

**Report of the American Sociological Association (ASA) Committee on the  
Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities (SREM) in Sociology:  
Results of the Graduate Student Survey**

**Submitted to the 2011-2012 Council of the  
American Sociological Association  
July 31, 2011**

**Approved by ASA Council on  
August 24, 2011  
With Additional Discussion of the Report Recommendations to  
Take Place at the 2012 Winter Council Meeting**

**Prepared by:**

**Denise A. Segura, Past Chair  
Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology**

**Scott Brooks, SREM Member**

**Jean H. Shin, ASA Staff Liaison & Director, ASA Minority Affairs Program**

**and**

**Dr. Laura Romo  
UCSB Gevirtz Graduate School of Education**

**SREM 2010-11 Members:**

***Abdallah M. Badahdah***

***Angie Y. Chung***

***Pawan H. Dhingra***

***Stuart L. Shafer***

***Victor M. Rios***

***Sarah Fenstermaker (ASA Council Liaison)***

**Note: The SREM Committee thanks Dr. Roberta Spalter-Roth, ASA Director of Research, for her assistance in survey construction and data analysis, as well as UCSB graduate student assistants Monica Lomeli and Bridget Harr.**

## INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In 2007, the American Sociological Association (ASA) Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Sociology (SREM) authorized Committee Chair Denise Segura to develop a survey to investigate the professional experiences and academic preparation of racial-ethnic minority graduate students<sup>1</sup> in the discipline. In 2008, SREM approved an online graduate student survey that was pre-tested at one large, PhD-granting department. In 2009, the revised graduate student survey was administered to 22 PhD-granting sociology departments in the United States. Survey development was supported jointly by the University of California, Santa Barbara's Institute for Social, Behavioral and Economic Research (ISBER) and ASA. SREM members Denise Segura, Scott Brooks and Jean Shin are the co-Principal Investigators and collaborated in the development of the survey and the data analysis. Survey results have been analyzed by Denise Segura in consultation with Dr. Laura Romo, UCSB Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. ASA Director of Research Dr. Roberta Spalter-Roth provided key feedback and advice on survey construction and analysis.

The following report provides an executive summary, an analysis of key survey findings regarding differences between white students and students of color on the importance of racial-ethnic diversity, peer social climate, faculty mentoring and professional socialization, and program satisfaction. The report concludes with recommendations for future research and how to improve departmental climate and strengthen the professional socialization of graduate students.

---

<sup>1</sup> The terms "racial-ethnic" minority and students of color are used interchangeably to refer to students of African American, Asian, American Indian, and Latina/o heritage.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Findings

Several major findings emerged from the 2009 Graduate Student Survey administered to graduate students in 22 PhD-granting institutions in sociology in the United States.

1. Graduate students perceive and value racial-ethnic departmental diversity differently. Compared to White students, students of color reported that faculty and department diversity was more important to their enrollment decisions.
2. Student satisfaction with their graduate program varies by race-ethnicity. Latina/o and Asian students reported less satisfaction with their graduate program vis-à-vis White and African American students.
3. Graduate students perceived “raced” advantages in other groups. Compared to students of color, White students more strongly agreed that racial-ethnic minority students are given advantages that discriminate against other students. Conversely, racial-ethnic minority students more strongly agreed that White students are given advantages that discriminate against other students.
4. Although reports of race-ethnic discrimination were low for all students, students of color reported slightly higher levels of discrimination from their peers compared to White students.
5. Latina/o students perceived less respect from their peers compared to White students.
6. Asian students felt less accepted by other graduate students compared to White students.
7. Students generally reported moderate levels of faculty mentoring. However, compared to African American students, Latinas/os reported lower levels of mentoring.
8. For all students, increased mentoring from faculty, more perceived respect among students, and acceptance from other students was associated with higher levels of satisfaction with their graduate program.
9. A higher percentage of students of color have seriously considered leaving their program compared to White students.

These findings are consistent with other initiatives from several other ASA programs and departments. Most notably, the findings of this report complement the ASA Research Department’s recent study of Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) alumni who are or were early career PhDs, and their productivity, placement, and retention compared to two comparison groups (Spalter-Roth, Mayorova, Shin, and White 2011).

## **Recommendations**

1. Sociology departments should explicitly recognize that as their programs diversify in ways that reverse historical patterns of enrolling predominantly White students, there will be tensions among students, faculty, and staff that need to be identified and analyzed to develop support systems that strengthen peer relations, faculty mentoring and academic professionalization.
2. ASA should disseminate and discuss the findings of this report at the yearly ASA conferences of the Directors of Graduate Studies and the Department Chairs.
3. Through SREM and the Minority Affairs Program, ASA should sponsor a panel and series of focus groups with graduate students to discuss the report findings and develop recommendations for the ASA to disseminate to departments to consider integrating into their programs.
4. Through SREM, ASA should encourage the regional sociological associations to disseminate the report findings through special thematic sessions. Regional associations should also be encouraged to hold focus groups with graduate students to discuss the report findings and develop recommendations to disseminate to departments to consider integrating into their programs.
5. ASA and SREM should jointly encourage departments to hold a series of discussions with their graduate students to discuss the report findings and ascertain what might be done within the program to improve peer relations and academic professionalization.
6. ASA should support the production of research briefs that further analyze findings of this SREM report to include unreported features of department climate, faculty advising, and departmental procedures that may also impact graduate student satisfaction and their preparation for academic careers.
7. ASA Council should renewal of the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities for another five-year term. We recommend that SREM collaborate with the ASA Research Department to examine longitudinal career tracks of early-career faculty to identify differences by race-ethnicity and gender.

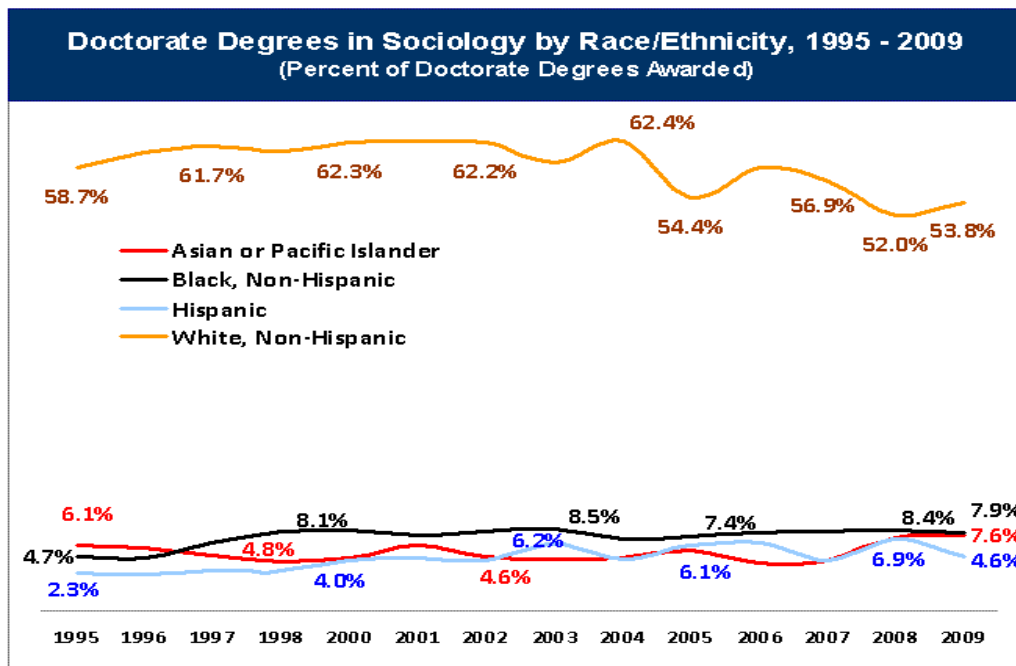
## BACKGROUND OF THE REPORT

### The Status of Racial-Ethnic Minority Students in Higher Education

Institutions of higher education are becoming increasingly more racially and ethnically diverse. In 1980, 17% of U.S. college students were racial-ethnic minorities (Digest of Education Statistics 2009, Table 226). By 2008, 34.6% of all college students were African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Latina/o or American Indian/Alaska Native (Digest of Education Statistics 2009, Table 226). The participation of racial-ethnic minorities in higher education beyond the baccalaureate has been growing more slowly. In 1980, 9.3% of all doctorates in the social sciences and psychology were awarded to racial-ethnic minorities. This grew to 19.4% in 2004-05 (Digest of Education Statistics 2006, Table 307).

Sociology is one of the most diverse fields in the social sciences. Underrepresented minorities (African American, Latinas/os, American Indian/Alaska Native) accounted for 29.3% of the 28,820 sociology bachelor degrees awarded in 2009 (U.S. Department of Education retrieved from <https://webcaspar.nsf.gov>, November 8, 2010). Women from all racial-ethnic groups constituted 70% of bachelor's degree recipients.

