The Role of Emotional Competencies in Faculty-Doctoral Student Relationships

KerryAnn O'Meara, Katrina Knudsen, Jill Jones

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Scholars have widely noted that, other than individual students themselves, the advisor is often the central and most powerful person influencing a student's trajectory through graduate school (Barnes & Austin, 2009; Fagen & Suedkamp Wells, 2004; Lovitts, 2001; Millett & Nettles, 2006; Nerad, Rudd, Morrison, & Picciano, 2007; Zhao, Golde, & McCormick, 2005). This is especially true in doctoral education, where advisors most often shape students' dissertations, integrate them into their department, and socialize them into their profession.

In fact, the faculty-student relationship in graduate school has been found to have a significant effect on most aspects of the doctoral experience, including overall doctoral satisfaction (Fagen & Suedkamp Wells, 2004, Gardner, 2007; Soto Antony & Taylor, 2004), attrition and retention (Golde,

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1998, 2005; Lovitts, 2001; Millett & Nettles, 2006; Schlosser & Gelso, 2001), time to degree (Ferrer de Valero, 2001; Maher, Ford, & Thompson 2004), and career aspirations and attitudes toward the profession (Austin, 2002; Golde, 2005; Nerad et al., 2007; Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006; Zhao, Golde, & McCormick, 2005).

There are major differences in advising and mentoring by discipline (Austin, 2002; Bair, Haworth, & Sandfort, 2004; Council of Graduate Schools, 2009; Golde, 2005; Jacks, Chubin, Porter, & Connolly 1983; Zhao, Golde, & McCormick, 2005) and by the institutional type and prestige of the program (Gardner, 2009; Sweitzer & Volkwein, 2009). The differences in the ways advisors and students interact may lead to differing cultural or behavioral norms that can affect student experiences (Zhao, Golde, & McCormick, 2005).

Given the importance of the faculty-student relationship to doctoral student success, it is important to study it from multiple vantage points. The most common framework is socialization theory, which draws on the works of Merton (1957), Schein (1985), and Geertz (1973) to understand how academic culture works overall (Bensimon & Neumann, 1992; Bergquist, 1992; Birnbaum, 1988, 1992; Kezar, 2001; Kuh & Whitt 1988) and how graduate students are socialized into their departments and careers (Baird, 1990; Egan, 1978; Gardner, 2008; Golde, 1998; Turner & Thomas, 1992; Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). Likewise Tinto (1993) and Lovitts's (2001) theories of academic and social integration have helped illuminate how and why some students are integrated effectively into the daily work and social life of a department and others are not.

While socialization theories and social integration theories have done much to help us understand the role of rituals, rites of passage, and rules of the game in academic departments that frame faculty-student relationships, they are perhaps less useful in capturing the emotional landscape of the experience. In fact, one topic that is understudied in the literature, but vitally important, is the human factors involved in the faculty-student relationship. Scholars have argued that human factors, also called psychosocial factors, may be the foremost rationale explaining why doctoral candidates fail to complete doctoral programs (Bair, 1999; Dorn & Papalewis, 1997; Hales, 1998; Schwarz, 1997; Sigafus, 1998; Stallone, 2004). Stallone (2004) completed a mixed-methods study involving a survey and qualitative interviews regarding the relative importance of program culture, faculty-student relations, cohort experience, and individual factors in doctoral student completion. Faculty student relationships had the highest mean; doctoral students were more likely to agree or strongly agree that faculty-student relationships were critical to their success than any other factor (Stallone, 2004). While much scholarship details the critical role of the faculty-student relationship in the doctoral experience (Barnes & Austin, 2009; Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006; Schlosser & Gelso, 2001; Zhao, Golde, & McCormick, 2005), we know much

less about the emotional landscape of these relationships and what makes them work. Faculty not only receive little training on the technical aspects of their advising role but also receive very little preparation for its emotional aspects. Likewise, doctoral students are rarely given guidance about how to behave inside these relationships in ways that will lead to their success.

The purpose of this article is to take a qualitative approach to understanding the emotional competencies that both faculty and students describe as part of their advising and mentoring relationships. In the next section, we describe a theory of emotional intelligence and emotional competencies and its applicability to faculty-student relationships. It is important to note that "advising" and "mentoring" are not necessarily interchangeable; a student's advisor is typically the faculty member who is primarily responsible for the student's practical guidance through the program, while "mentor" suggests a deeper personal relationship. In this study, the faculty played both advising and mentoring roles, and emotional competencies were described by participants in both. Thus, we use both terms throughout the article.

Theoretical Framework

Although Salovey and Mayer coined the term "emotional intelligence" in 1990, it was based on many decades of earlier work by psychologists on the role of non-cognitive predictors in helping people succeed in life and organizations (Chemiss, 2000). Included among these is Gardner's (1983) work on the intrapersonal and interpersonal multiple intelligences, which are not measured in regular IQ tests but which are, nonetheless, critical to success. Salovey and Mayer (1990) described emotional intelligence as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (p. 4). Daniel Goleman built on this work and the work of many others in his *Emotional Intelligence* (1995).

Since then, scholars who study this area have distinguished between emotional intelligence and emotional competencies (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). Emotional competencies are the personal and social skills that are displayed in individual interactions; these competencies are the foundation for emotional intelligence. Chemiss (2000) summarizes the arguments of scholars who study emotional intelligence (i.e., Goleman, 1998; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000), arguing that "emotional intelligence itself is probably not a good predictor of job performance. Rather it provides the bedrock for competencies that are" (Chemiss, 2000, pp. 7–8). While a certain amount of emotional intelligence is inherent in individuals who exhibit emotional competencies and is important in learning new competencies, it is the personal and social skills (emotional competencies) that individuals display that makes them successful in life and work (Chemiss, 2000).

In this study we use the emotional competence framework developed by the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (1998) to understand the kinds of competencies that doctoral students and faculty describe at work in their mentoring and advising relationships. The framework includes such personal competence areas as: self-awareness (i.e., emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence), self-regulation (i.e., self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, and innovativeness), and self-motivation (i.e., achievement drive, commitment, initiative, and optimism). It also includes such social competence areas as: social awareness (i.e., empathy, service orientation, developing others, leveraging diversity, and political awareness), and social skills (i.e., influence, communication, leadership, change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities). Tables 1–5 define each personal and social competency and provide examples of behaviors a faculty member or graduate student might display demonstrative of the competency.

