

Thomas, K., Willis, L., & Davis, J. (2007). Mentoring minority graduate students: issues and strategies for institutions, faculty, and students. *Equal Opportunities International*, 26(3), 178-192.

The authors delineate the importance of a mentoring relationship and recommend strategies for universities, mentors, and graduate students to encourage the effective mentoring of minority students. Specifically, functional mentoring is the cornerstone of succeeding in graduate studies and in one's career. The protégé receives benefits via networking and "academic guidance, career development, personal guidance, and overall aid" (Thomas, Willis, & Davis, 2007, p. 180) whereas the mentor is also awarded with work from graduate assistants and more networking possibilities. Despite these universal benefits, many minority graduate students report a lack of potential mentors and inadequate mentoring, such as the absence of mentors with multicultural competence and the inability to effectively communicate with minority protégés. Such obstacles to functional mentoring can lead to students feeling frustrated with their field, not developing effective mentoring skills themselves, and not considering a career in academe.

In order to encourage the effective mentoring of minority graduate students and prevent its possible barriers, Thomas et al. suggest a three-tiered intervention. First, organizational strategies, such as ensuring a positive climate for minority students, increasing faculty diversity, and instating rewards for successful mentoring (e.g., mentoring, teaching, and research awards), must occur. Second, improving faculty competence in mentoring (e.g., training in types of mentoring relationships, ethical issues in mentoring, etc.) and multiculturalism (e.g., training in multicultural competence, communication, and feedback) was suggested. Last, the authors state that the graduate student must play an active role in his or her career by comprehensively researching mentors and programs prior to applying, allow peer relationships to aid in the development of professional skills, and become active participants of their universities.