

CREATING A TRAINING MANUAL FOR IMPLEMENTING LGBT PROGRAMS &  
INITIATIVES AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

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BY

BRANDON M. HILDRETH  
AMANDA O. LATZ Ed.D. - ADVISOR

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY  
MUNCIE, INDIANA  
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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

For centuries, HBCUs have continuously provided educational opportunities for students, especially African Americans, seeking higher education (Redd, 1998).

Although, these institutions share some of the same services, curricular, and programs as other colleges and universities in the United States; it is often perceived that HBCUs substantially lack programs, services, and initiatives for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students. Many researchers believe that this perception is because of institutional homophobia. Therefore, most of these institutions are perceived to promote heterosexuality by their implementation of policies; which lacks the consideration of LGBT students. Many national media headlines suggest that HBCUs are reluctant and ill-equipped to handle concerns of LGBT students.

Despite the negative stigmas associated with HBCU's effectiveness to addressing LGBT issues, a small number of HBCUs have made some effort to ensure inclusion for LGBT students. Many of the today's college and universities have LGBT initiatives that date back to the late 1960s and 1970s; whereas, many of the LGBT initiatives at HBCUs started as early as the 2000s.

This creative project is focused on the creation and formation of a training manual that would assist HBCUs in implementing programs and initiatives for LGBT students. The training manual will highlight some of today's current programs and initiatives at

peer institutions; while providing HBCUs a recommended approach to implementing these programs and initiatives based on their unique campus culture and climate.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this creative project is to craft a literary resource that HBCUs can use to assist in creating initiatives and programs for LGBT students. There is very limited to no research on the topic of LGBT program and initiatives at HBCUS. Most in-depth qualitative literature focuses primarily homosexuality within African American males attending HBCUs, but exclude lesbian, bisexuals, and transgender students. In addition, HBCUs have made national headlines in regards to their lack of abilities to proper handle LGBT concerns. Therefore, a training manual would be very beneficial for implementing LGBT programs and initiatives at HBCUs. A training manual will provide a consortium of information to educate HBCU administrators, faculty, staff, and students while providing them with essential tools to creating a safe campus environment, inclusion, sensitivity among the campus community, and an understanding of the sexual identity process of LBGT students.

### **Significance of the Study**

Although HBCUs play a very instrumental role in the higher education community, many of these institutions are some of the least progressive in regards to providing adequate programs and initiatives for LGBT students. There are several factors that contribute to the institutional cultures associated with the perceived negative relationship between HBCUs and LGBT students; however, a manual on how to effective train student, faculty and administrators will assist in alleviating many of these common problems. This literary resource will not only fulfill the objectives outlined in the

purpose, but will also assist these institutions in removing the negative stigmas associated with HBCUs and LGBT issues.

### **Scopes and Limitations**

The training manual is designed to be beneficial for students, faculty, and administrators of HBCUs. Because HBCUs range in size, structure, cultures, campus climates and financial needs; the training manual is written from a general perspective.

It is imperative that HBCUs are fully aware of institutional factors associated with their respective institutions; since many of the recommendations presented in the training manual may not be suitable for every institution.

In addition, the training manual is based solely on training manuals that are produce for traditional American colleges and universities with adaptations for HBCUs; therefore, most of the programs and initiatives highlighted in the manual are considered successful programs and initiatives at traditional American institutions, not HBCUs.

### **Organization of the Paper**

This creative project is organized in four chapters. The second chapter consists of an extensive literature review on HBCUs, LGBT student identity development theories, and LGBT training manuals. The third chapter consists of the methodology utilized in the construction of the creative project. The fourth chapter showcases the training manual and in its entirety.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### **Summary of the Project**

There is an abundance of useful resources that assist post secondary institutions in creating programs and initiatives for LGBT students; however, HBCUs have been less progressive in creating these services for LGBT students due to lack of training and resources (Patton, 2011; Young, 2011). Many of today's training manuals utilized and created for institution regarding LGBT students and issues consist of topics which explore: LGBT identity development, academic and institution climate, faculty and student relationships, campus and community resources, and explanations of commonly used terms and symbols in the LGBT community (Hothem & Keene, 1998). The training manual will be design specifically for HBCUs and some of the cultural and social issues associated with these specific institutions.

