



UCD College of Science



CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MENTORING: INFORMATION FOR MENTEES

WHAT IS CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MENTORING?

Culturally responsive mentoring is an approach to mentoring that emphasises the benefits of cultural diversity and inclusivity. An individual's culture can impact their self-identification, their relationship with others, and their approach to work. Culturally responsive mentoring is cognisant of how cultural differences and similarities between mentors and their mentees can impact the success of mentoring relationships, and the development of a diverse cohort of scholars.

This Culturally Responsive Mentoring Initiative aims to foster the creation of culturally adaptive mentoring approaches in UCD College of Science, with a specific focus on recognising, addressing and accommodating the ever-evolving identities within our College of Science community. Culturally responsive mentoring encourages mentors to recognise their own culturally shaped beliefs, perceptions, and judgments, and develops their confidence in mentoring others from different diverse backgrounds.

HOW MIGHT YOU BENEFIT FROM A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MENTOR?

Mentoring relationships are built on trust and mutual respect, including respect for cultural diversity. Having a mentor that recognises and respects your cultural background and adapts their mentoring strategies to meet your cultural needs can help avoid unwanted power dynamics such as implicit bias and stereotype threat that can sour mentoring relationships. Engaging in culturally responsive mentoring is one solution that might help overcome barriers limiting mentoring relationships for minoritised early career researchers in the College.

Having a mentor who intentionally engages in the mentoring process may better support your career advancement, particularly if you identify as part of an underrepresented group in the College. Culturally responsive mentoring aims to take the burden away from you to accommodate cultural difference, to give you support and empowerment in the mentoring and career development process.

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM YOU AND YOUR MENTOR?

When you sign-up for a mentor you will be expected to reflect on your own internal cultural influences, to identify any particular cultural needs and sensitivities you have that you would like recognised in your mentoring relationship. You will be expected to self-assess your own vulnerabilities and strengths, to consider how you may need support in relation to institutional factors that might be compromising your career trajectory. This will include thinking about the uncomfortable dynamics of privilege, unconscious biases, racism, sexism, agism, homophobia and other oppressive dynamics in order to address and work through these topics. Your mentor will have been asked to reflect on the personal assumptions, biases, and privileges that operate within their research relationships. Although we cannot say that these assumptions, biases, and privileges will be completely eliminated, your mentor will be encouraged to actively consider how they may be impacting your mentorship and career progression.

As a mentee within the culturally responsive mentoring initiative you will be expected to maintain a positive mentoring relationship with your mentor. Your mentor will be someone with whom you can discuss your career development, who can support you in managing your career options, and may be able to help you seek resources. However, the mentoring relationship is non-directive and there is no obligation on you or the mentor beyond discussing your development. You must ensure the relationship is of the highest professional standards and that you treat the mentoring relationship with respect and confidentiality.

WHO MIGHT BE PAIRED AS YOUR MENTOR?

You will be paired with an Associate Professor, Professor, or Full Professor depending on your preference. This means that you will hold a more junior position to your mentor. During the sign-up process you will be asked about your gender and if you identify as a minority within the college. Those who sign-up to be a mentor will be asked the same questions.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After adding your details to our mentorship database via the google form the Culturally Responsive Mentoring Team will try and match you with an appropriate mentor based on your needs. You may not be paired straight away, as the timeline for being matched with a mentor will depend on the level of sign-up and compatibility.

Once matched, it is your responsibility as the mentee to organise an initial meeting with your mentor, during which you should both agree on the commitment you are expecting from each other. As the mentee, you will drive the mentoring relationship.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?



FOR MORE INFO GO TO [CULTURALLYRESPONSIVEMENTORING.UCD.IE](https://culturallyresponsivementoring.ucd.ie)



OR CONTACT US DIRECTLY AT SCIENCEMENTORING@UCD.IE