

How to Mentor Graduate Students:



A Guide for **Faculty** at a Diverse University

University of Michigan • The Rackham School of Graduate Studies

Dear Reader:

A

n important part of the mission of the Graduate School is to improve the quality of the graduate student experience. To that end, we spend time talking with students about their concerns and soliciting their suggestions for ways to improve their experience. In our conversations with graduate students over the past several years, a common theme emerged --graduate students' desires for good advice and mentoring. Of course, there are multiple reasons why many graduate students don't receive as much advice and mentoring as they would like, not the least of which is that their potential mentors are extremely busy pursuing research and teaching.

Both students and their mentors share responsibility for ensuring high quality mentoring relationships. We understand that there is no substitute for a healthy relationship between students and advisors; this is the key to successful mentoring. This handbook has been written with a primary focus on faculty members; a companion volume is focused on graduate students. We hope that both guides will be helpful resources for faculty, students, and staff.

The recommendations and suggestions in this handbook come from interviews and conversations with students, faculty, and staff. Their experiences may or may not be exactly the same as yours. We invite you to add your voices to those reflected in this handbook by sharing your thoughts with us. When doing so, please contact Rackham's Program Manager for Graduate Student Life, Darlene Ray-Johnson, Director of Graduate Student Affairs (647-7548 or rayj@umich.edu).

I urge you to read this guide, reflect on your mentoring relationships with students, share your ideas with colleagues, and continue the challenging but rewarding work of mentoring graduate students.

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A web version of this handbook can be obtained at:
<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/>
For further information about the handbook or other mentoring initiatives, contact Darlene Ray-Johnson at 647-7548 or rayj@umich.edu.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Part One: Mentorship of Graduate Students	
I. What Is Mentoring?	6
II. The Benefits of Mentoring	6
III. Before You Start	7
IV. The Basics of Good Mentorship	7
V. At the First Meetings	12
VI. Clarifying Expectations	14
VII. General Advice to Give to Graduate Students	16
VIII. How Departments Can Encourage Mentoring	18
Part Two: Mentoring Within a Diverse Community	
I. Common Themes Across Groups	21
II. Women Graduate Students	25
III. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Graduate Students	28
IV. Racial and Ethnic Minority Graduate Students	29
V. International Graduate Students	31
VI. Graduate Students with Family Responsibilities	33
VII. Graduate Students from Working-Class Backgrounds	36
VIII. Graduate Students with Disabilities	38
IX. Non-Traditional Graduate Students	40
Wrapping It Up	43
Appendix A: Professional Counseling Resources	44
Appendix B: Bibliography	45
Appendix C: Acknowledgements	49

INTRODUCTION

This guidebook for faculty, along with a companion handbook for graduate students (*How to Get the Mentoring You Want*), reflects Rackham's acknowledgment of the important role mentoring plays within graduate education. We developed these handbooks to assist faculty and graduate students in forming mentoring relationships that are based on realistic goals, expectations and understandings of one another.

The idea for this guide arose from forums and discussions we held over the past two years with our graduate students. At these meetings, we asked students to identify their concerns about their graduate education. We were struck by the frequency with which students remarked that their biggest desire was for more mentoring. We heard this from students regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, social class, disciplinary interest or departmental affiliation.

What exactly did students mean when they said they lacked a mentor? Students repeated a consistent theme - they were disappointed at not having someone who is concerned about them and how they fit into their wider discipline. They made such statements as: "I want to have a professor to talk to about issues in my field that lie beyond my research topic." "I want to have someone who is willing to teach me about what it means to be a professional in my field." "I want someone who cares enough about me to help open doors leading to funding or future job opportunities."

The first section of this guide (*Mentoring Graduate Students*) focuses on good mentoring practices and enumerates some general advice to give to graduate students. The information contained in these pages was distilled from numerous discussions with faculty and advanced graduate students as well as from some of the better mentoring handbooks developed by other universities and professional associations.

The second section of this guidebook (*Mentoring Within a Diverse Community*) was written because graduate student mentoring does not take place within a social and political vacuum. Instead, the University of Michigan is comprised of a diverse graduate student body. At Rackham we have had the unique opportunity of hearing from groups of students who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized in higher education and as a result we have come to learn about some of the unique sets of challenges they face in graduate school. We wrote this section in order to share the concerns that students expressed to us so that all of those who mentor graduate students can be aware of these issues.

We hope you find this guide useful. Just as importantly, we hope this project will stimulate helpful discussions about mentoring among those at the University who have strong interests in ensuring that graduate students receive good mentoring - the graduate students, the faculty, the heads of departments, schools and colleges, and our central administration.

PART ONE: MENTORSHIP OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

I

What Is Mentoring?

A mentoring relationship is a close, individualized relationship that develops over time between a graduate student and a faculty member and that includes both caring and guidance. Although there is a connection between mentors and advisors, not all mentors are advisors and not all advisors are mentors. Mentors, as defined by The Council of Graduate Schools, are:

Advisors, people with career experience willing to share their knowledge; supporters, people who give emotional and moral encouragement; tutors, people who give specific feedback on one's performance; masters, in the sense of employers to whom one is apprenticed; sponsors, sources of information about and aid in obtaining opportunities; models of identity, of the kind of person one should be to be an academic (Zelditch, 1990).

It is important to note that mentoring involves a constellation of activities that goes beyond advising or guiding a student through a project. Instead it involves a variety of ways for assisting and supporting students through their graduate careers and beyond. We certainly are not suggesting that you should try to fulfill all the roles described for every student you mentor. In fact, part of your responsibility as a mentor is to help students cultivate multiple mentoring relationships inside and outside the University.

II

The Benefits of Mentoring

To Graduate Students: During their first years, new graduate students find out that graduate school is vastly different from their undergraduate experience. One of the main differences is that the goal of an undergraduate is to obtain knowledge, while in graduate school their goal is also to contribute to a field of knowledge. Mentoring is an important mechanism that enables graduate students to acquire the body of knowledge and skills they need as well as an understanding of the way their discipline operates. Research shows that students who have mentoring relationships have higher productivity levels, a higher level of involvement with their departments, and greater satisfaction with their programs (Green & Bauer, 1995).

To Faculty: Faculty we interviewed for this project told us of the many rewards they reap from mentoring graduate students, including keeping abreast of new knowledge and techniques; gaining collaborators for current or future projects; having research assistants whose work is critical to the completion of a research grant; gaining increased professional stature by sending new scholars into the field; and experiencing the personal joys and satisfactions inherent in mentoring relationships.

III

Before You Start

You may find it useful to begin by thinking about your days as a graduate student and the mentoring you received. Think about the following:

- What kind of mentoring did you have?
- What did you like and not like about the mentoring you received?
- How well did your mentors help you progress through your graduate program?
- How well did your mentors prepare you for your academic career?
- What did you not receive in the way of mentoring which would have been helpful to you?