Theories of emotional intelligence and emotional competencies have been used increasingly in higher education organizations and other nonprofit and human service organizations to understand success. For example, they have been used to study college presidents (Niculescu-Mihai, 2008), undergraduate student success (Jaeger & Eagan, 2007), graduate student success (Boyatzis, Stubbs, & Taylor, 2002; Jaeger, 2003), and highly effective teaching (Haskett, 2003). A small but growing group of scholars is applying the concepts to faculty development, teaching, and advising (Bennouna, 2004; Haskett, 2003; Mohamadkhani, 2010). However, to our knowledge, scholars have not explored faculty and student displays of emotional competencies inside advising and mentoring relationships.

We believe that applying the framework of emotional competencies to such relationships is critical for at least two reasons. First, the faculty-doctoral student relationship is a long one with a great deal riding on its success. For example, time to Ph.D. in anthropology averages 11–12 years (NSF, 2006). Doctoral students are likely to be more successful in achieving desired career goals (within or outside academe) if they have published with faculty or with the help of faculty, been introduced by faculty to colleagues in their field, been assisted in their job searches by letters of recommendation, or been assisted in applying for jobs and preparing for interviews. It makes intuitive sense that more of these behaviors and experiences are likely to emerge from faculty-doctoral student relationships in which one or both members displays emotional competencies. Likewise, good relationships with doctoral students can catalyze a faculty member's research program, provide assistance for data collection, stimulate thinking, and enhance job satisfaction.

However, too often the actual work or meat of the faculty-student relationship is neglected as a focus of study in lieu of easier explanations and

TABLE 1
PERSONAL COMPETENCY: SELF-AWARENESS DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES

Competency	Definition	Example
Emotional awareness	Understands and realizes one's emotions and their link to performance, actions, values, and goals	Faculty member who realizes he is particularly attached to one doctoral student makes sure he treats all of his students fairly and with equal attention regardless
Accurate self-assessment	Understands personal strengths and weaknesses, has sense of humor about oneself, and is interested in feedback for self-development	Faculty member who understands his weakness as a mentor with regard to remembering key deadlines and policies gets help from a colleague
Self-confidence	Confidence in one's self-worth and abilities; able to stand up for opinions; is decisive	Graduate student who feels confident enough to tell his adviser when he needs something from her or that he wants to take a different theoretical approach than she suggested

Competencies and definitions drawn from the Emotional Competence Framework: Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (1998).

TABLE 2

PERSONAL COMPETENCE: SELF-REGULATION DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Competency	Definition	Example
Self-control	Manages emotions and stays composed in trying moments	Graduate student who refrains from expressing emotions of frustration when faculty scrutinize his work during a department/faculty meeting
Trustworthiness	Honest, behaves ethically, and admits mistakes	Faculty member who rightfully assigns authorship to graduate students for their contributions to a collaborative project
Conscientiousness	Meets commitments, holds him/herself accountable and is careful in his/her work	Graduate student who coordinates dissertation committee meetings in order to meet personal deadlines
Adaptability	Able to adapt to adverse conditions, shifting priorities, and rapid change	Faculty member who responds to changing student requests despite conflicting priorities and deadlines
Innovativeness	Embraces new ideas and suggestions from a variety of sources	Faculty member who uses streamlined scheduling procedures to meet student advising expectations

Competencies and definitions drawn from the Emotional Competence Framework: Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (1998).

TABLE 3
PERSONAL COMPETENCE: SELF–MOTIVATION DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Competency	Definition	Example
Achievement drive	Strive for excellence and set challenging goals	Faculty member who pursues outside funding in order to provide opportunities for graduate students
Commitment	Shows they will work toward common goals	Faculty member who works overtime to help a student get his dissertation done on time to graduate
Initiative	Recognizes and acts on opportunities; goes beyond what's expected or required	Graduate student who self-initiates individual fieldwork experiences above and beyond degree expectations
Optimism	Assumes success is possible despite challenges	Faculty member who remains optimistic about a graduate student's ability to meet a fellowship deadline despite time constraints

Competencies and definitions drawn from the Emotional Competence Framework: Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (1998).

TABLE 4
SOCIAL COMPETENCE: SOCIAL AWARENESS DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Competency	Definition	Example
Empathy	Sensitivity to and awareness of others' emotions	Faculty member comforts a student who has had a baby and is unsure about the effect this will have on her degree progression
Service orientation	Understands others' needs and finds ways to satisfy those needs	Faculty member who understands a graduate student's need for professional development and helps her find appropriate/affordable opportunities
Developing others	Mentoring with an awareness of different needs and strengths of those one is working with	Faculty member who recognizes developmental differences of graduate students and mentors accordingly (e.g., publication experience, understanding of specific methodology)
Leveraging diversity	Respect for and embracing of diverse worldviews; challenging bias and intolerance	Graduate student who intentionally seeks out a faculty adviser or mentor who has different methodological preferences and theoretical expertise than his own to serve on his committee
Political awareness	Understands power relationships and ways to navigate social networks within situations and organizations	Graduate student who intentionally learns about subfield differences and faculty relationships in her department in assembling a dissertation committee that can work well together

Competencies and definitions drawn from the Emotional Competence Framework: Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (1998).

TABLE 5
SOCIAL COMPETENCE: SOCIAL SKILLS DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Competency	Definition	Example
Influence	Persuasively able to build consensus and support	Faculty member who builds consensus among a research team regarding the use of a particular analytical strategy
Communication	Seeks mutual understanding and shares/receives information effectively	Graduate student who understands competing faculty priorities but clearly describes his needs as an advisee/mentee
Leadership	Inspires and arouses enthusiasm for a shared vision	Faculty member who inspires and directs a research team to tackle an aggressive research agenda/project
Change catalyst	Recognizes and manages opportunities for change	Faculty member who leads a department to streamline graduate student degree requirements due to student's need for clarification and to improve time to degree
Conflict management	Resolves conflict with open discussion and diplomacy	Graduate student who swiftly settles conflict about ordering of names in publication authorship
Building bonds	Cultivates nurturing relationships with social networks that are mutually beneficial	Faculty member invites graduate students to a monthly potluck at her house to connect with each other and learn of student progress
Collaboration and cooperation	Promotes friendly collaborations with shared plans, information, and resources	Faculty member who schedules regular research team meetings to share information and resources important to the group's success
Team capabilities	Builds teams that encourage respect, helpfulness, and cooperation	Graduate student who utilizes her skills in social networking to create vehicles for communication that bring her faculty mentor and research team closer together and able to work more effectively

Competencies and definitions drawn from the Emotional Competence Framework: Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (1998).

stereotypes about why these relationships succeed or fail. Examples of such default explanations include that the faculty member is just an excellent mentor, the student is a star, the faculty member is simply a bad mentor, or the student is adrift and unfocused. While these easy explanations may have some basis in reality, they do not reveal much about what actually happens inside a relationship that thwarts or moves the student forward. These typologies do not reveal much about what either students or faculty do. Knowing more about emotional competencies displayed helps us to fill that void.

