

**Tips for Supervisors & Mentors Based on Trainee Feedback:
Facilitating Comfortable Discussions about Race, Ethnicity, and Culture (R/E/C)**

The [2023 Trainee Perspectives of Culturally-responsive Supervision & Mentorship Survey](#) described trainee experiences of how well our current supervision practices address cultural diversity, equity, & inclusion. [In 2023, we also heard from faculty that they would like additional training](#) and resources focused on providing culturally-responsive supervision & mentoring. Robust training and instruction for supervisors and mentors is in development based on this feedback. In the meantime, below are summarized “tips” based on trainee feedback to provide insight and inform immediate action.

Trainee Feedback	Potential Supervisor & Mentor Action	Additional Resource
<p><i>Trainees report that they would like supervisors and/or mentors to initiate race, ethnicity, and culture (r/e/c) discussions and few do so in a systematic, intentional, and repeated manner.</i></p>	<p>Initiate discussions about r/e/c issues, demonstrating your own willingness to engage with these topics. By openly addressing r/e/c, you signal this is a safe and valued topic of conversation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>A beginning of the year/rotation touchpoint</u> that is transparent and consistent for every cohort of trainees/supervisors is strongly recommended ● Establish "defined spaces" for discussing r/e/c, whether it's <u>regular check-ins, dedicated time during supervision sessions, and/or creating opportunities for group discussions</u> ● <u>Normalize these conversations by integrating them</u> into regular practices (e.g., lab meetings, supervision) ● <u>When discussions are initiated, be sure to follow-up with intention</u> - one-time conversations are insufficient 	<p>A member of DPHB, Dr. Natalia Villa Hernandez, has created a clinical guidebook titled "Opening the Door to Dialogue on Diversity in the Supervision Process: A Multicultural Supervision Guidebook for Supervisors and Supervisees." See <i>Chapters 5 and 6 for information on introducing multicultural content during supervision & mentorship, and having conversations that may be difficult.</i></p>
<p><i>Trainees report that when r/e/c discussions arise, several barriers related to the supervisory relationship are often unaddressed.</i></p>	<p>During discussions about r/e/c issues, be approachable, non-judgmental, and genuinely interested in trainee’s experiences. It takes intentional work to create an open environment where trainees feel safe to express themselves without fear of judgment or negative repercussions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Use your active listening skills</u> by paying close attention to what trainees are saying, asking clarifying questions and reflecting back your understanding. Show empathy, validate, be open to others’ experiences. ● <u>Openly recognize the inherent power differential in the supervisor-trainee relationship</u> and how this might make it difficult for trainees to openly discuss r/e/c issues. ● <u>Openly acknowledge the existence of systemic racism and inequities within the department, university, and broader society;</u> notice a need or desire to rationalize or explain systemic racism and instead engage in active listening to fully understand the trainee’s perspective. 	<p>A member of DPHB, Dr. Natalia Villa Hernandez, has created a clinical guidebook titled "Opening the Door to Dialogue on Diversity in the Supervision Process: A Multicultural Supervision Guidebook for Supervisors and Supervisees." See <i>Chapters 4, 6, and 7 for content on building a strong alliance and handling ruptures to the relationship (should they arise)</i></p>

<p><i>Trainees report that when r/e/c discussions arise, several barriers related to the supervisory relationship are often unaddressed. (continued)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Acknowledge and share your own experiences and identity thoughtfully (if you are comfortable).</u> Sharing should aim to create a connection and demonstrate understanding, but it should not shift the focus away from the trainee's experiences, minimize experiences of others, or center your own narrative. ● <u>Be transparent about your own journey with DEIB and anti-racism,</u> including acknowledging areas where you are still learning and growing. It is expected that we are not all experts! ● <u>Take an active and collaborative role in supporting trainee's own DEIB/anti-racism growth.</u> This could involve recommending relevant resources, providing time for these activities, or connecting them with networks and organizations. Engage in these activities alongside trainees, and follow-up on them in individual discussions. 	<p>A member of DPHB, Dr. Natalia Villa Hernandez, has created a clinical guidebook titled "Opening the Door to Dialogue on Diversity in the Supervision Process: A Multicultural Supervision Guidebook for Supervisors and Supervisees." See <i>Chapters 4, 6, and 7</i> for content on building a strong alliance and handling ruptures to the relationship (should they arise)</p>
<p><i>Trainees reported that r/e/c discussions are perceived as less effective if the supervisor/mentor actions are not also demonstrative of valuing issues related to DEIB and anti-racism.</i></p>	<p>Supervisors and mentors must align their words with actions regarding DEIB & anti-racism. Expressing a commitment to diversity is insufficient if not backed up by concrete actions and changes in behavior.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Seek ongoing training and education;</u> training and education should equip you with the knowledge and skills to understand your own biases, navigate conversations about race and ethnicity effectively, and create a safe space for trainees to share their experiences. ● <u>Examine your biases and behaviors. Be open to messages that you may be sending through action.</u> Your behavior signals what is important to you. Work to create appropriate expectations around work-life balance, acknowledge important culturally-relevant dates or holidays, & speak up in the presence of ANY discriminatory and racist action. ● <u>Advocate for systemic changes within the department and university</u> to address inequities and create a more inclusive environment. This includes continued advocacy for protective time for supervisors, inclusive hiring practices, and trainee grievance policies. Be transparent with trainees about these efforts. ● <u>Be mindful of overburdening trainees from minority groups with DEI-related tasks and responsibilities.</u> Ensure that such contributions are recognized, valued, and equitably distributed among all trainees. 	<p>Natalia Villa Hernandez, has created a clinical guidebook titled "Opening the Door to Dialogue on Diversity in the Supervision Process: A Multicultural Supervision Guidebook for Supervisors and Supervisees." See <i>Chapter 2</i> for how to self-reflect on biases that may influence effective multicultural supervision and mentorship.</p> <p>DPHB is also hard at work on resources to help faculty take action in ways that are meaningful to them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Voice your feedback ● Join a work group ● Learn about new educational opportunities ● Find additional related resources and groups ● Educate yourself on trainee perspectives ● Keep yourself up to date on DPHB actions