

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

In line with its theme of Engaged Scholarship, the 9th Race, Ethnicity and Place Conference instituted the inaugural REP Early Career Scholars Workshop in October 2018. The day-long workshop immediately preceded the conference and was attended by 26 early career scholars from across the United States and Canada. PhD Candidates, Post-doctoral fellows, adjunct faculty or lecturers, and Assistant Professors were grouped according to career stage and academic interests and had the opportunity to engage with 14 senior scholars in their field.

Activities consisted of panels and presentations on writing, publishing, and grants, a round-table discussion on issues surrounding race, gender, and ability in the academy, and small group sessions on career planning and goal setting.

WORKSHOP GOALS

The stated goals of the Early Career Scholars Workshop were to integrate new generations of scholars into the Race, Ethnicity, and Place Conference meetings, foster exchanges between diverse approaches to the study of race and ethnicity; and via longer term mentoring and community-building, use the conference as a vehicle through which we can promote increased racial and ethnic diversity in the discipline of geography.

WORKSHOP AREAS

The Workshop covered three main areas:

- Creating a Strategic Writing and Publishing Plan
- Thriving in the Academy (work-life balance, navigating institutional politics, and race, gender and ability in the academy)
- Achieving Success in Tenure and Promotion or on the Job Market

INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED

The workshop had participants from 20 institutions across the US and Canada, including:

- Arizona State University
- California State University Fullerton
- Kent State University
- Michigan State University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Queen's University
- Rhodes College
- Rutgers University
- Stanford University
- Temple University
- Texas State University
- The University of British Columbia
- University of California Davis
- University of Colorado
- University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
- University of Louisville
- University of New Mexico
- Universidad de Puerto Rico at Cayey
- University of Tennessee
- University of Texas at Austin

ETHNIC/RACIAL DIVERSITY OF EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS

- Black/African American 29%
- White 29%
- Hispanic 21%
- Asian 17%
- Native American 4%

CAREER STAGES OF EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS

- 36% Tenure-Track Faculty
- 36% PhD Candidates
- 16% Lecturers or Adjunct
- 12% Postdoctoral Fellows

RESPONSES TO THE WORKSHOP OVERALL

- 68% of workshop participants were first time Race, Ethnicity and Place Conference Attendees
- Approximately 50% of workshop participants might not have attended the conference were they not also attending the workshop
- 92% of the early career scholars reported that the workshop equipped them achieve their career goals
- 96% of the early career scholar reported that the workshop activities were beneficial to them
- 96% of the early career scholars would strongly recommend the workshop to their peers and 100% of senior scholars would recommend it to their students or mentors

EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS RESPONSES TO WORKSHOP CONTENT

- 84% reported that they had learned skills necessary to help them increase their writing productivity
- 96% reported that they can now present their research and projects to any audience in a clear and cohesive manner
- 76% reported that the workshop helped them gain confidence in navigating the politics of their institutions
- 80% reported that the workshop helped them to improve their planning and organization skills
- 64% reported that they learned strategies to help them achieve better work-life balance
- 92% reported that the workshop provided useful insights into the tenure and promotion and job search process
- 76% reported that the workshop helped them develop strategic publishing tactics
- 76% reported that they have gained insight into how to present their activist, public, or engaged scholarship in a way that is valued by the academy.

SELECT COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

“I am not a geographer and I loved the conference, I felt like I was part of the community. Thank you very much for helping me feel welcome and for having such honest conversations. Thank you for your hard work!”

“All of the career management information will be so helpful in my future job search endeavors.”

“Overall, I thought it was great and definitely a very valuable experience that gave me solid resources (social and practical) moving forward. I do wish there had been more time in the breakouts. Perhaps if actual conference events didn't start until Tues morning then this could have allowed for more workshop time. I really applaud all the hard work that went into organizing it! There were specific questions and concerns I have as TT faculty that weren't really covered in the workshop that I do think should be given space at a conference that deals with Race and Ethnicity. Mostly these concerns have to do with the current political climate and targeted harassment of academics. This is something that all critical scholars who work on race should be prepared to deal with.”

“perhaps more time in small groups and less panels. I think one panel would have sufficed, and maybe to talk about writing productivity/tools in smaller groups instead”

“The effectiveness of each session also depends on the questions that are raised by the mentees. So having mentees of the same career stage in the same group is important. Overall, the workshop is very helpful, wish it could be longer.”

“The breakout sessions were crucial. I haven't found any other opportunities for this kind of in-person small group mentorship from senior faculty”

“the breakout session on thriving [were helpful] because we were offered very helpful tips for how to develop relationships with senior professors in the field. The writing section was also helpful in getting me to think about ways to publish consistently without burning out”

“I really appreciate having the panels with senior colleagues present, sharing their experiences with us. I learned a great deal about how to navigate the constraints and restrictions imposed, and what I might need to do to be successful.”

“. . . I wish we would have gotten more representation of people along the pipeline in the writing panel. I understand that we need to hear from seasoned professionals but the reality is that we have to navigate different spaces being on the tenure track than those of us who are already tenured (or even full). Learning how to write effectively and identify specific tools (rather than techniques) would have been incredibly helpful. Maybe identify top mistakes made by junior faculty, or top mistakes made in manuscript development... something that would have helped me identify things I'm doing wrong before submitting manuscripts for review.”