#### **Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs)**

For centuries, HBCUs have been pioneers for providing educational opportunities for African Americans seeking higher education (Redd, 1998). Section 322 of Title III of the Black College and University Act defines *historically Black colleges and universities* as historically Black institutions that existed before 1964 with a historic mission of providing education for African Americans as well as being open to all (Davis II & Brown, 2001; Redd; Roebuck & Murty, 1993, Sims, 1994). Since the 1800s, these



institutions continue to grow despite its strong history of discrimination from state and federal government. There are currently 103 public, private, four-year, and two-year HBCUs in the United States (Bonner 2001, Davis, II., & Brown, 2001; Gasman, Baez, Drezner, Sedgwick, Tudico, & Schmid., 2007;Hirt, 2006). HBCUs are located in 14 southern states, three northern state, three midwestern states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Island (Roebuck & Murty). Historically, HBCUs' mission has been to provide educational opportunities for low-income and students with low academic preparation regardless of race, ethnicity, or income. Many of today's HBCUs are comprehensive, liberal, and religiously affiliated institution with very few research institutions; therefore, HBCUs collectively "cannot be conceptualized within the traditional higher education hierarchy in American (Hurt, p109). Many experts argue that HBCUs need to be placed in their own distinct classification system within the higher education community. Despite many of the current hardships of HBCUs such as lack of funding and low enrollments, these institutions still strive to provide educational opportunities for all types of students. Although, many critics challenge the relevance of HBCUs because of the high percentage of African American students attending predominately White institutions (PWIs); however, these institutions will continue to be a major contributors to the academic success of all students.

## **History**

The history of HBCUs can be traced to the early 1800s during the pre-Civil War era. The first three HBCUs: the Institute for Colored Youth (renamed to Cheyenne University), Lincoln University, and Wilberforce University, were founded by White philanthropist with the intention to provide religious education and basic training for

African-Americans (Bond, 1976; Redd, 1998). These institutions experienced limited educational success since many African Americans were enslaved during this era.

In the 1860s, the Emancipation Proclamation freed approximately four million slaves in the United States; however, Blacks, with very few exceptions, were restricted from obtaining a college degree (Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Sims, 1994; Thompson, 1973). During the period of 1865 to 1873 many of the most prestigious HBCUs were founded, with some of the first HBCU being private institutions. The Freedman's Bureau bill of 1865, which mandated all abandoned and confiscated land within the southern states to be allocated between every male freed slave and refugee, assisted the establishments of many HBCUs (Cox, 1958, Roebuck & Murty; Redd 1998). These institutions such as: Howard University, Atlanta University (currently known as Clark Atlanta University), St. Augustine College, Fisk University, and Johnston C. Smith University, were all established because of the Freedman's Bureau. Two other federal laws, the National Land Grant Act of 1862 (also known as the First Morrill Act) and Second Morrill Act of 1890, also help to establish HBCUs (Davis, 1933; Redd). Many institutions that were established by funds authorized by the First Morrill Act were exclusively for White institutions; however, the Second Morrill Act mandated that all states that had dual segregated higher education systems for Whites and African Americans must provide a land-grant institution specifically for African Americans. Institutions that were established under the Morrill's Acts include: Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College (currently known as Alcorn State University), North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical State University, and University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. The Second Morrill Act was the initial practice of "separate but equal" within an

educational system, which would later be legalized through the U.S Supreme Court's decision in the 1856 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (Roebuck & Murty). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, most HBCUs did not confer degrees; however, they taught religious education, manual trade, and social skills (Redd).

In the early twentieth century, most HBCUs were considered "normal" schools for the African Americans that provided training in public elementary and secondary education (Redd, 1998). These institutions provided education for nearly all of the African American teachers in the United States. Although, the Second Morrill Act provided financial support for HBCUs, most of these institutions had limited financial resources. Many HBCUs received additional funding from organized philanthropy such as: Black churches, religious groups, and White philanthropist (Redd; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). One of the largest contributors to the financial sustainability of HBCUs was funds generated by the General Education Board founded by John D. Rockefeller. From 1902 to 1960, the General Education Board contributed \$63 million to African-Americans and HBCUs until the 1960s.

The 1950s and 1960s, brought major changes to HBCUs, both positively and negatively. One of the major historical landmark cases that impacted HBCUs was the Supreme Court's decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case of 1954 and 1955 (Redd, 1998). This decision declared the principle of "separate but equal" within public schools unconstitutional; therefore, making it unlawful for public institutions to discriminate against students based on race (Jones & Hancock, 2005; Reed; Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Zirkel & Cantor, 2004). Before this monumental case, HBCUs had experienced an increase in student enrollment since African Americans were denied

access to predominately White institutions (PWIs). As a result of the case, enrollment at HBCUs declined because many African Americans were enrolling into PWIs. By the 1968, only 36% of African Americans attended HBCUs (Redd). Due to low enrollment and low finances, many HBCUs closed or merged with other institutions to continue to exist.

It was not until the 1980s and 1990s, when enrollment increased at HBCUs (Redd, 1998). One of the contributing factors to the rise of student enrollment is because of an increase in federal support for HBCUs. In 1986, Congress passed a new program, the Historically Black College Act, which was a part of the Title III of the Higher Education Act (Redd, 1998; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). The Historically Black College Act “authorized a \$100 million dollars exclusively for historically Black colleges. Under this act, Congress approved \$50.7 million in the 1987 fiscal year, with at least \$350,000 going to each eligible historically Black college” (Roebuck & Murty, p. 48). In 1991, the Bush administration implemented a controversial plan that would reformate how HBCUs receive funds from federal agencies. Within this plan, HBCUs would be divided into categories that would differentiate them by programs and institutional missions. This plan would allow federal agencies to fund specific HBCU programs that closely related to the agencies’ need. Many HBCUs president were in opposition to this initiative with beliefs that federal agencies would only fund subsets within HBCUs that were already heavily funded. Bush’s plan to focus on subset would allow federal agencies to over look suffering institutions. Many presidents feared that this would create a caste-system among HBCUs and would allow federal agencies funding to “make rich HBCUs richer and poor institutions poorer” (Roebuck & Murty, p. 49).