As the table below indicates, in 2009, White, non-Hispanics accounted for 53.8% of the degrees awarded, African Americans 7.9%, Asian/Pacific Islanders 7.6%, and Latina/os were awarded 4.6% (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).<sup>2</sup> These figures demonstrate that graduate students of color remain underrepresented in doctoral degrees awarded although departments are slowly diversifying. How departments encourage and manage racial-ethnic diversity among graduate students and faculty is an important albeit understudied question.



<sup>2</sup>A total of 268 doctorates were awarded in 2009 in the U.S. The percentages in this chart do not add up to 100 percent because they do not include international students.

Under-representation of graduate students of color in graduate school impedes the university's broader mission to reflect the diversity of our society and to explore a broad and lively range of questions that can lead to new theoretical and empirical knowledge. Graduate students of color often encounter serious challenges in establishing themselves in the academy and are all too often expected to conform to existing normative structures that may not value their unique funds of knowledge and potential intellectual contributions (Austin and McDaniels 2006; Solórzano 1998). In light of huge demographic changes sweeping the nation and increasing levels of students of color in higher education, it is critical to develop data on the challenges students of color face and identify ways departments can support the pathway of racial-ethnic minorities to the doctorate.

### **Rationale and Development for the SREM Graduate Student Survey**

At the 2007 ASA Annual Meeting, the SREM Committee discussed the need for data on the experiences of racial-ethnic minority graduate students in sociology. The committee members raised issues and concerns they had regarding the slow pace departments were "diversifying," that is, hiring faculty of color and enrolling, graduating, and job-placing graduate students of color. The committee was also concerned that departmental diversification might be experienced negatively by graduate students, particularly students of color who could be tokenized, devalued socially or whose research might not be well-supported. The committee also worried about the potential consequences of the potential end or shrinkage of the ASA Minority Fellowship Program (MFP). MFP funding from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) had just ended, and the committee was very concerned about the future of a program that had provided significant financial and professional support to numerous scholars for decades. Members worried about the potential impact on graduate student diversity in sociology departments if the MFP program was ended or curtailed.

Some committee members shared some of the problems they had either observed or heard about that graduate students of color were having in their doctoral programs. These anecdotes suggested that some, if not all, graduate students of color might not be receiving the same quality of faculty mentorship and professional socialization as White students, and that they might be receiving negative evaluations of their intellectual abilities or inadequate support for their research, particularly in the area of race-ethnicity. The committee discussed the possibility that graduate students of color might not feel as if they "fit in" or "belonged" particularly in departments where resource allocation might be perceived as "raced." The committee agreed it was important to examine the issues raised by these anecdotes more systematically to ascertain the extent to which they could be verified, rejected, or qualified within a larger body of students.

By the 2008 ASA Annual Meeting, SREM Committee Chair Segura and ASA Director of Minority Affairs and Staff Liaison to SREM Dr. Jean Shin had developed a graduate student pilot survey to be pre-tested at a large and diverse sociology graduate program. The committee approved the research design and survey. At that time, Dr. Scott Brooks, UC Riverside, agreed to serve as a Co-PI to help analyze the pilot survey and take charge of a qualitative component. The pilot

survey and interviews were administered in October/November 2008 and January-March 2009.<sup>3</sup> The data were analyzed jointly by the Co-PIs assisted by the ASA Director of Research, Dr. Roberta Spalter-Roth. The final graduate student survey was developed in 2009 and administered in July-August 2009 to 22 sociology departments nationwide in the summer of 2009. The ASA and UC Santa Barbara jointly funded the survey<sup>4</sup>.

ASA support of the survey is consistent with the Association's concern to identify ways to promote diversity through programs such as the MFP and the preceding MOST program (Minority Opportunities through School Transformation). Moreover sociology has a strong record of paying particular attention to the professional socialization of its graduate students for future faculty roles. For example, the ASA journal *Teaching Sociology* and *The American Sociologist* have produced special issues and numerous articles on the socialization of graduate students that are mindful of the challenges presented by preparing future faculty for an increasingly diverse student body (Austin and McDaniels 2006).

ASA also conducts periodic surveys of sociology departments which document changes in the gender composition of faculty. What we do not have, however, are data on how racial-ethnic diversity is valued and experienced by graduate students in sociology or managed by their departments. The following analysis offers insight into ways to enhance the recruitment and retention of outstanding students inclusive of racial-ethnic minorities.

### **Major Questions**

This report examines:

1. Whether graduate students of color value racial-ethnic departmental diversity more than White students and which, if any, features associated with departmental diversity influence student enrollment decisions.
2. Whether graduate students of color perceive lower levels of respect, less acceptance, and more discrimination by their peers compared to White students, and how these factors contribute to program satisfaction;
3. Whether graduate students of color report less faculty mentoring and professional socialization than White students, and how this influence program satisfaction.
4. Whether more graduate students of color than White students report they have "seriously considered" leaving their program, and whether this is associated with faculty mentoring and peer social climate.

The analyses also took into account the effects of gender.

---

<sup>3</sup> A discussion of the pilot survey is available in the 2008 SREM update for Council. So the specific research questions and method is not provided in this report.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Segura received \$6,000 in funding from UC Santa Barbara's Institute for the Study of Social, Behavioral & Economic Research (ISBER). ASA provided a similar amount.

There are other research questions within the survey, but the above have the most direct bearing on the original questions the SREM Committee raised four years ago. Ultimately the committee hopes to point to some of the ways diversity is understood and managed in departments, identify weak areas in the delivery of academic support to students, and suggest potential alternatives to strengthen departmental diversity and the professionalization of graduate students of color as well as White students.

## **Procedures**

In the summer of 2009, through the aegis of UC Santa Barbara's Social Science Survey Center (SSSC), Co-PIs Segura, Shin, and Brooks administered a Graduate Student Survey to graduate students pursuing sociology doctoral degrees in 22 different sociology departments in the United States. At the time of sample selection, ASA was undertaking a study of terminal MA graduate programs; therefore, ASA requested that we limit our sample to students in departments the MA study would not tap. This narrowed the potential sample to 33 PhD-granting departments. As part of the project's IRB approval from UC Santa Barbara and human subjects protocols, the sample was limited further to institutions whose graduate student email addresses were publicly available on departmental websites.

The final sample was 1473 potential respondents in 22 Research I institutions in the United States.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the ASA had provided the Social Science Survey Center with emails of the last three years of MFP applicants so we could tabulate their responses separately, if we wished.<sup>6</sup>

The SSSC emailed each graduate student an invitation to participate in a web-based survey.<sup>7</sup> The survey consisted of 52 closed-ended questions, many with multiple sections. The final question asked respondents if they would be willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview.<sup>8</sup> Students who responded affirmatively were asked to give their names and phone numbers. To preserve the anonymity of all respondents, this section of the survey was gathered in a separate data base which cannot be connected to the larger survey.

A total of 685 graduate students from 22 institutions responded for a 44% response rate. This report focuses on the survey results for 584 graduate students who are African American, Asian, Latina/o and White.<sup>9, 10</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> The ASA Department Survey, 2007, identified 79 Research I universities with sociology departments in the U.S.; 22 were included in the survey, or 27.8% of R1 departments.

<sup>6</sup> Ultimately we received 31 responses from MFP fellows which is too few to include in regression analysis. This report provides only an overall profile of MFP fellows.

<sup>7</sup> The survey instrument is available from Co-PI Segura at [segura@soc.ucsb.edu](mailto:segura@soc.ucsb.edu).

