A Practical Guide for Supporting Emerging Scholars Through Mentoring and Networking Events

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Introduction

Building and maintaining strong professional networks represents an essential part of developing one's career. Connections with colleagues—whether they are peers, mentors, or collaborators—can facilitate valuable guidance through career transitions, helpful feedback, invitations to collaborate, and the ability to stay informed about developments in the field. However, many emerging scholars face barriers that make it difficult to build meaningful connections. These challenges may include having limited access to senior scholars in their field of study, lacking comfort or experience in approaching potential mentors, and finding academic spaces intimidating. Structured mentoring events, however, can provide opportunities to forge meaningful connections by focusing on community-building among researchers with shared research interests and creating safe spaces to talk openly about career development and emerging areas of research.

For more than a decade, the National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families (the Center) has hosted a series of mentoring and networking events at professional conferences aimed at connecting emerging scholars with mid- to late-career scholars who share similar research interests, with the goal of offering mentorship and guidance on career development, discussing emerging topics in the field, and building community. In this guide, we draw on our experience and lessons learned from hosting 18 events with more than 1,300 attendees to provide suggestions and tools to help other entities interested in facilitating similar efforts.

About This Guide

This guide provides an overview of the planning process for hosting mentoring and networking events and offers guidance on facilitating them. The appendices include a comprehensive set of tools and resources to support planning and facilitation, including timeline templates, sample promotional materials, email templates, and sample discussion guides. While we have hosted both in-person and virtual events, this guide focuses primarily on in-person events while offering select insights into the potential benefits and tradeoffs of virtual events.

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In Their Own Words

"This is an excellent event and my third time attending! I have always gotten useful advice and information during the event and met/made connections that lasted beyond PAA [Population Association of America]."

"This event is always a great way to connect with scholars in a more relaxed setting while also gaining insights into their experiences. The mentors always have helpful advice and answer questions thoroughly."

"It was a great way to get answers from faculty and mentors who are more experienced and knowledgeable on Latino populations. The networking with fellow peers was also such a great addition, I received the opportunity to make connections with peers at other universities!"

"Mentors were extremely knowledgeable and willing to talk openly about the topic. Everyone had great questions, and I certainly learned a lot about a career in academia!"

"I appreciated the range of mentors from different backgrounds and institutions/companies represented. We were able to ask questions throughout and share resources with each other. Mentors were very candid about their experiences and what to expect in their roles."

Planning a Mentoring Event

Getting started

Some key decisions must be made early (5-6 months ahead of the event), including the event's location, date, time, and size. Many of these decisions are driven by the available budget. For this reason, we start this section with some budget considerations and then discuss other key logistical factors.

- **Budget.** Hosting a mentoring event requires a significant amount of time for planning, coordinating, promoting, and hosting (see all steps in Table A1 in Appendix A; page 11), so such an event inherently involves personnel costs. These activities can be accomplished by one or two staff members—typically one person who creates the vision for the event and serves as the decision maker and someone who carries out the day-to-day activities involved in event planning. Additional staff are needed for the day of the event to assist with room setup and registration (three to five staff members total, depending on the size of the event).

  In addition to personnel costs, organizers should consider costs related to securing space for the event and, if desired, food and beverages, multimedia (AV), and promotional materials. Meeting room fees at conference venues are usually waived if the room is booked through the conference organizers as part of a package (see section on partnerships below; page 3), or if

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food is ordered from the venue.[a] While the provision of food is optional, it incentivizes participation, particularly among emerging scholars who often have limited travel funds. Event planners should be aware of any restrictions in their funding source regarding the use of funds for food and beverages. For example, some grants do not allow grantees to use project funds to purchase food; others may allow food but have restrictions on beverages. If such expenses are not permitted, organizers should consider partnering with other entities that can help cover these costs. Table A2 in Appendix A (see page 13) provides a detailed description of budget considerations for mentoring events.

- **Location.** Identifying a convenient location for the mentoring event is key to ensuring high participation. Conferences typically feature full-day programs with little time between sessions, so hosting mentoring events at the conference venue offers some important advantages, including easier access, reduced participant attrition, and elimination of the need to transport materials. However, these advantages must be weighed against the high cost of ordering food from hotel venues. In addition to the venue, organizers should also consider room configuration options to ensure that the selected space can be set up appropriately for the event—for example, with round tables seating 8–10 participants.

- **Event date and time**. Identifying a suitable date and time for the mentoring event is as important as securing a convenient location. Ideally, the event should be scheduled for the day with the highest conference attendance—typically the second day of a three-day conference. Event planners should coordinate with conference organizers to identify a time that does not conflict with high-profile sessions (e.g., keynote addresses) or events that are particularly relevant to emerging scholars (e.g., poster sessions). Mentoring events generally last 1 to 1.5 hours. When deciding on the timing of the event, organizers should consider the availability of funds to provide food. Ideally, events occurring early in the morning or during lunchtime offer food to participants, at the risk of lower participation. Breakfast and mid-morning or mid-afternoon snacks (e.g., appetizers, ice cream bars) are more affordable than lunch or dinner.

- **Event size.** Mentoring events can vary widely in size; typically, the Center's events have included 60 to 100 participants. Two main factors influence the event size—room capacity and budget—particularly if there are per-participant costs (e.g., food). Once the maximum number of participants has been determined, event planners should establish quotas for mentors and mentees. We have found that a ratio of one mentor to three mentees offers a good balance that allows meaningful interaction while maintaining a comfortable, non-intimidating environment for mentees.