By answering these questions, we hope you can develop a vision of the kind of mentor you want to be and can think about the most helpful ways you can mentor students inside and outside your discipline.

IV

The Basics of Good Mentorship

In the course of our project, we asked graduate students: “What did your mentors do for you that made the greatest difference to your graduate career?” We also talked with various faculty who have been recognized for their mentoring to find out what they do that makes them such good mentors. From these discussions, we have been able to identify the following tasks of a mentor:

Engage Graduate Students in Ongoing Conversations

“The message my mentor sent to me was that I had value enough for her to spend time with me.”

“The most important things my mentor did was spend time talking with me and taking an interest in things interesting to me.”

- A simple ‘hello’ in the hallway makes a big difference. If you have a moment, ask a student about his or her courses or current work.
- Let students know they are welcome to talk with you during your office hours.
- Be in touch with the students you mentor at least once a semester. Although it is ultimately the responsibility of students to initiate contact with you, it may make a difference if you contact those students who are becoming remote.
- Some professors invite students to coffee or to their homes for dinner so that discussions can take place in more informal settings and away from the distractions of the office.

Demystify Graduate School

“It has been extremely helpful to me to have a mentor who recognized that academic procedures and protocol - everything from how to select classes to how to assemble a panel for a conference - are not familiar territory for a lot of people.”

“My mentor has been willing to answer the most basic of questions without making me feel foolish for asking them.”

- Make sure you have the most recent copies of your program’s guidelines and Rackham’s *Graduate Student Handbook*. Be at least somewhat familiar with the contents of these publications.
- New students frequently do not know what questions to ask or what certain terminology means. Most likely they are hearing terms such as “qualifying exams” or “prelims” for the first time. Adjust your conversations accordingly.
- There are many aspects of graduate education that are unwritten or vague. You can help by clarifying your program’s expectations for coursework, comprehensive exams, research and teaching. Graduate students will also need to know how to form a committee and how to write a dissertation. For each stage of the graduate career, discuss the criteria that are used for determining what is quality work.

- Alert students to possible pitfalls, especially those that may affect their funding status.

Provide Constructive and Supportive Feedback

“I wrote several drafts before he felt I had begun to make a cogent argument, and as painful as that was, I would not have written the dissertation that I did without receiving strong, if just, criticism, but in a compassionate way.”

“Honest advice – given as gently as possible – is something all of us graduate students need.”

- Provide students with forthright assessments of their work. Do not assume that students know what you think about their work.
- Be sure to provide feedback on a student’s work in a timely manner because a delay in responding to their work can hinder their progress.
- Temper criticisms with praise when it is deserved. Remind students that you are holding them to high standards so as to help them improve.
- If a student is falling behind in his or her work, do not automatically assume this reflects a lack of commitment. Talk with the student to see what is going on. Perhaps the student is exhausted, is unclear about what s/he is suppose to do next, or maybe dislikes the project they are working on or the people they are working with.
- If you see problems that make you think a student is not capable of completing his or her degree, address these as soon as possible. If you put this issue aside, it may be more damaging to the student later on.

Provide Encouragement and Support

“Mentorship is far more than a one-time conversation about your career plans or a visit to a professor’s home. It is the mentor’s continuous engagement in her student’s professional growth and the on-going support and encouragement of her student’s academic endeavors.”

“My professors encouraged me both to publish my work and to participate in conferences. Without their encouragement, I may not have made the effort to accomplish these things.”

- Encourage students to discuss their ideas, even those ideas students might fear are naive or ‘crazy.’
- Encourage students to try new techniques and to expand their skills.
- Let students know it is okay to make mistakes. Remind them how much we learn from our failures.
- It is quite common for graduate students to suffer from anxiety and insecurity about whether or not they truly belong in graduate school. Let students know that most students experience this at some time. Assure them they have the skills and abilities to succeed.
- Share a negative experience you had and what you learned from it. One professor we talked with shows students the first paper he ever submitted in graduate school – one that was heavily critiqued.
- Teach students how to break large tasks into smaller ones to avoid being overwhelmed by the nature of graduate work.

Help Foster Networks

“My co-chair referred me to a faculty member at UNC at a time when my research was floundering and I really needed additional support. I could not have completed my dissertation were it not for this recommendation.”

“My advisors really made a team of their graduate students, having regular meetings, informal parties and get-togethers, working on projects together and forming different interest groups. That comradeship was essential to my academic growth as well as my sense of having a community.”

- If you cannot provide something a student needs, suggest other people who might be of assistance - other UM faculty, graduate students, alumni, department staff, retired faculty, and faculty from other universities.
- Within the department, and at conferences, introduce students to faculty and other graduate students who have complementary interests.
- Some professors actively build a community of scholars by coordinating meetings or potluck dinners among students who share similar academic interests.

Look Out for the Student's Interests

“My mentor allowed my tasks to grow along with me, offering me appropriate opportunities and challenges at each stage of my education.”

“I knew that I was not just an ordinary student when she invited me to co-teach with her. We worked together as colleagues, not as teacher and student.”

- Let your students know up front that you want them to succeed.
- Create opportunities for students to demonstrate their competencies. For instance, take your students to important meetings and conferences so they can gain some visibility. Encourage them to make presentations at these venues.
- When you feel a student is prepared, suggest or nominate him or her for fellowships, projects, and teaching opportunities.
- Be an advocate for a student if and when this is necessary.
- Promote the student's work within and outside your department.

Treat Students with Respect

“She treated me and her other students with respect – respect for our opinions, our independence, and our visions of what we wanted to get from graduate school.”

“It sounds silly but the best thing my mentor did for me was to actually sit down and listen to what I had to say. When graduate students are allowed to feel that what they have to say is actually worthwhile, it makes interactions more rewarding.”

- A common complaint among students is that they do not feel they have professors' full attention when they are talking with them. Try to minimize interruptions during meetings. Note your body language: Do you often look at your watch while your student is talking? One professor we talked with positioned a clock on the wall where students sit so he can be aware of the time without looking away from the student. Other faculty said they periodically meet away from the office or department - for instance at a coffee shop - to help create more personalized time.
- Have a system for remembering previous conversations with the student. A number of faculty maintain notes on discussions with students and then file them away in a folder separate from a student's official record. They review these files prior to scheduled meetings.

- Tell your students what you learn from them. This will make them realize they are potential colleagues.
- Acknowledge the skills and experience students bring with them to graduate school.

Provide a Personal Touch

“Having someone supportive of the things that can go wrong is the difference in my mind between an adequate mentor and a great one.”

“A few of my professors were always willing and eager to talk with me about my career interests, professional pursuits, and such issues as juggling career and family. This may not sound like much, but it truly makes a difference.”

- Students may need to discuss certain academic and nonacademic issues that arise for them while they are in graduate school. It is helpful for them to know they can come to you and that you will care. Being open and approachable is particularly important when a student is shy or comes from a different cultural background.
- Assist students in finding creative solutions to issues that arise.
- If you feel a student can benefit from professional counseling, be aware of the resources that are available. (See Appendix A.)

