

Tougaloo College and the HBCU Faculty Development Network: Networking for Mutual Reinforcement

Stephen L. Rozman, Gloria Roberts

Abstract

Tougaloo College has built on its tradition of community outreach—highlighted by its vanguard role in the Mississippi civil rights struggle—by serving as the founder of the HBCU Faculty Development Network in 1994 and creating its own Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility in 2004. The network has been hosting the annual HBCU Faculty Development Symposium for the past thirteen years and has included community service and service-learning in its focus areas. The network and the Center for Civic Engagement have cosponsored conferences and workshops in service-learning and civic engagement and are currently planning a summer institute on community-based participatory research for June 2007. The Tougaloo model is one of creating expanding networks. This effort includes linking minority and nonminority institutions in the promotion of community outreach and providing opportunities for HBCU faculty to enhance their skills and knowledge related to serving the community.

Introduction

Tougaloo College prides itself on its lengthy history of community outreach. During the 1960s, it was known as the “cradle of the Mississippi civil rights movement” for its key role in partnering with the African American community and with white civil rights volunteers in the struggle to end racial segregation. The historic Woodworth Chapel on the Tougaloo College campus was the scenario for rallies led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, Fannie Lou Hamer, and other movement leaders.

Tougaloo College’s motto is “Where history meets the future,” and its community outreach continues to develop. During the early 1990s, the faculty voted to establish a sixty-hour community service requirement for graduation, which brought about student placements with a wide variety of community organizations and, correspondingly, an ever-strengthening relationship with community representatives. Some of these placements have led to service-learning opportunities, with faculty engaging their classes in

projects that apply student skills and knowledge in service to the community. Representatives of community organizations, in turn, have conducted classroom sessions and participated in campus forums related to issues of concern to the community. Discipline-specific internships have also provided students with opportunities for community engagement.

Tougaloo College's community engagement got an additional boost from the creation of the HBCU Faculty Development Network, which was founded in 1994 on the Tougaloo College campus under the leadership of Dr. Stephen L. Rozman. Ten years later, in 2004, Tougaloo College president Beverly Wade Hogan created the Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility and appointed Dr. Rozman director. Since that time, the center and the network have played mutually reinforcing roles: activities initiated by the HBCU Faculty Development Network are promoted by the Center for Civic Engagement, and activities initiated by the Center for Civic Engagement are promoted by the HBCU Faculty Development Network, sometimes in the capacity of cosponsor.

The roots of the HBCU Faculty Development Network began to form in 1991, when Tougaloo College received a faculty development grant from the Bush Foundation of St. Paul, Minnesota. Although the Bush Foundation's outreach has been mainly to academic institutions in Minnesota and adjacent states, it decided to reach out to African American colleges and universities affiliated with the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), a group of some thirty-nine private institutions. Dr. Rozman directed the college's first Bush faculty development grant and each subsequent grant until the Bush Foundation ended funding for this program in 2005.

With its initial Bush grant, Tougaloo College became eligible for travel scholarships to attend the semiannual faculty development conferences of the Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning, which were held in the Twin Cities area. The collaboration (originally named the Bush Collaboration) set aside funds for faculty from minority institutions—African American and Native American—to attend the conferences and give presentations, and even designated an evening just prior to the start of the conference for representatives of minority institutions to meet for informal interaction.

Dr. Rozman and several other faculty from Tougaloo College took advantage of these travel grants to attend Collaboration conferences during the 1990s. However, only a handful of HBCUs were normally represented, with few represented as frequently as

Tougaloo College. This may have been due to the remoteness of Minnesota from most HBCUs (located in the southeast quadrant of the country) or to the cold weather in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area during the mid-November and mid-February conference times.

Dr. Rozman and other Tougaloo College faculty began to discuss the missed opportunities for HBCU faculty to gather and share their teaching innovations. The discussion, however, turned quickly to the idea of holding a faculty development conference for HBCU faculty in our own geographical area, under the belief that a southeastern location would attract greater attendance. We asked Bush Foundation president Humphrey Doermann whether the Bush Foundation would allow us to use \$10,000 of our Bush grant money to fund an HBCU faculty development conference in Jackson, Mississippi, the locale of Tougaloo College. Dr. Doermann gave a positive response, and the HBCU Faculty Development Network was on its way to being born.