As HBCUs thrive through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, some of the contemporary issues regarding these institutions will be addressed later in the literature.

### **Christian Underpinnings**

Many of today's HBCUs were founded by Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal, Christian Methodist Episcopal, United Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal Church organizations (Challenor, 2002). Xavier University is the only HBCU that was founded based on Catholic principles.

In the 1800s, the first religious group that assisted in formulating formal system of schools and colleges for Blacks was the Northern missionary groups (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). The Northern missionary groups sent missionaries to southern states to provide materials and assistance to freed slaves. In addition, many of these groups provided education and religion to freed slaves and their children. In 1861, the American Missionary Association (AMA) assisted in establishing several Black colleges and normal schools. During the era of 1865 to 1890s, northern missionaries groups and church assisted in establishing 200 Black private institutions in the South.

Many of these HBCUS were staffed primarily by White missionaries. Most taught freed slaves how to read and trained them to become clergymen. By the 1870s, the main three contributors to funding HBCUs were: AMA, the Freedman's Bureau, and Black churches (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). As a result of heavy contributions from northern missionaries and Black church, many of the HBCUs focused primarily on teaching and religious education. The Black church groups that financially supported HBCUs were the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist

Episcopal Church of Zion. Black churches based their contributions on institutions that shared their Christian values.

Although, these institutions have transitioned into more secular institution, some of these institutions continue to maintain their strong affiliations to their respective church sponsors (Challenor, 2002; Roebuck & Murty, 1998).

### **Contemporary Issues**

For centuries, HBCUs have persevered throughout hardship since their establishments in the nineteenth century. Despite the institution size and lack of resources, HBCUs account for 28% of bachelor degrees conferred by African Americans in the United States (Reed, 1998). In addition, HBCUs have lower percentages of college drop-out rates compared to PWIs. These institutions have made exceptional strives to become some of the leading institutions for educating all students; however, there are new issues that have arisen at these institutions.

**Financial issues.** Since their early establishment, HBCUs have struggled with operating with limited financial resources. Although, many HBCUs receive high revenue from enrollment, these figures mask that many institutions are operating with major deficiencies. There are several factors that contribute to their financial crisis such as tuition and endowments (Gasman, 2009). Approximately 90% of students attending both public and private HBCUs receive federal financial aid. In addition, HBCUs have tuitions cost which are 50% lower than historic White institutions. Another contributing factor for HBCUs financial crisis is their endowments, which are substantially lower than PWIs. Historically, these institutions have received lower funding from federal and state governments, corporations, and other agencies compared to other PWIs. Over the years

the financial crisis has been so severe that many HBCU leaders have been forced to make crucial decision to sustain their institution. The number of HBCUs has dropped drastically over the years due to the financial state of these institutions.

**Defending HBCUs against the critics.** Although, HBCUs have continuously provided exceptional education for all demographic of students, however, critics are questioning their relevance. According to many national college ranking publications, HBCUs rankings are much lower than PWI. The low ranking given to HBCUs is generally related to their low endowments in comparison to other PWIs (Curtin & Gasman, 2004; Gasman & Nelson, 2011) In many cases, today's media negatively portray HBCUs by misleading the public by exacerbating issues within these institutions. In the September 2010, the co-editor and member of the editorial board for the *Wall Street Journal*, Jamie Riley, published an article highly criticizing HBCUs entitled, "Black Colleges Need a New Mission." Many educational researchers and leaders challenged his article because many felt that he compared HBCUs to Ivy League institutions with larger endowments and based many of his arguments on out dated statistics (Gasman & Nelson). This article was received nationally as a poor reflection on the current state of HBCUs. Many of the scrutiny and false claims by the media are due to the limited to no research published on HBCUs (Curtin & Gasman; Gasman & Nelson).

