

# Peer Mentor & Protégé Handbook

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Director of Diversity Programs in Engineering

## **Part I: Mission of Cornell University Engineering Mentoring Partnerships – CU EMPower**

The primary goal of CU EMPower is to support the personal and academic development and achievement of students in the College of Engineering, especially women and underrepresented minority students. Within the CU EMPower framework, students have the opportunity to help other students create better connections to the university community and its resources as well as have increasingly positive experiences in and outside of the classroom. Protégés benefit personally and professionally from the insight and guidance of the more experienced students serving as peer mentors. Benefits to the peer mentors include knowing they are making meaningful contributions to the personal and professional development of their peers while experiencing professional development themselves.

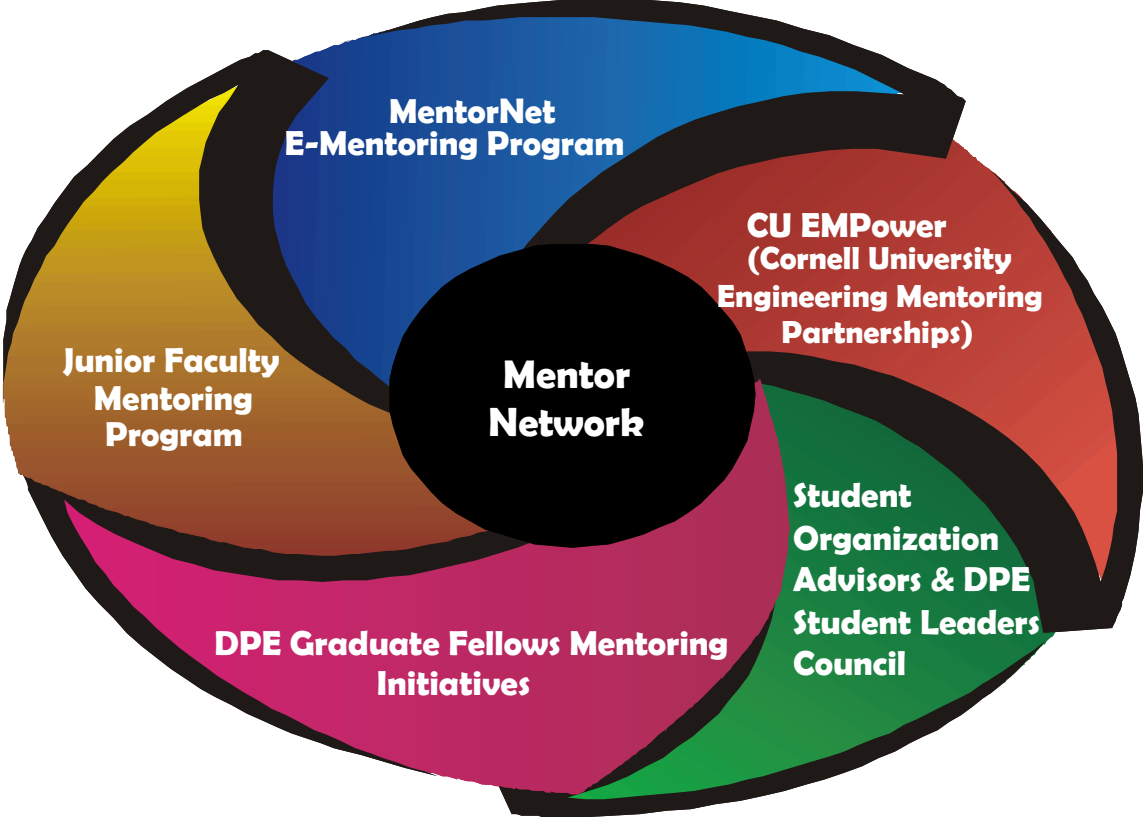
### **Key goals of CU EMPower include:**

- **Increasing student satisfaction and retention;**
- **Contributing to a holistic student support system;**
- **Developing meaningful connections between new and more experienced students; and**
- **Helping students build self-esteem and self-confidence.**

In CU EMPower, the peer mentors are upperclassmen and advanced graduate students who help guide their protégés through the challenges of being an engineering undergraduate or graduate student at Cornell. The protégés are new students in the College of Engineering – students that the peer mentors can help support by providing support and guidance. The roles of the peer mentors include promoting the personal and professional development of their protégés, helping them to overcome challenges and celebrate their successes. Peer mentors also serve as role models – through their behaviors, they help lead their protégés through the positive examples they set.