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Dr. Rozman, working in concert with the Tougaloo College Bush Grant Coordinating Team, began to plan the conference for the early autumn of 1994, but concern arose about the likelihood of success for a conference run by Tougaloo College as a Tougaloo event. At our request Dr. Lesley Cafarelli, director of the then Bush Collaboration, provided the names of key personnel from HBCUs that had been active in Collaboration activities: five faculty from five different HBCUs. We quickly invited them by telephone to become members of our planning committee. All agreed. We then used a portion of the \$10,000 we had allocated for our proposed conference to bring the group to Jackson for a planning committee meeting. We also agreed to create a faculty development network to provide an effective infrastructure for the conference, and named it the HBCU Faculty Development Network.

A portion of the \$10,000 was also used to hire Gloria Roberts (Brown) on a part-time basis—later expanded to full-time with funding from the Bush and Ford Foundations. Ms. Roberts has continued to work full-time for the HBCU Faculty Development Network and has also assisted Dr. Rozman with the work of the Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility, following

its creation in 2004. She has played a significant role in the network, with responsibilities ranging from administrative assistant to program coordinator for HBCU Faculty Development Network activities.

The First HBCU Faculty Development Symposium—we decided not to use the word “conference”—took place at the Holiday Inn North, in Jackson, and attracted about one hundred faculty from a wide variety of HBCUs, both public and private. The planning committee became a steering committee once the HBCU Faculty Development Network was created, and did not include faculty from public HBCUs since these institutions were not eligible for Bush grants. However, all HBCUs received notices about the upcoming symposium and were invited to submit proposals for presentation. The network was also able to provide small travel grants as incentives to would-be presenters—although budgetary constraints prevented our doing so for future conferences.

The evaluation of the symposium by presenters and other attendees was very favorable, and there was strong support for institutionalizing the HBCU Faculty Development Network and making the HBCU Faculty Development Symposium an annual event. Dr. Rozman and Dr. Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, of Johnson C. Smith University, became codirectors of the network, and the Second National HBCU Faculty Development Symposium was scheduled for Charlotte, North Carolina, the home of Johnson C. Smith University, in October 1995.

The HBCU Faculty Development Network approached the Bush Foundation for a three-year grant to fund the annual symposium and other activities. The foundation agreed to match other funding. Fortunately for the network, the Ford Foundation provided a grant, which Bush matched. Ford discontinued funding at the end of the three-year period, but Bush has continued to provide funds (as our major funder) up to the present time.

HBCU Faculty Development Network Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the HBCU Faculty Development Network flow from our vision statement, the essence of which is: “The HBCU Faculty Development Network will empower faculty to promote effective teaching and learning practices that will enable students to become engaged lifelong learners in an ever-changing society.” We have two overriding goals: (1) to enhance the teaching and learning process based on the collective experience of HBCUs and (2) to provide leadership and coordination

in collaborative efforts among HBCUs. Vehicles for advancing these two goals include (1) conducting the annual HBCU Faculty Development Symposium, (2) recruitment of members into the HBCU Faculty Development Network and enhancing participation at the symposium, (3) establishing collaboration and partnership agreements, (4) marketing the network, and (5) conducting regional workshops or institutes.

Progress Made in Advancing Goals and Objectives

Annual HBCU Faculty Development Symposium: In October 2006, we conducted the Thirteenth National HBCU Faculty Development Symposium in Houston, Texas, with an attendance of approximately 175. This annual event has been institutionalized, and planning is well under way for the Fourteenth National HBCU Faculty Development Symposium at Tuskegee University in October 2007 and the Fifteenth National HBCU Faculty Development Symposium in Washington, D.C., in October 2008.

Membership, Recruitment, and Registration Fees: Our objective related to membership, recruitment, and registration fees has been to promote the network and its activities more effectively among the academic community. In pursuing this objective, we have sought to expand membership in the HBCU Faculty Development Network, to recruit faculty for the annual symposium and regional workshops, and to streamline the collection of registration fees.

Membership has ranged from 150 to 200. Recruitment has been assisted in some years by symposium cosponsorship from the Ford/UNCF Service Learning Network and the UNCF Special Programs (UNCFSP) Health & Community Development Division. At the October 2003 symposium, for example, the Ford/UNCF Service Learning Network sponsored 32 participants, while the Health & Community Development Division sponsored 21. We have streamlined the collection of registration fees by allowing registrants to pay by credit card and by encouraging payment prior to the symposium itself, offering a financial incentive for early registration.

