

WOMEN, GENDER AND FAMILIES OF COLOR -- CALL FOR PAPERS

Care Work for Communities of Color in Higher Education: Reimagining Professional Pathways and Well-Being

New and Old Challenges for Communities of Color in Higher Education

Academic communities are not immune from national politics, global economies, cultural shifts or social issues. In this past year in the US, members of diverse learning and work environments have been challenged by ruptures confronting the broader society—legal assaults on affirmative action, DEI, women’s reproductive health and voting rights, the U.S. Supreme Court’s recent curtailment of the power of federal agencies to maintain health and safety regulations, and international conflicts, to name a few. While these issues present problems for the US and global landscape, they are yet another wave of the persistent social and economic inequities that historical racial/ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ populations, and people with disabilities have long experienced relative to majority groups.

The current social, cultural, political and economic landscape demands greater “care and well-being” among new and established scholars, staff, administrators, and graduate students of color across academic communities. This moment demands a fostering of community among and between the various groups. It is highly imperative that we establish practices of generosity for issues such as negotiation of work and life balance, isolation and aloneness, distrust of policies and practices, and uncertainty about the future demand that we recognize and cherish our shared experiences. This call is an invitation to submit reflective essays that offer experience and guidance to peers and colleagues as they navigate these and other circumstances of academic life.

Reflective Essays: What We Are Looking For

We are soliciting contributions to a special issue that can expand a “Care and Well-Being Toolkit” for communities of color in higher education. We seek essays from scholars, professional staff, and administrators across academic disciplinary lines, types of colleges and universities, and the range of university actor categories. This special issue is a departure from the peer-reviewed manuscripts that generally represent the content of WGFC. We encourage contributions that reflect on the identities and personal experiences of authors as well as essays that offer guidance on topics related to elements of learning, work, and engagement in higher education.

Our Goal as Editors

We want to build an academic environment where our students, peers, and colleagues can be their best selves. In addition to our roles as editors, our academic trajectories have included varying appointments across multiple universities. Regardless of our respective positions, we want to highlight the experiences of those marginalized within hegemonic academic spaces. These demographic groups remain underrepresented, contribute disproportionately to service, and are less likely to be present at the highest ranks of faculty and university administration. The navigation of various “isms” within institutional bureaucracies, transparency and information sharing, and community building are central to our advocacy, mentoring, coaching, and support activities. These practices make up our own “care and well-being toolkit” for communities of color on the campuses we inhabit. Academia is a layered and complex “institution” with participants from multiple backgrounds and experiences, which demand particular attention. Our ultimate goal is to strengthen the presence and productivity of individuals within our communities and beyond by emphasizing their value, forging critical connections and professional networks among them, and facilitating collaborative scholarship, retention of students, initiatives and transformative equity strategies, and retention and career advancement opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color with attention to their multiple intersecting identities (gender, sexuality, 1st gen, disabilities, age, etc.).

In community,
Jennifer Hamer and Ayesha Hardison, Co-Editors

Essay submission foci include, but are not limited to the following:

Mentoring, coaching, sponsorship	Balance of teaching, research, service
Leadership meaning, forms, and pathways	Managing relationships w/ colleagues, heads/chairs,
Management up/management down	Conference attendance, including meaning, purpose, goals
Community building, purpose, meaning	Peer review processes
Understanding university bureaucracy	Scholarly production (tips and tools)
Building a program, center, or institute	Journal publishing
Where to go/to whom to turn for help	Book publishing
Teaching/classroom experience	Professional staff
Dissertation completion (tips and tools)	Raising children in the academy
Career advancement (tips and tools)	Managing K-12 education
Writing groups, coaching, and other resources	Managing care of kin
Balance of teaching, service, research	Transition to graduate studies/from graduate studies
Transition to new appointment and campus	Retention decisions
Leadership roles (e.g., committee chair, department Chair/head, etc.)	Housing decisions
Career trajectory, academic or alt-ac	Social life/leisure/health
Navigation of problems	Living as part of a university town, commuter campus, etc.
Managing isolation/aloneness	Commuting, remote work, or hybrid appointments
Rank of assistant/associate/full professor	After tenure and promotion
Non tenure track/line faculty	Preparation for legacy and retirement
	Professional associations

We are soliciting a diversity of perspectives –especially from those who identify as part of marginalized and minoritized populations.

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSIONS

Length/word count: 1250 – 2500 words (5-10 double-spaced pages), **word document only**
Deadline for submission: September 29, 2024
Submit manuscript to: jenniferhamer@psu.edu and include the following text in the email subject line
“**Your Name-Special Issue on Care Work**” (example: Hamer-Special Issue on Care Work)

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For more information about Women, Gender and Families of Color visit the website at [University of Illinois Press](https://www.press.uillinois.edu/).