CU EMPower is an important element of the Mentor Network supported by Diversity Programs in Engineering. The foundation of this network are the connections students have the opportunity to make with each other, Cornell staff and faculty, Cornell Alumni, and engineering professionals working in the academy and industry. As illustrated by the following figure, the key components of the Mentor Network are MentorNet's e-mentoring program, CU EMPower, DPE Student Leaders Council, DPE Graduate Fellows mentoring initiatives, and the junior faculty mentoring program. Supporting this mentor network are also the formal and informal relationships established between students and Cornell staff and faculty.

**Diversity Programs Mentor Network**



## **Part II: Roles and Responsibilities of CU EMPower Participants**

The foundation of CU EMPower centers on developing reciprocal relationships between peer mentors and their respective protégés within which both the peer mentors and protégés can learn and grow from each other's knowledge and experience. These dynamic relationships should help address the constantly changing needs and concerns for both the peer mentors and protégés.

### **In establishing and maintaining relationships, protégés and peer mentors:**

- Share their particular expertise in different areas;
- Listen actively to each other's college and life experiences;
- Encourage creative thinking in many areas of life;
- Respect and support each other's life and academic goals; and
- Attend regularly scheduled CU EMPower meetings and events.

Peer mentors should be great resources for helping protégés get through their first year in Engineering at Cornell successfully. [The following is just a sampling of the types of things on which peer mentors may be able to provide protégés with guidance and insight.](#)

- Which classes to take, with which professors, and at what times
- How to respond to the various challenges that might arise in or outside of the classroom
- How to manage time and balance academic life with a social life
- Informing protégés about where to find internships/co-ops/research opportunities and how to prepare to become competitive candidates
- Locating good places to study on and off campus

- ☑ How to locate and secure an apartment off campus should protégés decide to move out of a residential hall next year
- ☑ Where to find help for classes and exams
- ☑ Where to buy the cheapest books
- ☑ Strategies for achieving important milestones; for example for undergrads, affiliation with a major, and for example for graduate students, strategies for preparing for and passing the Q, A, and B exams
- ☑ Exploring options for life immediately after Cornell – be it in industry or graduate school

Peer mentors and protégés should maintain regular contact with each other by participating in CU EMPower monthly meetings and events. Additionally, peer mentors and protégés should communicate one-to-one either in-person, via phone, email, text messaging, Twitter, or via Facebook – including via the CU EMPower Facebook group. Whether peer mentors and protégés call, email, text, or message each other, if they are trying to schedule a time to get together, they should indicate in their messages the best times and ways to reach each other.

If peer mentors or protégés lose touch with their mentoring partners for any reason and are unable to re-establish a relationship, they should contact Director of Diversity Programs in Engineering Sara Xayarath Hernández at [sh267@cornell.edu](mailto:sh267@cornell.edu) or just stop by 146 Olin Hall. Members of the DPE staff or the CU EMPower student coordinators can try other resources to reconnect mentoring partners or find a new mentoring partner for a peer mentor or protégé if it becomes necessary.