A second reason the emotional competencies framework is useful for the study of doctoral education is socialization literature that has cued our attention to the key disciplinary differences that exist in how students are prepared, trained, and supported. However, there can be a tendency in research and practice to explain away a lack of attention to the multiple needs of both doctoral students and faculty as conventions in a given field, without questioning whether specific aspects of doctoral programs should be done that way. Disciplinary leaders may need to revise old narratives and scripts about faculty-doctoral student relationships in their field to better meet the needs of a more diverse group of students entering doctoral programs. By focusing on emotional competencies displayed within faculty-doctoral student relationships in one discipline—as opposed to the norms in the discipline itself—we intentionally focus attention on the process of human interaction. This process is relevant across disciplines despite the content of doctoral programs being distinct.

We also want to clarify our focus on the positive display of emotional competencies, as opposed to the absence or inverse of competencies. The framework we use is positive. That is, the emotional competencies framework assumes that the display of personal and social competencies is integral to individuals with emotional competence; it does not suggest that those without those same competencies are emotionally incompetent. Accordingly, we chose to focus on the positive display of emotional competencies, because this approach aligns with the framework's positive nature.

Therefore, our intent was to describe and analyze the displays of emotional competencies between faculty and doctoral students in one doctoral program. As noted later in the findings section, 80% of the experiences shared by students and faculty were positive. We do not, however, make a case that the displays of emotional competence described by students and faculty were necessarily the only ingredient or sole reason why most relationships were positive. In any doctoral program, many factors impact advising and mentoring relationships, both positively and negatively. We simply reveal one important factor, emotional competence, which we believe is worthy of analysis. The research questions that guided this inquiry were:

1. What kinds of emotional competence do students display in their relationships with faculty?

2. What kinds of emotional competence do faculty display in their relationships with students?

Research Methods

This study employed a single, revelatory case study method in order to build understanding of the competencies that doctoral students and faculty displayed in advising and mentoring relationships in one academic department (Yin, 1994). Specifically, we wanted to understand whether and how students and faculty displayed emotional competence within their mentoring and advising experience. The chair of the Anthropology Department in our setting was eager for his department to engage in this study as a way of continuing department conversations on how to improve the mentoring culture for graduate students.

Our primary data-gathering technique was interviews. Interviews have been found to be an ideal method to uncover how actors make meaning of processes and structures (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Schein, 1985; Yin, 1994). The first author and the department chair provided invitations (in person at a department meeting and then again by email) for all graduate students and all full-time faculty in the department to participate in the study. The invitation noted that the first author was engaged in a study of the mentoring environment for doctoral students, from both a faculty and a student perspective. The request for participation promised anonymity, as well as an invitation to a department reception where key findings would be shared in aggregate. All participants understood that the department chair was interested in knowing the results of the study for potential improvement and planning purposes. Therefore, students and faculty involved in this study were those who volunteered; they were not selected for any specific kinds of experiences they may have had regarding mentoring and advising. That said, we found the department to be a positive culture, for the most part, for doctoral students. While participants shared both positive and negative experiences, many more of the experiences they shared were positive.

The first author interviewed 11 faculty members and 10 students. The interviews were semi-structured, with all graduate students and faculty being asked similar sets of questions, but allowing room for participants to further explore the concepts and ideas these questions raised for them. While this study was part of a larger project, questions pertinent to our inquiry focused on faculty-doctoral student relationships. We asked faculty how they worked with students to help them achieve their career goals (e.g., which strategies they employed to challenge and support students). We asked students ques-

tions about how they worked with their advisers to achieve their goals (e.g., strategies to move toward their career goals; when they felt supported and challenged). Our questions for both participant groups probed further on times when students felt stuck and what faculty did to assist them. Likewise, in both sets of interviews, we paid close attention to what both faculty and students did in the accounts we heard. In addition to interviews, we received emails from 12 participants. Six comprised follow-up thoughts after interviews, and six comprised contributions to the study by individuals who were unable to participate in interviews. These emails were not coded but were used as additional background context. Data gathered for this study include responses from about 70% of the faculty in the department and 40% of registered local students. Anonymity was provided to both faculty and students by avoiding the use of names or ranks, by masking other identifiable comments, and by masking the identity of the university.

We also gathered background data on the department and its programs. We did this in order to understand the contexts in which these advising and mentoring relationships existed. As such, external and internal evaluation reports, statistics on student persistence, and program information also became part of the data analyzed for the study.

The data analysis process for this study was concept driven (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). Concept-driven coding involves the use of pre-determined codes from the literature to guide analysis of the data. In this study, the framework of emotional competence drove our analysis. Our coding emphasis was on displays of emotional competencies as described in Tables 1–5. Therefore, we looked at our data for instances where participants described these competencies and coded them with each competency name (e.g., "personal competence: self-regulation"). Many participant accounts involved more than one competency and so received multiple codes throughout. We also took note of which person displayed which competency: faculty or students. We noted the prevalence of each display of emotional competence present for each group—students or faculty—across all 21 interviews.

We identified up to five competencies for each faculty or student transcript we coded. The display of emotional competence was either about oneself (e.g., student account illuminates student competence) or about another individual (e.g., faculty account illuminates student competence). Each faculty and student participant could display a competency more than once. On average, each faculty member in our study displayed 25 competencies and each student displayed 13 competencies.

Likewise, we analyzed the documents we collected to understand the key structural or cultural elements of the department that surrounded these relationships. This analysis provided us with a context for understanding different aspects of the doctoral experience described by our participants,

such as: the process for admissions, GA/TA appointments, comprehensive examinations, and policies for writing a dissertation.

We strengthened the internal validity of our analysis in four ways. First, each of the authors analyzed the reports and transcripts separately and then came together to clarify codes and application of the theoretical framework. Second, we produced a report for the department and presented it at a luncheon, which was attended by 90% of the participants in the study. We used that session to conduct a group member-checking exercise. Discussion affirmed the findings and provided new data in the way of participant reactions to our themes. Third, several participants also emailed subsequent feedback, which we incorporated into the case description, so that the fullness of these activities allowed for both public and private—or even anonymous—member checking.

