Chapter 5
The “Art” in Mentoring Women Faculty at Historically Black Colleges/Universities

Susan Smith
South Carolina State University, USA

Cassandra Sligh Conway
South Carolina State University, USA

ABSTRACT
The literature on mentoring women in certain fields like Fine Arts is scant. Therefore, in this chapter the authors shed light on personal mentoring opportunities at an HBCU environment. The purpose of this effort is to do the following: 1) review the mentoring literature; 2) provide the research available on mentoring women in Fine Arts; 3) provide solutions, recommendations, and future directions to administrators, faculty, stakeholders, that can impact mentoring opportunities and initiatives provided to women and minorities in the academy.

INTRODUCTION
Where does a faculty member find the job expectations? Where does a faculty member go to get a copy of the Faculty Handbook? Will faculty be accepted-female faculty or minority faculty? Will faculty be treated fairly during the tenure and promotion review process? Is Faculty mentorship alive and well or going the way of the dinosaur and the floppy disc? Will a Black college/university understand faculty needs more? As a female faculty member, what type of mentor is needed in the Fine Arts and

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-4071-7.ch005

Copyright © 2018, IGI Global. Copying or distributing in print or electronic forms without written permission of IGI Global is prohibited.
The “Art” in Mentoring Women Faculty at Historically Black Colleges/Universities

other programs? As a woman in the Fine Arts, one question seems to need further examination. The question is, will exhibitions and gallery work be accepted as a publication during the tenure and promotion process? Another important question that is crucial at this time is: “How is the current state of affairs and reduction in funding affecting the mentorship practices of first year and tenure track faculty members who are women at Historically Black Colleges and Universities”? The answer is one that certainly requires a worthy examination from many lens in order to assist female faculty members, especially in the Fine Arts.

In order to understand the challenges that female faculty may undergo in being mentored, it is important to understand some of the facts that give us a picture of the HBCU. The HBCU, according to the literature, has been a gem in providing opportunities to minorities and women that at one time in history was completely impossible. This university has provided some of the best physicians, lawyers, and colonels. If there was no HBCU present historically over the last forty years, there would be fewer persons and women, with terminal degrees. With these milestones that the HBCU has created in the lives of some faculty, it is as noteworthy to identify some of the challenges that the HBCU now faces. According to the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES, 2017, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d99/d99t187.asp), universities are facing more economic challenges, which is requiring fewer faculty members to do more with fewer resources. This impacts the chronically underfunded Historically Black Institutions, HBCUs, at a much higher level than predominately white institutions that have had disproportionally more funding throughout history. The state of the HBCU, not only affects the students; the faculty who teach are affected tremendously. Faculty entering the higher education work force as junior faculty members face a number of challenges right off the bat. Faculty are coming into a new culture, into an organization with both written rules and the undertones of the unwritten rules or social expectations. Bota (2016) recommends that incoming faculty members are aware of the university’s rules and policies, including both the faculty handbook as well as the student handbook and code of conduct. Bota suggested that junior faculty members choose committees that benefit the career development as related to accreditation and programmatic issues. Finding a mentor, who understands key components involved in reaching career goals is deemed an important aspect of the mentoring processes.

With these financial challenges, historical updates, political circumstances, and cultural trends in higher education, the lives of faculty are being challenged as well. Unfortunately, at some HBCUS, the trend is teaching overloads, being given more duties as necessary, longer hours, furloughs, financial exigency, and permanent pay cuts. With all of these challenges, the lives of women in faculty positions in academia are being affected tremendously as the pay is sometimes at the bottom of the barrel.
Blending Technology-Centric Strategies for Faculty Development in Higher Education

Communication, Culture, and Discord: A Lesson in Leadership Failure