## Tips on How to be a Great Protégé

- Be honest with your peer mentor.
- Be willing to seek out your peer mentor for advice and guidance – don't be afraid to ask questions...even the ones you think might be silly.
- Understand the importance of writing down and setting SMART Goals with your peer mentor – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely goals.
- Be willing to proactively address academic, professional, and personal needs and challenges.
- Inform your peer mentor and CU EMPOWER about your successes – great and small, every achievement is worth celebrating.
- Take responsibility for fulfilling your commitments to yourself as well as to your peer mentor and the CU EMPOWER Family.
- Build relationships with other peer mentors in the group – they are great resources for you too!
- Be an active member of the group – Attend CU EMPOWER meetings and events.
- Provide CU EMPOWER with feedback about your experience as a peer mentor – complete your evaluation forms!
- Review the CU EMPOWER handbook at <http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/cu-empower> and the IBP Mentoring Manual at <http://www.pathwaystoscience.org/manual.asp?sort=Overview%20and%20Home>
- And most importantly, have fun!

## Tips on How to be a Great Peer Mentor

- Be available for your protégé – in person, via email, Facebook, phone, and/or text.
- Don't wait for your protégé to contact you or ask you for advice first. Be proactive and offer support so your protégé can effectively address academic, professional, and personal needs and challenges – before they become a big issue.
- Develop and use good communication skills – work on your abilities to actively listen, understand, and question.
- Understand the importance of writing down and setting SMART Goals with your protégé – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely goals.
- Be approachable, flexible, and open-minded.
- Be aware of your resources – look for assistance when necessary (DPE, Advising, Gannett, etc.). You are not expected to have all of the answers!
- Be a positive team member – CU EMPower is as much about group mentoring as it is about individual mentoring.
- Be respectful – demonstrate self-respect as well as respect for others.
- Take responsibility for fulfilling your commitments to yourself as well as to your protégé and the CU EMPower Family
- Provide CU EMPower with feedback about your experience as a peer mentor – complete your evaluation forms!
- Review the CU EMPower handbook at <http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/cu-empower> and the IBP Mentoring Manual at <http://www.pathwaystoscience.org/manual.asp?sort=Overview%20and%20Home>
- And most importantly, have fun!

## **Four Principal Objectives to Guide CU EMPower Peer Mentors\***

### **1. Establish a positive, personal relationship with your protégé**

- Avoid acting as if you were nothing more than a professional service provider – “I’m here to do a job. I’m a tutor/peer advisor/student office worker; I’m *not* here to be your friend!” Make a proactive effort to act as a guide, coach, ally, and advocate.
- Once a positive, personal relationship is developed, it is much easier to realize the broader goals of the CU EMPower as well as the goals defined by your protégé and you.
- You must establish and maintain trust.
- Regular interaction and consistent support are important in to the success of your mentoring relationship.

### **2. Help your protégé develop academic and life skills**

- Work to accomplish specific goals (e.g., tutoring assistance on a homework assignment or peer advising about the best use of “free” time).
- When and where appropriate, emphasize life-management skills, such as decision-making, goal setting, time management, dealing with conflict, values clarification, and skills for coping with stress and fear.

### **3. Enhance your protégé’s ability to interact comfortably and productively with people/groups from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, academic, and socioeconomic backgrounds**

- Your own willingness to interact with individuals and groups different from you will make a powerful statement about the value placed on diversity. Model the attitudes and behaviors that you emphasize.
- Contrary to popular belief, we are *not* “all the same.” It is important to acknowledge and understand, not ignore our differences. We need to learn how to use our differences as resources for growth. Respecting our differences is necessary but not sufficient; we need to know how to negotiate our differences in ways that produce new understandings and insights.



- Everyone holds particular preconceptions and stereotypes about one's own group and other groups. Take special care that you are not (intentionally or unintentionally) promoting your own views and values at the expense of your protégé's viewpoints. Work at understanding and critically examining your own perspectives on race, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