And fourth, as a graduate faculty member who has advised students in at least two academic departments, the first author was aware that her perceptions of the challenges both faculty and students face could be influenced by these experiences. She was also aware of the fact that both faculty and students in the program studied would understand that, while she was not in their program, she was a faculty member in a graduate program. This knowledge could have influenced or biased participant responses. To mediate such bias, the first author made the purposes of the study explicit to all participants, offered anonymity to both individuals and the department, and made sure all participants knew there would be a public report of findings and transparency in interpretation of results. Likewise, the second and third authors recognized that their experiences, both as graduate students in academic programs and as professional advisers may have influenced their interpretations of results. To mitigate any bias, we constantly checked each other's interpretations, related all findings back to our theoretical framework, and engaged in debriefing sessions as we analyzed the data.

Findings

We present our findings in three stages. In the first stage, we provide context on the doctoral program and department we studied. Two aspects of the program offer important context for the examination of displays of emotional competencies by students and faculty: (a) the structure (composition and requirements) of the program, and (b) the nature of the program as a community. Both of these aspects influenced the emotional competencies that emerged in the narratives of faculty and students about their relationships with each other. In the second and third stages, we present the respective displays of emotional competencies (personal and social) that emerged from our data for students and for faculty. In both of these stages we begin by noting the prevalence of the competency and then provide narrative examples.

The Case: Field University Anthropology Department

Field University is a research-extensive institution that an external review report noted as a "truly international university." The Department of Anthropology is home to approximately 15–20 faculty members and 85–95 graduate students. The graduate program offers M.A. and Ph.D. tracks with subfields in four traditional divisions of the discipline. Graduate admissions had remained fairly consistent for 15 years, yielding about 10–12 new students per year. Then, at the students' request, the program faculty/graduate admissions committee decided to limit the entering cohort to seven students for the next few years on account of funding limitations. Most students who enter with a bachelor's degree continue on to receive their doctorates, with only a small number (usually 0–2 in each cohort) leaving with the M.A. The average number of years to complete the Ph.D. has varied over the last 15 years, with the last estimate ranging around 8.93 years. While students now take longer to complete their programs than in the past, the attrition rate has dropped. At the same time, current students are taking fewer credits, a higher proportion are part-time, and more graduate students look to the department for financial support than ever before.

This department has a healthy balance of assistant, associate, and full professors, and four of the faculty are alumni of program. The external review observed that all faculty are active researchers, most have external grant funding supporting their work, and there is an active outreach component to the department. There are remarkably few curricular and programmatic requirements for both the M.A. and Ph.D. programs. There is a 30-credit requirement for the M.A. and few specific course requirements for the Ph.D. except for 10 dissertation credits. Doctoral students complete what amounts to a comprehensive examination in addition to their dissertation. According to the external reviewers, the department is "very highly regarded in the field." The reviewers further noted, "The department has a reputation that is much greater than one would expect, given its relatively small size and relatively meager resources." For this reason, they observed that they are able to place virtually all of their Ph.D. alumni in professional positions and most in higher education or research institutions.

Overall, the Field University Anthropology Department has a cohesive and community-oriented culture. The external evaluation report observed "a commendable social cohesion among the faculty and students." A former department chair observed that "the department has sustained a vibrant democratic and egalitarian ethos" and drew attention to the fact that the department does not differentiate faculty teaching assignments by rank as one artifact of that culture. Sitting in the student lounge, the first author observed students and faculty stopping to talk to each other as they passed by. Dress was informal, and most individuals referred to each other by first

name. Interviews with faculty and students and observations from the external evaluation all affirmed a humanistic orientation within the department.

The result is an intentionally supportive and non-competitive environment for doctoral education. In about 80% of the cases, the adjectives participants used to describe the culture were positive, such as "supportive," "caring," and "collegial." In about 20% of the cases, students and faculty mentioned the presence of cliques. Although there likely were some cliques—as there are in any organization—the small groups of faculty and students that seemed to be most connected appeared to be clustered around advisors and subfields. Minor conflicts have arisen between some faculty and students in recent years, such as whether the department should limit the number of new doctoral students admitted and whether doctoral students should teach courses that compete for enrollment with junior faculty seminars. However, our data suggested that even these conflicts were handled through democratic and transparent governance procedures with the result that, even if individuals did not agree with the resolution of the issue, they knew the department had tried to handle it fairly.

In sum, the program requirements for this doctorate are remarkably few, and the very structure of the program depends on self-direction and self-motivation to succeed. Faculty look for these qualities in student applications, and faculty and students repeatedly mentioned these qualities as important for students to succeed in the program. In terms of the emotional landscape of the community, it was a predominantly supportive and collegial culture with expectations that students and faculty would help each other, be open, and listen to each other.

Graduate Student Displays of Emotional Competence

The frequency with which graduate students displayed personal and social competencies in their relationships with faculty members appear in Table 6 and 7. The remainder of this section details participants' accounts of these displays of emotional competence.

Graduate Student Displays of Personal Competence

The two most prevalent aspects of personal competence displayed by graduate students were self-awareness and self-motivation. These competencies are important, because individuals who understand their emotions and strengths and who are self-motivated are more likely to be satisfied with and committed to their work (Abraham, 2000). As we have noted, a critical aspect of this particular doctoral program was the lack of requirements and structure. The program was built on the assumption that students came into the program knowing what they wanted to study and would work with faculty to design their own programs, develop their own comprehensive

Table 6

Graduate Student Frequency of Personal Competence

Subcategory	Competencies	Frequency of Display
Self-awareness	Emotional awareness	5
	Accurate self-assessment	11
	Self-confidence	9
Self-regulation	Self-control	0
	Trustworthiness	2
	Conscientiousness	1
	Adaptability	10
	Innovativeness	2
Self-motivation	Achievement drive	10
	Commitment	5
	Initiative	14
	Optimism	0

Table 7

Graduate Student Frequency of Social Competence

Subcategory	Competencies	Frequency of Display
Social awareness	Empathy	6
	Service orientation	0
	Developing others	3
	Leveraging diversity	3
	Political awareness	7
Social skills	Influence	1
	Communication	9
	Leadership	0
	Change catalyst	1
	Conflict management	5
	Building bonds	9
	Collaboration and cooperation	12
	Team capabilities	2

committees, and construct their own dissertations. This fact was mentioned by every faculty member and student in the study. It was thus not surprising that doctoral students in this program were, for the most part, highly aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and were highly self-motivated. They were selected for this characteristic, and the program reinforced it.