- **Partnerships.** Partnerships are a key component of hosting successful mentoring events. Collaborating with other entities on events at conferences can help secure an appropriate space, coordinate scheduling to avoid conflicts with major sessions, and streamline promotion and registration efforts. Partnerships can also facilitate cost-sharing and increase both the credibility and visibility of events among relevant constituencies. Over the years, the Center has partnered with a range of other entities to co-host mentoring events at their professional conferences,

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[a] Conference venues, which are often hotels, typically require that food be ordered from their in-house services and prohibit outside catering.

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including professional associations—e.g., the Population Association of America (PAA), the Society for Research in Child Development's Latinx Caucus (SRCD), and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)—and government-funded conferences, such as the Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC), the National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), and the Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS). The Center has also partnered with other research centers that share similar goals, including the National African American Child and Family Research Center (NAACFRC) and the Tribal Early Childhood Research Center (TRC). Co-hosts should clearly outline how tasks and responsibilities will be distributed among partners for a successful partnership.

Event structure and modality

Mentoring and networking events can take various forms that differ in both structure (e.g., pre-planned group assignments, speed mentoring) and modality (e.g., in-person, virtual). Each format has its own benefits and tradeoffs.

Event structure

Table 1 (on the next page) outlines different ways we have structured our mentoring events and what we have observed to be each structure's benefits and tradeoffs.

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Table 1. Description of mentoring event types, their benefits, and tradeoffs

Event structure	Description	Benefits	Tradeoffs
Pre-assigned groups (traditional approach adopted by the Center)	• Mentors and mentees complete a short survey during registration in which they are offered a menu of discussion topics from which to select. • Respondents provide information about their research interests, career level, and top three topic selections. • Event organizers use the registration information to match mentors and mentees based on their desired discussion topic and career level. • Individuals receive their group assignments ahead of the event via email, along with a short biography for each person in their assigned group. • Participants receive a discussion guide with prompts to get conversations going, if needed.	• Providing topic preferences during registration removes the uncertainty of which groups will be popular, allowing organizers to plan accordingly. • Knowing the discussion topic ahead of time allows participants to think about discussion questions prior to the event. • Learning about group members in advance may minimize intimidation and facilitate connections beyond the event since contact information is shared from the start. • Spending 1-1.5 hours as a group allows for deeper conversations and connections.	• Matching takes a significant amount of time. • Attrition, including last-minute cancellations, is common. This can place an additional burden on the organizers as they need to track cancellations and reassign individuals into groups. • Some past attendees at Center events have noted a desire to participate in more than one group discussion. However, others have indicated they want to spend more time in their groups.
Speed mentoring	• Mentors are assigned to specific topics based on their interests, as indicated in a registration survey. • Mentees walk into the room and sit at their desired tables on a first-come, first-served basis. • Mentees move around to different tables of their preference every	• Participants interact with a greater number of mentors and mentees. • Participants can discuss various topics of interest. • Little coordination is needed ahead of time.	• Participants spend a shorter time in each group, which does not allow for in-depth conversations. • Mentees may be grouped with others at very different career stages (e.g., undergraduate students and early career faculty) or with

Event structure	Description	Benefits	Tradeoffs
	20 minutes, for a total of three rounds.		different goals (e.g., academic versus applied job searches), which can make the conversation less relevant for some.
Pre-assigned groups + unstructured time	• Uses the same model as the pre-assigned groups described above, but groups meet for roughly 50 minutes. After that, mentors and mentees are invited to move around and network with others informally.	• Offers the same benefits as the pre-assigned groups. • Spending roughly 50 minutes as a group allows for deeper conversations and connections than the speed mentoring event, while also allowing time to build connections outside the designated groups.	• Includes the same tradeoffs as the pre-assigned groups, but with somewhat less time for deep connection. • This structure assumes that the event is 1.5 hours long, which might not be a desirable option for shorter events. • When we tried this model, participants hesitated to interrupt their conversations and instead continued their discussions at their designated tables.

Event modality

The Center's mentoring events were originally designed to be in-person to foster face-to-face interactions. During the COVID-19 pandemic and the temporary move to virtual conferences to address health concerns, the Center transitioned to virtual mentoring events to maintain engagement with emerging scholars and facilitate connections during an especially difficult time to network. We held mentoring events on Zoom and replaced roundtables with breakout rooms. Virtual mentoring events were well-received and highly attended, and offered various advantages over in-person events, including greater capacity, lower cost, and access to a wider range of participants by removing the travel requirement.

Table 2 compares the benefits and tradeoffs of in-person and virtual mentoring events that can inform your decisions about event modality. Face-to-face interactions during in-person events facilitate building trust and may yield more genuine engagement among participants. These interactions can also lead to additional connections during the conference (e.g., during breaks,

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introductions to others) with long-term benefits. However, in-person mentoring events can be costly for organizers and participants who need to travel. Virtual mentoring events, by contrast, offer an opportunity to create connections when resources are limited, or to make or maintain connections between in-person conferences. Regardless of the event modality you choose, clearly state whether the event is virtual or in-person in promotional materials and confirmation emails to avoid confusion.

Table 2. Benefits and tradeoffs of in-person and virtual mentoring events

Event modality	Benefits	Tradeoffs
In-person	• Easier to build trust and create genuine engagement • Opportunities for additional connections (e.g., lunch, hallway conversations, introductions to others) • Fewer distractions • Greater commitment to participation	• High cost • Limited accessibility may hinder participation from those without the resources necessary to travel and individuals with caregiving, mobility, or visa restrictions • Scheduling restrictions
Virtual	• Greater accessibility for a wider range of participants (e.g., across geographies, those with differing access to resources for travel) • Lower cost • Greater capacity to accommodate large groups • Flexible scheduling	• Harder to foster deep connections • Limited opportunities for spontaneous connections • Platform fatigue • Greater distractions that can limit genuine engagement

Event promotion and recruitment

Promote events early (as soon as registration opens) and frequently to ensure that they are well-attended. We recommend promoting events through multiple channels, including via conference websites and programs, newsletters, listservs of professional associations, and social media. Sample language is included in Appendix B (see page 14).