#### **4. Assist your protégé in accessing academic and university resources**

- Provide information — or better yet, help your protégé find information about academic resources (Diversity Programs, faculty, staff, academic support services, student organizations, etc.). Assist your protégé in learning how to access and use these resources — do not assume that just because they know where their professor's office is that they also understand how to approach and speak with their professor.
- Recognize when and why to make referrals to DPE staff or other appropriate university staff. Instances when a referral may be appropriate include but are not limited to the following:
  - Protégé requests information to which you do not have access
  - Protégé experiences a conflict or uncomfortable situation with a member of our community (faculty, staff, or student) and needs the support of the Diversity Programs Office.
  - Protégé displays abnormal behavior that may indicate tension, anxiety, or depression.
  - Protégé appears to have attitudes, which severely limit his or her ability to complete an academic program in a successful manner. For example, hostility, defiance, passivity, apathy, etc.
  - Protégé exhibits a marked change in his or her behavior pattern. For example, a good student suddenly begins to do poorly; a generally happy student suddenly seems unhappy or depressed, etc.
  - Protégé threatens harm to self or others.

## **Part III: CU EMPower Resources and Forms**

## **Mentoring Activity Ideas**

- Attend CU EMPower meetings and fun events like snow tubing, coffee breaks, small group dinners, and more!
- Plan to meet at the DPE First Friday Dinners and Friday Coffee or Social Hours
- Get together for lunch at the Ivy Room – You all need to eat sometime!
- Attend events sponsored by DPE like the “Master Your Future” & “Strategic Actions for Excellence” programs
- Invite your protégé or peer mentor to attend a student organization meeting or event.
- Go to a performance, concert, movie, or play together.
- Make plans to attend a corporate networking event and critique each other’s resume before you go.
- Go to the library together – keep each other on task!
- Get together in the DPE computer lab – it’s a great place to get work done or just hang out!
- Cook dinner together or go off campus for dinner in Collegetown or on the Commons.
- Check out the Farmers Market or other “Ithaca” venues and activities.
- Join an intramural sport together.
- Just hang out and chat!
- Make plans to do things (academic or social) with other CU EMPower peer mentors and protégés.

# CU EMPower: Mentoring Partner Commitments Agreement

*All peer mentors and protégés must understand and agree to the commitments below by signing in the designated area.*

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## CU EMPower Commitments

I understand that I will be a participant in CU EMPower for one academic year with one or more mentoring partners assigned to me. I will work with my mentoring partner(s) set and reach academic and personal goals. I will be available and accessible to my mentoring partner(s) within reason.

I recognize that consistent and regular contact with my mentoring partner(s) will increase the chances of us meeting our personal and academic goals. I commit to making a determined effort to maintain regular contact with my mentoring partner(s) and to attend scheduled CU EMPower meetings and events.

I understand that providing regular, prompt, and meaningful feedback about my experiences with my mentoring partner(s) and with the CU EMPower group to the CU EMPower staff is an essential component of program. If I feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed by any situation, I will contact a member of the CU EMPower staff for assistance. I will also complete and submit my on-line *monthly activity forms* on a regular basis.

I understand that I must collaborate with my mentoring partner(s) to determine how we will work together and utilize campus resources to help us meet our goals. Since CU EMPower is open-ended in this respect, I will play an active role in structuring the mentoring relationship.

Openness, honesty, and trust are key components of a successful mentoring relationship. I recognize that the strength of my mentoring relationships depends on my willingness to incorporate these qualities.

I acknowledge that I am signing up for CU EMPower in good faith, and that I will make an honest effort to meet the commitments outlined above.

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Name – Print

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Signature

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Date

## References

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**Appendix A:**  
**Student Support and Academic Resource Guide**

# Student Support & Academic

## Resource Guide



Cornell University  
College of Engineering



John S.  
**Knight Institute**  
*for Writing in the Disciplines*

## College of Engineering Resources:

### Diversity Programs in Engineering: 146 Olin Hall, Telephone: 607-255-6403

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Academic Advising
- Advocacy & Counseling Services
- B55 Olin Hall, Computer Lounge
- First Friday Dinners
- Master Your Future Series
- Peer Mentoring Program
- Ryan Scholars Program
- LSAMP Scholars Program

<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/diversity>

### Engineering Advising: 167 Olin Hall, Telephone: 607-255-7414

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Academic Information
- Engineering Handbook
- Academic Assistance
- Peer Advising
- Counseling Services
- Engineering 150
- Orientation