V

At the First Meetings

In the graduate student guidebook, we suggest to students that they undertake a critical self-appraisal before they meet with professors. Students will be better able to assess whom to add to their “mentoring team” if they have first identified their needs and the type of people they best work with. Below are some issues we suggest students think about. We share a modified version of this listing as possible “talking points” for you in your first meeting with a student.

What are the student's goals for graduate school and beyond?

- Find out about the student's previous educational experiences and why s/he decided to go to graduate school. What does the student hope to get out of graduate school?
- Discuss your research or creative projects and how they complement or diverge from the student's interests.
- Offer suggestions about courses the student should take, or other training and work experiences s/he should seek, that will help the student achieve his or her goals.
- Refer the student to other people inside or outside the University whom s/he should meet. If you know someone well, offer to send a letter of introduction on the student's behalf.

What are the student's strengths and weaknesses?

- Ask about their prior academic, professional, or personal experiences.
- Ask them about their skills (creative, analytical, statistical, etc.)
- If you know them from classes or projects, share your impressions about their strengths as well as the areas that they need to improve.
- Offer ideas about courses or experiences they need in order to improve their skills.

What is the student's work style?

- Discuss with the student what type of guidance s/he seeks. How much independence versus one-on-one work does the student want?
- Discuss your work style and the way you work with graduate students.
- Ask the student about people in his or her past who have been important mentors. Inquire about how these people were effective in helping the student.

Clarifying Expectations

Problems in mentorship most often occur because of misunderstandings about expectations faculty and graduate students have of one another. To avoid this, you and your student need to discuss your respective roles and responsibilities. Although you do not necessarily have to set up a formal contract, some people find it helpful to specify mutual agreements. As a student progresses through his or her program, you may find that you need to reiterate or revise the expectations you have of one another.

Below are some suggestions of areas you may want to discuss:

Goals: Ask each of your graduate students to develop and share with you a work plan that includes short-term and long-term goals as well as the timeframe for reaching those goals. These lists of goals will need to be revised periodically, so it is a good idea to revisit these with students on a yearly basis

Make sure the student's work plan meets the program's requirements and is feasible. Ask the student to be in contact with you at least once a semester to update you on progress made as well as obstacles encountered. Discuss any additional training and experiences the student needs in order to achieve his or her goals. If modifications to the timeline are necessary, agree upon a new work plan.

Meetings: Inform students about how frequently you will be able to meet with them. Be explicit if you have a heavy travel schedule, are about to take a sabbatical, or will be assuming an administrative position. If you will not be able to meet often enough to satisfy some students' needs, discuss alternative means of communication such as e-mail, and remind them of others with whom they can consult.

You can also talk to students about the kinds of issues you feel require a face to face meeting and the kinds that can be dealt with in other ways. Let them know whether you use e-mail and what types of issues you think are best dealt with electronically. Also let students know if they may contact you at home, and under what circumstanc-

es that might be appropriate. Provide the student an opportunity to also let you know if you can contact them at home.

Most professors want students to take the responsibility to arrange and then lead their meetings together. If this is true for you, make that explicit. Let students know it is their responsibility to contact you when they need something. Emphasize that they need to be prepared with an agenda of discussion items, and that it is up to them to make the most out of your allotted time together.

Feedback: Discuss how often you will give them feedback about their general progress. It is also helpful if you talk to them about what type of feedback they can expect from you. If you tend to give a lot of criticism, forewarn them and let them know this is to further their professional growth. If you tend to give sparse criticism, let them know this as well.

Also tell students how long it generally takes you to review and provide feedback of their work. Let them know how they can best remind you about receiving it if they do not hear from you within the specified timeframe. For instance, perhaps you would appreciate a reminder via e-mail or telephone a few days before the agreed upon date. Each time students submit something to you, let them know when they can expect you to return it.

Drafts: Discuss your expectations of what first drafts should look like before they are submitted to you. If you do not want students to hand in rough drafts, suggest they share their work first with a trusted peer or writing group. After students submit a number of successive drafts, suggest they highlight revised sections to save you from unnecessarily re-reading the full document.

Publishing and Presenting: Discuss your philosophy and expectations about co-authorship and your ability to help your students prepare work for submission to journals and conferences.

Intellectual Property: In advance of working with students on a project, clarify who owns the data that is being collected, and whether others will have access to it. Also discuss the ownership of any copyright and patent agreements that might occur as a result of a project. For

further information contact the Office of Vice President for Research or look at their website at www.research.umich.edu/.

Recommendation Letters: Let students know how much time you need to write letters on their behalf. Discuss when and in what way you like to be reminded of an upcoming deadline. Let students know that they can help you by providing information about the fellowship, grant, or program for which they are applying and by providing updated copies of their curriculum vitae. You may also find it helpful if they provide details about how they are structuring their applications and what points they want you to emphasize.

Try to address all the different components of students' work. For instance, some faculty arrange to visit classes taught by their graduate students so that they can discuss the students' teaching abilities within a recommendation letter.

VII

General Advice to Give to Graduate Students

What do graduate students need to know about finding mentors? The following are tips faculty and graduate students gave us. Although this is elaborated upon in the graduate student guide, you may find it helpful to discuss some of these ideas with students with whom you come in contact.

Be proactive: At a large research university like Michigan, graduate students may find they need to take the initiative to seek out interactions with faculty members. Unlike their undergraduate experience, it is less common for professors to come along and take students under their wings. Graduate students should therefore not take it personally if they find that faculty are not approaching them. Instead, students need to be aware that they must often be the ones to initiate contact with faculty. The easiest way to do this is for students to visit professors during their office hours.

Find multiple mentors: Rather than trying to find one perfect mentor, graduate students need to find multiple mentors, each of whom can provide something the students need. By carefully selecting mul-

multiple mentors, students increase the likelihood that they will receive the assistance and support they desire. Mentors for graduate students can include faculty within or outside of the University of Michigan, departmental staff and other graduate students.

Have realistic expectations of your mentors: Students should identify what they need from an individual faculty member and explicitly ask for those things. It is easier for a professor to respond to specific requests for assistance than to general requests for mentorship.

Don't be invisible: Students need to understand the importance of being seen in their departments. Students should be told that office and hallway conversations are an important means for building and maintaining relationships as well as for learning vital information. In addition, students who have a visible presence are more likely to be perceived as being committed to their program. If students have a departmental office, they should use it. Whenever possible, they should also attend departmental lectures, meetings and social events.

Take yourself seriously: Graduate students need to make the transition from thinking of themselves as bright students to seeing themselves as potential colleagues. Ways to do this include attending departmental lectures and other activities; joining professional associations and societies; attending conferences in order to network with others; and seeking out opportunities to present their work either inside or outside their departments.