Collaboration and Partnership Agreements: Our objective related to collaboration and partnership agreements has been to provide support in securing resources and information. In attaining this objective, we have strived to collaborate with other organizations that have a major commitment to promoting faculty development.

Our most notable relationships with regard to community service have been with the Ford/UNCF Service Learning Network and the UNCFSP Health & Community Development Division.

In 2005, we developed a collaborative partnership with the UNCFSP to promote faculty development, with the signing of a memorandum of understanding. In April 2006, the entire Steering Committee of the HBCU Faculty Development Network was invited to participate in a roundtable at the headquarters of the United Negro College Fund in Fairfax, Virginia, to discuss a new collaboration to promote faculty development at HBCUs. Indications are that a formal working relationship will be established between the network and the UNCF.

UNCFSP's relationship with the network has been through its HIV/AIDS program related to the health of the community. This program also conducted its own workshops in conjunction with the annual symposium and paid for faculty from UNCF member institutions to attend the symposium. This relationship with UNCFSP, together with the growth of health-related academic programs at HBCUs and the creation of Health & Wellness Centers, inspired the network to develop a health-related strand to encourage more presentations in that focus area.

Marketing: Our objective related to marketing has been to stimulate research, publication, and scholarly activities. A representative of Campus Compact approached the Network Steering Committee to encourage faculty from HBCUs to participate in a Campus Compact program related to the publishing of monographs on service-learning projects at institutions of higher learning. The response was positive and led to the Campus Compact publication *One with the Community: Indicators of Engagement at Minority-Serving Institutions*. Dr. Rozman wrote the foreword for this publication.

Conducting Regional Workshops or Institutes: Our objectives related to regional workshops and institutes have been to (1) provide an avenue for sharing innovative instructional methods; (2) provide support in securing resources and information; (3) promote collaboration among faculty; (4) stimulate research, publication, and scholarly activities; (5) promote the connection between classroom and community service; (6) promote utilization of technology; and (7) enhance communication among diverse peoples in a global society.

To provide an avenue for sharing innovative instructional methods, the Summer Institute on Learning Communities in 2002 at Johnson C. Smith University enlisted the services of several leading specialists in conducting learning communities, and these consultants interacted with teams of faculty from participating institutions. The First Service-Learning Summer Institute in 2003 at LeMoyne-Owen College brought in consultants who were leading specialists in service-learning. The Third Annual Summer Institute, Transforming the Curriculum through Innovations in Technology, Information Literacy, and Service Learning, held at Norfolk State University in 2004, brought in consultants with expertise in these respective areas. The Fourth Annual Summer Institute, Civic Engagement & Social Justice, held in Jackson, Mississippi, in June 2005, was very well attended, with twenty-one institutions represented (including eighteen HBCUs). The network

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cosponsored a summer institute with the Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility, Response to Community Crisis: Lessons from Recent Hurricanes, June 6–8, 2006, in Jackson. A special three-year supplemental grant from the Bush Foundation helped enable the network to initiate these annual summer institutes. After 2002 (learning communities), the summer institutes have focused on civic engagement and service-learning. The UNCF service-learning program has participated actively in the summer institutes: one of its own annual service-learning workshops was conducted in conjunction with our summer institute, and it has paid for its participants’ attendance at network summer institutes.

Dr. Rozman and Dr. Dawkins remain codirectors of the network. The steering committee membership has changed over the thirteen-year period, with two of the current members representing public HBCUs. The symposium has been held at a variety of sites around the Southeast, including Jackson, Charlotte, Memphis, Atlanta, Miami, Houston, Norfolk, Nashville, and Savannah. The institutions of Network Steering Committee members are located in all but two of these sites—Nashville and Savannah—but HBCUs are located in all of the sites. Local planning committees have been created in each site to work with the steering committee in the planning and logistics related to the upcoming symposium. The local

HBCU (HBCUs in some cases) has normally hosted preconference workshops and receptions and has often provided audiovisual equipment for the two-day regular conference, thereby saving the network the considerable cost of renting it from the host hotel. In addition, large numbers of faculty from local and nearby HBCUs have normally been symposium presenters and participants.

A new development occurred at the Thirteenth National HBCU Faculty Development Symposium in Houston (October 2006), when Prairie View A&M University invited their graduate students to participate and attracted approximately thirty-five.