A common refrain from many students is illustrated by one participant, who observed: "I think you have to be self-directed. I think that's why I was

accepted here." They almost all went on to explain that both the nature of the program and the type of mentoring that faculty provided left a great deal of autonomy and decision-making to the individual student; if they were not so self-motivated and self-aware, they would not have been as successful. Another student provided a similar view:

> Well, I can honestly say that the fact that I have the personality that I have has made the experience less painful for me than what I've gotten from other people. The fact that I am a self-starter, the fact that I am self-motivated, the fact that I don't need too much guidance is in my favor.

Another student participant explained how and why the structure of the program required this aspect of self-motivation: "It's definitely a program where it's not as structured as other programs and so it's very much up to the student to create a path where they can access all the resources they need to access." A fourth student commented on the importance of self-motivation but acknowledged that he had had to learn and develop this trait:

> So one of the things I've had to learn how to do is be really directed and focused on the things that I want rather than assuming that the program will carry me through and at the end of it I'll have a Ph.D. in anthropology. But I'm okay with that challenge.

In each of these examples, students displayed awareness of their own strengths. They also acknowledged a strong fit between the strength of being self-motivated and the nature of their particular program.

A key aspect of self-motivation was the initiative that students demonstrated. This initiative took the form of advocacy for students' own professional goals, curricular progression, and personal needs when interacting with faculty advisors and mentors. For example, students described applying for teaching positions and research assistantships because they were tied to their long-term career goals. Perhaps most importantly, though, students described initiative they had displayed in asking faculty for feedback on papers, signatures on key forms, and chances to meet to discuss their research agenda. Students often discussed how they had needed to advocate for faculty to meet with them, as here:

> Originally, [my advisor] got frustrated with me. But the thing about him and my interaction is that he's a confrontational person so [he] appreciates that from me. . . . So, to some degree, I'm like, "Look, you haven't been available for me. And I don't feel like you are available for me and that's a huge problem. And so I'm trying to figure out what I need to do so that you're available." And he was like, "What? No, that's not true," And I said, "Look, there's XYZ incident that I can pinpoint clearly on the calendar, if need be." And he was like "Oh . . . Okay." Like, that kind of worked for him, you know? And he was able to hear it.

While the student appreciated that the faculty member was able to listen to her and be responsive (a form of emotional competence on his part), the key point in this section is that she took the initiative to communicate the message to the faculty member and in a way that was effective. Another student told a story of asking a faculty member to provide very concrete feedback on a paper so it could be submitted soon for publication. The faculty member responded well, and it was completed and published. The same student had seen other students rewrite papers three times because they were afraid to ask their faculty member for more definitive or clearer feedback—which at least in their mind—made the process take longer.

Another student explained that, in his department, faculty doors were generally open but "they're so busy that you have to be persistent to get their time." He added that if students were shy or unfamiliar with this environment, they "flounder[ed] a bit." Thus, graduate students either innately showed initiative or learned to show initiative to connect with faculty.

Another personal competence displayed by doctoral students was self-regulation. In most cases, self-regulation was displayed in relation to students' adaptability. For example, students consistently described themselves as self-starters; however, one student admitted that he was not initially a self-starter but that he adapted to a department culture that values self-starters. In other words he regulated his behavior to fit his department culture. He said:

> For those of us—and I would include myself here—that are not easily self-starters, it can be difficult to navigate a program that has this much freedom. But like I said, for me, that's a challenge; I would prefer that challenge—having to learn how to direct myself to having to live up to standards that are set for me.

In sum, self-awareness and self-motivation were displayed prominently in our data. Self-regulation was present, but less so.

Graduate Student Display of Social Competence

Social competence is important to the ways graduate students learn throughout the curriculum and interact with other students, staff, and faculty (Jaeger, 2003). It has two key components: social awareness and social skills. Social awareness includes the ability to empathize, serve, and develop others, leverage diversity, and remain aware of an individual's political environment. Social skills include the ability to influence, communicate, collaborate, and manage relationships with others. In subsequent work Goleman (2006) elaborated on this category, referring to social competence as social intelligence and referring to social skills as social facility.

Of all of the emotional competencies displayed by students, we found the greatest number of instances of social skills. Two key social skills that students displayed in their relationships with faculty were communication and

conflict management. In the following two student accounts, they displayed both sets of social skills:

> You can't be too concerned with whether or not the faculty are going to like you. Because sometimes, in terms of access to professors—certainly I wouldn't ever advocate that you want to be rude—but you know, sometimes you do just have to say, "This paper needs to be turned in. Could you please just sign it?" You know, and not feel like, "I can't approach this person." You have to be willing to say, "You know, this is what I need." And the professors need to be willing to say, "I can't do that for you right now. You have to find someone else who can be on your committee."

> And it was a time where I was revising one project and it was supposed to be a project that [my mentor] and I were working on together, and he wasn't doing anything. And so, [I said to him] "I'm not putting your name on something that you're not doing anything for; and if all you're telling me is to revise it with no guidance, no comments, no participation in any way other than 'it's not good enough, here,' then . . . I'm sorry."

In both of these examples, it became necessary for doctoral students to confront their faculty advisors and communicate their position clearly, in spite of the difficulty of these tasks and the potential for greater conflict. In the first case, it was difficult because the faculty member might say no because his or her time was constrained. In the second case, it was difficult because the student wanted the faculty member to remove his or her name from the article after failing to contribute to it. In both examples, it was critical for the relationship that the doctoral student be able to address this conflict directly and communicate effectively to resolve it. Both students effectively presented their positions and shaped the outcomes they desired.

Empathy and political awareness were two key aspects of social awareness displayed by students in their relationships with faculty. Empathy took the form of awareness by doctoral students that faculty had many roles and responsibilities beyond mentoring them and that it was sometimes hard for them to meet student expectations. For example, one participant said:

> I'm sure [advising] is important to them. I think that they're overwhelmed. I think that they can't—in general, I think it's very difficult with everything else they have to do with their teaching and their writing. They have to be on committees, and you have to do this and that and go to meetings. So I think it is very difficult.

Another kind of social awareness was recognition that faculty and students lived in departments where there were politics and it was important to be aware of and to negotiate them. This is seen in the comments of the following doctoral student:

> There's the aspect that's true in every department, which is you have to know which faculty members are willing to work with each other. You have to know which faculty members are really picky about certain things and aren't [picky] about others when you go to form your committee. And that just gets handed down from grad student to grad student.

