

# The Face of Mentoring is Diverse

Bradley C. Hyman

University of California-Riverside

Standing on the considerable shoulders of:

Robert Lue  
Harvard Univ.



Chris Pfund  
Univ. Wisconsin



James Stith  
Am. Inst. of Physics



Michelle Withers  
West Virginia Univ.



# Mid-morning wake-up!



# Learning objectives for this short morning session:

Participants will be able to:

- **reflect** on your own experiences with mentors
- **identify** some qualities/skills of effective mentors
- **recognize** some mentoring challenges

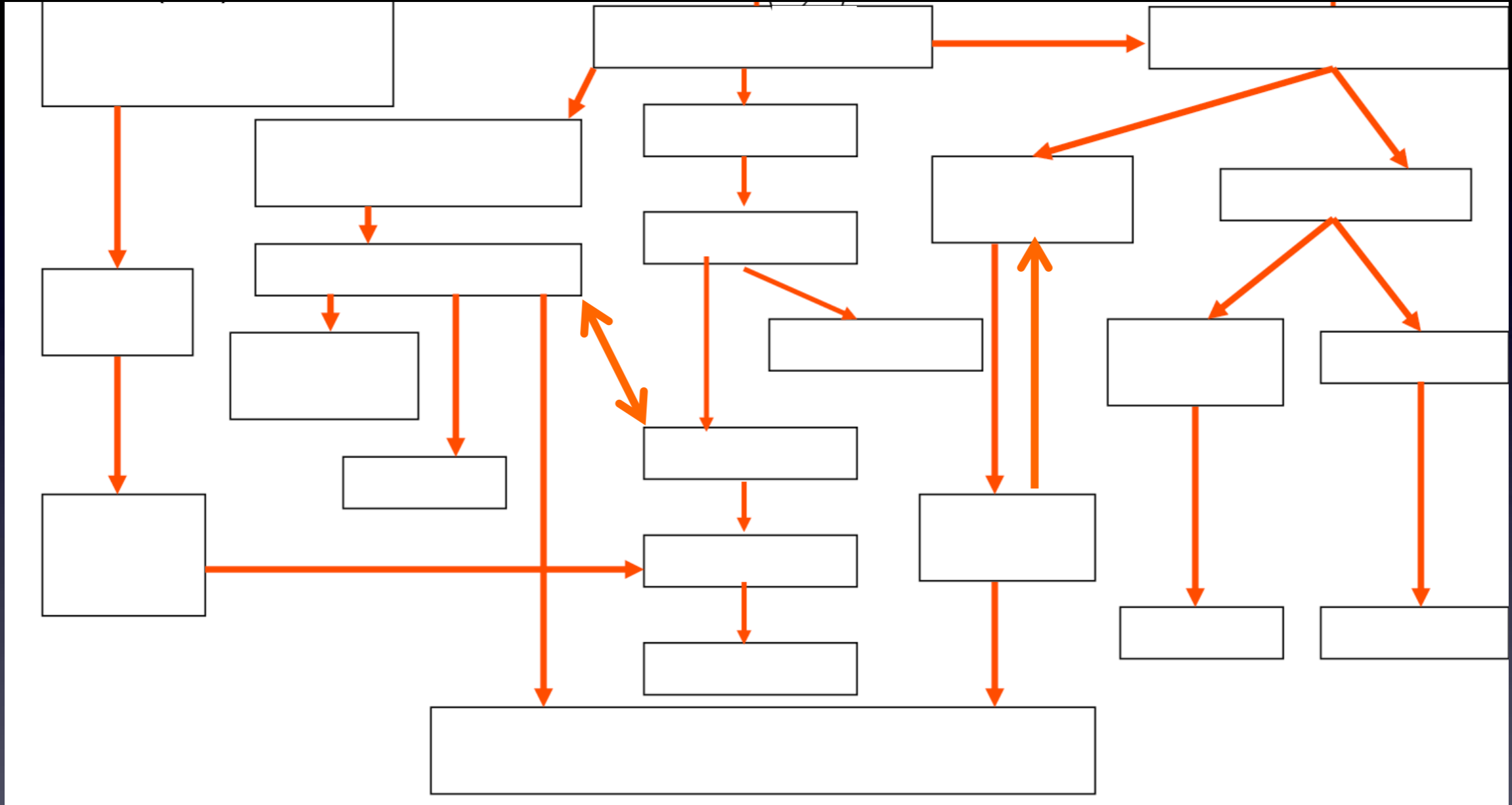


# Who mentored you?

- --parents/guardians/providers
- --other relatives
- --research mentors
- --department chair/administrator who hired you
- --teachers
- --valued friends
- --others? (clergy, guidance counselors, etc.)