Direct outreach to professional networks is particularly effective for recruiting mentors (see sample email in Appendix C; page 16). As organizers host mentoring events, they can create a roster of past mentors for future outreach. In our experience, mentors have demonstrated immense generosity and willingness to support emerging scholars through these mentoring events and have found the experience rewarding.

Interest in mentoring events among emerging scholars is high, and we are often unable to accommodate everyone interested in participating. For this reason, we maintain waitlists and open

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slots as space becomes available through cancellations. We describe how we administer the waitlist in "Handling cancelations" below (page 9).

Assigning mentoring groups

Organizers who decide to create groups ahead of time should collect some information from participants at the time of registration. This can be accomplished via a survey collecting information about their professional backgrounds, research interests, and career levels (see survey in Appendix C; page 16). In our surveys, we also ask registrants to select the top three topics they would like to discuss during the event. Topics are developed *a priori* based on scholar input, feedback from past events, and general knowledge about the topics of interest among emerging scholars.

Examples of topics we have offered include:

- Pursuing a career in academia
- Pursuing a career in applied research organizations
- Pursuing a career in government
- Navigating the service demands for junior faculty and getting tenured
- Getting published
- Strategies for successful grant writing
- Preparing for job interviews
- Conducting research with Hispanic populations[b]
- Creating and maintaining networks and collaborations
- Productivity in graduate school

Approach to matching mentors and mentees

In most cases, not all the topics listed above are discussed at each mentoring event. Instead, the topics selected for discussion are informed primarily by mentees' interest and mentors' availability and expertise.

When assigning mentoring groups, we prioritize matching participants by preferred discussion topic(s) and career level (e.g., grouping graduate students). When possible, we also attempt to align areas of interest as captured by the registration survey. The size of the groups may vary and is restricted by the number of chairs per table (for in-person events). Ideally, there should be one mentor for every three mentees, for a maximum of eight participants per table.

Once individuals have been assigned into groups, we send an introductory email to all group members (see email template in Appendix C; page 19). The email contains basic background information about each member, their group assignment, logistical information, and a discussion

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[b] We use the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" interchangeably. Consistent with the Office of Budget and Management's (OMB) standards for data on race and ethnicity, these terms refer to individuals of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Cuban, Dominican, Guatemalan, and other Central or South American or Spanish cultures or origins.

guide with question prompts that can serve as conversation starters. While the guide is rarely needed, it is designed to remove barriers to participation among mentees who are still developing the confidence to initiate conversations with peers and senior scholars.

Handling cancellations

Cancellations—including last-minute cancellations due to conflicts, illness, or other reasons—are common. Tracking these can be a challenge, especially if they occur via an email to an inbox to which all organizers do not have access. To centralize this process, we have developed a form (see Appendix C; page 20) for people to complete if they are no longer able to attend. As participants withdraw their participation, we have offered open spots to those on the waitlist on a rolling basis. If cancellations occur at least 24 hours before the event, individuals on the waitlist are assigned to an existing group and an updated email is sent. If cancellations occur too close to the event, we keep those spots open and accept walk-ins on a first-come, first-served basis. Communication about last-minute openings can occur via social media or word of mouth.

Facilitating a Mentoring Event

Table D1 in Appendix D (see page 22) provides a step-by-step guide to facilitating a mentoring event, beginning with room setup and ending with sending thank you emails and a post-event survey. Appendix D also contains a checklist of suggested materials to bring to the mentoring event (see page 23).

Three to five staff members should attend the event to support setup and registration, depending on the event size. We describe key roles and responsibilities below:

- **Event coordinator.** This person ensures that the room is arranged as requested (e.g., with the desired number of tables and chairs), that food and any AV requests are properly set up, and that the event flows as planned. The coordinator offers opening remarks and monitors time, announcing transitions or event conclusions as appropriate. If the event is co-sponsored with another entity, the co-sponsor may opt to offer opening remarks as well.

- **Logistics assistant.** One staff member works with the coordinator to ensure that the space is properly set up. This includes setting up materials on tables (e.g., table numbers, promotional materials, banners; see the materials checklist in Appendix D for a full list; page 23). Once the room and registration table are set up, this staff member can help with registration. And once the event starts, the logistics assistant can be available to register latecomers, take pictures, and post pictures on social media to promote the event. At the conclusion of the event, the logistics assistant and event coordinator clean up the room and collect remaining materials.

- **Registration staff.** Event registration should be adequately staffed, with at least three staff members for small events (30–40 participants), and a minimum of five staff members (including the coordinator and logistics assistant) for larger events (70–100 participants). One person should be designated as the registration lead to handle walk-ins and troubleshoot any registration issues that may arise. Because participants often arrive shortly before the event

begins, registration typically takes place within a compressed timeframe. Having additional staff on hand helps ensure a smooth check-in process and a timely start to the event.

Follow-up and Next Steps

It is good practice to follow up the mentoring event with a thank you email to partners, mentors, and attendees. This message can also include a brief survey to gather feedback on the event (see Appendix C; page 20). The Center regularly refines the topics, format, and support systems for mentoring events based on participants' insights. Each event offers valuable lessons, and a post-event debrief among organizers—focused on what went well, what could be improved, and what should change—helps ensure ongoing improvement and success.