Be responsible: Students should show up for scheduled meetings on time and be prepared with an agenda of what they need to accomplish. They need to take responsibility for periodically updating their mentors about the progress they are making and the difficulties they are encountering. As one faculty member says to her students: "Take charge and own your education."

Show commitment to the profession: Students need to demonstrate that they are involved in their programs, courses, and research. Various faculty spoke about the importance of students "embracing their work" or "deciding to be the world's expert in a particular area."

Receive criticism in a professional manner: Students need to accept critiques of their work in a professional manner. This does not mean they have to agree with everything that is said, but they do need to

show a willingness to consider other points of view. If students disagree with a criticism, they should demonstrate their ability to defend their ideas.

Let mentors know you are following their advice: Faculty want to know that the time they spend with students is being put to good use. After reading books or articles a faculty member suggests, students should share their reactions with them.

VIII

How Departments Can Encourage Mentoring

Assign a First Year Temporary Advisor

To facilitate graduate student interaction with faculty immediately upon entry into graduate school, assign new students a temporary faculty advisor. Students and faculty can be paired based upon stated interests. Each advisor should be required to meet with their advisees at least twice during the academic year to review course selections, departmental requirements, and to answer questions that arise. After this first year, it should be viewed positively if graduate students want to change advisors. It needs to be made clear to faculty and graduate students that developing a relationship with someone else is a signal of a student's growth and progress.

Faculty-Graduate Student Lunch Program

Designed especially for new graduate students, this program provides opportunities for students to sign up for lunch with several different professors during their first year. In this way, they can meet a variety of faculty and discover mutual interests. Since individualized attention is critical for the success of this program, lunch groups should be kept as small as possible, perhaps with no more than four students meeting with a faculty member at one time. To help students assess which faculty they might want to meet, departments should circulate professors' recent curriculum vitae or put them on a website. The department can support such programs by making funds available for lunches.

Peer Mentoring Programs

In order to ease the transition to graduate student life, pair first year graduate students with more advanced graduate students who share similar interests. Peer mentors can help new students become familiar with such things as departmental cultures, strategies for success in the first year, and resources at the University and in Ann Arbor. Departments can support this effort by making funds available so students can go out together for coffee, etc.

Research Mentors

Some departments require first or second year students to work a certain number of hours per week on a project with a faculty member. The expectation is that graduate students will receive training as well as the opportunity to interact closely with a faculty member. In this type of program, it needs to be made explicit to faculty that students are not expected to have already the skills and knowledge they would need to work on their own. The purpose of this program is to provide students an opportunity to be taught the necessary skills. Disciplines in the sciences and engineering often take this type of training one step further by using a rotation system to expose students to different professors with different specializations during their initial year of graduate study.

Teaching Mentors

Some departments offer a special course for their graduate students who are working as graduate student instructors. The faculty teaching the course discuss such topics as teaching techniques, curriculum development and other pedagogical issues. Departments can also assign a faculty mentor to each graduate student instructor (GSI). This mentor's role is to observe classes taught by the GSI and make suggestions for improvement.

Creating Community

To establish a collegial atmosphere in which graduate students and faculty in a department can interact informally, it is helpful to designate a space, such as a lounge, for this purpose. Many departments also host social events to which graduate students, faculty, staff, and families are invited. Some departments also have monthly or weekly social gatherings.

Professional Socialization

Departments can make it easier for mentors to nurture the professional development of their graduate students by instituting certain policies and programs. For instance, to help students learn how their disciplines operate, a number of departments invite student participation on departmental committees, including those focusing on hiring and/or admissions. Departments can help ensure that their graduate students are being given opportunities to practice their public speaking skills by requiring each doctoral student to make a presentation at a departmental seminar or brown bag. To increase the usefulness of such a program to graduate students, one or two faculty can be assigned to provide written feedback to a particular student both about the content and the style of his or her presentation.

Develop a Mentoring Policy

A department can construct a written policy explicitly stating that mentoring is part of the educational experience graduate students receive in their programs. In advance of such a policy, faculty in the department need to understand and agree that mentoring is an important part of their role in working with graduate students.

Rewarding Mentors

It will be easier for departments to encourage mentoring if they also institutionalize some rewards for good mentorship. During reviews for merit increases, departments can take into account the quality and quantity of mentoring by asking faculty for this information and by asking graduate students to assess their mentors. An additional means for rewarding mentoring is to factor in teaching credits for faculty who have heavy mentoring responsibilities.

PART TWO: MENTORING WITHIN A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

The Rackham School of Graduate Studies strongly believes that a diverse graduate student population greatly enriches the scholarly, cultural, and social activities at the University. The Graduate School is therefore committed to examining the issues faced by students from historically underrepresented or marginalized populations, with the expectation that ultimately this will be of assistance to all of our graduate students. The purpose of this section is to present the experiences that a diverse array of graduate students has shared with us. We share this information with you so that you can be aware of some possible concerns facing students you mentor.

We found that many common issues surfaced in the discussions we held with different populations of graduate students. Yet there were also issues unique to or of greater concern to one set of students than another. In addition, not all students from a particular group shared the concerns listed. Indeed, we found that variability exists within each group in terms of their perspectives and experiences. Therefore, when we write such things as “women can find it difficult to speak up in class,” we are referring to the prevailing opinion of the people with whom we spoke.

After detailing each issue, we offer a list of some actions you can take to help to improve the graduate experience for students. We consider this to be just the start of possible recommendations. We would appreciate hearing from you about other ideas so that we can share them with the graduate community as well.

I

Common Themes Across Groups

Need for Role Models

Students from historically underrepresented or marginalized groups have a harder time finding faculty role models who might have had experiences similar to their own. As some students say, they want to find “someone who looks like me;” “someone who immediately understands my experiences and perspectives;” “someone whose very presence lets me know I, too, can make it in the academy.”



SUGGESTIONS

- If the faculty and graduate students in your department are ostensibly homogenous, help your department identify and recruit new faculty and graduate students who represent diverse backgrounds.
- Expand your knowledge about people across the university or at other universities who may be able to help students you mentor.
- Don't lose sight of the fact that you can provide very good mentoring to students who are of a different gender, race, or culture than you. As one professor of color pointed out: "It is important for graduate students to develop ties and networks irrespective of race and gender but based on what people can offer."

Questioning the Canons

Students from underrepresented or marginalized groups, particularly those in the social sciences and humanities, sometimes find that their perspectives or experiences do not fit into the current academic canons. At the worst extreme, some students tell us that when they select research questions focusing on race, gender or sexual orientation, professors deem their work irrelevant. More commonly, they find that their experiences are missing from current theory and research. These students need safe environments where their thoughts can be shared and valued, as they explore, and possibly challenge, traditional inquiry.



SUGGESTIONS

- Be open to hearing students' experiences and perspectives. Ask students to share with you a scholarly article or essay as an example of the work they would like to do.
- There are many interdisciplinary programs and research centers across campus that may provide your students with a community of scholars with interests similar to their own. For instance,

suggest they contact the Center for Afro-American and African Studies (CAAS), the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program (LACS), the Native American Studies Program, the Program in American Culture, or the Women's Studies Program.