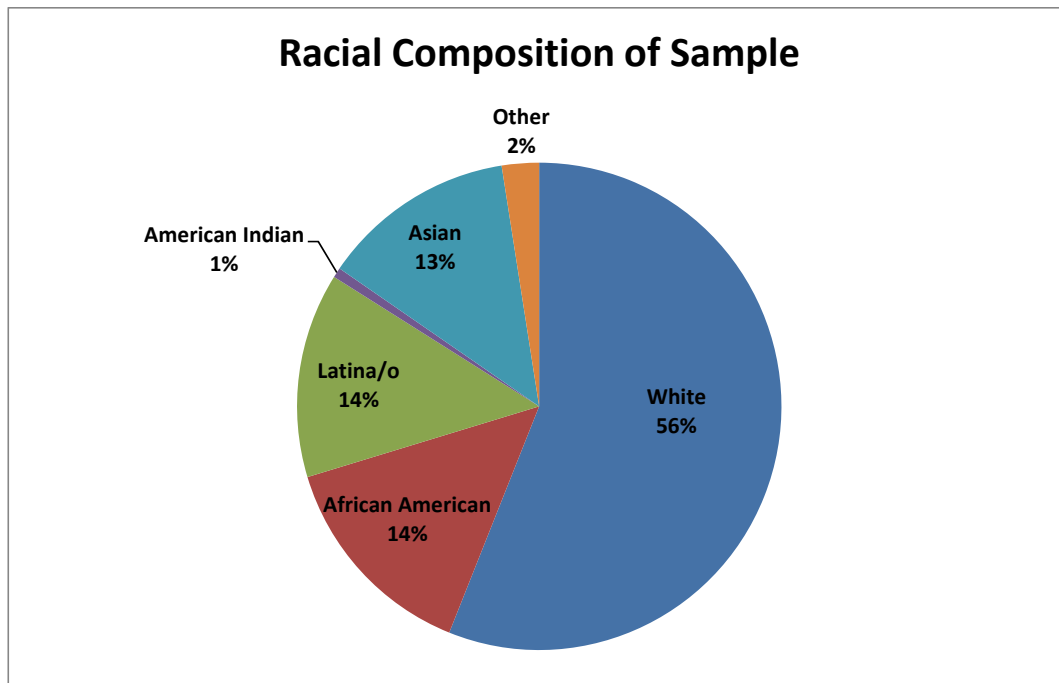
<sup>8</sup> In all 357 students volunteered for follow-up interviews. Brooks and Segura would like to conduct follow-up interviews but have been unable to do so as a result of time constraints. Whether or not to do the interviews will be decided at the 2011 ASA SREM committee meeting.

<sup>9</sup> The American Indian sample is very small and does not yield sufficient data for statistical analyses; those in the "other" category are heterogeneous so results cannot be generalized. Therefore, responses from these two groups were not included in the analyses.



## **Socio-Demographic Profile of Survey Participants**

The pie graph below illustrates that a majority of the survey participants are female (64.3% or 390), 35.1% are male ( $n = 213$ ), and 0.7% identify as other ( $n = 4$ ). Of the respondents<sup>11</sup>, 14.3% are African American ( $n = 86$ ), 0.7% are American Indian ( $n = 4$ ), 12.9% are Asian ( $n = 78$ ), 13.6% are Latina/o ( $n = 82$ ), 56.1% are White ( $n = 338$ ), and 2.5% self-identify as other<sup>12</sup> ( $n = 15$ ).



---

<sup>10</sup> Note that 9.1% of participants ( $n = 53$ ) had already obtained their sociology doctorate. They remained in the sample because they were still listed on their department's website as graduate students and because the PIs decided that these participants' status as newly minted PhDs would provide responses reflective of their entire graduate school experience and therefore, be valuable to the study.

<sup>11</sup> The African American, Asian, and Latina/o categories include biracial participants who report one parent belonging to one of these racial-ethnic categories.

<sup>12</sup> The "other" category comprises individuals who asserted identities that are multiracial or multiethnic, respondents whose racial-ethnic backgrounds were not African American, American Indian, Asian, Latina/o or White, and participants who abstained from providing their race and/or ethnicity.

Table 1 illustrates some of the respondents' key socio-demographic characteristics<sup>13</sup>.

**Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Sample**

	<b>White</b> (n = 338)	<b>Latina/o</b> (n = 82)	<b>African American</b> (n = 86)	<b>Asian</b> (n =78)
<b>% Female</b>	64	60	66	67
<b>% Male</b>	36	40	31	32
<b>Mean age</b>	30	31	31	31
<b>% U.S. citizen</b>	94	93	95	54
<b>Average Years in Program</b>	4.1	5.2	4.7	4.8

The mean age of the sample is 31 years and ranges from 20 to 68 years. Slightly over half (51%) of the respondents have received their Master's Degree as part of their PhD program; nearly 60% of the sample have completed the required PhD coursework; 49.3% have passed

<sup>13</sup> In Table 1, all figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

their PhD qualifying exam(s); and 39.4% of students in the sample have advanced to candidacy<sup>14</sup>. Finally, 9.1% of the sample had received their sociology PhD, nearly 67% of whom are female ( $n = 36$ ). At the time of the survey, respondents had spent an average 4.5 years in their respective programs. The majority expected to receive their sociology doctorate degree between 2009 and 2011.

Over 92% of respondents in each racial-ethnic group are U.S. Citizens with the exception of Asians, 46% of whom are not U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents ( $n = 36$ ). Most of the respondents attend public institutions (72.4%). Latinas/os have the largest enrollment in public institutions (76.8%) whereas African American respondents have the highest enrollment in private institutions (31.4%).

Most students report receiving high levels of financial support including: teaching assistantships (77.3%), followed by fellowships or scholarships (61.4%), research assistantships (60.5%), and loans (44.6%)<sup>15</sup>. A high proportion of African Americans (72%) and Latinas/os (nearly 55%) report taking out loans for graduate school. Slightly less than half of Asians (46.9%) report taking out loans and 39.3% of White students report taking out loans. Nationwide African Americans and Latinas/os are more likely to have higher education-related debts than either White or Asian students (Hoffer, Hess, Welch, and Williams 2006).

The top sociological research areas of the respondents are mainly in race and ethnicity and/or gender and sexuality, and for men, includes education. All students of color respondents chose race and ethnicity as a top research interest.

### **Parental Education and Occupation**

The education and occupation of students' parents are important indicators of their socioeconomic background and access to social and cultural capital. The majority of fathers, except for Latinas/os, have greater than a high school education. Latina/o students report that 38.9% of their fathers and 26.8% of their mothers have less than a high school education. White parents have completed higher levels of education than other groups: 36% of fathers and 30% of mothers have completed graduate/professional school. The majority of fathers (except for Latinas/os) work in management, production, and computer and mathematical occupations. Students' mothers tend to work in office administration, education, training and library occupations, and some are unemployed.

### **Socio-Demographics of ASA Minority Fellowship Program Fellows**

A total of 31 participants from the sample reported they had received a fellowship from the ASA Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) of which 41.9% (13) are African American, 35.5% (11) are Latina/o, and 22.6% (7) are Asian. Over half the MFP respondents are female (56.3%), 40.6%

---

<sup>14</sup> Percentages for the educational phase of participants do not equal 100%. Participants were allowed to select more than one category given that oftentimes graduate study involves progress at two or more stages.

<sup>15</sup> Note that percentages for financial support do not add up to 100% because participants were allowed to select more than one category of financial support.

are male and 3.1% identify as “other.” Their top three research areas of interest are: race and ethnicity, mental health, and gender and sexuality.<sup>16</sup>

Nearly a third (28.1%) of the fathers of MFP recipients had received less than a high school education; a quarter (25%) had a graduate or professional degree. With respect to their occupations, there is a five-way tie (at 10.7% each) for the top occupations of fathers: architecture and engineering; protective services; installation, maintenance and repair; transportation and material moving. About 11% of MFP Fellows’ fathers are unemployed.

Nearly one-third (31.3%) of the mothers of MFP recipients had attended 2-year colleges but almost 22% had received less than a high school education. The top four occupations of MFP Fellows’ mothers are in: education, training and library occupations (16.1%); management (12.9%); office administration (12.9%); and protective services (9.7%).

Nearly 72% of the MFP fellows attend public institutions and half are attending universities in the Midwestern United States.

## FINDINGS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY

### I. IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY

Research indicates that the institutional climate for diversity can have a considerable impact on students’ enrollment decisions, their academic and social lives, and their satisfaction with their educational programs (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen 1996). The Graduate Student Survey asked a number of questions to examine the ways that students value diversity. We define diversity as inclusion of historically underrepresented communities in the university as well as “engagement across racial and ethnic lines comprised of a broad and varied set of activities and initiatives,” designed to promote democracy, tolerance, and appreciation of these communities (Milem, Chang, and Antonio 2005).

Students in the sample were compared on the importance they placed on departmental and faculty racial-ethnic diversity in their enrollment decisions. Differences between White students and racial-ethnic minority students were also compared regarding their sensitivity to the representation of faculty of color in the department and whether race-ethnic scholarship is represented in their graduate seminars and in the research interests of program faculty and student peers.

These questions provided insight into the ways that racial-ethnic diversity in departments in both faculty representation and research are perceived among students and the differences in student appreciation of the representation of scholarship on race-ethnicity in their research and coursework. Differences in the value of diversity may identify departmental features that can enhance the successful recruitment of graduate students of color.

### **Measures**

---

<sup>16</sup> Because of significant support from the NIMH prior to 2010, MFP fellows during the sample period were heavily weighted toward those interested in mental health, illness and well-being.