Attendance at the symposium has ranged from 150 to 200, with the large majority being presenters. The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, impacted attendance at the Norfolk symposium in October of that year since some faculty cancelled their presentations. We had expected to exceed 200 registrants, which would have been record attendance for us. Following that year, attendance would have also declined had the UNCF and UNCFSP not sponsored HBCU faculty to attend.

A combination of factors seems to be impeding attendance. One apparent factor has been a growing competition for faculty travel dollars as new faculty conferences are developed. Another factor has been the decline in outside funding for faculty development—notably from the Bush Foundation, a major source of faculty development funds for UNCF-affiliated institutions. The HBCU Faculty Development Network has attempted to counter this decline by increasing its promotion of the symposium at colleges and universities near the symposium site since travel costs would be much less for their faculty.

The Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility

The Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility was created in 2004, with the overriding goal of engaging “in activities designed to empower citizens so that they become active participants in the life of their communities by providing a forum for the sharing of ideas, expression of diverse views, and the formulation of opinions and actions that serve the common good” (*Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility 2004*).

Its objectives include

- Engaging students in research on important policy issues in classes across the curriculum

- Conducting student-led forums to share research findings
- Directing student community service projects
- Directing service-learning projects
- Sponsoring forums and films
- Hosting workshops, symposia, and conferences
- Networking with other organizations.

With the creation of the Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility, the HBCU Faculty Development Network found another important partner. Their initial collaborative endeavor occurred in 2005, with the summer institute in Jackson, Mississippi. Since the supplemental funding grant from the Bush Foundation was nearly exhausted, it was necessary to locate other sources of funding. The Mississippi Center for Community & Civic Engagement, located at the University of Southern Mississippi, provided some funding, and registration fees from individuals and teams from eighteen HBCUs and three non-HBCUs provided additional income. The Center for Civic Engagement—with its growing community ties—engaged the leaders of several community organizations and some public officials.

In the summer of 2006, the Center for Civic Engagement took the lead and sponsored a symposium titled *Response to Community Crisis: Lessons from Recent Hurricanes*. In the absence of outside funding, the Network Steering Committee did not schedule a summer institute for this year. However, the devastation of New Orleans resulting from Hurricane Katrina created an opportunity to respond to the need for reflection and action in dealing with community crisis situations.

The Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning had scheduled its 2006 conference in New Orleans, but was compelled to cancel the conference due to hurricane damage. The Center for Civic Engagement volunteered to hold the Gulf-South Summit in Jackson and to serve as host, since its leadership and other representatives from Tougaloo College had been active participants in previous Gulf-South Summits. The Gulf-South Summit leadership agreed to support this Tougaloo College initiative, but asked the Center for Civic Engagement to refrain from calling the proposed symposium a Gulf-South Summit. However, they provided some financial assistance, and the Mississippi Center for Community & Civic Engagement provided additional assistance. Campus Compact also provided some financial support for the

2006 summer symposium. In addition, a Campus Compact staff member was an active participant in this symposium—and in the 2005 summer institute.

A new challenge for the Center for Civic Engagement, the HBCU Faculty Development Network, and HBCUs in general has been to document HBCU community involvement. Historically black colleges and universities have lengthy records of community outreach and service, but they have traditionally not undertaken the systematic research necessary to document their initiatives.

In planning the 2006 summer symposium, *Response to Community Crisis: Lessons from Recent Hurricanes*, the center invited presentations on established research projects related to community crisis; it also encouraged presenters to undertake scholarly research related

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to this topic following the symposium. We had written a proposal for funding from the National Science Foundation, with the symposium serving as a springboard for community-based research on community crisis, and alerted presenters that NSF funds might be available if they were prepared to undertake research projects. Several expressed an interest, and the NSF awarded the center a small grant.

The center has also planned a summer institute, *Community-Based Participatory Research*, for June 26–29, 2007, at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson, and will be collaborating with the HBCU Faculty Development Network, the Community-Campus Partnership for Health, the Southeast Community Research Center, the Bonner Foundation, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Mississippi Center for Community & Civic Engagement, Florida Campus Compact, and other organizations as cosponsors.

Dr. Rozman was invited to participate in a summit conference of civic engagement leaders in February 2006 at Wingspread, in Racine, Wisconsin, at which a new umbrella organization, the Higher Education Network for Community Engagement (HENCE), was formed. Dr. Hiram Fitzgerald, from Michigan State University, approached Dr. Rozman at that conference and expressed an interest in sharing Michigan State’s expertise in

community-based participatory research with HBCUs, inviting Dr. Rozman to assemble a representative group of HBCU faculty for a proposed training intensive at Michigan State University. Dr. Fitzgerald obtained the funding for a one-week intensive (which will be held in May 2007), and Dr. Rozman has assembled a seven-member faculty team (including himself) from a mixture of seven public and private HBCUs.