# Concept map!



# Who mentored you?



Parent(s)



Professional  
peers

Doctoral  
advisor

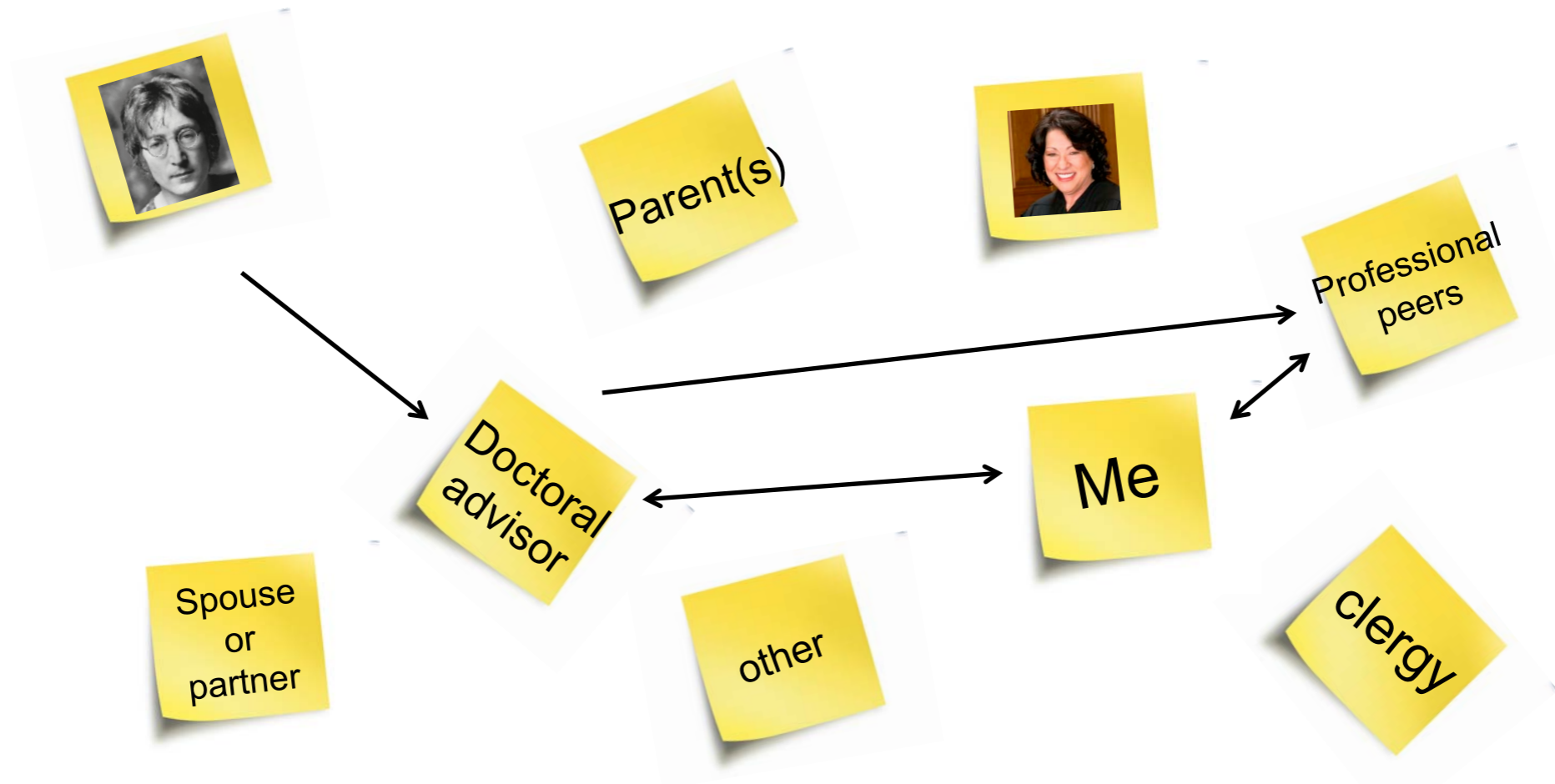
Me

Spouse  
or  
partner

other

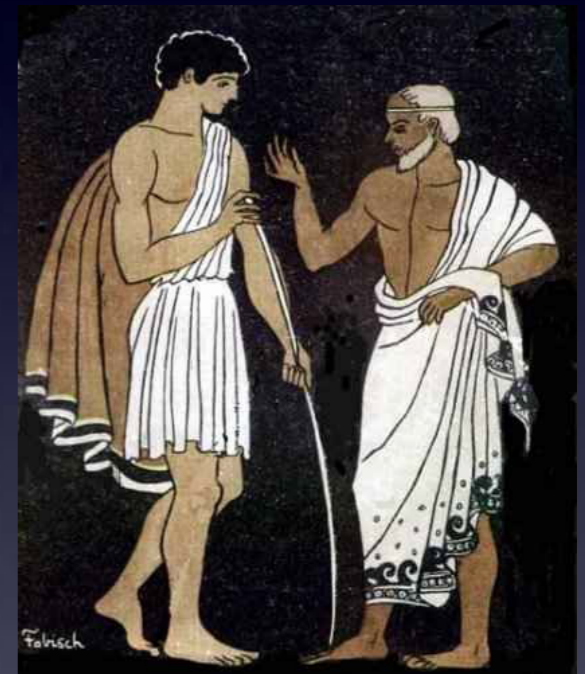
clergy

# Who mentored you?



# What is a mentor?

- A person who fosters a personal as well as a professional relationship, willing to give emotional and moral encouragement, as distinguished from an adviser
- Long term relationship during which needs and nature of relationship can change
- Assists the mentee's socialization into a disciplinary culture
- Takes a special interest in helping a mentee develop into a successful professional
- Strong listener, observer, problem solver, feedback provider





# Now think about...

Can you identify a person who ought to have been a mentor but the opportunity went awry or had a negative impact on you?

What made it a sub-optimal experience?



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PROGRESS REPORT  
ON BRIDGING THE  
DIVIDE BETWEEN  
RACE AND GENDER...

WELL,  
WE'RE  
GETTING  
CLOSER

4-27

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# We Know and Believe...

Those educated and mentored in diverse settings are:

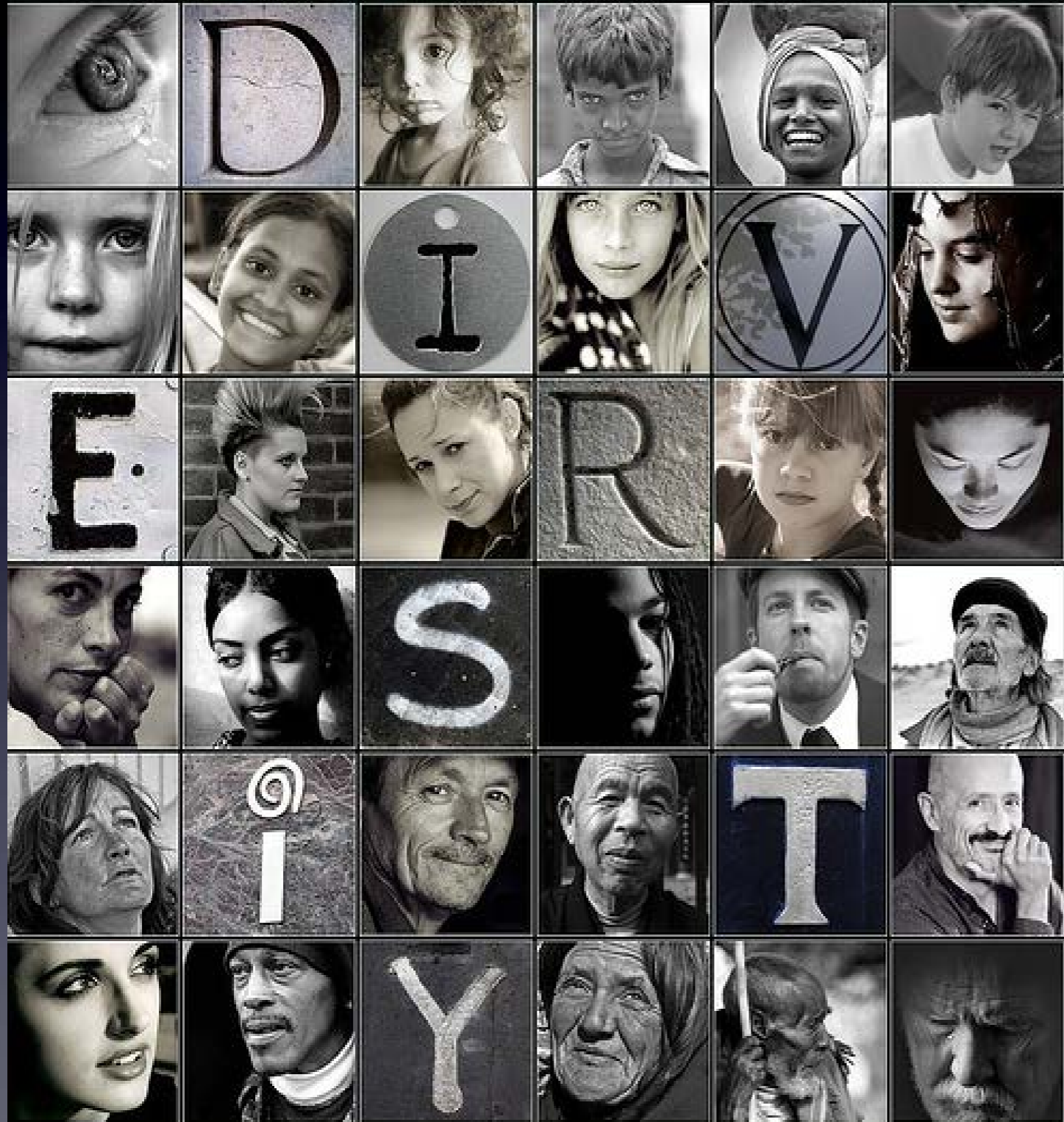
- More likely to be intellectually nimble and creative
- More likely to make meaningful contributions
- More likely to be effective team players
- More likely to be successful leaders
- More likely to do the right thing

# Afternoon Session Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- **Explain** the benefits and challenges of diversity in mentoring
- **Employ** case studies to promote discussions about diversity and mentoring
- **Develop** and **implement** strategies to institutionalize mentoring at your home institution

# Active Learning: Brainstorming



Your whole table brainstorm:

2 lists:

1. What forms of diversity does this picture reveal?

2. What forms of diversity does this picture not



Exploring the relationship between  
diversity and mentoring through case  
histories

# Active Learning : Case studies

Why do  
them?

- The human narrative is more engaging
- Allows discussion in a broader context
- Less threatening to the audience
- Emotional resonance produces greater “buy-in”



Together we are going to read a case history and then each table discuss what it might mean with respect to diversity and mentoring.

Randomly chosen tables will then report out to group as a whole.