**LGBT issues.** Many of today's American's post-secondary institutions are on the forefront for providing equality and resources for the increase in LGBT students; however, there is a strong perception that HBCUs are making limited advancements for LGBT students (Patton, 2011; Young, 2011). Many researchers believe this perception is

due to institutional homophobia present at HBCUs. Therefore, many HBCUs are believed to promote heterosexuality and implement policies without the consideration of their affects on LGBT students and the community. Many media headlines suggest that HBCUs are reluctant and ill-equipped to handle concerns of LGBT students. The most noted all-male HBCU, Morehouse College, has received heavy media coverage for its reluctant to identify and address its issues regarding its gay community. In 2002, a Morehouse College student was severely beaten with a bat for the assumption of making sexual advances towards another student. Although, this crime made media headlines across the United States, little was done to address the concerns of gay students at the institution. In 2009, Morehouse College made national headlines again for its adopted “Appropriate Attire Policy” which banned male students from wearing dresses, make-up, high-heels, and purses (Mungin, 2009). The “Appropriate Attire Policy” brought forth major concerns regarding freedom of expression and whether the institution was implementing policies to restrict cross-dressing among five Morehouse students. Another HBCU, Hampton University, was accused of discriminating against the LBGT student organization, SPEAK. The university refused to recognize the organization twice without giving the students sufficient information to the institution’s refusal (Patton). Patton also expressed that if these incidents continue to appear at these institutions it may “suggest that HBCUs consciously work to prevent the establishment of LGBT oriented organization that students in these environments may keep their sexual identity secret in order to obtain their education (p. 77).



## **Understanding LGBT Students of Color through Identity Developmental Theories**

Throughout history, researchers have defined and conceptualized the various identities within individuals. *Identity* can be defined as “the sense of self that emerges from the interaction between the individual and social experience” (Rhoads, 1994, p. 12). Identity formation is considered a vital part of individual’s development and psychosocial well-being (Erikson, 1980; Smith & Silva, 2011). The identity formation process can be challenging for many individuals, especially persons who identify within the LGBT community. Therefore, the process of identity formation can be more complex for individuals of other racial groups (Porter, 1998); “lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons of African descent continue to face the question ‘Who are you first?’ and ‘Are you Black first or gay first?’” (Washington & Wall, 2006, p. 179). These conflicting identities could cause major identity confusion within LGBT student of color (Patton, 2011).

Researchers have examined the experience of LGBT college students; however, most of today’s literature do not examines LBGT students of color, especially attending HBCUs. Most researchers that examine LBGT students of colors, base their identity development on theories such as: Jones and McEwen’s Multiple Dimension theory and Cass’ Sexual Identity theory (Patton, 2011; Washington & Wall; Wall & Washington, 1991). Racial identity also plays a major role in how LGBT students of color defined their identity. These identity developmental theories can assist in understanding the identity configuration of LGBT students of color.

### **Multiple Dimension of Identity Theory**

There has been an increase in literature in regards to how social constructs contribute to developing identity. Previously, many theorist and literature only focused

on one-dimension of identity development; therefore, many rarely acknowledged or examine the multiple dimensions within individuals (Jones, & McEwen, 2000; Reynolds & Pope, 1991). Researchers are increasingly exploring how identity dimension such as race, culture, social class, social orientation, and other socio-cultural and socio-political factors influence how individuals construct identity (Trickett, Watts, & Birman, 1994).

Most of the today's literature reference to the multiple identity dimension model (2002) created by Susan R. Jones and Marylu K. McEwen (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2000). Jones and McEwen created their historical multiple-dimension framework model based on the previous

**Reynolds and Pope's multiple identity model.** Reynolds and Pope's (1991) multiple identity model is primarily based on the idea of multiple oppressions, which was developed through case studies. The term *oppression* is defined as "a system that allows access to the services, rewards, benefits, and privileges of society based on membership in a particular group (p. 174). The term *multiple oppression* is when an individual is a member of two or more oppressed groups. For example, a Black female who is a lesbian is a member of three oppressed groups. These theorists used multiple oppressions as a lens to explore several case studies to determine how expressions reflected complexities within cultural diversity.

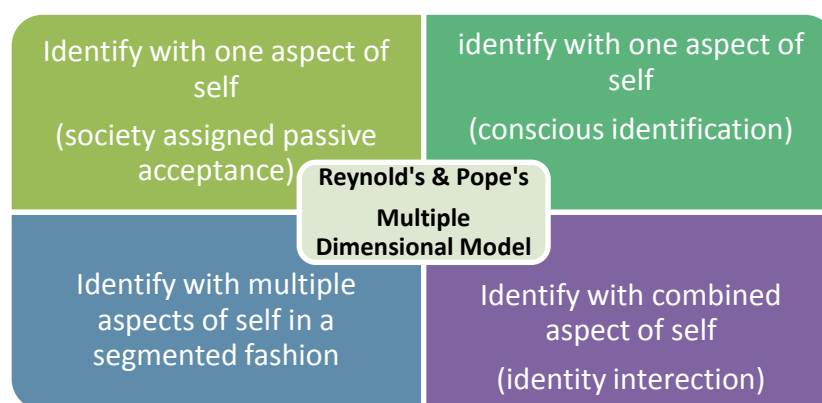
Reynolds and Pope's Multiple Identity Model (Figure 1) proposed four ways that individuals deal with oppression within multiple identities:

1. Identifying with one aspect of self that is socially assigned (e.g., gender or race).

This option is considered a passive approach, because one's identity is

constructed based on the influences such as: society, community, family and other external factors. This may cause individuals to suppress one aspect within them to feel more accepted within various social structures.

