

NAHSA Mentorship

The National Association of Holmes Scholars Alumni (NAHSA) mentorship program is designed in accordance with the mission and goals of the organization, to support the professional development and leadership among its members and scholars of color to enhance research, practice, and policy within the broader education profession. The mentorship program offers a systematic process for supporting the establishment of relationships among mentors and mentees and utilizes the NAHSA mentorship spiral model as a guide for supporting the development of mentees as colleagues.

The Selection Process for Mentorship

Upon the completion of the NAHSA Mentorship interest form, the mentorship committee will make every effort to pair mentors and mentees according to their professional and research interests and the stated preferences for communication. Once pairing is made, the mentorship committee will notify both the mentor and mentee of the results and provide each member with contact information and a brief bio of his/her mentor/mentee. Because NAHSA seeks to maintain integrity of mentorship, a mentor will typically work with no more than two mentees at a given time.

NAHSA Support for Mentorship and Evaluation

Each mentor-mentee pair will be assigned a designated liaison from the NAHSA mentorship committee, who will serve as a resource. It is important that if either member has a question about NAHSA expectations or resources for mentorship he/she should contact the liaison or the chair of the mentorship committee. Additional resources for mentorship will be provided on the NAHSA website.

Each mentor-mentee pair should participate in the annual mentorship evaluation. NAHSA will use the data from the evaluation for the continuous improvement of mentorship procedures.

The Responsibility of the Mentor

The mentor should contact the new mentee upon notification of the pairing and then meet with the mentee (in person, via telephone, electronically) on a regular basis. The mentor should provide informal advice to the mentee on aspects of teaching, research, goal setting, publications, balancing professional and personal responsibilities, etc. or be able to direct the mentee to appropriate other individuals and opportunities for professional development. The mentor should treat all interactions and discussions in confidence. There is no evaluation or assessment of the mentee on the part of the mentor, only supportive guidance and constructive feedback.

The Responsibility of the Mentee

The mentee should keep his/her mentor informed of any problems or concerns as they arise. The mentee should be sure to keep all established appointments with his/her mentor, as the time of each individual is important. The mentee should seek to maintain open and candid communication, yet in a professional manner. When input or feedback on work is desired, the mentee should leave sufficient time (e.g., in the grant proposal and paper submission process) to allow his/her mentor the opportunity to review and critique drafts.

The Mentor

The most important tasks of a good mentor are to support his/her mentee's professional development toward the completion of his/her doctoral program and as he/she enters a chosen professional career. Although the role of mentor is an informal one, it poses a challenge and requires dedication and time. A good relationship with a supportive, active mentor has been shown to contribute significantly to a mentee's career development and satisfaction.

Qualities of a Good Mentor*

- Accessibility—the mentor is encouraged to make time to be available to the mentee. The mentor might keep in contact by dropping by, calling, sending e-mail, or extending a lunch invitation. It is very helpful for the mentor to make time to read / critique proposals and papers and to provide periodic reviews of progress.
- Modeling—the mentor assumes a position of respect and patience, guides rather than tells, models life-long learning, and provides challenges that stretch the capacity of the mentee.
- Active Listening—the mentor actively listens, reflects on experiences, asks questions, encourages a sense of ownership, and affirms the experience of the mentee.
- Networking—the mentor should be able to help the mentee establish a professional network.
- Independence—the mentee's intellectual independence from the mentor must be carefully preserved and the mentor must avoid developing a competitive relationship with his/her mentee.
- NAHSA mission—the mentor upholds and conveys the NAHSA mission.

Qualities of a Good Mentee

- Non-bias—the mentee learns to observe with a minimum of bias.
- Communication—the mentee communicates and listens effectively.
- Knowledge—the mentee seeks to increase his/her self-knowledge about strengths, needs, learning styles, weaknesses, and "blind spots".
- Receptive—the mentee is receptive to feedback rather than defensive, and maintains an interdependent rather than a dependent or autonomous relationship with their mentor.

Goals for the Mentorship*

Short-term goals

- Goal setting—help the mentee to establish professional goals as relevant to his/her professional station.
- Networking—introduction to colleagues, identification of other possible mentors.
- Developing awareness—help mentee understand policies and procedures that are relevant to the academy or his/her work.
- Providing feedback—offer constructive criticism and encouragement and compliments on achievements.
- Helping to sort out priorities—provide advice on budgeting time, balancing research, teaching, and service, etc.

Long-term goals

- Developing visibility and prominence within the profession.
- Achieving career advancement.

Benefits for the mentor

- Satisfaction in assisting in the development of a colleague
- Ideas for and feedback about the mentor's own teaching/scholarship
- A network of colleagues who have passed through the program
- Enhancement of NAHSA mentorship quality

Changing Mentors

In cases of changes in professional or research interests, incompatibility, or where the relationship is not mutually fulfilling, either the mentee or mentor should seek confidential advice from a representative of the NAHSA mentorship committee. It is important to realize that changes can and should be made without prejudice or fault. The mentee, in any case, should be encouraged to seek out additional mentor(s) as the need arises.

Typical Issues

- How does one establish an appropriate balance between teaching, research, and committee work? How does one say "no?"
- What criteria are used for teaching excellence, how is teaching evaluated?
- How does one obtain feedback concerning teaching? What resources are available for teaching enhancement?
- How does one identify and recruit good graduate students? How are graduate students supported? What should one expect from graduate students? What is required in the graduate program?
- What are the criteria for research excellence, how is research evaluated?
- How does the merit and promotion process work? Who is involved?
- What committees should one be on and how much committee work should one expect?
- What is the college system? What responsibilities come with appointment to a particular college?
- How do I construct my vitae for a particular job description?
- What processes should I consider for publication?
- How do I prepare for a job interview?
- How might I negotiate a job offer?
- How do I see a job that is right for me and my career goals?

Resources:

Academic Mentoring:

<http://www.faculty.diversity.ucla.edu/mentor/docs/articles/AcademicMentoringHowtoGiveItandGetit.pdf>

<http://www.socsci.uci.edu/ssarc/lspa/webdocs/Mentorship.pdf>

Formatting and Writing Style Guides: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

*Adapted from the University of California, San Diego