- Think about the ways that race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and other characteristics help to expand the types of questions that are asked in your discipline and the approaches used for answering them.

Fear of Being Categorized as a “Single-Issue” Scholar

Some students are concerned that by selecting dissertation topics that focus on such issues as gender, race, or sexual orientation, others will see them as being only interested in these topics for the rest of their professional careers.



SUGGESTIONS

- Ask where a student's research interests lie rather than making assumptions about them based on the student's personal characteristics or past work.
- Help students practice job talks and interview responses that will help them demonstrate the depth and breadth of their research interests.

Feelings of Isolation

Students from historically underrepresented groups can feel particularly isolated or alienated from other students in their departments, especially if the composition of a program is highly homogenous.



SUGGESTIONS

- Be aware of students who seem to be finding it particularly difficult to take active roles in academic or social settings and find ways to include them. Take the initiative to talk with them. Ask them about their research interests, hobbies and activities outside of school.
- Introduce your student to other students and faculty with complementary interests.
- Remind students of the wealth of organizations within or outside the University that might provide them with a sense of community. Some examples are cultural and religious groups, as well as reading groups and professional associations. A listing of these types of resources can be found in *The Guide to Campus and Community* which can be obtained through Rackham or be viewed on-line at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/

Burden of Being a Spokesperson

Students from underrepresented groups often expend a lot of time and energy speaking up when issues such as race, class, gender or sexual orientation arise or are being ignored. These students point out how most of their peers have an advantage in not carrying such a burden.



SUGGESTIONS

- Instead of assuming that certain experiences are the norm, question whether race, gender, or other characteristics provide different perspectives from those being expressed.
- When you see students taking on spokesperson roles, tell them, and others, what you have gained from their contributions to class discussion. These words of appreciation can lift someone's spirits.

Seeking Balance

Students observe that professors need to devote large parts of their lives to their work in order to be successful in the academy. Students from all disciplines tell us that they feel faculty expect them to spend every waking minute on their work. This perception of faculty expectations, accurate or not, is of grave concern to students who have children or wish to, as well as for those who want to balance their lives with their other interests.



SUGGESTIONS

- Students need to see you demonstrate the fact that you value your personal life. Be open to bringing up your interests and hobbies. Consider sharing your thoughts about the importance of taking some time away from work.
- Be explicit with students about the number of hours you expect them to work for a research assistantship or graduate student instructorship. This will enable them to decide whether this arrangement would be suitable for them.
- Recognize that students are working hard to balance demanding school and home lives. As one faculty member put it “Sometimes those with family responsibilities, etc., are not around as many hours, but are better focused when they are here.”

II

Women Graduate Students

Assertiveness

While females traditionally have been raised to be polite and soft-spoken, it is clear that successful graduate students aggressively assert themselves in classroom discussions. Many women - and international students as well - told us of the difficulties

they have in speaking up in class. Too often, they find that in order to say something in class, they have to interrupt another student. Women often see interjecting themselves in this manner as being rude and disrespectful. Some fear that their lack of participation in discussions will be wrongly interpreted as their not having any thoughts at all. On the other hand, other women tell us that when they assert themselves they are subjected to criticism in a way that men are not - even though it is the same behavior.

Competitiveness

We have heard, and research has verified, that many students, but especially women, can feel alienated by the competitive and critical atmosphere that pervades many graduate programs (Sandler, Silverberg & Hall, 1996). Women are certainly capable of being critical of others' work when they think it is appropriate, but they think some students are being overly critical out of a desire to appear intellectually superior. Women, and other students, too often see that the system does not reward one for praising the contributions of other scholars. Some women students suggest that graduate school would be less competitive if there were more opportunities to do collaborative work.

Importance of Positive Feedback

Both male and female students can at times find that they do not receive much clear positive feedback on their work in graduate school. Although this is problematic in its own right, it also appears that the lack of positive feedback leads women, more so than men, to end up doubting their capabilities (Nerad, 1992). Women graduate students tend to think that any negative experiences they have in graduate school are due to personal deficiencies, while men tend to attribute negative experiences to insufficient guidance or problems within the department (Nerad and Stewart, 1991). Even in regard to their mentor's personal style, men are more content than women with mentors who are impersonal but offer instrumental advice. Women tend to interpret a professor's distance as an indication that the professor has a negative opinion of them.



SUGGESTIONS

- Experiment with different ways to minimize the possibility that a few students dominate your class while other students rarely, if ever, participate. One faculty member structures his class by telling students that they can participate once in discussion but then they have to wait until everyone else has a chance to talk before they can contribute again.
- Try to discourage interruptions by pointing out that a person has not yet finished talking.
- Try to change the tenor of discussions when they become overly critical. For instance, you can remind people that it is always easier to criticize a work than to produce one. You can then follow up with: “What contributions does this particular piece make?”
- Ask especially quiet students to come talk with you during your office hours. Discuss with them whether it might help them to participate more in class if you ask them directly about their thought on a particular topic.
- State positive feedback to a student’s work in positive terms. Use phrases like “good job” rather than “not bad” or “I don’t have any major problems with it.”

Resources

The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (764-0505 or www.crlt.umich.edu/) offers workshops on ways to make the classroom more inclusive. For special programs and workshops focusing on women, students can contact the Center for the Education of Women (998-7080 or www.umich.edu/~cew), the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (764-9537 or www.umich.edu/~irwg), and Counseling and Psychological Services (764-8312 or www.umich.edu/~caps).

III

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered (LGBT) Graduate Students

Homophobia

Our LGBT students told us that it is not uncommon to encounter homophobia in the classroom - either as a student or as a Graduate Student Instructor. Remarks can range from the blatantly offensive to the less obvious such as “that is so gay.”

Heterosexism

LGBT students often hear professors and students in classes or in social settings discuss a given subject with the unconscious assumption that everyone is heterosexual. Even faculty and students who are aware of gender and racial issues may be unaware of their tendency to think about the world from an exclusively heterosexual perspective. As a result, LGBT students may find their experiences are not represented in research or in discussions.

Disclosing

Being out as an LGBT student (or faculty member) is not a one-time event, but instead is a decision the person experiences each time s/he enters a new situation. LGBT students face a burden of having to assess the personal, social and political ramifications of disclosing their sexual orientation each time they do so. Since our heterosexual students do not have to disclose their sexuality, only LGBT students face these physically and emotionally draining experiences.



SUGGESTIONS

- Enter every classroom assuming there are LGBT students present who may not feel safe in being out.

- Be sensitive to whether anti-gay comments are being made, and discuss how they may be offensive to other students in the classroom.
- Be aware that examples you and others in the class are using may be based on heterosexual experiences. For example, when talking about families, don't talk as if every family is composed of a husband, wife, and children. Simply using a word like "spouse and partner" instead of just "spouse" can go a long way in making LGBT students (and unmarried students) feel they are represented in the discussion.