2. Identifying with one aspect of self which is determined by the individual (e.g., sexual orientation). This option describes an individual identifying with one aspect without including other oppressed identities.
3. Identifying with multiple aspects of self, which is expressed in a segmented fashion. This option is also a passive approach, because individuals may shift between one aspects and another depending on time. For example, in one setting an individual may identify as Black, and in another may identify as being a lesbian. This option allows the individual embrace all aspects of one's identity while living in separate or unconnected worlds.
4. Identifying with the combined self. This option expresses the identity resolution between the individual and their multiple dimensions. The identity resolution causes individual to able to intersect the various multiple dimensions within their identity.



*Figure 1.* Model of Multidimensional Identity. Adapted from Reynolds and Pope (1991).

**Jones and McEwen’s multiple dimensions of identity model.** The Jones and McEwen’s Multiple Dimension Models use a different approach to understanding the multiple identities than Reynolds and Pope’s model. McEwen used her physics and mathematics background to develop a model that conceptualizes the developmental processes regarding multiple identities (Jones, & McEwen, 2000). The model is based on conical structure with varying radii and height to represent the interactions and intersection of multiple identity development within individuals. Each individual’s length and circumference is different; therefore, increasing lengths and circumference represents a greater complexity within an individual. The length and circumference is heavily influenced by factors such as: age, experiences, education, and reflection change. The two dimensional cross section within the conical structure represents the development of the individual at the particular time. These dimensions intersect to display that dimension cannot be understood from a singular dimension.

The Jones and McEwen’s Multiple Dimensions of Identity Model (Figure 2) have several instrumental parts which explain how the influence of changing contexts creates an ongoing process of identity construction:

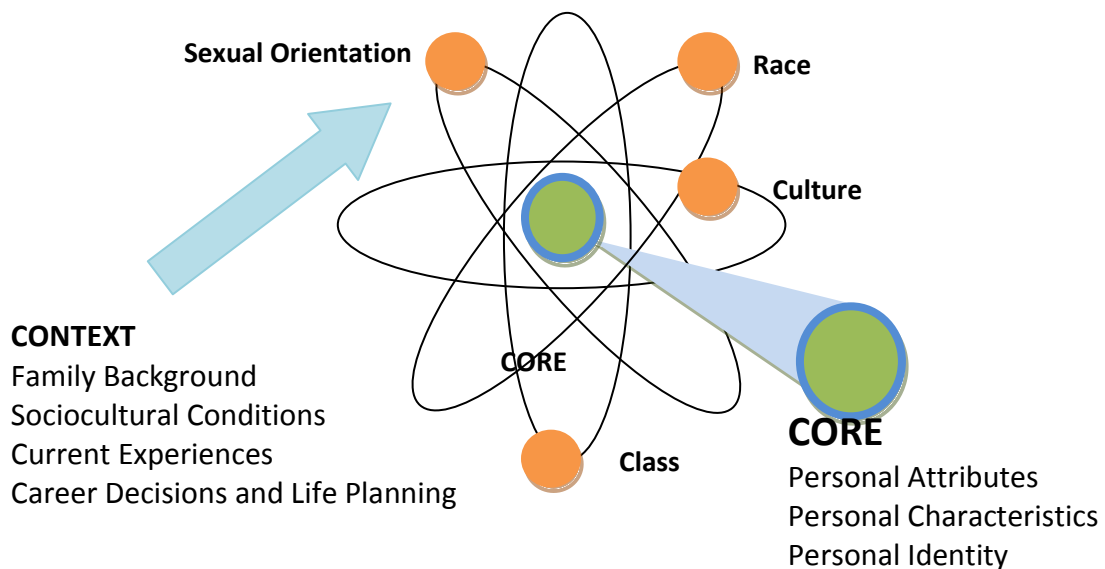
***The core.*** The center of the model represents the core-identity of the individual, which represent the “valued personal attributes and characteristics” (Jones & McEwen, 2002, p. 408). The core of the structure is an instrumental aspect of the model because it represents the individual’s inner-identity. Most times external dimensions such as: gender, race, culture, and religion are integrally connected to the core.

***Intersecting circles of identity.*** According to Jones and McEwen (2000), “the intersecting circles of identity in the model represent the significant identity dimensions

and contextual influences (p. 408). The various identity dimensions and contextual influences include: race, culture, sexual orientation, social class, religion, and gender.

The circles interact with one another other represents Jones and McEwen’s concept that no one dimension may be understood singularly.

**Relative salience.** The relative salience of the various identity dimensions is “indicated by dots located on each of the identity dimension circles. The location of the dot and its proximity to the core represents the particular salience of that identity dimension (Jones & McEwen, 2000, p. 410). For example, if an individual is particularly salient with their gender at that particular time, the dot on the identity dimension would be located closer towards the core. In contrast, if an individual is not particularly salient with their sexual orientation at the time, the dot on the identity dimension would be located farther away from the core.