This same theme was present in other instances where students accepted that some faculty would work better together or had unusual expectations and it was important for them to know this information and navigate accordingly.

FACULTY DISPLAY OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

The frequency with which faculty members displayed personal and social competencies in their relationships with graduate students are exhibited in Tables 8 and 9. The remainder of this section provides concrete examples of these displays of emotional competence.

Faculty Display of Personal Competence

The most common personal competencies faculty displayed were self-motivation and self-regulation, followed by self-awareness. Self-motivation includes the display of commitment, initiative, and optimism. Faculty described very intentional strategies that they took to support doctoral students. Such strategies were optimistic in that they showed that faculty intentionally invested in and thought positively of their student's success. For example, some faculty mentioned trying to attract external funding as a way to fund doctoral students and mentor them in research. A student noted how his adviser showed commitment by making regular appointments with him and by his general positive attitude each time they met. In the following example, a doctoral student gives an account of how her advisor showed the personal competencies of initiative, commitment, and optimism while encouraging her to apply for a grant:

> About two weeks ago there was an email that went out about a grant. [My advisor] sent out an email to his advisees, "You all should go for it." So I said, "Okay," so I went to the website and it said you need to write a four hundred word abstract, and I'm thinking, "Fantastic. I can do that." So I wrote it up, I sent it to him, he gave me some comments. So, the deadline is March 1st. So, on February 26th or maybe 27th, I sent it in. To my horror I discovered that once you sent in the abstract you've just applied, but you are not done. You need to have three letters of reference, you need to have your transcripts, you need to have your CV, a piece of writing, a budget—you need to have all this stuff which they gave no clue of. So, here I am, it's February 26th or 27th and I'm horrified, but I'm not that horrified, because I think it's impossible. I'm not going to be able to put all that stuff together. So I write [her advisor]. I said, "You know what, I think it's impossible. Here's the email they sent back.

Table 8

Faculty Frequency of Personal Competence

Subcategory	Competencies	Frequency of Display
Self-awareness	Emotional awareness	3
	Accurate self-assessment	14
	Self-confidence	0
Self-regulation	Self-control	0
	Trustworthiness	5
	Conscientiousness	7
	Adaptability	6
	Innovativeness	8
Self-motivation	Achievement drive	3
	Commitment	12
	Initiative	10
	Optimism	4

Table 9

Faculty Frequency of Social Competence

Subcategory	Competencies	Frequency of Display
Social awareness	Empathy	19
	Service orientation	22
	Developing others	38
	Leveraging diversity	7
	Political awareness	8
Social skills	Influence	6
	Communication	18
	Leadership	16
	Change catalyst	8
	Conflict management	4
	Building bonds	10
	Collaboration and cooperation	20
	Team capabilities	4

Here's the list of stuff I have to get. I can't do this. Do you agree that it's impossible?" He writes me back and says, "No I don't agree that it's impossible. I think you should go for it." So I did, to make a long story short. You know, I had to do a lot of scrambling, but I did it. . . I begged. Well, he was the one [who begged one person], so that was cool. Another person I called at home, which I'm, you know, was mortified, but he said, "You should do it. You should call him at home." I said fine, "[My advisor] said it was okay for me to . . . call you," so he wrote one. And then another one said, "Can I do it Monday,?" I said, "No, you can't do it Monday," and then . . . I wasn't hearing back from

that one, so I contacted another one, who did write me a letter, very kindly, absolutely. [My advisor] knew that the scramble was worth it, even if I don't get it. So that's the kind of advisor I have, which, of course, was more work for him, right? He's telling all of his advisees to do this, and he is helping each one of us. He helped me with every aspect of it. I mean, we were emailing late at night, early in the morning to get this thing done, and so I am very grateful that I have someone like him.

In this second story, a doctoral student, who had just had a baby and was worried about her status in the program, received a surprise phone call at home:

I would say, honestly, one of the most helpful things my advisor has done, and this is not—this is sort of personal, as opposed to academic, but it really has a strong bearing in my experience in academia—which is two weeks after my daughter was born, my advisor called me at home to see how I was doing, and he said, "[name of student], I just want you to know we are okay. Things are okay with us, and this is fine and you just take the time that you need, and we'll be okay." And that was wonderful to me.

These two stories illustrate faculty members' commitments to student success. Faculty members took initiative and, most importantly, remained optimistic, in spite of perceived set-backs or obstacles. In both cases the faculty member kept the goal of achievement front and center, whether that achievement was being successful in the role of adviser or the ultimate goal of helping his or her student graduate and succeed in his or her career. Their optimism inspired the students, who expressed genuine appreciation for these efforts.

There were also several instances of faculty display of self-regulation present in our data. The most frequent self-regulation competencies displayed by faculty were conscientiousness and innovativeness. Several students felt that faculty members acted conscientiously by holding themselves accountable for mentoring and advising students. One student said, "[My mentor] thinks of [mentoring] as a mission. He thinks, 'These are my students and I'm going to kick [expletive] on their behalf.'" Other faculty members exhibited self-regulative competencies by creating innovative advising practices to meet student demands. For example, one faculty member heard that his students felt that he was not accessible, and this is how he addressed the problem:

I have a book in the lounge that has five hours of sign-up time a week. . . . I'd like to think that if people—as people come to grips with what they're trying to do, I'm very predictable. If they want to have a chapter read, they can sign up for an hour, an hour and a half. That day I'll have the chapter read for them. It may not fit their lives in a sense that they want me to read that chapter today, and then I may not have any time available for a few weeks, and there may be

other faculty members that can squeeze it in, but they know in three weeks I'll have it done. And they can go work on the next chapter, so that's what I mean when I say, I try to be temporally accessible, and I think I try to have a personality that tries to be accessible.

Examples of self-awareness competencies were less abundant than the other emotional competency sub-categories, but they were present nonetheless. As noted earlier self-awareness involves being attuned to other people, empathizing with them effectively and being able to "get" complicated social situations (Goleman, 2006). Self-awareness was observable in the previous example of the faculty member who knew that calling his advisee during her maternity leave would be helpful to her self-confidence and to their relationship. Self-awareness was also present in the faculty member who was willing to listen to critical feedback about his performance and respond affirmatively.

