



**PennState**  
College of the Liberal Arts

# MENTORING FOR THE FUTURE

OF GLOBAL LITERARY, LINGUISTIC,  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Mentor Handbook 2024–25

[sites.psu.edu/mffsgllc](https://sites.psu.edu/mffsgllc)

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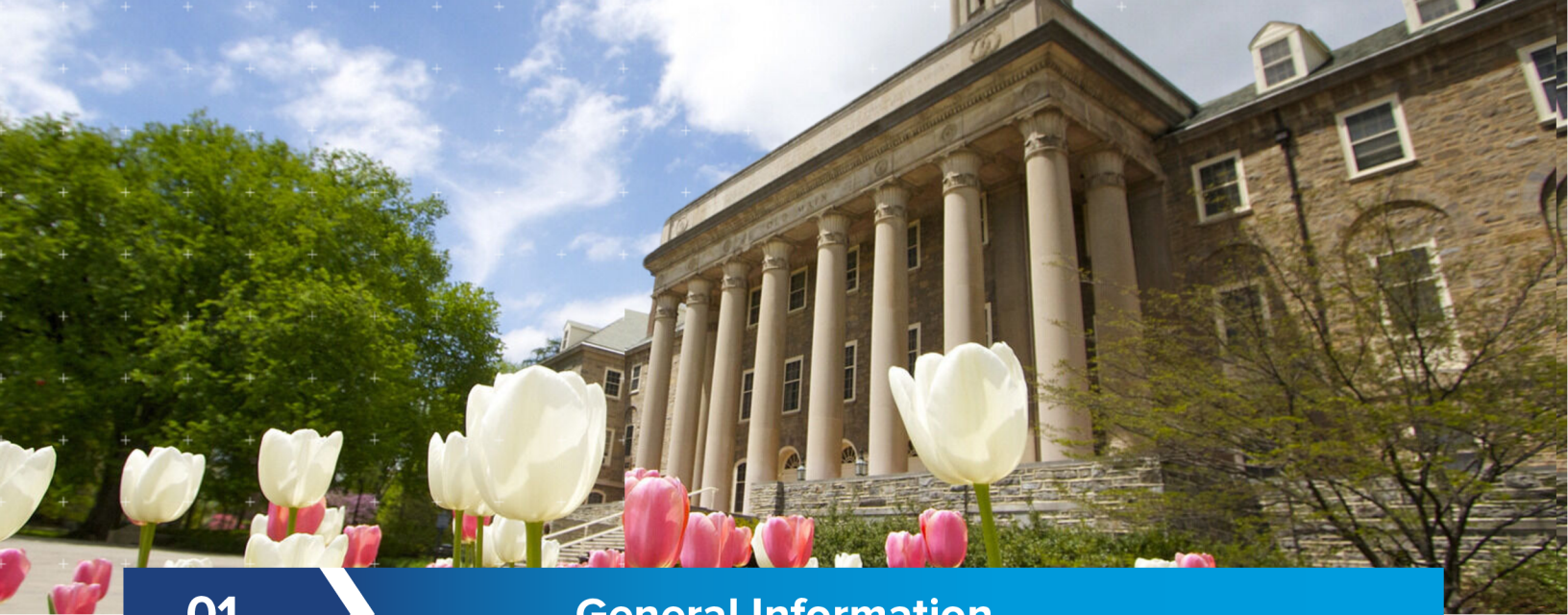
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## General Information

### About Us

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MFF was created by graduate students of the Department of Comparative Literature in 2020 as an effort to help eradicate anti-Black and minority discrimination in academia. It is a mentoring program that offers a free exploratory workshop for students who have not had enough information about graduate studies, or who may not have considered graduate studies for a variety of social, economic, or cultural circumstances, and who might want to know more.

### Program Mission

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This program invites applications from persons of diverse backgrounds who are curious about or interested in pursuing graduate studies in the larger fields of languages, linguistics, literatures, and cultures. Participants attend a two-day remote workshop series with the goal of

- learning more about graduate school
- identifying potential graduate programs in these fields
- preparing competitive applications for graduate school

### Timeline

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The program starts with a workshop in **May**, followed by optional summer meetings in **June and July**. From **August to November**, regular meetings focus on providing feedback on application materials. **December and January** are for wrap-ups and check-ins, with an option to continue the mentoring relationship starting in February.



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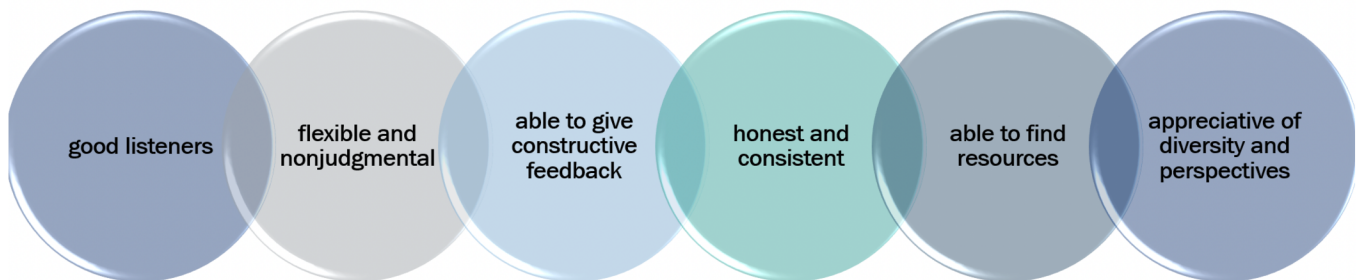
## About Mentors

MFF participants are paired with grad student mentors and faculty mentors. The mentoring relationship is expected to last for several months (typically until the mentees accept an offer to grad school). Mentors organize monthly meetings (usually throughout the fall semester) to coach mentees in their application process for grad school and provide feedback on their materials (CVs, statements of purpose, etc.)