## Case history #1:

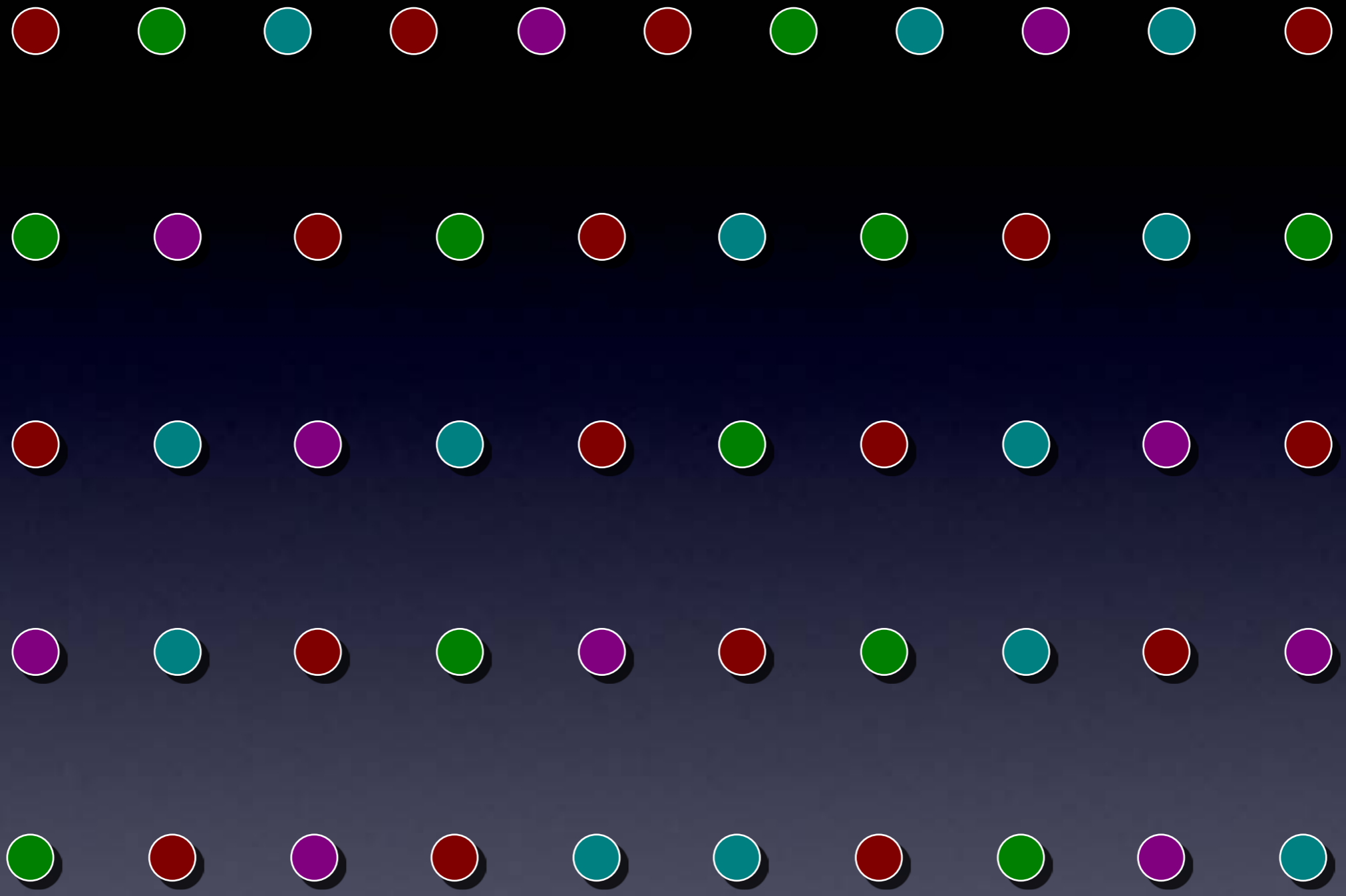
I am a newly assigned mentor for a mid-career faculty member in my department. I decided to attend several lectures delivered by my colleague. Even though she had significant teaching experience, I identified many areas that I thought would improve her lectures, and was eager to share them during our upcoming mentoring session. To my surprise, she was resistant to speaking about this specific topic, explaining she attended many teaching institutes, had earned solid teaching evaluations, and even received TA of the year award while a graduate student. In subsequent months, I often saw her in active conversation with an award-winning instructor. Several years later, she was a “Distinguished Teaching Award” recipient!