Emotional awareness was observable when a faculty member noted that he tried to be aware when he had a particular kind of reaction or feeling for a student (e.g., frustration and disappointment or approval). He did this to make sure that this feeling did not interfere with the work they were doing together. Likewise, there were many instances of faculty accurate self-assessment. Faculty who displayed this competency seemed to have found ways to use their own graduate school experiences to inform their mentoring and advising interactions with their students. These faculty tended to remain honest with themselves about the limitations and pitfalls of their own skills as advisers vis-à-vis other faculty in the department, in order to successfully mentor students. For example, faculty who had negative interactions with their advisors as graduate students tended to intentionally provide unsolicited support to their students on similar matters. One faculty member described a mentor who was brilliant academically but who was "psychically traumatizing" in interpersonal reactions and did not have to be. As a result, this faculty member made very intentional efforts to be more accessible and aware of his own mood and its impact on students. Another faculty member exhibited self-assessment and used it to mentor students in relationship to attending conferences. He explained that in graduate school no one ever told him that he should attend conferences. He did not, others did, and it hurt him professionally. He said:

I'm the first person to ever become any kind of professional in my family, so there was no way for me to know that, and nobody told me. So that was a major setback for me, because I didn't get to learn about that and be able to process that with my professors. I had to figure that out on my own, by sink-or-swim method. I start telling my students from the very first meeting that we have that it is expected that they attend conferences and that they begin to prepare their research papers for publication and presentation. And by the second or third year, they're already doing that.

In sum, faculty displayed personal competence by being aware of their own strengths, weaknesses, and experiences. They used that awareness to form better relationships with students and to communicate information and commitment to them.

Faculty Display of Social Competence

The social competence categories of social awareness and social skills, with regard to faculty, comprised the most frequently displayed competencies in this study. Because these competencies are closely related, and many of our illustrations depict aspects of both, we describe them together.

We have shared the story of the faculty member who showed initiative in contacting his doctoral student when she had a baby. In addition to showing initiative, this advisor displayed the social awareness skill of empathy as he showed that he understood that she might feel vulnerable. This kind of empathy was also displayed by the faculty member who realized his students were having a hard time accessing time with him and created a system for scheduling appointments. This advisor showed emotional awareness of student anxieties over having a lack of control in regard to scheduling conflicts. Subsequently, he went out of his way to restore that sense of control and security for the student's benefit. Likewise, comments from students confirm an accuracy and attunement as both advisers correctly read the situations and were in sync with student needs. He also demonstrated a service orientation, by placing part of his schedule in their hands in order to best serve their needs.

Other advisors demonstrated service orientation. For example, one advisor had all of his students over for a potluck dinner regularly because he felt that his students were lagging behind. Soon, the group became a personal and professional network of support. This example shows the advisor's additional social skill competencies in collaborating with others, leading a team, building bonds within a team, and being a change catalyst in the presence of barriers—all aspects of emotional competence.

Faculty also displayed the social awareness skill of political awareness. Faculty were highly aware of the political and social culture in the department, as well as what was needed to help students succeed despite the obstacles that culture presented. One faculty member demonstrated a clear sense of political awareness in describing her strategies for creating opportunities for Native American students to integrate and succeed in her department. She observed that these students needed allies in a social and political culture that often seemed very foreign at first for them. She noted that part of her role was to help them "figure it out."

Faculty also displayed skills in collaboration. As one student noted, faculty in the department often integrated opportunities for collaboration into the curriculum:

> He's teaching, this term, the [name of specific elective course], and there are a bunch of us who meet with him . . . every two weeks, and we call ourselves the [name of topic] research group. So, we're reading, or we're talking, or we're doing different things, and we've actually been writing quite a bit, mostly with him. . . . My understanding is one way you are successful is by having relationships with people who are going to be your colleagues, or supervisors, or whatever—so building your relationships through schoolwork.

Faculty would also go out of their way to build bonds and elicit collaboration when mentoring individual students outside of the classroom. One doctoral student explained that his faculty mentor and committee members constantly pointed out research, theories, and colleagues to connect to when they met. He noted that his mentor "listens well" to his ideas and then goes back and considers new options for non-profits or other researchers for him to connect to. He appreciated how collaborative his faculty member was in these efforts, constantly identifying new potential partners or places to get ideas.

Finally, faculty displayed commitment to student success in many ways. They displayed commitment through regular contact and meetings, their willingness to go above and beyond norms for advising for their students and by communicating a general sense that they were invested in student success for the long term, as in the following student example:

> The short answer is: I think if I am not successful, my advisor is going to personally drag me back and get me going in the right direction until I am successful. He was a graduate student in the program until a year ago; he got his doctorate at Field University and then found an opportunity to be hired into the department. So he is sort of in this unique position of being a graduate student himself very recently and now I am his first grad student, so in some ways we are sort of figuring this out together. But in other ways, since I am his first graduate student there's no way he's going to let me [fail]. So, I actually—rather than feeling intimidated by that I feel very comforted by that, just knowing that I have a person who is just as invested in my education as I am.

Another student observed that faculty commitment to developing students often extended long beyond degree completion. He observed that, in anthropology, advisers and students are considered to be part of a "rope team":

> I think the term they use in anthropology is rope team. I don't know if they do that in your areas, but it's basically that they feel a very strong connection to anyone that graduates who they advised. They will do a lot once you're out of here, too, to connect you with other people. So they want you to learn at the level of what they expected. If they connect you with a colleague, that colleague has an idea of what you're bringing to the table because of who your advisor was.

In this example, the student felt his faculty member intentionally connected him to a broader network as a way to strengthen his professional development. The student recognized that effort as a signal that the faculty member was committed to the student's success.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the different kinds of emotional competencies displayed by students and faculty who were in advising and mentoring relationships. In this section, we discuss the kinds of competencies we found in each group, compare them, and consider potential influences on findings. Table 10 compares the frequencies of displays of emotional competencies between graduate students and faculty.

Overall we found 252 instances of emotional competencies displayed by faculty and 127 by graduate students. The starkest comparison is in the area of social awareness, where we found 19 instances of emotional competencies among graduate students and 94 among faculty. We found more displays of social awareness from faculty than any other emotional competency. Faculty also accounted for 86 displays of social skills, compared to 39 student displays.