- Importance of racial-ethnic diversity in enrollment decision. The students rated the extent to which they agreed that the following four factors were important to their enrollment decisions: (1) *Racial-ethnic diversity in the department*; (2) *Presence of a faculty member of my own race*; (3) *Presence of faculty of color*; (4) *Presence of women faculty*. The ratings were made on 4-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important to 4 = very important). Separate analyses were performed on the responses to each of the four questions.
- Representation of faculty of color. The students rated the extent to which they agreed (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) with the statement: "*There are too few faculty of color in this program.*"
- Representation of scholarship on race and ethnicity in courses and seminars. The students rated how well scholarship on race and ethnicity was represented in courses and seminars. The ratings (1 = not at all represented, 2 = poorly represented, 3 = somewhat represented, 4 = very well represented) were made in response to two questions about required and elective coursework. The ratings were summed to create a single score.
- Representation of scholarship on race and ethnicity in the research interests of graduate program faculty and student peers. The students rated how well scholarship on race and ethnicity was represented (1 = not at all represented to 4 = very well-represented) in (1) *the research interests of faculty* and (2) *in the research interests of their graduate student peers*. Separate analyses were performed on the responses to the two questions.

A series of two-way ANOVAs with gender and race-ethnicity as two between-groups independent variables were conducted separately for each diversity variable: the importance of race-ethnic diversity, the importance of the presence of faculty of color, the importance of women faculty, perceptions about the representation of faculty of color, and representation of scholarship on race and ethnicity in courses, research interests of faculty and students. Only significant main effects and interactions are reported. Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations by ethnic group.

### **Importance of Racial-Ethnic Diversity in Enrollment Decision**

- White students reported that racial-ethnic diversity in the department was less important to their enrollment decision compared to African American, Asian, and Latina/o students,  $F(3,549) = 17.86, p < .001$ . There was no difference among African Americans, Asian, and Latina/o students.
- Female students ( $M = 2.6, SD = 1.0$ ) reported that racial-ethnic diversity was more important compared to male students ( $M = 2.22, SD = 1.1$ ),  $F(1,540) = 7.62, p < .01$ .
- The effect of gender was qualified by a significant interaction effect,  $F(3,549) = 3.65, p < .05$ . White and Asian female students rated racial-ethnic diversity more important than males, but gender differences were not significant for African American and Latina/o students.

### **Importance of Faculty of Color in Enrollment Decision**

- White students reported that the presence of faculty of color was less important to their enrollment decision compared to African American, Asian, and Latina/o students,  $F(3,525) = 17.80, p < .01$ . The three racial-ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another.
- Female students ( $M = 1.9, SD = 1.0$ ) rated the importance of the presence of faculty of color more important compared to males ( $M = 1.67, SD = 1.0$ ),  $F(3,525) = 7.00, p < .01$ .

### **Importance of Women Faculty in Enrollment Decision**

- African American students rated the presence of women faculty more important to their enrollment decision compared to White students,  $F(3, 542) = 3.41, p < .05$ . The three racial-ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another, and Latina/o and Asian students did not differ from Whites.
- Female students ( $M = 2.6, SD = 1.0$ ) rated the presence of female faculty more important compared to male students ( $M = 1.7, SD = .9$ ),  $F(1, 542) = 3.41, p < .001$ .
- The effect of gender was qualified by a significant interaction effect,  $F(3,542) = 3.10, p < .05$ . Female students rated the presence of women faculty more important than males in all ethnic groups except for African Americans (no gender differences for this question).

### **Perceived Representation of Faculty of Color**

- African American and Latina/o students reported there were too few faculty of color in their program compared to White students and Asian students,  $F(3, 559) = 10.79, p < .05$ . The perceptions of African American and Latina/o students did not differ from one another, nor did the perceptions of White and Asian students differ from one another.
- Female students ( $M = 3.2, SD = .9$ ) perceived that there were too few faculty of color compared to males ( $M = 3.0, SD = 1.0$ ),  $F(1, 559) = 4.68, p < .05$ .

### **Perceived Representation of Scholarship on Race and Ethnicity in Courses or Seminars**

- White students perceived that scholarship on race and ethnicity was well-represented in courses and seminars more so than African American students,  $F(3,560) = 6.94, p < .01$ . The three racial-ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another, and Asian and Latina/o students did not differ from White students.

### **Perceived Representation of Scholarship on Race and Ethnicity in the Research Interests of Graduate Program Faculty**

- White students perceived that scholarship on race and ethnicity was well-represented in the research interests of faculty more so than African American, Asian, and Latina/o students,  $F(3,563) = 4.45, p < .01$ . The three racial-ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another.

### **Perceived Representation of Scholarship on Race and Ethnicity in the Research Interests of Fellow Graduate Students**

- White students perceived that scholarship on race and ethnicity is well represented in the research interests of fellow graduate students more so than African American, Asian, and Latina/o students,  $F(3,571) = 4.45, p < .01$ . The three racial-ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another.

### **Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations Associated with the Values of Diversity Variables by Racial-Ethnic Group**

	<u>White</u> (n = 335)	<u>African Americans</u> (n = 86)	<u>Asians</u> (n = 78)	<u>Latinas/os</u> (n = 81)
<b>Importance of racial-ethnic diversity†</b>	1.3 (1.3) <sub>a</sub>	2.9 (1.0) <sub>b</sub>	2.1 (1.1) <sub>b</sub>	2.5 (1.1) <sub>b</sub>
<b>Importance of presence of faculty of color†</b>	2.6 (1.0) <sub>a</sub>	3.0 (1.0) <sub>b</sub>	2.7 (1.1) <sub>b</sub>	2.7 (1.1) <sub>b</sub>
<b>Importance of women faculty†</b>	2.3 (1.0) <sub>a</sub>	2.6 (1.0) <sub>b</sub>	2.4 (1.0)	2.5 (1.0)
<b>“Too few faculty of color”‡</b>	3.0 (.9) <sub>a</sub>	3.5 (.9) <sub>b</sub>	3.0 (1.0) <sub>b</sub>	3.5 (.8) <sub>a</sub>
<b>Race representation in courses↑</b>	6.0 (1.4) <sub>a</sub>	5.2 (1.4) <sub>b</sub>	5.8 (1.4)	5.6 (1.5)
<b>Race representation in faculty research±</b>	3.4 (.7) <sub>a</sub>	3.1 (.8) <sub>b</sub>	3.1 (.8) <sub>b</sub>	3.1 (.7) <sub>b</sub>
<b>Race representation in student research±</b>	3.5 (.7) <sub>a</sub>	3.3 (.8) <sub>b</sub>	3.1 (.7) <sub>b</sub>	3.2 (.7) <sub>b</sub>

Means with different subscripts are significantly different from one another,  $p < .05$ .

† importance scale: 1 = not at all important to 4 = very important

‡ faculty representation scale: 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree

↑ race representation in courses scale (range 2 – 8)

± race representation in research (1 = not at all represented to 4= very well represented)

## II. PEER SOCIAL CLIMATE AND GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAM SATISFACTION

There is a large body of research on the effects of campus or departmental climate on student retention. Departmental climate refers to students’ perceptions of the social and academic features of their environments. Reid and Radhakrishnan assert that “different individuals can—and do—experience the same school in dramatically different ways on the basis of race” (2003: 264). Do students believe that they are treated the same? Or, do white students believe that racial-ethnic minority students receive advantages in the program? Conversely, do racial-ethnic minority students believe that white students receive advantages?

Student perceptions that they may not be treated equitably vis-à-vis other groups is essential to examine given research that indicates that graduate students often learn more from each other than from faculty (Anderson and Swazey 1998) and that peer interaction and peer advising are critical avenues for graduate student socialization (Lovitts 2004). Graduate students who do not enjoy positive peer relations tend to experience alienation, feel “out of place,” and report higher levels of dissatisfaction with their graduate program (Solórzano 1998). If students feel that one ethnic group enjoys preferential treatment, it will be important for departments to examine this more closely and develop ways to address underlying race-ethnic discourses that may fuel these perceptions.

This section analyzes peer social climate and program satisfaction. We examined whether students of color perceive lower levels of respect, less acceptance, and more discrimination by their peers compared to White students. We also examined whether or not students felt that one group vis-à-vis another group are “given advantages” within the department. This section

concludes with an analysis of the relationship between peer social climate and program satisfaction.

### **Measures**

- **Respect among students.** Students were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) with three statements: "*Male students respect female student' attitudes and beliefs;*" *Female students respect male attitudes and beliefs;*" and "*There is respect and acceptance among students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds.*" The ratings were summed to create a single score.
- **Acceptance by peers.** Students were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with the statement: "*I feel well-accepted by other graduate students in my department.*"
- **Perceived White student advantage.** Students were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with the statement: "*I feel that White students are given advantages in this department that discriminate against other students.*"
- **Perceived racial-ethnic minority student advantage.** Students were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with the statement: "*I feel that racial ethnic-minority students are given advantages in this department that discriminate against other students.*"
- **Discrimination from peers.** Students were asked to rate how often they had experienced discrimination from graduate students (0 = never, 1 = occasionally, 2 = frequently).
- **Program satisfaction.** Students were asked to rate the extent to which they were satisfied with their program (1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat satisfied, 4 = very satisfied).