<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/advising>

### Engineering Learning Initiatives: 167 Olin Hall, Telephone: 607-255-9622

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Academic Excellence Workshops (AEWs)
- Peer Tutoring
- Undergraduate Research
- Student Project Teams
- TA Development

[http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/resources/learning\\_initiatives](http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/resources/learning_initiatives)

### CO-OP & Career Services: 201 Carpenter Hall, Telephone: 607-255-5006

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Career Assistance
- On-campus Recruiting
- On-Line Resume Book
- Company Information Sessions
- Workshops & Seminars
- Summer Internships
- Co-op Program

[www.engineering.cornell.edu/resources/career\\_services](http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/resources/career_services)

### Engineering Registrar: 158 Olin Hall, Telephone: 607-255-7140

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Dates & Deadlines
- Courses, Classes, & Exams
- Registration
- AP and Transfer Credit
- Forms
- Reserve a Room



- Reserve Outdoor Space
- Privacy Information

- Commencement
- Enrollment Statistics

<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/student-services/registrar/>

**Engineering Leadership Program, 156 Olin Hall, Telephone: 607-9074**

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Leadership Workshops
- Applied experiences in leadership
- Leadership training for project teams and student organizations
- Cornell LeaderShape Program
- Leadership modules for academic courses
- Strategies for building productive teams

[http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/resources/leadership\\_program](http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/resources/leadership_program)

**THE SUNDIAL - A weekly newsletter for Engineering Undergraduates**

- Important Dates and Deadlines
- Academics
- Events and Opportunities
- Engineering Student Groups and Projects
- How to Place an Add in THE SUNDIAL

<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/news/sundial/>

**Cornell University Resources:**

**Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment: Day Hall, Room 203,  
Telephone: (607) 255-5145 & Fax: (607) 255-5022**

Office hours: Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:30pm except Tue 9:30am-4:30pm

Telephone Hours: Mon-Fri 10:00am-4:00pm

Counselor Walk-In Hours: Mon-Fri 12:00pm-3:30pm

- Applying for Financial Aid
- Important Dates and Deadlines
- Costs
- Policies and Procedures
- Financial Aid Award Determination
- Financial Aid Award Components
- Forms
- Financing Options
- Counselors
- Special Programs

<http://finaid.cornell.edu/>

### **Cornell Information Technologies (CIT), Public Computing Labs:**

- Access to public computers
- Lab Schedule

<http://www.cit.cornell.edu/labs/>

### **Academic Computing Center in the Engineering Library (ACCEL): 203 Carpenter Hall, Telephone: (607) 255-5598**

- Eighty Workstations and Five Classrooms
- Engineering Software

<http://www.accel.cornell.edu/>

### **Cornell University Library Gateway:**

- Library Hours
- Map of the Libraries

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/>

### **Gannett Health Services: Ho Plaza across from Olin Hall, Telephone: 607 255-5155**

Office hours (Fall & Spring Semesters): 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, & the building is closed on Sunday

- Medical Care
- Counseling & Support
- Health Promotion
- Massage Therapy
- Patient Advocacy
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Volunteer Program
- Medical Excuse Policy
- Medical Leaves of Absence

<http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/>

### **Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)**

#### **“Let’s Talk” – CAPS Off-Site Consultation Hours**

Students are welcome to stop by for free and confidential consultations. Speaking with a counselor can help provide insight, workable solutions, and information about other resources. There is no appointment necessary. Hours and locations are listed on the CAPS website.