Conclusion

The Center has developed and refined a successful model for hosting mentoring and networking events that promote connection, knowledge-sharing, and relationship-building among emerging scholars and leaders in the field. While the specific modality, format, and budget for these events may vary, each offers valuable experiences for both mentors and mentees. A key opportunity—and challenge—is to develop strategies to promote sustained engagement and connections beyond these mentoring events. We hope this guide will equip others with the resources and tools to continue and expand these opportunities to support and connect the research community.

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Appendix A. Planning Resources

Planning timeline

Table A1. Description of event tasks and suggested timeline for in-person events

Task	Suggested timeline	Details
Begin outreach to conference organizers and potential collaborators	5-6 months before event	In the initial discussion, make sure to discuss: • Date and timing of the event • Potential location and room capacity • Catering options • Event registration process • Promotion timeline • Roles and responsibilities
Develop event registration materials	5 months before event	Develop a registration survey via any survey platform (e.g., Google Forms, Microsoft Forms) to acquire basic information about participants and their topic preference, as appropriate (see Appendix C; page 16). The registration form should inform registrants of their registration status (confirmed, waitlisted, or to be notified at a later date).
Develop promotional materials and dissemination plan	5 months before event	Promotional materials may include: • Blurbs to send out via conference, partners, and organizers newsletters • Posts for social media platforms • Email templates for mentor outreach Sample language is included in Appendix B (see page 14).
Create mentor list	4 months before event	Identify a list of potential mentors for outreach, drawing from past mentoring event participants (if applicable) and others in your networks who may be open to acting in this role.
Start event promotion	4 months before event	In addition to promoting the event broadly, we recommend reaching out specifically to potential mentors in your network to invite them to participate in the event.
Assign mentoring groups	At least 2 weeks before event	See a full explanation of our approach to group assignments in the "Approach to matching mentors and mentees" section, above (page 8). When hosting in-person mentoring events, inquire about the number of tables and chairs per table. This will determine the number of groups that can be formed and the maximum number of people per group.

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Task	Suggested timeline	Details
Contact participants to confirm their participation in the event (or waitlist status) and mentoring group assignment	At least 2 weeks before event	Sample language is included in Appendix C (see page 19).
Develop event discussion guide	At least 2 weeks before event	Sample discussion questions are included in Appendix D (see page 24). **Tip:** We recommend waiting to finalize the event discussion guide until after assigning mentoring groups.
Confirm logistics with venue	At least 2 weeks before event	These include the room set-up (e.g., number and size of tables, availability of registration table, AV equipment to share slides, head count; food order)
Develop social media posts to publish during the event	At least 1 week before event	Sample posts are included in Appendix B (see page 14).
Develop post-event communication materials	At least 1 week before event	These may include a thank you email and a link to a feedback survey. Sample materials are included in Appendix C (see page 20).
Send reminder emails to participants	1 week before event; 1 day before event	**Tip:** We recommend sending multiple reminder emails.
Prepare event supplies	At least 2 days before event	These may include slides to share at the event, hardcopies of the registration list, printed table numbers, and/or other materials to distribute to participants. See suggested list in Appendix D (page 23).
Send post-event thank you messages and feedback survey link	1 business day after event	Sample materials are included in Appendix C (see page 20).
Record survey metrics and debrief	1 week after event	Review the survey responses and reflect on what went well, what can be improved, and what can be done differently in future events. Record lessons learned for consideration in future planning.

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Budget considerations

Mentoring event expenses can vary widely depending on event size, location, and modality. Table A2 lists budget items for consideration when planning a mentoring event. The table indicates whether the expense is considered necessary or optional to help organizers make planning decisions.

Table A2. Budget items for consideration when planning a mentoring event

Budget item	Necessary for in-person events	Necessary for virtual events	Optional
Personnel time	✓	✓	
Venue fees	✓[1]		
Online hosting fees (e.g., Zoom)		✓	
Food and beverages			✓
Mentor stipend			✓
Basic materials (e.g., table tents with table numbers, printed copies of table assignments)	✓		
Promotional materials and their transportation (e.g., banners, postcards, resources, baggage/shipping costs)			✓
Travel and lodging for event facilitators	✓		
Conference registration fee for event facilitators	✓[2]		

[1] Venue fees are often waived with the purchase of food or when booking through the conference organizers as part of the conference package.

[2] Only applicable if hosting the event as part of the conference's programming.

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Appendix B. Promotional Materials

Promotional material sample text

Mentoring event description

The [event host] and [event co-host] are excited to host a mentoring and networking event aimed at promoting the growth of emerging scholars. This event will connect students and early-career professionals with experienced mentors who are leaders in the field, creating opportunities for meaningful conversations and professional development.

Participants will engage in informal discussions covering a range of topics, including grant writing and fundraising, navigating career paths inside and outside academia, strategies for productivity in graduate school, and best practices for conducting research on Hispanic populations. The event is designed to encourage group interactions, allowing mentees to gain insights not only from mentors but also from their peers.

Whether you are looking for guidance on career advancement, research methodologies, or work-life balance, this event offers a supportive space to exchange ideas, ask questions, and build lasting professional connections. Join us for an engaging and collaborative experience that will help shape the next generation of scholars in the field. Snacks and refreshments will be served.

Newsletter blurb/LinkedIn post

The [event host] and the [event co-host] are pleased to announce a free [event name] at the [event location/conference name] on [event date], at [event time].

The event is designed to facilitate relationships between mentees (students and early career scholars) and mentors (senior researchers and leaders in the field, usually with 10+ years of postdoctoral research experience). Mentees and mentors will be assigned groups based on topical interest and will have ample opportunity to speak with both their peers and mentors. Discussions will be informal, and topics may include special considerations when conducting research with Hispanic populations, getting published, and career development more broadly.