A series of two-way (ethnic group x gender) ANOVAs were conducted on each of the five peer climate and program satisfaction variables. Only significant main effects and interactions are reported.

Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations by race-ethnic group.

## **RESULTS**

### **Racial-Ethnic and Gender Group Differences in Peer Climate and Program Satisfaction Variables**

#### **Respect among Students**

- Latina/o students perceived less respect among graduate students than White students,  $F(3,557) = 8.20, p < .001$ . African American and Asian students did not differ from Whites. The three racial-ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another.

#### **Acceptance by Peers**



- Asian students felt less accepted by other graduate students compared to White students,  $F(3,566) = 4.11, p < .01$ . The means for African American and Latina/o students did not differ from one another, nor did they differ from Asians.

### Discrimination from Students

- African American, Asian, and Latina/o students reported experiencing more discrimination from students compared to White students,  $F(3,556) = 7.00, p < .001$ . The three ethnic minority groups did not differ from one another.
- Female students ( $M = .4, SD = .6$ ) reported more discrimination than male students ( $M = .6, SD = .6$ ),  $F(1,556) = 7.81, p < .01$ .

### Perceived White Student Advantage

- Compared to White students, African American, Latina/o, and Asian students more strongly agreed that White students are given advantages that discriminate against other students,  $F(3,564) = 15.95, p < .001$ . The three race-ethnic groups did not differ from one another.
- Females ( $M = 1.9, SD = .9$ ) more strongly agreed than males ( $M = 1.7, SD = .8$ ) that White students are given advantages,  $F(1,564) = 3.91, p < .05$ .

### Perceived Ethnic-Minority Student Advantage

- White students more strongly agreed that racial-ethnic minority students are given advantages that discriminate against other students compared to African American and Latina/o students,  $F(3,568) = 10.31, p < .001$ . Asian students did not differ from White students. The three race-ethnic groups did not differ from one another.

### Program Satisfaction

- Latina/o and Asian students reported less satisfaction with their program compared to White and African American students,  $F(3,571) = 3.18, p < .05$ . White students did not differ from African American students, and Latina/o students did not differ from Asian students.

**Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations Associated with Peer Social Climate and Program Satisfaction Variables by Race-Ethnic Group**

	White ( <i>n</i> = 335)	African Americans ( <i>n</i> = 86)	Asians ( <i>n</i> = 78)	Latinas/os ( <i>n</i> = 81)
Respect among students†	10.2 (1.6) <sub>a</sub>	9.9 (1.6)	9.8 (1.8)	9.3 (1.7) <sub>b</sub>
Acceptance by peers‡	3.2 (.8) <sub>a</sub>	3.1 (.9)	2.9 (.8) <sub>b</sub>	3.0 (1.0)
Perceived White student advantage‡	1.6 (.7) <sub>a</sub>	2.2 (1.1) <sub>b</sub>	2.1 (1.0) <sub>b</sub>	2.2 (1.0) <sub>b</sub>
Perceived Ethnic minority advantage†	1.6 (.8) <sub>a</sub>	1.2 (.5) <sub>b</sub>	1.5 (.7)	1.2 (.5) <sub>b</sub>
Discrimination from peers↑	.4 (.6) <sub>a</sub>	.6 (.7) <sub>b</sub>	.6 (.7) <sub>b</sub>	.7 (.7) <sub>b</sub>
Program satisfaction±	3.1 (.9) <sub>a</sub>	3.1 (.8) <sub>a</sub>	2.8 (.9) <sub>b</sub>	2.8 (.9) <sub>b</sub>

Means with different subscripts are significantly different from one another,  $p < .05$ .

† respect scale (range = 3 – 12)

‡ acceptance; “other” group disadvantage scale: (range 1 to 4)

↑ discrimination scale: (0 = never, 1 = occasionally, 2 = frequently)

± program satisfaction scale (1 = very dissatisfied to 4 = very satisfied)

### **Correlations among the Peer Social Climate and Program Satisfaction Variables**

A series of bivariate correlations were performed to examine the relationships among the peer social climate and program satisfaction variables. The top of Table 4 presents the correlations for White students. Because African American, Asian, and Latina/o students showed a similar pattern of correlations, we collapsed them into a single "Student of Color" group. The correlations are presented at the bottom of Table 4.

For all students, more program satisfaction was associated with students perceiving high levels of respect among graduate students. Students who experienced more discrimination from students were less satisfied with their program. Higher levels of respect among graduate students were associated with students perceiving more acceptance and less discrimination, which in turn were negatively correlated with one another.

Higher perceptions that White students are given advantages were associated with less acceptance, more perceived discrimination, and less respect among graduate students. For White students only, higher perceptions that racial-ethnic minority students are given advantages were associated with less acceptance, more perceived discrimination, and less program satisfaction. For students of color, less program satisfaction was associated with higher perceptions that White students are given advantages that discriminate against other students.

**Table 4. Correlations among Peer Social Climate and Program Satisfaction Variables**

	White Students				
	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
<b>I. Respect among students</b>					
<b>II. Acceptance by peers</b>	.31**				
<b>III. Discrimination from peers</b>	-.42**	.18**			
<b>IV. Perceived White student advantage</b>	-.45**	-.22**	.18**		
<b>V. Perceived Ethnic minority advantage</b>	-.05	-.17**	-.16**	.13*	
<b>VI. Program Satisfaction</b>	.27*	.30**	-.15**	-.15	-.29**

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

	Students of Color				
	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
I. Respect among students					
II. Acceptance by peers	.42**				
III. Discrimination from peers	-.49**	-.53**			
IV. Perceived White student advantage	-.50**	-.35**	.41**		
V. Perceived Ethnic minority advantage	0	-.05	-.02	-.05	
VI. Program Satisfaction	.37**	.45**	-.29**	.37**	-.02

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

### Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Program Satisfaction from Peer Social Climate Variables

To examine the combined effects of the five peer social climate variables in predicting program satisfaction, two multiple regression analyses were carried out. Given the small sample sizes within each racial-ethnic minority group, African Americans, Asians, and Latina/os were collapsed into a single "Student of Color" group. Results are presented in Table 5.

#### **White Students**

- The regression model was significant,  $F(5,305) = 13.83$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 19% of the variance. More respect among graduate students and higher perceptions of acceptance from students was associated with White students feeling more satisfied with their program. Higher perceptions that racial-ethnic minority graduate students are given advantages that discriminate against other students predicted less program satisfaction. Perceived discrimination and perceptions that White students are given advantages showed no significant relationship to program satisfaction.

#### **Students of Color**

- The regression model was significant,  $F(5,229) = 16.99$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 27% of the variance. More respect among graduate students and higher perceptions of acceptance from students was associated with students of color feeling more satisfied with their program. Higher perceptions that White graduate students are given advantages that discriminate against other students predicted less program satisfaction. Perceived discrimination and perceptions that racial-ethnic minority students are given advantages showed no significant relationship to program satisfaction.

**Table 5. Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Program Satisfaction from Peer Social Climate Variables**

	White Students ( $n=311$ )	Students of Color ( $n = 235$ )
Denise A. Segura	19	July 31, 2011
2011 SREM Final Report		
DM #71467		

	$\beta$	$t$	Sig	$\beta$	$t$	Sig
<b>Respect among students</b>	.19	2.87	.01	.16	2.21	.05
<b>Acceptance by peers</b>	.21	3.79	.001	.33	4.82	.001
<b>Discrimination from peers</b>	0	-.02	<i>ns</i>	.03	.47	<i>ns</i>
<b>Perceived White student advantage</b>	.01	.13	<i>ns</i>	-.19	-2.79	.01
<b>Perceived ethnic-minority advantage</b>	-.25	-4.65	.001	-.02	-.27	<i>ns</i>

### III. FACULTY MENTORING AND GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAM SATISFACTION

Faculty mentoring is an integral component of graduate student education and professionalization into the discipline (Rose 2005). Dixon-Reeves defines mentoring “as a process by which persons of superior rank, special achievements, and prestige instruct, counsel, guide, and facilitate the intellectual (or career) development of persons identified as protégés or *mentees*” (2003: 15-16). Faculty mentors provide sponsorship, protection, challenge, exposure, visibility, counseling, acceptance, confirmation, and/or coaching to their graduate students (Green and Bauer 1995). Faculty mentors impact students’ perceptions of the quality of their graduate experience and their satisfaction with their academic professionalization (Katz and Hartnett 1976; Luna and Cullen 1998). Differences in faculty mentoring also affects overall graduate student program satisfaction and retention (Dixon-Reeves 2003).

This section analyzes student satisfaction with mentoring and academic professionalization by faculty. We examined perceived differences in key measures of mentoring related to academic professionalization that encompass opportunities to collaborate with faculty on research, co-author with faculty, and help in applying for grants, fellowships or to publish. We also analyzed differences in perceived respect by faculty for students and how often they received advice regarding academic survival and politics. This section concludes with an analysis of the relationship between faculty mentoring and student satisfaction with their graduate program.