*Figure 2.* Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity. Adapted from Jones and McEwen (2002).

## **Sexual Identity Theory**

As LGBT college students become more prevalent in today's college and universities, researchers are examining the identity formation and experiences of LGBT students. Although, there are many theories on sexual identity theories, Vivienne Cass' Sexual Identity theory (1979) is the first model to be published and most highly referenced in regards to understanding sexual identity formation (Fassinger, 1998). Cass uses a six-stage linear model to explain sexual identity development (Cass, 1984; Eliason, 1996; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010; Fassinger, 1998). The six stages consist of: identity confusion, identity comparison, identity tolerance, identity acceptance, identity pride, and identity synthesis.

**Stage one: Identity confusion.** During this stage, the individual develops feelings, thoughts, and behaviors associated with homosexuality. According to Eliason (1996), "These feelings disrupt the self-identity as heterosexual and cause confusion" (p. 40). This state of confusion initiates a sense of exploration within the individual, which leads the individual to the next stage.

**Stage two: Identity comparison.** As the individual explores their newly noticed homosexual thoughts, behaviors, and feelings, the individual becomes self-alienated. During this period of alienation, the individual becomes more aware of potential similarities and differences within themselves and homosexuals. This stage is important because their self discovery could lead to individuals wanting to continue or discontinue their sexual exploration.

**Stage three: Identity tolerance.** Within this stage, the individual become more committed to their homosexuality. The individual begins to seek homosexual friends and

associations. Individuals in this stage limit their disclosure of their sexuality identity to heterosexual, which usually causes them to live double lives.

**Stage four: Identity acceptance.** The initial interactions with homosexuals and their associations in stage three play an instrumental role in stage four. If the initial contacts were perceived well, then the individual will move rapidly to accepting their new sexual identity. The individual begins to disclose their new identity to close friends and family.

**Stage five: Identity pride.** Individuals in this stage will start develop a sense of pride for their sexual identity. In addition, the individual develops a stern loyalty to the homosexual group by devaluing and discrediting heterosexuals. This view towards heterosexuals could be associated by societal views of devaluing homosexuals. Individuals will begin to “dichotomize the world between heterosexual and homosexual” to develop congruency (Eliason, 1996, p. 40).

**Stage six: Identity synthesis.** This stage marks the end of the sexual identity configuration. The individual becomes congruent and fully accepts all aspects of their sexual identity. This congruency represents the individual’s ability to view their sexuality as one aspect of their total identity. During this process, the individual will begin to merge their private and public life

After Cass’ sexual identity model was published, it initiated other researchers to examine sexual identity. Many of the earlier sexual identity models and studies use small or bias sampling to conceptualize sexual identity (Fassinger, 1998). Therefore, many theories were based on the experiences of gay men; which were later generalized to include women. Many of today’s literature expose the discrepancies within these sexual

identity models; while examining the different experiences between the subgroups within the LGBT community. According to Fassinger, “Although there has been criticism of Cass’ model, its familiarity to many and the brevity of its assessments instruments suggest that it will remain widely used within Student Affairs as a model for understand LGB students” (p. 15).

### **Racial Identity: Cross’ Nigrescence Theory**

The study of nigrescence evolved around the 1960s, when African American psychologists tried to formulate and map an understanding to how identity transformation occurred within African Americans during Black social movement. The term *nigrescence* is derived from the French word meaning “the process of becoming black” (Cross, 1991, p.147). William E. Cross is the Black American psychologist that formulated the nigrescence model which identifies the stages African Americans move through to develop identity. The nigrescence theory has played a major part in understanding African American identity over the last three decades, and can has been used as the foundation of other Black identity theoretical explications and empirical studies in the field (Worrell, Cross & Vandiver, 2001). Cross (1991) based the nigrescence theory on clinical observations, case studies and participants observations. His first Black identity model, “Negro-to Black Conversation Model,” used self-analysis and participation observations to build the foundations for his nigrescence theory (p. xi).

In the 1970s, the nigrescence model encompasses five stages which Cross believes African Americans transition from self-hatred to self-acceptance. As of 2001, Cross has revised his nigrescence model and modified it to four stages. The four stages included: Pre-encounter, Encounter, Immersion-Emersion, and Internalization.



**Stage 1: Pre-encounter.** The pre-encounter stage represented the initial identity which is in mostly referred to a period of assimilation (Worrell, Cross, & Vandiver, 2001). Cross believes that African American attempt to assimilate the customs and ways of white Americans; while rejecting those belonging to African Americans. Also, this sense of anti-Black within African Americans is believed to influence many to have a sense of self-hatred.

**Stage 2: Encounter.** The encounter stage represents a period when African Americans encounter an experience or situation that challenges their initial identity. These experiences could be large-scale or small individual experiences (e.g. the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King or racial profiling in a department store) that could challenge the individual's views of white Americans. In addition, an individual does not have to negative experience during the encounter stage. For example, the election of President Barak Obama could allow some African Americans to regain trust in the African American community and challenge their initial self-hatred or anti-black mentality.