If you are interested in serving as a mentee or mentor for this event, please complete the registration form here [include link]. If you have any questions about this mentoring event, please contact [point of contact] at [email address].

Pre-mentoring event posts for social media

We'll be co-hosting a free [event name] with [event co-host] for students and early career scholars at [event location/conference name] on [event date]. Register now: [registration link] #EmScholars

Emerging Scholars: Connect with your peers and leaders in research at [event location/conference name]! Join the [event name] on [event date]. Register now: [registration link] @[event co-host] #EmScholars

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If you're an early career scholar attending [event location/conference name], register for a free [event name] on [event date] for an opportunity to discuss topics like career development and getting published. [registration link]@[event co-host] #EmScholars

Post-mentoring event posts for social media

It's been wonderful to get to know so many emerging scholars at [event name]! Please keep in touch with your mentors. Have questions as you grow in your career? Check out our resources page for more information: [website link]

We and your mentors are here for you. Remember you can reach out for support, get a question answered, or simply share with us the successes you are having in your profession! Thanks for being a part of the [event name] mentoring event! [Add photo of mentors and mentees together in a group]

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Appendix C. Communication With Participants

Email invitations to mentors

Subject: Availability to serve as a mentor in the [event host] and [event co-host] mentoring event

Dear [Name],

The [event host] and the [event co-host] will host a mentoring event, [event name], at the [event location/conference name] [event date], at [event time].

The event is designed to facilitate relationships between mentees (students & early career scholars) and mentors (senior researchers and leaders in the field, usually with 10+ years of postdoctoral research experience). We have hosted this event at [event location/conference name] and similar conferences in previous years, and it has been very well-received. The event is in-person and is structured with mentees and mentors assigned to groups based on topical interest, including grant writing and fundraising, navigating career paths inside and outside academia, strategies for productivity in graduate school, and best practices for conducting research on Hispanic populations. One to two mentors are assigned to each discussion group, ensuring all participants will have ample opportunity to speak with both their peers and mentors.

Do you have interest (and availability) in serving as a mentor at this event? If so, please complete this brief registration [include link] by [deadline] to confirm your participation and indicate your topic preferences.

In advance of the event, you will receive an email that includes the topic you have been selected to address with mentees, high-level information about the mentees who have registered to join your group, and an informal discussion guide to help facilitate conversation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. If you know of any other mentors or emerging scholars who may be interested in participating in this event, please share this opportunity with them.

If you have any questions about this mentoring event, please contact [point of contact] at [email].

Best,

[Name]

Registration survey

[Event title]

[Overview of event, including by when you will reach out to confirm participation/waitlist status.]

1. First & last name (*required)

2. Email address (*required)

3. Are you signing up to serve as a mentor or mentee? Mentors are typically those who have 10+ years of post-doctoral experience. Mentees are typically students and early career investigators. (*required)

    a. Mentor

    b. Mentee

4. Affiliation/university (*required)

5. Department (*required)

6. Position/title (*required)

7. Social media handle(s)

8. Can we share your handle(s) with other participants? (*required)

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. N/A

9. Areas of interest (select all that apply) (*required) *This list should be tailored to the event's specific audience.*

    a. Fertility, family planning, sexual behavior, and reproductive health

    b. Marriage, family, households, and relationships

    c. Children and youth

    d. Health and mortality

    e. Gender, race, and ethnicity

    f. Migration and urbanization

    g. Economy, labor force, and education

    h. Population, development, and environment

    i. Population and aging

    j. Data and methods

    k. Applied demography

    l. Other (please describe)

10. Short biography (1,200 characters max): (*required)

11. What is your first preference for the topic of our group discussion? (*required)

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        a. [Add topics: see suggestions in the "Assigning mentoring groups" section, above; page 8]

12. What is your second preference for the topic of our group discussion? (*required)

        a. [Add topics]

13. What is your third preference for the topic of our group discussion? (*required)

        a. [Add topics]

14. What is your race and/or ethnicity? (select all that apply; optional)

        a. American Indian or Alaska Native

        b. Asian

        c. Black or African American

        d. Hispanic or Latino

        e. Middle Eastern or North African

        f. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

        g. White

        h. Other (please describe)

15. Is this your first time attending a mentoring event organized by [event host]?

        a. Yes

        b. No

16. Would you like to sign up for newsletters from [event host]?

        a. Yes

        b. No

Thank you for taking the time to complete the registration form.

Form auto-response/confirmation message upon submission:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this event. We will reach out by [date] to confirm your participation in the event or let you know if you have been added to our waitlist. Please contact [point of contact] at [email] with questions or concerns.

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Group assignment email

Subject: Topic Assignment for the [event name] at [event location/conference name]

Hello all,

Thank you for registering for the [event name] hosted by [event host] and [event co-host] at [event location/conference name]. The event will be held on [event date], at [event time].

Based on your selections in the sign-up form, you have been assigned to Group [group number], which will be discussing [topic]. Information about your fellow mentors and mentees is listed below, and mentors and mentees are also copied on this email. We will send a discussion guide to help facilitate the discussion ahead of the event. Conversations will be informal and responsive to mentees' interests. As a note, there may be last-minute changes in attendance that affect group assignments.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you will no longer be able to attend the event by completing this form [include link] and reach out if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing you at the event!

Best wishes,

[Name]

The mentors in this group are listed below.

Mentor	Biography
[Name] *[Affiliation]* [Social media handles]	[Bio]

The mentees in this group are listed below, as well as their affiliation, level, and biography.