#### Measures

- Frequency of faculty mentoring. Students were asked to report how often (0 = never to 3 = often) they (1) received opportunities to *collaborate with faculty on research*; and (2) *co-author publications with faculty*. In addition, they were asked to report how often they received guidance and support to (3) *develop and obtain research grants*; (4) *apply for fellowships that provide financial support*; and (5) *publish*. The ratings to the five questions were summed to create a single score. The alpha for the scale was .87.
- Respect for students from faculty. Students were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = strongly agree) with two statements: “*Male faculty respect female students’ attitudes and beliefs;*” and “*Female faculty respect male students’ attitudes and beliefs.*” The ratings were summed to create a single score.

- Advice regarding academic survival. Students were asked to report how often (0 = never to 3 = often) they received advice regarding academic survival and politics.

A series of two-way (racial-ethnic group x gender) ANOVAs were performed on each of the faculty mentoring and program satisfaction variables. Only significant main effects and interactions are reported. Table 6 presents the means and standard deviations by ethnic group.

## RESULTS

### **Racial-Ethnic and Gender Group Differences in Faculty Mentoring and Program Satisfaction Variables**

#### **Frequency of Faculty Mentoring**

- Latina/o students reported lower levels of faculty mentoring compared to African American students,  $F(3,501) = 3.40, p < .05$ . African Americans did not differ from White and Asian students. Latina/o, Asian, and White students did not differ from one another.
- There was a significant ethnic group by gender effect,  $F(3,501) = 2.96, p < .05$ . African American males ( $M = 10.0, SD = 3.4$ ) reported significantly higher levels of mentoring compared to African American females ( $M = 7.8, SD = 4.3$ ). Latina females ( $M = 7.5, SD = 4.0$ ) reportedly marginally higher levels of mentoring compared to Latino males ( $M = 5.8, SD = 3.2, p = .05$ ).

#### **Respect for Students from Faculty**

- Latina/o students perceived less respect for students from faculty compared to White students,  $F(3,552) = 5.03, p < .01$ . White students did not differ from African American and Asian students, and African American and Asian students did not differ from one another.

#### **Advice Regarding Academic Survival and Politics.**

- There were no race-ethnic group or gender differences regarding how often students received advice regarding academic survival and politics from faculty.

**Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations Associated with Faculty Relationship and Program Satisfaction Variables by Racial-Ethnic Group**

	White ( <i>n</i> = 327)	African Americans ( <i>n</i> = 83)	Asians ( <i>n</i> = 74)	Latinas/os ( <i>n</i> = 80)
<b>Frequency of mentoring†</b>	7.8 (4.0)	8.5 (4.1) <sub>a</sub>	7.7 (4.4)	6.9 (3.8) <sub>b</sub>
<b>Respect for students‡</b>	6.8 (1.1) <sub>a</sub>	6.7 (1.2)	6.6 (1.2)	6.3 (1.3) <sub>b</sub>
<b>Advice regarding academic survival‡</b>	0.5 (0.6)	0.7 (0.6)	0.7 (0.7)	0.7 (0.6)

Means with different subscripts are significantly different from one another,  $p < .05$ .

† frequency mentoring scale (range 0 - 15)

↑ respect scale (range 2- 8)

‡ advice scale (range 1 =never to 3= often)

### **Correlations among the Faculty Mentoring and Program Satisfaction Variables**

A series of bivariate correlations were conducted to examine the associations among the faculty mentoring and program satisfaction variables. The results are presented in Table 7.

For all students, increased frequency of mentoring was associated with more program satisfaction and more respect from faculty. In addition, students who perceived receiving more advice regarding academic survival were more satisfied with their program.

For White, Latina/o students, and Asian students, more respect from faculty was associated with more program satisfaction. This correlation was not significant for African Americans. For White, African American, and Latino students, advice regarding academic survival was associated with more respect from faculty, but it was not significant for Asian students. Increased frequency of mentoring was associated with more advice regarding academic survival for White and Latino students, but not African American and Asian students.

**Table 7. Correlations among Faculty Mentoring and Program Satisfaction Variables**

	<b><u>White Students</u></b>		
	I.	II.	III.
<b>I Frequency of mentoring</b>			
<b>II Advice regarding academic survival</b>	.56***		
<b>III. Respect from Faculty</b>	.24***	.19**	
<b>IV. Program Satisfaction</b>	.62***	.47***	.30***
* $p < .05$ ; ** $p < .01$ ; *** $p < .001$			
	<b><u>African American Students</u></b>		
	I.	II.	III.
<b>I Frequency of mentoring</b>			
<b>II. Advice regarding academic survival</b>	.16		
<b>III. Respect from Faculty</b>	.51***	.26*	
<b>IV. Program Satisfaction</b>	.50***	.36**	.20
* $p < .05$ ; ** $p < .01$ ; *** $p < .001$			
	<b><u>Asian Students</u></b>		

	I.	II.	III.
<b>I Frequency of mentoring</b>			
<b>II. Advice regarding academic survival</b>	.10		
<b>III. Respect from Faculty</b>	.47***	0	
<b>IV. Program Satisfaction</b>	.46***	.31**	.30**

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

	<b>Latina/o Students</b>		
	I.	II.	III.
<b>I Frequency of mentoring</b>			
<b>II. Advice regarding academic survival</b>	.32**		
<b>III. Respect from Faculty</b>	.46***	.31**	
<b>IV. Program Satisfaction</b>	.51***	.35**	.36**

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

### **Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Satisfaction from Faculty Mentoring Variables**

For each racial-ethnic group, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the combined effects of the faculty mentoring variables in predicting program satisfaction. Table 8 presents the results by ethnic group.

#### **White Students**

- The regression model was significant,  $F(3,274) = 74.03$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 45% of the variance. More frequent mentoring, more advice regarding academic survival, and perceiving more respect from faculty predicted more program satisfaction.

#### **African American Students**

- The regression model was significant,  $F(3,62) = 11.08$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 35% of the variance. More frequent mentoring predicted program satisfaction. Advice regarding academic survival and respect from faculty showed no significant relation to program satisfaction.

#### **Asian Students**

- The regression model was significant,  $F(3,66) = 10.23$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 28% of the variance. More frequent mentoring and more advice regarding academic survival predicted program satisfaction. Respect from faculty was not significantly associated with program satisfaction.

#### **Latina/o Students**

- The regression model was significant,  $F(3,70) = 10.00$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 30% of the variance. More frequent mentoring predicted program satisfaction. Advice regarding academic survival and respect from faculty showed no significant relation to program satisfaction.



**Table 8. Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Program Satisfaction from Faculty Mentoring Variables**

	White Students (n = 282)†			African American (n=66)±		
	$\beta$	t	Sig	$\beta$	t	Sig
<b>I. Frequency of Mentoring</b>	.47	8.62	.001	.40	3.30	.01
<b>II. Advice regarding academic survival</b>	.17	3.56	.001	.20	1.87	ns
<b>III. Respect from Faculty</b>	.21	3.77	.001	.19	1.51	ns

	Asian (n = 70)§			Latina/o (n = 74)↑		
	$\beta$	t	Sig	$\beta$	t	Sig
<b>I. Frequency of Mentoring</b>	.39	3.28	.01	.40	3.51	.001
<b>II. Advice regarding academic survival</b>	.22	2.11	.05	.20	1.82	ns
<b>III. Respect from Faculty</b>	.13	1.13	ns	.09	.79	ns

† missing data on 56 students due to many students skipping the question on advice

± missing 20 students

§ missing 8 students

↑ missing 8 students

#### IV. RETENTION

Faculty mentoring and relationships with advisors impact students' decisions to drop out or stay in the program (Austin and McDaniels 2006: 436). The quality of peer relationships impacts the overall departmental climate and is also critical to retention for all students.

Because the Graduate Student Survey was administered to current or recently enrolled graduate students and did not include students who left the program, we cannot assess the relationship between program features and retention. However, our survey provides data on whether or not students ever "seriously considered" leaving their program. This question is important to examine given its relationship to retention.

This section analyzes whether students "seriously considered" leaving their graduate program and whether this was associated with faculty mentoring and peer social climate.

### Measure

- The students were asked to report 'yes' or 'no' in response to whether they ever seriously considered leaving their doctoral program.

## RESULTS

The percentage of students that seriously considered leaving the program differed by ethnicity,  $\chi^2(1, N = 582) = 4.618, p < .05$ . Fifty-seven percent of students of color considered leaving the program compared to 48% of White students.