**Stage 3: Immersion-emersion.** The immersion-emersion stage is the climax of the identity transformation. During this stage, many African Americans have completely immersed themselves in black culture; while rejecting anything associated with white America. These individuals will adopt African American hairstyles, clothing, music, and anything that will express their Black nationality. Also during this period of "intense Black involvement," many African Americans develop a sense of disdain towards white Americans for being responsible for their miseducation and deception towards their

African and African American heritage and the ways of society (Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2011).

**Stage 4: Internalization.** The internalization stage is the final stage of the nigrescence where African Americans conceptualize their Blackness. During this stage the African American develops a sense of “Black self-actualization” which allows them to accept the positive aspects of their Black culture (Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokly, Cross & Worrell, 2011). The individuals will begin to remove feelings of hatred and guilt which were generated from the immersion-emersion stage. This period marks the beginning of internalizing and self-healing.

### **LGBT Training Manuals for Colleges & Universities**

Today, there are an abundance of resources and literature that aid institutions to create LGBT programs, initiatives, and services. As LGBT student population increase on many college campuses, institutions are seeking ways to create a safe learning and living environments for these students. Despite for the demand for these resource, very little to no resource or training manuals have been designed specifically for HBCUs. According to Hothem and Keene (1998), “training guides or manuals should contain sections addressing LGBT identity, homophobia, issues in the classroom, campus/community resources, and a glossary of the language and symbols of the LGBT community” (p. 367).

### **LGBT Identity**

As mentioned previously in the literature, Vivian Cass is one of the most reference theorists in regards to gay identity formation. Cass uses a six stage model to express an individual’s transition to form their sexual identity.

## **Homophobia**

The term *homophobia* can be defined as “as prejudice against individuals based on non-heterosexual orientation, and is characterized as intense fear or hatred of those who desire individuals of the same gender” (Wickens & Sandlin, 2010, p. 652).

Homophobia is one of the major issues LGBT students face on college campus.

Although, many institutions have increased their awareness and implementation of services to create a holistic and safe campus environment, homophobia is still present on many of today’s colleges and universities. Based on the findings of a 2010 national survey, “despite inclusive policies and institutional commitments, the fear or experience of customary and irrational prejudice remains a common problem for LGBT students and members of the faculty and staff” (Cramer & Ford, 2011, p.4).

## **Issues in the Classroom**

One of the leading issues regarding LGBT students in today’s college classroom is the promotion of heterosexism. Heterosexism in many of today’s college classrooms creates a learning environment that promotes heteronormativity. The term *heteronormativity* is defined as the “presumes and privileges heterosexuality and monitors ‘proper’ and accepted gender identities through regulation of sexual arrangements” (Wilkens & Sandlin, 2010, p.653). Many colleges and universities express heterosexuality through various facets of institutional policies and language. For example, a professor may use language in a classroom that would assume that everyone in the classroom is heterosexual. Therefore, many institutions have made tremendous strides to train faculty on diversity issues and inclusion in today’s classroom.

## **Campus and Community Resources**

There are an abundance of campus and community resources and services that post secondary institutions provides for LGBT students. Based on *the Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students* by Shane Windmeyer (2006), some of these major resources offered at institutions include:

- Student groups
- Out students, faculty, and staff
- LGBT resource centers/offices
- LGBT housing

## **Glossary of LGBT Language and Symbols**

Many of reference books regarding LGBT student, services, and programs contain glossaries that explain language, symbols, and national holidays within the LGBT community (e.g. rainbow flags, Gay Pride Month, and National Coming Out Day).

## **Summary**

Although some HBCUs have made some advances in providing services for LGBT, these institutions are substantially lagging behind other U.S institutions in providing adequate support, services and programs for LGBT students.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this creative project is to craft a literary resource that HBCUs can use to assist in creating programs and initiatives for LGBT students. There is very limited to no research on the topic of LGBT students, services, programs, and initiatives present at HBCUs. Most in-depth qualitative literature focuses primarily on homosexuality within African American males attending HBCUs, but exclude lesbian, bisexuals, and transgender students. In addition, HBCUs have made national headlines in regards to their lack of abilities to proper handle LGBT concerns. Therefore, a training manual would be very beneficial for implementing LGBT services, programs, and initiatives at HBCUs. A training manual will provide a consortium of information to educate HBCU administrators, faculty, staff, and students while providing them with essential tools in creating a safe campus environment, inclusion, sensitivity among the campus community, and an understanding of the sexual identity process of LGBT students.