Mentee	Biography
[Name] *[Career level]* [Social media handles]	[Bio]

Registration cancelation form

Registration Cancelation Form: [event name] at [event location/conference name]

We're sorry you can't join us. By completing this form, you are officially canceling your registration for the [event name] scheduled for [event date] at [event time]. Thank you for letting us know!

1. Full name
2. Email address
3. What is the reason for your cancelation?
   a. Schedule conflict
   b. No longer interested
   c. Personal reasons
   d. Illness or emergency
   e. Attending another event
   f. Other (please explain)
4. Comments or questions

Post-mentoring event survey

[Event name]: Post-event survey

Thank you for attending the [event name] hosted by [event host] and the [event co-host] at [event location/conference name].

Please complete this **anonymous** survey to provide feedback on your experience.

1. Did you attend as a mentor or mentee?

   a. Mentor

   b. Mentee

   c. I was not able to attend.

2. Please indicate your current position:

   a. Undergraduate student

   b. Graduate student

   c. Postdoc

   d. Early career academic

   e. Early career outside of academia

   f. Practitioner

   g. Other (please describe)

3. In which discussion topic did you participate?

a. [Topic list from event]

4. Overall, how satisfied were you with the event?

    a. 1 (extremely dissatisfied)

    b. 2

    c. 3

    d. 4

    e. 5 (extremely satisfied)

5. How useful did you find the discussions during the event?

    a. 1 (not useful at all)

    b. 2

    c. 3

    d. 4

    e. 5 (very useful)

6. To what extent did the event facilitate networks/connections?

    a. 1 (minimal connection)

    b. 2

    c. 3

    d. 4

    e. 5 (strong networking and connection)

7. In what ways were the mentoring and networking event useful?

8. In what ways could the event be improved?

9. What other topics would you have liked to have discussed, if there had been additional time?

10. Would you recommend this event to a colleague or friend?

    a. Yes

    b. No

    c. Maybe

Appendix D. Facilitation Resources

Run-of-show

Table D1. Step-by-step guide to facilitating a mentoring event

Time	Tasks	Person(s) responsible

45 minutes before event	• Go to mentoring event location to begin setting up.
	• Check that all tables are appropriately arranged (i.e., the number of tables is correct, the number of chairs per table is correct).
	• If food is offered, check that all food and drinks are set up.
	• Set up banners and signs.
	• Place photo disclaimer sign.
	• Set up slides on projector.
	• Set up each table with:
	   ○ A mentoring guide (if printed)
	   ○ Acrylic display with QR code to post about the event on social media
	   ○ Table numbers
	   ○ Pens
	   ○ Sponsor-specific promotional materials (e.g., newsletter sign-up sheets, resources for emerging scholars, recent publications, etc.)
		Coordinator and logistics assistant

20 minutes before event	• Sit at the registration table in front of the mentoring event room and prepare to sign people in as they arrive.
	   ○ Notes:
	      ▪ All registration staff should have access to the sign-in sheet (either digital or paper copies).
	      ▪ If there is room available, walk-ins can be added to the list and assigned to tables that have space available.
	• Let attendees know where to find food and refreshments if available.
		Registration staff

At the start of the event	• Welcome everyone, share the slideshow (if applicable), introduce the host organizations, and invite any other speakers to talk if appropriate.	Coordinator and co-sponsors, as appropriate
During the event	• Take pictures of mentors and mentees talking. • Post on social media at the start of the event, in the middle of the event, and right as the event ends, including captions and pictures to promote the event and engagement.	Logistics assistant

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Time	Tasks	Person(s) responsible
Post-event	• Clean up the space; gather any materials that can be reused. • Send out thank you emails the next business day, with the post-event survey included (see example in Appendix C; page 20).	Coordinator and logistics assistant

Materials checklist

- ✓ Interactive check-in list, in alphabetical order
- ✓ Laptop for each person assisting with registration
- ✓ Physical copies of the check-in list, in alphabetical order
- ✓ Printed copy of table topics (for walk-ins to choose topic)
- ✓ Printed copy of the discussion guide or QR code to the discussion guide
- ✓ Newsletter signup sheets for each table or QR code to sign up
- ✓ Table tents and table numbers for each table
- ✓ Pens for each table
- ✓ Slideshow (and USB for slides; if applicable)
- ✓ QR code to post about the event on social media (can be included in the slides or printed out for each table)
- ✓ Disclaimer sign with notice of photography and video recording taking place during event
- ✓ Organization-specific promotional materials (e.g., newsletter sign-up sheets, resources for emerging scholars, recent publications, business cards)

Language for photo disclaimer sign

This session is being photographed and recorded. By entering this area, you are giving your consent to be photographed and recorded. If you do not agree to the foregoing, please do not enter this area.

Check-in process and sign-in sheet

We recommend creating a dynamic check-in list using Google Sheets or another platform that includes participants' names, roles (mentor/mentee), and table assignments (see template here). The check-in list should be set up to allow event coordinators to easily see how many open spots remain at each table, so that walk-ins can be accommodated if registered participants do not attend. See the table below for an example:

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Table Number	Topic	No. Mentors Assigned	No. Mentees Assigned	Total No. People Assigned	No. People Checked In
1	Pursuing a career in a non-academic or applied position	3	8	11	9
3	Pursuing a career in academia	3	9	12	10
4	Navigating the service demands for junior faculty and getting tenure	2	6	8	6
6	Preparing for academic job interviews	2	8	10	8
7	Strategies for successful grant writing	3	9	12	9
8	Conducting research with Hispanic/Latinx populations	3	8	11	12

In addition to a dynamic check-in list, we also recommend having printed copies of discussion topics and group assignments, as the internet can be unreliable and it may not be possible to access web-based documents.