### **Faculty Mentoring, Peer Social Climate, and Retention**

A series of t-tests were conducted separately for White students and students of color to examine differences between students who considered leaving the program and those who did not in the frequency of faculty mentoring, perceived respect for students from faculty, perceived respect among students, and acceptance by students.

In addition, a new variable was added in which students were asked to report the extent to which they agreed (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) with the statement "*Sometimes I feel there is no one I can talk to when I have an academic concern.*" Table 9 provides the means and standard deviations for each group.

#### **White Students**

- Compared to students who had not seriously considered leaving their program, those who did reported lower frequency levels of mentoring,  $t(1,290) = -4.91, p < .001$ , less respect from faculty,  $t(1,322) = -5.09, p < .001$ , less acceptance from students,  $t(1,333) = -2.78, p < .01$ , less respect among students,  $t(1,325) = -3.37, p < .01$ , and higher levels of agreement that sometimes they feel there is no one they can talk to when they have an academic concern,  $t(1,331) = 7.33, p < .001$ .

#### **Students of Color**

- Similarly, compared to students who had not seriously considered leaving their program, those who did reported lower levels of mentoring,  $t(1,217) = -2.68, p < .01$ , less respect from faculty,  $t(1,239) = -2.09, p < .05$ , less acceptance from students,  $t(1,243) = -3.80, p < .001$ , less respect for students,  $t(1,241) = -2.76, p < .01$ , and higher levels of agreement that sometimes they feel there is no one they can talk to when they have an academic concern,  $t(1,244) = 4.35, p < .001$ .

**Table 9. Means and Standard Deviations Associated with Faculty Mentoring and Social Climate Variables by Whether Students Seriously Considered Leaving their Program**

Considered leaving the program?	White Students		Students of Color	
	Yes (n=159)	No (n = 174)	Yes (n = 140)	No (n = 106)
Frequency of Faculty mentoring <sup>†</sup>	6.7 (3.4)	8.9 (3.8)***	7.1 (3.9)	8.9 (4.3)**
Respect for students from faculty <sup>‡</sup>	6.5 (1.1)	7.1 (1.0)***	6.3 (1.2)	6.6 (1.2)*
Acceptance by students <sup>§</sup>	3.1 (.9)	3.3 (.7)**	2.8 (1.0)	3.2 (.7)***
Respect among students <sup>↑</sup>	9.9 (1.7)	10.5 (1.5)**	9.4 (1.8)	10.0 (1.5)**
“no one I can talk to” about academic concerns <sup>§</sup>	2.7 (1.0)	2.0 (1.0)***	2.7 (1.0)	2.1 (1.0)***

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

† mentoring frequency scale (range 0 - 15)

‡ respect from faculty scale (range 2 - 8)

§ acceptance and academic concerns scale (range 1- 4)

↑ respect among students scale (range = 3 – 12)

## DISCUSSION

Graduate departments work hard to recruit outstanding students who bring diverse interests to the program. Many departments also focus on recruiting outstanding students who are from historically underrepresented groups. However, access to higher education including graduate school is an increasingly contested terrain. A number of states have passed legislation to severely curtail affirmative action policies which seek to help redress the past and present effects of institutional and interactional racial-ethnic inequality. These legislative and legal decisions disregard the injuries of race-ethnicity that are difficult to voice, even if they have been personally experienced, to seethe in a departmental “underground” alongside unresolved issues and ill-understood perceptions of unfair privilege and access.

At the same time that increasing numbers of departments are diversifying their graduate student populations, gaps (sometime chasms) in the mechanisms of inclusion remain. Faculty and graduate students in departments that are experiencing racial-ethnic diversity may not be implementing support systems that provide affirmation to both students of color who may feel stigmatized as racial-ethnic “tokens” or White students who may feel unfairly disadvantaged by shifts in admissions and re-allocation of increasingly scarce resources (e.g., faculty mentoring, fellowships).

Graduate student participants in our survey differed in their perceptions of the importance of departmental diversity and peer social climate, and faculty mentoring—all factors research has associated with enrollment decisions, program satisfaction, and retention. We found that African

American, Asian, and Latina/o students valued diversity differently than White students. Students of color were significantly more likely to report that departmental diversity and the presence of faculty of color was important in their enrollment decisions compared to White students. Compared to their male counterparts, White, Asian, and Latina women indicated that the presence of faculty of color was more important in their enrollment decisions, but there were no significant differences between African American women and men.

One reason students of color may value faculty racial-ethnic or gender diversity in their enrollment decisions, is that it increases their opportunities to have role models and/or faculty mentors who have similar characteristics and often have intersecting research or applied interests. Having a faculty mentor or role models (faculty, graduate students, staff) of the same gender or race-ethnicity increases undergraduate students' academic performance (Jacobi 1991, Crisp and Cruz 2009). There is also qualitative evidence that points to the importance of African American faculty mentors and role models to the academic success of African American graduate students (Patton 2009; Dixon-Reeves 2003). Solórzano's study of Chicana/o Ford Foundation Graduate and Postdoctoral Minority Fellows, emphasizes the importance of "similar race-ethnic" faculty role models and quotes one of his respondents, "you need to see someone like you in the position that you hope to attain. Otherwise you began to wonder, to doubt, to second guess yourself" (1998: 128). Our survey data verified the importance of the presence of faculty of color to the enrollment decisions of graduate students of color.

The presence of faculty of color and other features of departmental diversity may facilitate racial-ethnic minority graduate student recruitment which is an outcome highly sought by many sociology departments. It is important, however, to recognize that recruitment is just the first step to diversify the pathway to the professoriate. Creating an environment that fosters the intellectual development and sense of belonging among all students pose challenges for departments, particularly those that are reversing historical patterns of enrolling predominantly white students. As departments diversify and as financial and faculty resources become more competitive to obtain, the stage is set for increasing tension between students, particularly if some of these students are perceived as "affirmative action" or "diversity" protégés.

A major finding in this study was that White students and racial-ethnic minority students tended to perceive that the "other group" enjoys "advantages" that discriminate against other students. This finding is critical because students who more strongly endorsed this point of view felt less satisfied with the program. The "other" group advantage variable emerged as the strongest predictor of program satisfaction for White students. This viewpoint has negative implications for peer social climate in that, for all students, higher perceptions that the other group received advantages was associated with lower levels of respect among students and less acceptance by peers, factors that also predicted program satisfaction. For students of color, the major predictor of program satisfaction was acceptance by students. Peer social relations clearly need to be worked on to improve student satisfaction

The perception by students of color that white students enjoy advantages in graduate school is grounded historically and in social interaction. Historically students of color have had unequal access to economic, social, and political resources including the graduate education and the professoriate. Perceptions by white students that students of color enjoy discriminatory advantages in access to, and resources within graduate school may be accurate or may reflect resistance by some of these students to acknowledge white privilege, which Yosso and her

colleagues define as “a system of advantage resulting from a legacy of racism and benefiting individuals and groups on the basis of whiteness” (2004: 7). These perceptions can also evolve into claims of “reverse racism” by white students and as examples of white privilege by students of color.

What this finding points to is the need for additional research as well as programs and procedures to analyze whether any one group is indeed receiving privileged access to resources such as faculty mentoring or academic professionalization. If students of color or white students are receiving higher levels of departmental support, the question becomes whether or not this constitutes an “unfair” advantage or whether it reflects merit or market pressures. Even if unequal resource allocation reflects “merit” or “market” considerations, the question becomes whether or not departments’ ways of assessing merit or market features reinscribes unequal racial boundaries and, if so, whether departments wish to participate in this process. These types of questions are difficult to hear and even harder to discuss but they will be increasingly important to engage if, as results indicate, these sentiments grow in ways that can stifle collegiality.

Our analysis of peer social climate variables revealed differences among students of color vis-à-vis their perceptions of peer acceptance, respect, and discrimination. Latinas/os reported receiving less respect among graduate students than White students; Asians felt less peer acceptance; and both African Americans and Latinas/os reported experiencing more discrimination from other students compared White students. These findings may contribute to why Latina/o and Asian students reported less satisfaction with their graduate programs than either African Americans or White students, with scores ranging between somewhat dissatisfied to somewhat satisfied. That, compared to White peers, Latinas/os reported feeling less accepted, Asians felt less respected by White peers, and African American and Latinas/os perceived more discrimination, probably reflects aspects of chilly departmental climates. It is important for departments to consider if they wish to improve these features of their intellectual community.

One of the most important resources within graduate departments is faculty mentorship. Faculty mentors help prepare the next generation of college and university members through professional socialization into the norms, values, and practices associated with productive academics. Overall, students reported modest levels of mentoring that included opportunities to collaborate with faculty on research, co-authoring, developing research grants, and help applying for fellowships, and publishing. However, Latina/o students reported lower levels of faculty mentoring than African American students. African American men reported higher levels of mentoring than African American women, and Latinas reported marginally higher levels of mentoring compared to Latino men. In addition, Latina/o students perceived less respect for students from faculty.