### A Good Mentor

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Though there's not a manual on how to become a mentor, we would like our mentors to be:



Tips from current and previous graduate mentors:

- Be yourself. There's no a secret formula to be a mentor, so just be yourself. Start by listening and asking questions, and make progress from there.
- Set some goals. Try to share your mentee's visions and goals, and help them work towards them. Make sure to always set goals and action plans.
- Be an accountability partner. To be an effective mentor, start by delving into what your mentee's goals are (e.g., what they want and need out of the relationship). Then, hold them accountable. And remember: it's not about doing the work for them, it's about guiding them.
- Make it about them. The mentoring relationship is not about you. Always listen actively to understand their needs and assist them where appropriate.

## Mentoring Meetings

The mentoring meetings are led by graduate students. These are organized based on what works best for all parts, typically once a month. If the faculty mentor cannot make any of these meetings, the graduate student and the mentee are still expected to meet regularly.

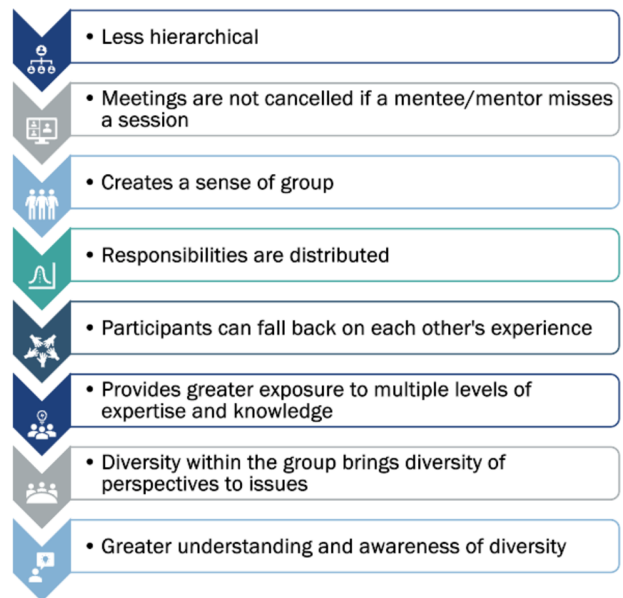
The faculty mentor plays an auxiliary role and can be updated later. Some responsibilities of the graduate student mentors are:

- Organizing meetings (usually throughout the fall semester)
- Setting a plan or goal for each meeting
- Coaching mentees in their application process
- Providing feedback on application materials (e.g., CV, statements of purpose)
- Providing updates to MFF grad leader
- Providing updates to faculty mentor (if necessary)

## Group mentoring

**Based on the Workshop on Effective and Equitable Academic Mentoring, Maria Wisdom**

Instead of the traditional 1:1 mentoring pairs, you and other grad students with similar interests can consider group mentoring instead. In these meetings, there are two or more graduate mentors meet with two or more mentees.



## Results

*"My biggest takeaway is the financial aspect, I was very nervous about that, so I'm glad we could learn more about it. [...] And the mentorship aspect: I'm glad that I now have people I can ask questions to, that I now know who I can go to and for what question."*

Blakeli Campbell  
Nevada State College—USA

*A big takeaway was realizing how dreams do come true, how there are real live people doing what I'm trying to achieve, doing it so wonderfully and being able to help other people like me."*

Matilde Rueda Crump  
Universidad de Los Andes—Bogotá, Colombia

*"I was glad to learn that I don't need to have everything figured out from the get-go, and that there are a variety of resources available to assist me figuring out my goals. It is great to know where to look for information as well as who to ask and what to ask."*

Lynn Odira,  
Braeburn Garden State School—Nairobi, Kenya



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Placements

Participants in the Mentoring for the Future workshop and mentoring series come from all over the world and from all walks of life. Our mentees have been offered admission to graduate programs at universities around the world! Some of them are:



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH



USC University of Southern California



University of Massachusetts Amherst



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN  
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Georgetown University

Virginia State University

Indiana University Bloomington

King's College London

University of York

The Pennsylvania State University

CUNY Graduate Center

University of California Riverside

National University of Singapore

University of New Mexico

University of Ghana

University of Louisville

Universität des Saarlandes

University of Pittsburgh

New York University

The University of Edinburgh

University of Glasgow

University of Virginia

Emory University

University of Cape Town

Trinity College Dublin

University of Michigan

University of Kentucky

University of Massachusetts Amherst

University of Southern California

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## Get Involved!

### Become a Mentor

- Attend monthly meetings with your mentee(s) as part of a mentor group
- Guide and coach your mentee(s) by assisting them with goal setting and by providing feedback and motivation
- Help your mentee(s) identify relevant resources and contacts
- Help spread the word about MFF via undergraduate diversity recruitment events (aka email parties)



[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to become a mentor today!

### Next Steps

#### Email Party!

- Watch out for our emails.
- We bring the resources, including a directory of minority serving institutions, an email template, and an email flyer.
- We bring the food.
- You bring the email-sending people-power!

## CONTACT US

## Program Contacts for 2024–2025

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