Conversely, we found the same number of instances of self-motivation among faculty and students (29). Self-motivation is a critical competency for doctoral students to display inside an advising or a mentoring relationship. Faculty work with many students simultaneously and have many demands on their time related to their other roles in research, teaching, and service. When students display self-motivation in these relationships, they help faculty to be more effective advisors and mentors. Such displays of emotional competence are likely to increase faculty confidence that their advisee can work competently and independently to accomplish their common goals of degree completion and job placement. Given expectations in this particular department for independent thinkers and self-directed study, displaying this emotional competence would have been particularly important as a sign of fit. Interestingly, we found more instances of social competencies than personal competencies among the faculty. Faculty displays of such personal competencies as self-motivation and self-regulation would likely inspire confidence in doctoral students that the faculty member could be trusted to lead them through the degree process effectively.

We see two strong influences on the emotional competencies displayed in this study: (a) the focus of the study on the mentoring and advising culture of the department and related normative expectations for faculty-doctoral student relationships, and (b) the doctoral program context. First, we did not approach the participants in the study and ask them which emotional competencies students and faculty displayed in their relationships. Rather,

TABLE 10

SUMMARY OF GRADUATE STUDENT AND FACULTY EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

	Graduate Student: Frequencies of Display	Faculty: Frequencies of Display
Personal: Self-awareness	25	17
Personal: Self-regulation	15	26
Personal: Self-motivation	29	29
Social: Social awareness	19	94
Social: Social skills	39	86

we asked them about what faculty and students typically did in their mentoring and advising relationships. Inevitably, each participant responded based on his or her experiences but also against a backdrop of assumptions and expectations for student and faculty roles. This narrative placed much greater responsibility on the faculty member to guide, support, challenge, and nurture the student through the doctoral program. This narrative reflected a dominant power structure that assigns greater agency to the faculty member than to the student. While this program normatively prized student initiative, both students and faculty placed more emphasis on what faculty did.

This perspective may seem counterintuitive in that the literature on doctoral education has certainly focused on the different student predictors (e.g., demographics, entering qualifications, funding, career aspirations, etc.) on doctoral satisfaction, time to degree, and placement. However, as we dug into student and faculty narratives about what occurs in faculty-student relationships, the faculty member was typically the subject, not the student (i.e., what the faculty member did or did not do and their displays or lack of social competence). The popular narrative posited by this finding is that the best possible mentoring and advising relationship is one in which the faculty member is a good communicator, is highly socially aware and skilled, has a service orientation, develops others, shows empathy, handles conflict well, collaborates, and has political awareness. Students in this narrative also display social skills, though less social awareness and self-regulation. Unfortunately this narrative makes student display of emotional competence a side story and faculty display of the same the main attraction.

In terms of department context, the strong cultural norm in this department of individualized programs and expectations for independent work shaped student and faculty narratives about initiative and self-motivation. This norm was undoubtedly reified by the unique admissions process of this program, as well as by faculty recruitment. The department drew in students

who held these competencies and faculty who valued them. This finding is consistent with Goleman's (2006) observation that our natural inclinations still require a platform for expression. That is, environments shape how we behave—whether we tend to display more or less emotional competence. This finding is also consistent with many other studies that have shown the powerful effect of department and program context on the doctoral experience. For example, Gardner (2009) found that different faculty conceptions of success influenced the doctoral experience, Golde (2005) and Ferrer de Valero (2001) both found department and disciplinary effects on time to degree and attrition, and Sweitzer and Volkwein (2009) found that the prestige of graduate programs influences the graduate student experience. Given that these contexts influence such aspects of the doctoral experience as retention and satisfaction, it is not surprising that the structural and cultural context of a doctoral program would influence the kinds of emotional competencies most students and faculty displayed.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was small and exploratory, intended to examine the faculty-student relationship from a new perspective. The intention was not to present generalizable results but to provide a rich description of how we might understand what faculty and students do in their relationships from the perspective of emotional competencies. On the one hand, our findings mirrored other doctoral studies on the critical role faculty mentors play in the lives of doctoral students from both the student and faculty perspectives (Bair, Haworth, & Sandfort, 2004; Barnes & Austin, 2009; Eby & McManus, 2004; Gardner, 2009; Stallone, 2004). That is, our findings revealed faculty playing typical mentoring roles of showing concern, sharing information, and looking out for the best long-term interests of students. However, by using the emotional competencies framework, this study also looked inside the "work" of the relationship and revealed other behaviors and skills. The findings revealed students managing conflict, faculty regulating their own emotions, and faculty being aware of their actions and their impact. We saw students regulating their own behavior to be consistent with program expectations. Likewise, the findings revealed the role of such things as optimism, adaptability, political awareness, and the ability to facilitate collaboration inside these relationships. While further study is needed to understand their prevalence, relevance, and impact, we believe that faculty and students might use this study to begin conversations about the role that emotional competencies are playing in their own doctoral experiences—from both a faculty and student perspective.

While it is important to study faculty's display of emotional competencies, we believe it may be even more important to explore student emotional

competencies. Many handbooks and guides are written for doctoral students encouraging them to be strategic and persistent in completing their Ph.D., but there is much less analysis of what students do inside relationships with faculty that increases the success of those relationships in achieving key outcomes. It would be useful to study emotional competencies in doctoral education longitudinally to understand whether displaying emotional competencies by students or faculty has any direct or indirect influence on student satisfaction, time to degree, departure, completion, and placement.

While exploratory, this study helped us see how the culture and structure of a doctoral program can influence the kinds of emotional competencies most on display. While self-motivation was considered critical in this discipline and department, other disciplines will have different normative structures and cultures that prioritize and reveal other kinds of emotional competencies. We believe that comparative case study research in diverse disciplines could reveal differences in the kinds of emotional competencies employed between students and faculty.

The findings in this study affirm that emotional competencies play a critical role in doctoral education, both for faculty and students. They are a part of daily interactions, yet they are understudied. Why? Compelling rationales seem to include: (a) the common belief that emotional competence is primarily innate and cannot be learned, (b) the belief that learning emotional competencies is expensive and complicated, and (c) the separation within many graduate programs between issues of intellect and emotion.

We recognize that not all faculty and students will be comfortable discussing the emotional landscape of their working relationship or even feel that it is relevant to doctoral study. While scholars such as Anna Neumann (2009) have revealed the role of emotion and passion in the research of university professors, and others, like Parker Palmer (2007) have called for educators to reunite our hearts and minds in how we teach, learn, and serve as professionals, not every individual will want to bring the topic of emotional competencies into labs, classrooms, or archaeological digs. However, given national norms in time to degree, completion rates, and job placement, it seems unwise not to consider all possible improvements to the way doctoral education is conducted. Attention to the nature of the relationships at the center of the doctoral experience, and the ways faculty and doctoral students interact, should be considered one such area for excavation.

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