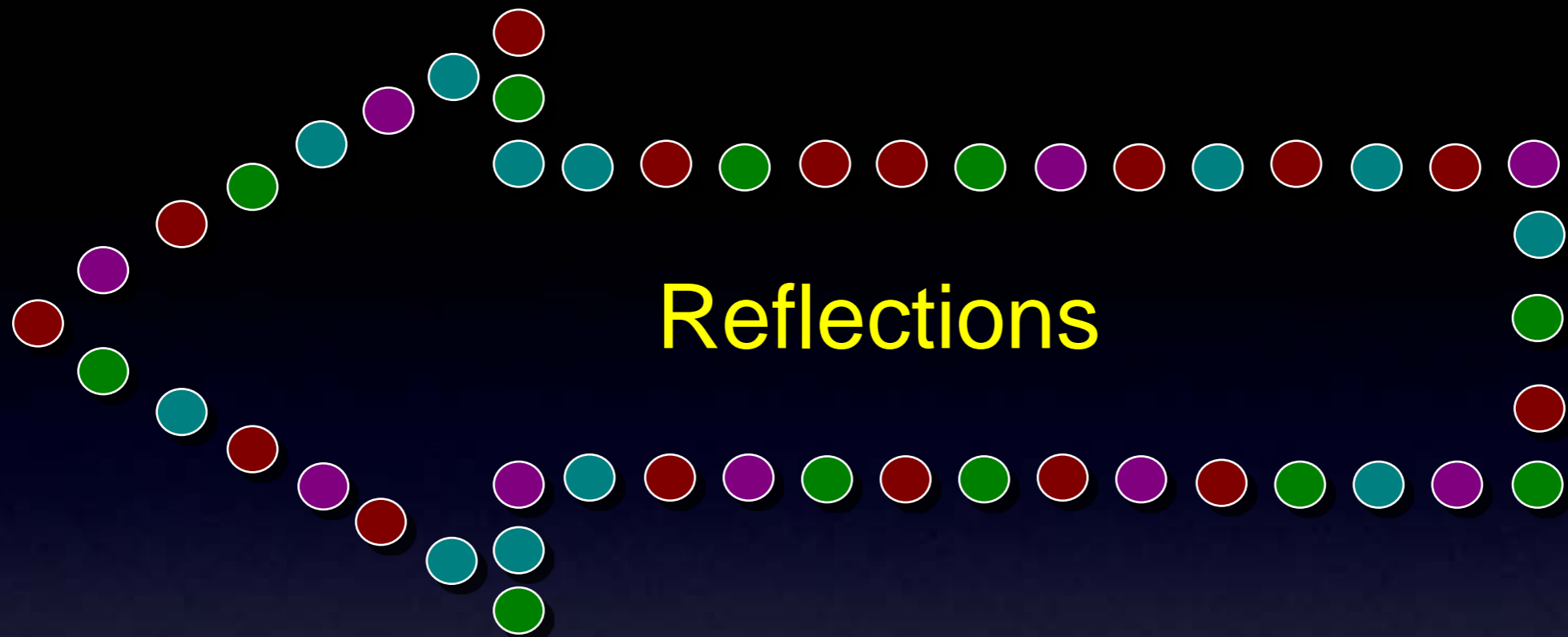
I also noticed her patience for graduate students under her tutelage was waning. I approached her about my concern and how she might handle certain situations that had arisen in her research group. She politely listened but insisted that nothing was wrong. I was surprised later in the year, when serving on the “Graduate Mentor of the Year” selection committee, that her students submitted a collaborative nomination supporting her for this award!

## Case History #2

When a new assistant professor was recruited into the department, a more senior faculty member was assigned to be his mentor. Although regular meetings were scheduled, he would forward the mentor several emails each day or seek her (the mentor) out at any time he deemed necessary, even if it meant interrupting a meeting. Often, topics previously discussed were revisited. This was becoming increasingly frustrating for the mentor, since the senior faculty member recognized the new faculty member was otherwise fully capable because excellent decisions were made when the mentor was traveling. The senior faculty member vented her frustrations to another faculty member and wondered what to do.

These experiences have made me realize the power of the “match.” The mentee and mentor have to be well matched, and all fit has to come together. We can’t be the very best mentor to all new faculty (even if well-intentioned) and where I fail, someone else might succeed. It reminds me to be humble about mentoring, not to judge, and never predict what they can do. Happily they will surprise you!