Discussion guide

This guidance is shared with participants ahead of time to offer suggestions on beginning conversations and reducing anxiety about engaging in discussions. This content is available at events via a QR code displayed on slides or handouts.

Event overview

The purpose of this event is to form new connections and create conversations between mentors and emerging scholars via topical and professional development discussion. Please briefly introduce yourselves and together determine the focus of the conversation to maximize this time. We have provided conversation starters for each discussion group in the pages that follow. Please review the guidance for your assigned group, but feel free to select other topics as you see fit. Discussions are meant to be informal.

Pursuing a career in academia

1. **What is some general advice for people entering the academic job market?** (What should I focus on in graduate school to best prepare for an academic position? How do I stand out in my application? What are some tips for giving a successful job talk? What are some tips for negotiating and what should I negotiate for? What are some tips for having a robust career?)

2. **How important is a post-doc for getting an academic job and how can I think strategically about a post-doc?** (Is it best to look for a post-doc that is similar to and builds upon my work in graduate school or is it better to look for a post-doc that gives me a new and different experience? What is most important to get out of a post-doc to be successful at getting an academic job afterwards?)

3. **What are the key considerations to know about a career in academia?** (How do you balance interests in practice, teaching, and research while in academia? What is work-life balance like? What are the tradeoffs in a tenure-track vs. non-tenure-track position? What are important accomplishments to consider early in your career as you work toward tenure?)

4. **What advice is there for early career academics other than "publish or perish"?**

Pursuing a career in applied research organizations

1. **What career options are available outside of academia?** (What are different options for research careers outside of academia? What are examples of applied positions within a university setting? What are the key considerations of these different career options? What career paths did you consider?)

2. **How can I explore and best prepare for research positions outside academia?** (What skills should I aim to develop during graduate school? How can I pursue applied experiences/internships to gain experience during graduate school? What are the challenges in pursuing these careers when my mentors in graduate school are in tenure-track academic positions?)

3. **What things should I consider when applying for jobs outside academia?** (What resources or websites are available and most useful? What skills should I highlight? How do I prepare for the interview? What does a successful job talk look like? What should I ask interviewers to determine if a position is right for me?)

4. **How does a career in applied research organizations differ from those in academia?** (What are the main differences? What are the advantages and disadvantages of different positions? How does research differ in these settings? What is day-to-day life like in each setting? What is work-life balance like in each setting? What are common sources of funding in each setting? What does success look like in each setting?)

Pursuing a career in government

1. **What career options are available within government?** (What are different options for research and non-research careers in government? What are examples of positions within federal, state, and local governments? What key elements should I consider with these different levels of government? What level are you considering?)

2. **How can I explore and best prepare for government careers?** (What skills should I aim to develop and what experiences should I gain during graduate school? How can I pursue internships to gain experience during graduate school? What challenges are involved in

pursuing these careers when my mentors in graduate school are in tenure-track academic positions?)

3. **What things should I consider when applying for government jobs?** (What resources or websites are available and most useful? What skills should I highlight? How do I prepare for the interview? What should I ask interviewers to determine if a position is right for me?)

4. **How does a career in government differ from academic or non-academic applied ones?** (What are the main differences? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in government? How does research differ in these settings? What is day-to-day life like in government? What is work-life balance like in government? What does success look like in government?)

5. **How can I advance from a junior to more senior position within government?** (How can I identify and manage relationships with mentors? How can I gain experience outside my day-to-day responsibilities? How can I gain supervisory skills and experience in a non-supervisory role? How can I network within government? What are tips for identifying and pursuing useful professional development opportunities? How can I stand out in my current junior role?)

Navigating the service demands for junior faculty and getting tenured

1. **What service demands should I expect as a junior faculty member, and which can I say no to?** (How do I balance these demands with other obligations?)

2. **What should I focus on most, if I am on a tenure track, that will lead to a successful dossier?** (Is publishing the most important thing? How much does teaching and service play into tenure success? What are all the tenure requirements and do they differ by institution? What should I look for in letter writers for my tenure dossier?)

3. **How do I prioritize and increase my chances of getting published?** (How do I choose the right journal? How do I tailor my manuscript to a specific journal? What are strategies for publishing qualitative research? Should I always revise and resubmit? How do I handle situations where I disagree with reviewer comments?)

4. **What type of collaborations should I think about to improve my chances of tenure?** (Should I focus on collaborations that will lead to the most publications, or ones that result in fewer publications with big names?)

5. **What advice is there for managing time for research and grant writing as a junior faculty member?**

Getting published

1. **What should the writing stage look like?** (What is the best way to organize the introduction section? What about the discussion section? What are the strategies for publishing qualitative research?)

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2. **How do I carve out time to write?** (How do I overcome writer's block? How do I balance my course work with writing? How do I establish collaborations on publications post-graduate school?)

3. **How do I select the appropriate journal for my topic that has the most impact?** (How do I tailor my research to a specific journal? What do I do with papers that can't seem to find a journal home?)

4. **Is it always advisable to revise and resubmit?** (How do I effectively respond to reviewers' comments? How do I handle situations when I disagree with the comment(s)?)

5. **Do you ever consider non-peer-reviewed dissemination outlets?** (Which outlets? What goes into that decision?)

6. **How many publications should I strive to have at different stages in my career?**

Strategies for successful grant writing

1. **What are some common sources of research funding?** (How do I find out about funding opportunity announcements? How do I know if a funding opportunity is right for me? How do I get funding for small/pilot projects? What is the difference between a grant, contract, and a cooperative agreement?)