Resources

- Students can learn about special programs and activities for LGBT graduate students by contacting LambdaGrads and the Office of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Program Affairs (763-4186 or www.umich.edu/-inquery).
- LGBT students can access a listing of LGBT faculty via the online *LGBT Faculty Mentoring Directory for Graduate Students* on the Rackham website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/lgbt-dir.html.

IV

Racial and Ethnic Minority Graduate Students

Students of color spoke passionately to us about many issues, most of which are covered in the section entitled "Common Themes Across Groups" (pages 21-25). Among these issues, the one most often cited was their lack of role models. They told us how the dearth of faculty of color at UM reduces their chances of finding someone in their fields who "looks like them." They told us how devastating it is when one of the few faculty of color leaves UM for another university, since commonly this means

that they lose one of the main supporters of their work. They infer from the low numbers of faculty of color that the academy remains an unwelcoming environment for many who are not white. In addition, they spoke to us about:

Stereotyping

Many students, especially the African American and Latino students on Rackham Merit Fellowships, sometimes feel other students and faculty assume they are less qualified to be in graduate school. On the other hand, Asian American students are burdened by the “model minority” myth, which assumes they are exemplary students, particularly in math and the sciences. Stereotyping in either direction has negative consequences for students of color.

Rackham Merit Fellows

Because departments sometimes assume that underrepresented students on Rackham Merit Fellowships have their funding taken care of, these students can be overlooked for Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) and Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA) appointments. As a result, these students have fewer opportunities to interact with faculty or to experience the formal and informal mentoring that occurs for student instructors or research assistants. They also miss the teaching and research experiences that strengthen their graduate work and their curriculum vitae. In the past two years, the Rackham School of Graduate Studies has begun working with departments to address this issue.



- Understand that different minority groups face different issues and experiences. Yet do not assume that all students from one minority group will share the same thoughts and perspectives. Remember that social class, geographic origin, and other factors play an important role in shaping people’s behaviors and attitudes.
- You can help erase stereotypes by recognizing each student’s unique strengths and scholarly promise.

- Think about the ways you have been socialized concerning ideas of race and make efforts to increase your awareness and knowledge about these issues.

Resources

Obtain a copy of *Campus Connections: A Guide to Campus Resources for Students of Color* from the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives (936-1055 or www.umich.edu/~oami). This booklet provides listings of student groups and administrative offices on campus to help your students. For other information, contact the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs (763-9044 or www.umich.edu/~mesamss) and Students of Color of Rackham (www.umich.edu/~scorweb)

V

International Graduate Students

Issues of Culture and Language in the Classroom

Having chosen to study in the United States means many of our international students need to function in a second language and adjust to a new set of cultural and educational norms (Trice, 1999). For instance, many international students find American classes to be unnecessarily competitive. Students from East and Southeast Asia, who were trained in educational systems where the student's role is to be passive, are shocked to see American students speaking up without being called upon and challenging the remarks of professors and peers. They fear that if they do not exhibit these behaviors, the faculty will judge them to be less capable and/or less intelligent. Many international students also state they are uncertain about academic rules. Lastly, some international students have expressed disappointment with the fact that their classes incorporate very little in the way of international perspectives and that American faculty and students undervalue the experiences they bring into the classroom.

Social Stresses

While many graduate students experience the stress of having moved away from families and friends, international students have an even greater sense of displacement. International students who bring their partners and children with them have worries about how well their families are adjusting to American life overall and to Ann Arbor in particular. In addition, a significant number of international graduate students cite the following as concerns: loneliness, not knowing how to socialize with Americans, and being unable to find people patient enough to speak with them (Trice, 1999). A further complication is that, upon returning home, international graduate students find that because of their different dress, talk and behavior, they have become “foreigners” in their own countries. As one international student told us: “I become 10% more American every year I am here.”



SUGGESTIONS

- If you have ever traveled to another country, recall how you had to rely on assistance from others as you became acclimated to the language and customs. Offer international students the same courtesies you found you needed.
- Demonstrate your interest in international students by reaching out to them at academic and social occasions. Ask about their research and outside interests. Take time to learn about their experiences and perspectives.
- Introduce new international students to more advanced international graduate students so they have a network of people to go to for advice.
- Some international students may find it hard to jump into classroom discussions. Temporarily calling on them for specific responses may help acclimate them to your classes.
- Some international students find it difficult to converse over e-mail since they rely on seeing facial and body expressions to understand conversations. You may want to offer to meet in person with international students if you discern they have difficulties with e-mail.

- Do not assume that all international students have difficulties with English, since a number were trained in English-speaking institutions and others have English as their first language.
- Be aware that international students have many rules that govern their studies and funding. Most commonly students have a single country visa which prohibits them from traveling freely. They also cannot work for pay, except for GSI or GSRA positions, and they are excluded from most U.S.-based fellowships. If you have any questions, contact the International Center (764-9310).

Resources

- Suggest students contact the University's International Center (764-9310 or www.umich.edu/~icenter). They offer many workshops that address a range of issues and can provide one-on-one assistance.
- The International Families Outreach Program on North Campus offers assistance to spouses and families in adjusting to Ann Arbor. Call 647-5615 for further information.

VI

Graduate Students with Family Responsibilities

While this section was written about students who have parenting responsibilities, many of the same issues pertain to those who are responsible for the care of their parents.

Dual Commitments

Students with parenting responsibilities are committed to being successful graduate students and feel they can succeed by being highly organized and intensely focused during the blocks of time they carve out for their studies, lab work, etc. Unfortunately, they feel that some professors perceive them as lacking in commitment to their fields because they have another priority in their lives. This situation is exac-

erbated when an emergency arises, such as an ill child, and makes it impossible for them to attend classes or meetings. The intensity of childcare demands does not stop once a child enters school, because then there are a variety of activities in and out of the classroom that parents need to be involved with.

Isolation

Because of family demands, students may not be able to attend some social, academic, and professional functions. As a result, they can feel isolated from others in their cohort and from their departments as a whole.

Time Constraints

Students with family responsibilities typically need to be home in the evenings to tend to those in their care. Difficulties can emerge in a group project since commonly other students find the evenings the best time to meet. In addition, it is often difficult for students with parenting responsibilities to come back to campus for evening lectures or departmental meetings.



