty mentoring, like advising, involves an academic-centered relationship, however mentors serve as a sounding board and resource supporting the student developmentally both in and out of coursework which includes cultural and mental supports (Lunsford, 2012) to navigate both academic and nonacademic challenges.

The essence of mentoring involves an interactive process whereby faculty members engage in layered ways through multiple roles with protégés centering and concerned about their personal and professional growth. When entering graduate school, GSoC have to make meaning of different cultural norms, the unwritten rules of the academy, and the academic culture

of their departments (often quite homogenous and centering Westernized, Eurocentric standards). History shows that whiteness and White privilege are justified and authorized by America's essential principles of prosperity and individualism (Alvarado, 2010; McIntyre & Lykes, 1998; Powell, 2000). Indeed, the culture of the academy is racialized and subscribes to meritocratic principles that further whiteness and individualism (Gusa, 2010; Posselt, 2018). In turn, academic and social failures of GSoC are regarded as individual problems rather than institutionalized and systemic.

Culturally responsive mentoring requires reciprocal efforts. The institution and college should take the lead in creating and facilitating a culturally responsive mentoring practice by reforming policy, hiring more domestic and international Faculty/Staff of Color, and providing mentor training and development resources across the institution. In addition, a contextualized mentoring model should be developed and provided consistently at the department level. Each department can provide formal and informal networking events and faculty training. Faculty should be aware of the different communication styles of GSoC. Mentors should avoid assuming what domestic and international GSoC know or do not know about graduate school experiences or that international GSoC with high English proficiency do not experience cultural dissonance.

Developing culturally responsive and equity-conscious mentoring programs should require faculty to acknowledge cultural differences and identify the needs and mentoring expectations of GSoC, understanding that graduate school socialization is not race-neutral and effective mentoring seeks to advance racially equitable student outcomes (Williams et al., 2018). Finally, peer-mentoring opportunities offer another way to take advantage of mentoring. Mentoring without intentional attention to cultural differences results in the maintenance of the status quo, White, Westernized culture which does not advance anti-racist education at the graduate level (Welton et al., 2018) or the urgency of addressing institutional culture and transforming practices in the mentorship of GSoC.

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