In addition, the Center for Civic Engagement received a small grant from the Bonner Foundation to participate in a workshop on community-based research in late September 2006 in Princeton, New Jersey. Tougaloo College was the only HBCU participant. Three Tougaloo College faculty attended (including Dr. Rozman), from three different disciplines—political science, biology, and English—with a commitment to promote community-based research in conjunction with service-learning in selected courses, and to recruit additional Tougaloo College faculty for this project.

This series of opportunities has flowed from the creation of the HBCU Faculty Development Network, Tougaloo College's leading role in the network, and the recent creation of the Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility at Tougaloo College. Dr. Rozman's leadership roles in these infrastructures have helped him develop a growing network of personal relationships that has increased his awareness of opportunities and has facilitated his taking advantage of these opportunities. Ms. Roberts, as his assistant, has contributed significantly to the network of personal relationships through contacts that she herself has established.

Other members of the HBCU Faculty Development Network Steering Committee have contributed to the expanding network of personal relationships and to what we refer to as the "networking of networks." The initial contacts with the Ford Foundation and the UNCF service-learning program came from the personal relationships of a steering committee member. Contacts with the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD) came from another steering committee member. The Network has formalized a relationship with POD—the leading national faculty development network—with leadership from each organization attending the annual conference of the other, and plans being discussed for joint activities. The network also held one of the annual symposia (2004 in Charlotte, North Carolina) as a joint conference with the Association of General and Liberal Studies (AGLS).

Dr. Dawkins and Dr. Rozman, together with Dr. Andrea Beach of Western Michigan University (2006), coauthored “Perceptions of Faculty Developers about the Present and Future of Faculty Development at Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” a chapter in volume 24 of *To Improve the Academy: Resources for Faculty, Instructional, and Organizational Development*. This chapter includes a survey comparing the perceptions of faculty developers at HBCUs with those at non-HBCUs affiliated with POD (institutions with predominantly nonminority populations). When asked to identify the most important issues for faculty development at their respective institutions, faculty developers at HBCUs ranked “community service-learning” significantly higher than those at non-HBCUs. They also indicated that courses in community service-learning were more prevalent at HBCUs than at non-HBCUs (p. 116).

When asked to identify new challenges and pressures on institutions that affect faculty work, both in terms of how important they think it is to address those issues through faculty development and the extent to which their institutions are already responding, faculty developers at HBCUs assigned significantly greater importance to “community-based research,” “outreach/service activities,” and “commitment to civic life/the public good” than those at non-HBCUs; and the former group indicated a greater response to these challenges and pressures on the part of their institutions than the latter group in all three of these areas (p. 118).

How will the community benefit from these developments? If, as the data reveal, HBCUs attach greater importance to community outreach and community-based research than non-HBCUs and have taken more steps to develop courses in these areas, their surrounding communities may expect to reap greater benefits than communities adjacent to non-HBCUs. The benefits may be enhanced if HBCUs find community-based research and outreach a source of greater challenges and pressures toward engagement.

The infrastructures provided by the HBCU Faculty Development Network and the Tougaloo College Center for Civic Engagement have opened the doors to growing opportunities for HBCU faculty to enhance their skills and knowledge related to serving the community and benefiting from community skills and knowledge. They also provide outlets for diffusion of best practices so that the successes experienced by one institution in its relationship with the community can be emulated by other institutions.

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About the Authors

- Dr. Stephen L. Rozman is a professor of political science and director of the Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility at Tougaloo College. He is also founder and codirector of the HBCU Faculty Development Network, the leading faculty development network for historically black colleges and universities. He has directed numerous faculty development projects at Tougaloo College and has hosted workshops, conferences, and summer institutes related to civic engagement and service-learning. The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility is networking with several other organizations to sponsor a summer institute on community-based participatory research scheduled for June 26–29, 2007, in Jackson, Mississippi.
- Ms. Gloria Roberts is the program director for the HBCU Faculty Development Network and has been program coordinator for the annual HBCU Faculty Development Symposium—sponsored by the HBCU Faculty Development Network—during each of the thirteen years that the symposium has taken place (since the founding of the HBCU Faculty Development Network in 1994).