SUGGESTIONS

- Students with family responsibilities may need to miss some classes. Try to develop some accommodations for this.
- Give out assignments well in advance so that students with children can fit the assignments into their demanding schedules. Since many students with children try to set aside time for their families on weekends, you are not providing enough advance notice if you make an assignment just before a weekend and say it is due on Monday.
- For group projects, try to accommodate students' requests to work in a group that meets during the day. You can also encourage students to explore ways to use e-mail attachments to transmit documents and the Internet to facilitate group discussions. To learn about a number of different tools, look at the website maintained

- by the Information and Technology Office at www.itd.umich.edu.
- If you have children, discuss them with your graduate students. Occasionally bring your children to the office and/or to departmental social events. Doing so will reinforce the fact that it is possible to have a family and a successful academic career.
 - Plan some departmental social events where it would be appropriate for students, faculty and staff to bring their children along. For these events, make sure you pick a time of day when families can attend. Be sure the invitation specifically states that children are welcome.
 - Rather than assuming that students with family responsibilities are not committed to their programs, bear in mind that it takes a great deal of organization, commitment and passion for one's work to "do it all and do it well." Allow students to demonstrate their professional commitment in different ways. Those with family responsibilities may not be in the classroom, office or lab at any given moment, but they may be highly focused and productive when they are there.

Resources

- The Financial Aid Office runs a child care subsidy program. To be eligible for funding, students need to demonstrate financial need and the use of licensed childcare. Contact the Financial Aid Office at 763-6600 or www.finaid.umich.edu/types_of_financial_aid/child.asp for further details.
- The Work/Life Resource Center can help students find childcare or elder care. Call them at 936-8677 or www.umich.edu/~hrra/worklife.
- The Kids Kare Program, run through the Work/Life Resource Center, provides in-home care for sick children. Pre-registration is required. For more information, contact 936-8677 or www.umich.edu/~hrra/worklife/kidskare/index.html.
- When students are looking for housing, advise them of the University's Family Housing on North Campus (763-3164). The courtyard design provides safe play areas and opportunities to meet other students who share the same life experiences.

VII

Graduate Students from Working-Class Backgrounds

Economic Concerns

Students from working-class backgrounds often do not have family members they can turn to for monetary support through graduate school. In addition, some students have the responsibility of financially supporting parents, siblings or other relatives.

Access to Professional Networks

These graduate students are aware they may not have or know how to develop professional networks as effectively as their peers who come from more advantaged backgrounds (especially those who grew up within academic families). This disparity is most visible when they attend conferences or when they seek summer employment.

Summer Professional Opportunities

These graduate students also see a progressive disparity in what they and their more advantaged peers can do during the summer. The latter, because of their families' financial assistance and their enhanced access to professional networks, can more easily afford and secure internships which provide them with further professional development. In contrast, students from working-class backgrounds may need to work in better paying jobs which are further removed from their graduate studies. Thus, students from working-class backgrounds may feel they are falling behind in their graduate careers by not having more relevant job experiences over the summer. In addition, they may be afraid that professors who don't understand their financial situations will mistakenly assume they are less seriously involved in their academic work than more advantaged students.

Difference in Background Experiences

Students from working-class backgrounds also told us how intimidating it can be to hear about the past travels and experiences of some of their fellow students. Stu-

dents, especially those in the arts, humanities and social sciences, can feel vulnerable knowing that some of their peers have traveled to, or even lived in, the foreign countries they are studying.

Disjunction with Family and Friends

Once socialized into their disciplines, students can often find it more difficult to talk to their families and old friends about their work and for families and friends to understand their new endeavors. This communication gap can make students feel as if they are no longer comfortable within their old worlds but have not yet settled into their new worlds.



SUGGESTIONS

- Be aware that not all students have the same academic networks to draw on. Make an extra effort to introduce these students to people you know who could be helpful in expanding their networks.
- Be alert to funding opportunities, especially for the summer period. Be sure to pass this information on to your students, especially those you feel most need it.
- Put books or coursepacks on reserve so that students don't have to buy their own copies.

Resources

If they are faced with an emergency, students can apply to the Rackham Discretionary Fund for financial assistance. For further information, contact 764-8119. Applications are available through the Rackham Fellowships Office or their website at www.rackham.umich.edu/Fellowships/guideln/2408.html

VIII

Graduate Students with Disabilities

Obviously students with disabilities have different needs and concerns depending upon the types of disability they have. For example, a student who is visually impaired has different needs than a student who uses a wheelchair or a student with a learning disability. Yet students' needs will also vary depending upon whether they have had their disabilities since birth or whether the disabilities developed later in their lives. In this section, we try to deal with issues confronting students with physical disabilities, learning disabilities (such as attention deficit disorder and dyslexia), chronic illnesses (such as lupus and chronic fatigue syndrome) and/or psychological illnesses (such as depression and bipolar disorder).

Reluctance to Ask for Help

Students with disabilities often fear that they may appear to be too dependent - or become too dependent - if they ask for help. This is especially true for those who have experienced the fairly recent onset of a disability and are unaccustomed to asking for help, as well as for those who have disabilities that are invisible to others, such as individuals with learning disabilities or chronic psychological illnesses.

Effort Exerted Just to Keep Up

For those with physical and learning disabilities, meeting the basic requirements demands much more time and energy than it does for students without disabilities. Some students find they cannot participate in certain professional activities (such as submitting papers for conferences) as much as they would like because they need to devote all their time and energy to meeting the deadlines of their programs.

Problems that Arise from Last Minute Changes

Changes in reading assignments can be very difficult for students who are visually impaired. At the beginning of the semester, students who are blind or severely visually impaired have their readings converted into Braille. Any readings added on at a later date will require them to make special emergency trips to have these new materials

translated in a short period of time. Changes in room locations are also a hardship for visually and physically challenged students.



A number of the suggestions below will be beneficial to all students in your classroom:

- Put your syllabus together as early as possible so students with learning disabilities can get a head start on the readings during the winter or summer break.
- It is helpful to students with disabilities if you note which of the assigned readings are of the highest priority.
- Write an outline on the board for each class so students with learning disabilities can follow the larger context of what will be occurring that day.
- Keep to your syllabus as much as possible. If you need to add materials, see if there are ways you or someone else can help a student with a physical disability obtain the new materials.
- State in class and on your syllabus that you would like students to contact you as soon as possible about any special accommodations they may need (either because of disabilities or religious practices). Since some students may be initially hesitant to contact you, you will also need to make them feel comfortable about approaching you at a later time.
- Be as flexible as possible with deadlines. Although students with disabilities do not want requirements lowered for them, they may need a longer period of time to complete the task at hand.
- If you have a physically disabled student, know whether your office, lab, or classroom is accessible and if not, make other arrangements with the student.
- When you are planning group exercises in class, think about how these exercises could be done by students with various kinds of disabilities.
- Try to develop accommodations for missed classes and meetings, which can happen to those with a chronic or psychological illness.

- Do not hesitate to ask a student with a physical disability if she or he needs assistance.
- Assume that there are students with invisible disabilities (such as learning disabilities and psychological disabilities) in your classroom.
- Students with psychological disabilities may display their symptoms by isolating themselves or by behaving impulsively or inappropriately. Continue to provide support to these students during their difficult times.