When we considered how the combined effects of faculty mentoring associated with academic professionalization predicted program satisfaction, we found that for all students, increased mentoring predicted more program satisfaction. In addition, for White students, more advice regarding academic survival and politics as well as more perceived respect from faculty were also important in predicting program satisfaction. This profile is different for African Americans and Latina/o students for whom only higher levels of faculty mentoring predicted program satisfaction, after controlling for respect and advice for academic survival and politics.

This finding points to the need for graduate departments to strengthen faculty mentoring particularly for Latina/o students who perceive themselves as receiving lower levels of this support compared to the largest racial-ethnic minority group in sociology graduate programs, African Americans. With respect to African Americans, our findings point to the need for departments to maintain strong faculty mentorship, which may become more of a challenge as numbers of African American male faculty decline (e.g., through retirement) and are difficult if not impossible to replace with other men as a result of the diminishing pool of African American male PhDs in sociology vis-a-vis African American women. Research by Dixon-Reeves (2003) demonstrates that much of the success of African American graduate students has been facilitated by African American male faculty and points to the need for vigilance by departments.

The finding that Latinas/os reported receiving less mentoring than African Americans may be related to the lower numbers of Latina/o faculty vis-a-vis African American faculty in Research I universities. This does not suggest that only same-race or same-gender faculty can or should mentor students from similar backgrounds; rather, the low levels of Latina/o faculty may impact the way Latina/o students perceive mentoring. In addition, Latina/o students are more likely than other students, to come to graduate school from less prestigious undergraduate institutions which might affect faculty expectations of their intellectual potential as mentees.

Faculty mentoring and relations with advisors and peers does impact retention. Over half the student of color respondents (57%) and close to half (48%) of the White student respondents reported they had “seriously considered” leaving the department; this difference was statistically significant. Our analyses demonstrated that these students reported lower levels of mentoring, less respect from faculty, less acceptance and respect from their peers, and higher levels of agreement that sometimes they feel there is no one they can talk to when they have an academic concern compared to students who never considered leaving the program. These findings point to the need for departments to carefully monitor faculty advising and peer social climate to identify and develop supportive structures for students who may feel isolated or less respected by peers and faculty.

When we consider the rise of new cultural, social and economic formations associated with globalization and demographic changes, the need for diverse intellectual agendas is urgent. Graduate students and faculty of color are in the middle of many of these changes and often experience them in intimate ways as “solo” or “token” members of their communities. Although racial-ethnic minority graduate students and faculty may be few in number in any one department, their intellectual work often incorporates the voices of communities historically underserved by higher education in the United States, which strengthens the research, teaching and service mission of the university. If sociology departments wish to diversify in ways that are not perceived as providing unfair “advantages” to either white or racial-ethnic minority students, we need to analyze further practices that strengthen departmental diversity and the professionalization of all students equally.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Departments must recognize that as their programs diversify in ways that reverse historical patterns of enrolling predominantly White students, there will be tensions among students, faculty, and staff that need to be identified and analyzed to develop support systems that strengthen peer relations, faculty mentoring and academic professionalization.
2. ASA should disseminate and discuss the findings of this report at the yearly programs of the ASA Directors of Graduate Studies and the Department Chairs.
3. Through SREM and the ASA Minority Affairs Program, ASA should sponsor a panel and series of focus groups with graduate students to discuss the report findings and develop recommendations for the ASA to disseminate to departments to consider integrating into their programs.
4. Through SREM. ASA should encourage the regional sociological associations to disseminate the report findings through special thematic sessions. Regional associations should also be encouraged to hold focus groups with graduate students to discuss the report findings and develop recommendations to disseminate to departments to consider integrating into their programs.
5. The ASA and SREM should encourage departments to hold a series of discussions with their graduate students to discuss the report findings and ascertain what might be done within the program to improve peer relations and academic professionalization.
6. ASA should support the production of research briefs that further analyze findings of this SREM report to include unreported features of department climate, faculty advising, and departmental procedures that may also impact graduate student satisfaction and their preparation for academic careers.
7. Council should renew the ASA Status Committee on Racial and Ethnic Minorities for another five-year term. We recommend that SREM collaborate with the ASA Research Department to examine longitudinal career tracks of early-career faculty to identify differences by race-ethnicity and gender.

## REFERENCES

American Sociological Association. ASA Department Survey, 2007.

American Sociological Association. Tabulation from WebCASPAR. "Number of Doctorate Degrees Awarded in Sociology by Race-ethnicity (in Numbers)."  
[http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/research\\_and\\_stats/profession\\_trend\\_data/number\\_of\\_doctorate\\_degrees\\_awarded\\_in\\_sociology\\_by\\_race/ethnicity](http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/research_and_stats/profession_trend_data/number_of_doctorate_degrees_awarded_in_sociology_by_race/ethnicity), retrieved June 25, 2008.

Anderson, Melissa S. and Judith P. Swazey. 1998. "Reflections on the graduate student experience: An Overview." In M.S. Anderson (ed.), *The Experience of Being in Graduate School: An Exploration. New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Austin, Anne E. and Melissa McDaniels. 2006. "Preparing the Professoriate of the Future: Graduate Student Socialization for Faculty Roles." *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Practice* 21:397-456.

Crisp, Gloria and Irene Cruz. (2009). "Mentoring college students: A critical review of the Literature between 1999 and 2007." *Research in Higher Education* 50(6):525-545.

Dixon-Reeves, Regina. 2003. "Mentoring as a Precursor to Incorporation: An Assessment of the Mentoring Experiences of Recently Minted Ph.D.s." *Journal of Black Studies* 34(1):12-27.

Green, Stephen G. and Talya N. Bauer. (1995) "Supervisory mentoring by advisers: Relationships with doctoral student potential, productivity, and commitment." *Personnel Psychology* 48(3): 537-562.

Hoffer, T.B., M. Hess, V. Welch, Jr., and K. Williams. 2007. *Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Summary Report 2007*. Chicago, IL: National Opinion Research Center. Report available at: <http://www.norc.org/SED.htm>

Hurtado, Sylvia, Jeffrey F. Milem, Alma Clayton-Pedersen, and Walter Allen. 1996. *Improving the Climate for Diversity in Higher Education* (Final Report to the Lilly Endowment). Nashville, TN: Peabody College, Vanderbilt University.

Jacobi, Maryann. (1991) "Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A Literature Review." *Review of Educational Research* 61(4): 505-532.

Katz, Joseph and Rodney T. Hartnett. 1976. *Scholars in the Making: The Development of Graduate and Professional Students*. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing.

Lovitts, Barbara E. 2004. "Research on the structure and process of graduate education: Retaining students." Pp.115-136 in Donald H. Wulff and Ann E. Austin (editors), *Paths to the Professoriate: Strategies for Enriching the Preparation of Future Faculty*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



Luna, Gaye and Deborah Cullen. 1998. "Do graduate students need mentoring?" *College Student Journal* 32(3):322–330.

Milem, Jeffrey F., Mitchell, J. Chang, and Anthony Lising Antonio. 2005. "Making Diversity Work on Campus: A Research-Based Perspective." (One of a series of 3 papers commissioned for *Making Excellence Inclusive: Preparing Students and Campuses for an Era of Greater Expectations*). Washington D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Patton, Lori D. 2009. "My Sister's Keeper: A Qualitative Examination of Mentoring Experiences among African American Women in Graduate and Professional Schools." *The Journal of Higher Education* (80)5:510-537.

Reid, Landon D. and Phanikiran Radhakrishnan. 2003. "Race Matters: The Relation between Race and General Campus Climate." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 9(3): 263-275.

Rose, Gail L. 2005. "Group differences in graduate students' concepts of the ideal mentor." *Research in Higher Education* (February) 46(1):53-80.

Solórzano, Daniel G. 1998. "Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars." *Qualitative Studies in Education* 11(1):121-136.

Spalter-Roth, Roberta, Olga V. Mayorova, Jean Shin, and Patricia E. White. 2011. "Pathways to the 'Ideal' PhD Careers: Race-Ethnicity, Gender and the Impact of Mentoring." Paper presented at the Eastern Sociological Association, February 2011.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Completions, 1995-2009 (Washington, DC: NCES, 2010).

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Completions, 1995-2009 (Washington, DC: NCES, 2010). Retrieved from <https://webcaspar.nsf.gov> (November 8, 2010).

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 2009. *Digest of Education Statistics*, Table 226. [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09\\_226asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_226asp)

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 2006. *Digest of Education Statistics*, Table 307.

Yosso, Tara J., Laurence Parker, Daniel G. Solorzano, and Marvin Lynn. 2004. "From Jim Crow to Affirmative Action and Back Again: A Critical Race Discussion of Racialized Rationales and Access to Higher Education." *Review of Research in Education* 28:1-25.