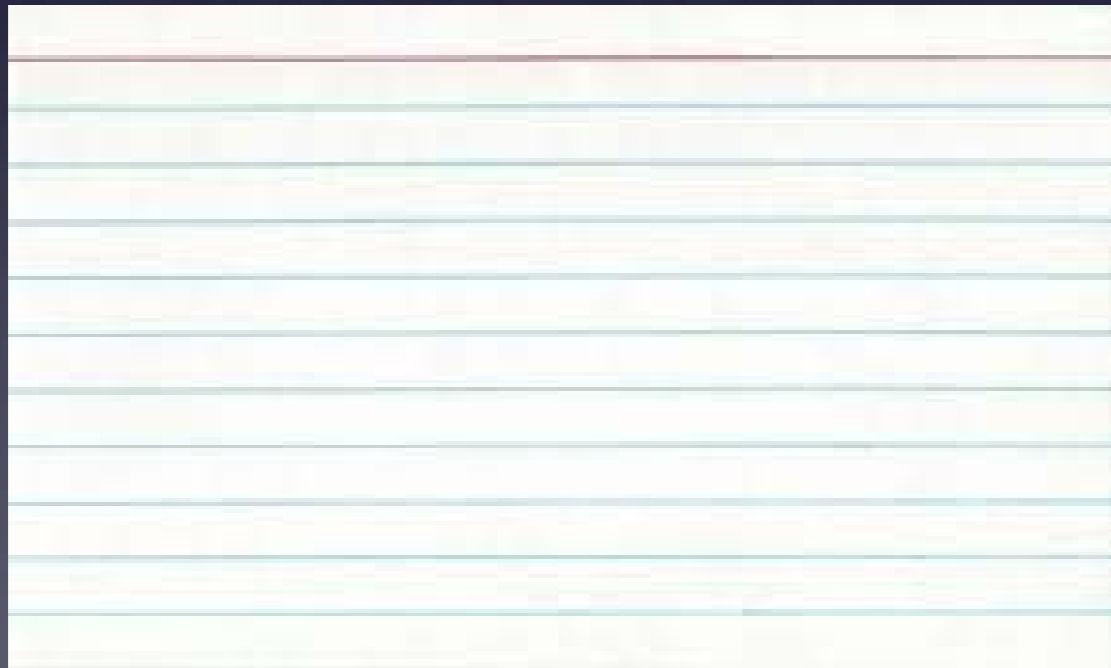
Reflections



Going forward

# Closing Reflection

What are 1 or 2 elements of how diversity and mentoring are linked that you had not considered before this session?

A rectangular area containing a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, intended for writing a reflection.

Active learning:  
1-minute essay

# Carrying it back home with you...

April 10, 2013

Your campus administrator \_\_\_\_\_  
enter appropriate individual here

\_\_\_\_\_  
enter appropriate campus address here

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to ask support from your office to improve the mentoring of:

(circle those that apply):

new faculty members (with a special focus on \_\_\_\_\_)  
mid-career faculty members (with a special focus on \_\_\_\_\_)  
other \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g. administrators, etc.)

I believe that current members of our campus who would be helpful in mentoring would include:

(circle those that apply):

senior/advanced undergraduates  
graduate students  
postdoctoral students  
teaching assistants  
research technicians  
mid-career faculty members  
senior faculty members (with a special reference to \_\_\_\_\_)  
other \_\_\_\_\_

I attended a day-long advance workshop at UCR on April 10, 2013 and learned that effective mentoring is important because:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

I propose that my department/unit should implement mentor training in some capacity. I believe the following benefits would result:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Some possible action plans for our campus could include:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We could partner with the following programs and efforts already ongoing on our campus:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Importantly, implementation of a new mentoring program for \_\_\_\_\_ or expansion of one or more existing programs for \_\_\_\_\_ should be considered a funding priority because:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I would be very interested in meeting with you to discuss in detail my/our desire to improve mentoring in my/our department/unit.

Sincerely,



# Session Recap: Addressing Diversity in mentoring.

time, such as at a retreat...

- How do you now define diversity?
- How might your mentoring approach be viewed by different mentees?
- How do you adapt to different mentors/mentees?
- How do you begin institutionalizing what you have learned today?

# Resources



**CIRTL Network** COMMITTED TO ADVANCING THE TEACHING  
OF STEM DISCIPLINES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Diversity Institute of the  
Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and  
Learning  
[www.cirtl.net](http://www.cirtl.net)

case studies, bibliographies, instructional resources, etc.

# THANK YOU!

# Diverse

ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

January 24, 2008 • Volume 24, No. 25  
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*She doesn't  
have a clue.*

*Why is it  
always about  
race?*

## When Diversity Training Goes Awry

Done incorrectly, what should be a  
useful exercise can and has backfired  
on some colleges and universities.