Resources

- Contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (763-3000 or www.umich.edu/~sswd) for further information and advice. They have developed handbooks for both student and faculty about services and advice for possible accommodations.
- The Adaptive Technology Computer Site has various computers, readers, speech dictation machines and scanners that can be of great assistance for those students who are visually impaired or blind, have mobility impairments (including repetitive stress syndrome) or are learning disabled. The office is located in B136 Shapiro Library. For more information contact Jim Knox at 647-6437 or e-mail jimbo@umich.edu.

IX

Non-Traditional Graduate Students

It is common for non-traditional age students (i.e., “the chronologically advantaged”) to be more focused and aware of what they want out of graduate school than their younger colleagues. Perhaps one of their biggest assets is they are not intimidated by the prospects of engaging in discussions with you. Yet older students often face their own types of problems:

Devaluation of Life Experiences

Many of our older students have returned to school after spending a considerable number of years either running a business, working in industry or the public sector, or raising a family. One of the most difficult issues these students face is finding that their relevant 'real life' knowledge is sometimes of little or no value in the classroom. This is particularly frustrating when their vast array of experiences contradict the research and theory they are studying.

Fear of Having “Rusty” Skills

Older students who have been out of school for a number of years can fear competing with their younger counterparts. They may see that the younger students are more up-to-date on the current issues within their disciplines and have more computer experience.

Invisibility in the Classroom

Older students commonly describe how badly they feel when a professor refers to something from several decades back and then says, “And of course none of you would remember that.” Although not intended to be harmful, this remark makes older students feel as though their presence in the classroom is not being acknowledged.

Isolation from Fellow Students

Because of the age differences between them and their peers, many older students feel somewhat socially isolated. Although friendships can develop with their younger colleagues, older students are aware that some of their fellow students are the ages of their own children. Furthermore, many of the older students tell us they no longer want to be in the places where younger students go to relax and socialize.

Awkwardness with Faculty

Non-traditional students can be close in age or even significantly older than their professors. These students tell us that some faculty appear to be much more comfortable with the younger students than with them.



SUGGESTIONS

- Make links between theory and practice so that all students can understand how information learned in the classroom is transferable to the world outside.
- Show your interest in older students by finding out what they did before they entered their graduate programs and how their life experiences might be relevant to the classroom setting.
- Welcome and value the special contributions older students make in class discussions.

Resources

- If students need to improve their computer skills, the Information Technology Central Services (ITCS) offers free on-line training on various topics. They also have a number of part-day classes that must be paid for (starting at \$35 and up). For further information, consult their website (www.itd.umich.edu/education) or call 764-0299.
- For free help with statistics, contact the Center for Statistical Consultation and Research (CSCAR) at 764-7828 or www.umich.edu/~cscar.

WRAPPING IT UP

We have learned a great deal from the faculty and students who have talked to us. We wish to continue the conversation about mentoring and diversity issues within the Graduate School, and we welcome your participation in that discussion. Feel free to contact Darlene Ray-Johnson at 647-7548 or rayj@umich.edu with any comments and suggestions you have.

Please note that every semester Rackham invites students from various backgrounds and with various interests to share their experiences, and help one another. Look at our website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Calendar for further information.

We have also compiled a list of resources, both web and text based, for those interested in reading more about mentoring. These can be viewed online at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/mentoring.html.

APPENDIX A: PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING RESOURCES

Graduate school, and life as a whole, can at times be very stressful. Students and faculty need to be aware that there are various ways students can obtain professional assistance for issues that may arise.

GradCare

GradCare is a health insurance plan which is available only to those who hold the title of graduate student instructors (GSIs), graduate student research assistants (GSRAs), graduate student staff assistants (GSSAs) or who have a fellowship that stipulates GradCare coverage. Under this plan, students are entitled to 20 mental health visits per year, with a \$15 copay for each visit. For further information, and for the necessary pre-authorization, call MCDR (Michigan Central Diagnostic and Referral) at 1-800-439-6348.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

This office provides free short-term individual counseling (4-6 weeks) as well as workshops and support groups. For those students who need longer term counseling, CAPS can direct students to therapists and psychologists in the area, some of whom charge on a sliding scale basis. CAPS is located in 3100 Michigan Union. For more information, call 764-8312.

The Center for the Education of Women (CEW)

Available to men and women, CEW has professional counselors who help individuals explore their educational and career goals. CEW also offers free or low fee workshops. For more information, call 998-7080.

Rackham School of Graduate Studies

It may be possible for students to obtain funds for private professional counseling through the Rackham Discretionary Fund. Applications are available from the Fellowships Office and on their website at www.rackham.umich.edu/Fellowships/guideln/2408.html.

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Acknowledgements

As is often the case, it took the talents and input of a number of people to bring this project to fruition. We wish to thank the following people for their assistance and to apologize to anyone we may have inadvertently left out.

First and foremost, we are extremely grateful to all the graduate students who attended our various forums and shared their successes and challenges with us. We appreciate both the time you spent with us and your honesty and candidness. We are keenly aware of the high caliber of graduate students across this University, and we are committed to continually looking for ways to improve the quality of your experiences here.

This project was directed by **Jayne London**, Rackham's Coordinator of Diversity Initiatives. During the last two years, she spent a considerable amount of her working hours on this guidebook. She moderated student forums; talked with individual graduate students, faculty, and staff about mentoring; and worked through many iterations of this document. It was truly a labor of love for her.

This project greatly benefited from the skills of two graduate student interns. **Adrian Burgos, Jr.** worked on this project in its earliest stage, giving this document its initial shape. **Mark Hager**, who came to the Graduate School during the project's second phase, brought us his breadth of knowledge about research and theory on mentoring. He thereby added a great deal to the final product. Mark and Adrian drafted much of what is in the guidebook. We thank you both for your work and devotion to seeing this project through to completion.

The following graduate students volunteered to read drafts of this document. The feedback you gave greatly enhanced the quality of what we were able to produce. Thanks go to: **Wendy Blanda, Jennifer Cash, Elizabeth de la Portilla-Lyon, Glenn Fischer, Andrea Frank, Hillary Halloway, Seth Houston, Martin Johnson, Beverley Langevin, Chavella Pittman, Ashwin Tirodkar, and Jean Waltman.**

We also wish to thank the many wonderful faculty mentors who shared with us your thoughts about the joys and challenges of mentoring: **Frances Aparicio, Ruth Behar, Tony England, Sheila Feld, June Howard, Claudia Kent, Karin Martin, Robert Sellers, Pat Simons, Abby Stewart, Steve Sumida, Dennis Thiele, Clinton Webb, and David Winters.** Thanks also go to **James Kibbie, Kerry Larson and Thelma Thomas** for taking time to review this document and sharing your comments with us.

Several staff people, both inside and outside of Rackham, added valuable insights to this handbook. Thanks to **Vi Benner, Elyse Rubin, Glenda Haskell, Shari Saunders and Debbie Taylor** for the tremendously detailed edits and comments you made to prior drafts. And a very special thank you to **Ann Kolkman and Elyse Rubin** for the beautiful cover design and layout.