2. **What things should I consider *before* applying for funding?** (How do I know if my proposal idea is of interest to the funder? How do I balance pursuing my own research interests and conducting research in line with the funder's priorities? Are there benefits to partnering with other researchers at my institution or elsewhere? How much experience do I need in the proposed topic before applying for a grant?)

3. **How do I write a successful grant application?** (What are the key components of a strong application and how does this vary by type of funder? What are the top reasons an application might score poorly? How do I get training on grant writing? How do I write a strong aims page?)

4. **Do you have key lessons learned to share?** (What are key lessons learned from your experience writing/reviewing proposals? What are the next steps when my application isn't funded?)

5. **What is the best piece of advice you have regarding developing strong proposals?**

Preparing for academic job interviews

1. **What is some general advice for people entering the academic job market?** (What should I focus on in graduate school to best prepare for an academic position? How do I stand out in my application? What are some tips for giving a successful job talk? What are some tips for negotiating and what should I negotiate for? What are some tips for having a robust career?)

2. **How important is a post-doc for getting an academic job and how can I think strategically about a post-doc?** (Is it best to look for a post-doc that is similar to and builds upon my work in graduate school or is it better to look for a post-doc that gives me a new and

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different experience? What is most important to get out of a post-doc to be successful at getting an academic job afterwards?)

3. **What are the key considerations to know about a career in academia?** (How do you balance interests in practice, teaching, and research while in academia? What is work-life balance like? What are the tradeoffs in a tenure-track vs. non-tenure-track position? What are important accomplishments to consider early in your career as you work toward tenure?)

4. **What advice is there for early career academics other than "publish or perish"?**

Conducting research with Hispanic populations

1. **How do you navigate the different terminology used to refer to the Latino population in research (e.g., Hispanic vs. Latino)?**

2. **What are the benefits and limitations of research focused on documenting differences between racial and ethnic groups?** (When are comparisons between racial and ethnic groups appropriate vs. research focused on a single racial or ethnic group?)

3. **How can we account for the variation of Latino populations in our research?** (How do we balance limitations to studying Latino populations as a whole with more focused studies that may have less generalizability?)

4. **How can research (and communications) focused on Latino populations highlight the strengths of Hispanic families and children while also addressing the areas of need?**

5. **How do you frame your work for funders or journals that may not understand, or value, research focused on Latino populations?**

6. **What are the currently unexplored/underexplored areas of research related to Hispanic populations?**

7. **What are the best population-level data sources available to study Hispanic populations in the United States (e.g., families, health, migration, mortality, etc.)?**

8. **How might the growing population of Hispanic children and families shape one's future work and/or career trajectory?**

9. **How do I establish good collaborative partnerships within the community?** (What are best practices for engaging with Latino families in the community? What are examples of successful partnerships? How do these partnerships enhance your overall research program?)

Creating and maintaining networks and collaborations

1. **What opportunities are there to build my network as a student, recent graduate, or junior staff or faculty member?** (How can I leverage conferences to build my network? How can I be more proactive? How can I build on my current network to further expand it?)

2. **How important is it to establish professional relationships? How can I build these relationships?** (How does one go about connecting with someone with whom they want to

build a relationship? How do I overcome anxiety about meeting new individuals? Why is it important to build relationships with others in our field?)

3. **How do I establish research collaborations?** (How can I network to find future coauthors? How do I develop collaborations among junior faculty that will lead to grant submissions? How do I maintain a relationship with my graduate school mentors and colleagues post-graduation?)

4. **What are key elements of successful collaborations?** (How do I negotiate roles and responsibilities? How can we keep each other accountable? How do I identify the right collaborators?)

5. **What do I do if a collaborative relationship needs improvement?** (How do I navigate different expectations about workload, roles, and responsibilities?)

Productivity in graduate school

1. **How do I prepare for graduate school?** (What are some important factors to be aware of before entering graduate school? What should I focus on when deciding between graduate schools and programs? How do I know which type of graduate program is best for me?)

2. **What skills should I aim to develop and what experiences should I seek out during graduate school?** (What programs and activities should I be involved with based on the career I want to pursue? How do I best prepare myself for a career after graduate school?)

3. **What should I consider as I select mentors and advisors?** (Can you recommend strategies for establishing strong relationships with mentors? What can you do when you receive conflicting advice from mentors? What do you do when a mentor/advisory relationship is not working well? How can you find mentors and advisors who are not in tenure-track academic positions?)

4. **What opportunities are there to build my network?** (How can I leverage conferences to build my network? How do I initiate contact when opportunities for face-to-face interactions are limited? How can I be more proactive? How can I build on my current network to further expand it?)

5. **What recommendations do you have for balancing schoolwork with personal life?**

6. **How can I balance interests in practice, teaching, and research when choosing or pursuing a career path?**

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About the Authors

María A. Ramos-Olazagasti, PhD, is the deputy director of the National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families and lead for its Building Capacity Activities. She is a research scholar at Child Trends. She is deeply committed to fostering the next generation of scholars and conducting research that elevates the strengths and varied experiences of Latino families and children.

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About the Center

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families (Center) conducts research to inform programs and policy to better serve Hispanic children and families with low incomes. Our research focuses on poverty reduction and economic self-sufficiency; child care and early education, including federal programs such as Head Start (HS) and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); and cross-cutting topics that include parenting, family structure, and family dynamics. The Center is led by Child Trends, in partnership with Duke University, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and University of Maryland, College Park.

We welcome your feedback! Email us at Info@HispanicResearchCenter.org.

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