<http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/LetsTalk>

### **Office of the Dean of Students: 401 Willard Straight Hall:**

**Telephone: 607-255-6839**

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Cornell United Religious Work
- Fraternity and Sorority Affairs
- New Student Programs
- Student & Community Support
- Student Activities Office
- Student Disability Services

<http://www.dos.cornell.edu/>

**International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO): B50 Caldwell Hall,  
Telephone: (607) 255-5243**

ISSO Advising Hours: Mon., Tues. & Thur. 9-12 & 1-4:30; Fri. 9-12 & 1-4:30\*; Wed. 1-4:30 (\*During the summer, ISSO closes at 3:30 on Fridays)

<http://www.isso.cornell.edu/>

**PeopleSoft – Student Center:**

- |               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| ● My IDs      | ● Class Schedule          |
| ● Addresses   | ● Financial Aid           |
| ● Bursar      | ● Grades                  |
| ● CornellCard | ● Classes & Exams         |
| ● Add / Drop  | ● Questions & Information |
| ● CoursEnroll |                           |

<http://studentcenter.cornell.edu/>

**The Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines: The Writing Walk-In Service, 174  
Rockefeller Hall, Telephone: (607) 255-6349**

“The Writing Walk-In Service is **a resource for every writer on campus**, serving university faculty, staff and graduate students, as well as a range of undergraduate needs...The Writing Walk-In Service operates on a drop-in basis and is located at three separate on-campus locations:”

Mann Library, Follet Information Commons  
Monday - Thursday 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Rockefeller Hall, Room 178  
Monday - Thursday 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Carol Tatkon Center, Room 3343  
Sunday - Thursday 7:00 to 10:00 pm

Olin Library, Room 403  
Sunday - Thursday 7:00 to 10:00 pm

Uris Library, Room 102A  
Sunday - Thursday 7:00 to 10:00 pm

[http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight\\_institute/](http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/)

**The Learning Strategies Center: 420 Computing & Communications Center (CCC),  
Telephone: (607) 255-6310**

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Study Skills Resources
- Supplemental Courses
- Tutoring Program
- Study Skills Workshops
- Study Skills Course: HE100 Critical Reading and Thinking
- Study Skills Consultation
- Writing Assistance
- Summer & Winter Session Scholarships

<http://lsc.sas.cornell.edu/>

**Mathematics Support Center: 256 Malott Hall, Telephone: (607) 255-4658**

Worried about math? Whether you are studying for a prelim or brushing up on forgotten algebra, the Math Support Center can relieve your math anxiety. Director Doug Alfors and all the trained tutors readily assist students who need math help at a variety of levels.

<http://www.math.cornell.edu/Courses/FSM/msc.html>

**LGBT Resource Center: 282 Caldwell Hall, Telephone: (607) 254-4987**

Office hours: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

- Advocacy
- Consultation
- Diversity Training
- Education
- Referrals
- Advising
- Community Development
- Peer Matching
- Programming
- Research

<http://www.lgbtrc.cornell.edu/>

**Cornell University Women's Resource Center: 209 Willard Straight Hall, Telephone: (607) 255-0015**

Office hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday, or by appointment

The CWRC sponsors and co-sponsors many programs and events throughout the academic year. Some of these include:

- Women's Self-Defense Workshop
- Workshops
- Women's History Month
- Health Awareness Week
- Take Back the Night March

<http://wrc.dos.cornell.edu/>

**The Office of Academic Diversity Initiatives: 200 CCC, Telephone: (607) 255-3841**

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Services and publications provided by the office include:

- Campus-wide advocacy
- Counseling and advising
- A resource for summer research projects and summer internships
- Assisted job placement and job development programs
- Pre-Professional Program – P3
- New York State Opportunity Programs: Collegiate Science & Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) & Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP)

<http://omea.cornell.edu/>

**Intercultural Center: 626 Thurston Ave, Telephone: (607) 255-3841**

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Services and publications provided by the office include:

- Campus-wide advocacy
- Counseling and advising
- Cornell Alumni-Student Mentoring Program
- Asian & Asian American Center
- LGBT Resource Center
- Student Organizations
- Intercultural Dialogues

<http://dos.cornell.edu/intercultural/index.cfm>

**Cornell Housing & Residential Housing – Housing Office: 201 Robert Purcell Community Center (RPCC): (607) 255-5368**

Office hours: 8:30a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

<http://housing.cornell.edu/>