Chapter 12
Organizational Change and Online Education at HBCUs: Mentoring Supportive and Resistant Faculty

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines how mentoring pre-tenured and tenured faculty during organizational change of implementing fully online academic programs impacts resistant and/or supportive faculty. By using a case of an experience of some faculty at HBCUs, the authors examine how mentorship is necessary to engender a supportive and successful transition in the face of faculty members’ resistance to including online education. Influence on faculty becoming adept experts of online teaching and education, prioritizing online teaching and its impact on how they approach live instruction, and anticipating how a designated mentor(s) affects teaching evaluations and research scholarship necessary to achieve rank and tenure promotion will be delineated.
INTRODUCTION

Mentoring as a means of facilitating organizational change within colleges and universities is rarely discussed in the literature. Organizational change, though often described as necessary is similarly identified as challenging; yet rarely described as advantageous for faculty. Whether it is the reduction of faculty salaries or downsizing of employees, radical restructuring within an organization can be anxiety provoking. Moreover, research investigating mentorship of faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) typically focuses on faculty-student mentorship (Alexander, & Bodenhorn, 2015; Eagan, Sharkness, Hurtado, Mosqueda, Chang, 2011; Hickson, 2002). Basically, a model for professional development mentorship for faculty via organizational change at HBCUs has yet to be established.

Mentorship is defined by the Business Dictionary as [an] “employee training system under which a senior or more experienced individual (the mentor) is assigned to act as an advisor, counselor, or guide to a junior or trainee. The mentor is responsible for providing support to, and feedback on, the individual in his or her charge (http://www.businessdictionary.com).” This definition suggests that the demographic of mentor who would be most effective in the process of organizational change is an older employee who has worked for a company for at least 15 years or more, and has obtained titles and/or positions associated with promotion and advancement. In higher education, this is likened to a tenured professor, seasoned administrator and/or expert executive leader. These individuals would be viewed as the go to persons for organizational change. Essentially, whether there is an extreme resistance or an enthusiastic support, examining the process of mentoring from who is identified as a mentor and how mentorship impacts their academic and/or administrative career is a worthwhile endeavor; especially during organizational change at Historically Black College and Universities.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) experiencing organizational change has typically been due to declining student enrollment and/or attrition; as well as economic downturn. With the goal of achieving financial solvency, the establishment of fully online academic programs has been touted as an effective strategy to reach a broader base of students, as well as generate income (Collins & Zacharakis, 2009); especially at HBCUs. The implementation of fully online academic programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities has been offered as a feasible solution to increasing enrollment and restoring financial stability. Ascertaining who will provide mentorship to faculty, inclusive of assessment and evaluation of determining which pre-tenured faculty will be considered competent to achieve tenure and promotion; and which tenured faculty will maintain associate rank, progress to rank of professor, and remain tenured can also be challenging. In
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