

Case Study**Diversity: Is It Okay to Ask?**

Last summer I worked with a fantastic undergraduate mentee. Shirley was very intelligent and generated a fair amount of data directly relevant to my thesis project. I think that she had a positive summer research experience, but there are a few questions that still linger in my mind. This particular mentee was an African-American woman from a small town. I always wondered how she felt on a big urban campus. I also wondered how Shirley felt about being the only African-American woman in our lab. In fact, she was the only African-American woman in our entire department that summer. I wanted to ask Shirley how she felt, but I worried that it might be insensitive or politically incorrect to do so. I never asked. I still wonder how she felt and how those feelings may have affected her experience.