#### **Methodology**

The initial steps involved in this creative project consisted of an extensive review of existing literature regarding HBCUs, identity development theories of LGBT students of color, and LGBT training manuals and resources. Next, various institutions were

researched to gather information on successful programs, services, best practices, and initiatives for LGBT students on college campuses. In addition, information was gathered on several HBCUs that currently had form of services, programs, and organizations available for LGBT students. Lastly, all the information was evaluated to create training manual designed for the distinct campus climate and social cultures associated with these institutions.

### **Design of the Project**

The training manuals was created to assist HBCUs implement programs and initiatives to aid in providing efficient services for LGBT students attending these institutions. Because HBCUs range in types, sizes, funding, and cultures, it is imperative to take a generalized approach for recommendations since each program or initiatives may not be appropriate for every institution. This training manual provides an overview of some of the best practices, successful programs, services, and initiatives at peer institutions and modified to accommodate the distinct institutional cultures of HBCUs. In addition, the manual will assist in informing HBCUs of the cultures, symbols, and current issues regarding the LGBT community, especially related to students attending HBCUs. The training manual consists of several sections that will include assessments, supplemental information, and templates of programs, services and initiative that HBCUs can implement at their institutions.

The first section will consist of an historical overview of LGBT issues prevalent at HBCUs, as well as some of the most current programs offered at these types of institutions. In addition, this section will also present a list of some of the most current resource centers and student organizations present at HBCUs.

The second section will be dedicated to discussing LGBT student identity theory. It will encompass Jones and McEwen's Multiple Dimension Identity (2002) and Cass' Queer Theory (1991). This section will help HBCUs understand the developmental processes of LGBT students attending HBCUs. This will also give student affairs professionals and faculty a better understanding of the various stages students transition through as they develop their identity; while making recommendations that are based primarily on the cultures associated with HBCUs.

The third section will be based on understanding homophobia and how to create a safe campus for LGBT students. This section will define homophobia and how it affects campus climate. This section also focuses on the various societal and cultural norms of the African American community and the Black church influence campus culture and homophobia on HBCUs. Recommendations are also made on how HBCUs can improve and educate the relations between LGBT and African American community.

The fourth section will be based on Safe Zone training. This section will give HBCUs all the information need to create safe zones and location on their campus. In addition, this section will consist of a list of the various types of Safe Zone training. Also, this section highlights how to find Safe Zone facilitators and topics that should be discussed within the training sessions.

The fifth section will consist of information on how HBCUs can implement student groups and organizations specifically for LGBT students and to assist in creating gay-straight allies. This section will give HBCUs insight on the importance of student organizations in regards campus safety and inclusion within the LGBT community.

Included in this section are recommendations on selecting an advisor, drafting constitutions and by-laws, funding, and programs.

The sixth section will consist of a glossary of terms and symbols of the LGBT community. This glossary will be very helpful in understanding the cultures and issues associated with LGBT students.

### **Summary**

The training manual will be a useful resource for HBCUs in becoming more conscious of LGBT students. The fulfillment of its purpose is to ensure that these institutions are providing exception programs and services for LGBT students while creating a safe and inclusive campus for these students.



CHAPTER FOUR  
CREATING A TRAINING MANUAL

**Project Summary**

For this creative project, I created a training manual for implementing LGBT programs and initiatives for HBCUs. This project provides a broad spectrum of recommendations and knowledge that can be altered to fit any HBCU. The concept of this project is to provide a literary resource for HBCUs to assist in implementing services, programs, and initiatives for LGBT students. The project provides the reader with current trends within the LGBT community regarding, especially HBCUs, and several recommendations for implementing programs, services, and initiatives. Implementing a training manual gives students, faculty, and administrators the opportunity to positively impact the LGBT and campus community.

The project consists of the following sections:

- Section 1: Current State of LGBT Services and Issues at HBCUs, page 30.
- Section 2: LGBT Development Theory, page 37.
- Section 3: Understanding Homophobia, page 43.
- Section 4: Safe Zone Training, page 46.
- Section 5: Developing LGBT Student Organizations, page 51.
- Section 6: Glossary of Terms, page 58.

# SECTION ONE

## Current State of **LGBT Services** and **Issues** at **HBCUs**

For centuries, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have been pioneers for providing educational opportunities for African Americans and underrepresented student populations. Since their early establishments in the late eighteenth century, these institutions have provided higher education opportunities to African Americans who were initially denied access to higher education in the United States. Currently, these institutions serve a plethora of students ranging in various ages, nationalities, religions, race, social class, and sexuality.

Although several HBCUs pride themselves on providing access to marginalized student population, many criticize these institutions for ignoring their LGBT students. HBCUs have made national media headlines regarding how they address LGBT issues.

- In 2002, a student was severely beaten on the campus of Morehouse College. Morehouse College is an all-male and private HBCU located in Atlanta, Georgia.

On November 4, 2002 a student, whose name is kept anonymous for protection, sustained a fractured skull from being beaten by sophomore, Aaron Price, with a baseball bat. The student, who was not wearing his glasses at the time, peered into Price's shower stall in an attempt to look for his roommate. In retaliation, Price attacked the victim with a baseball bat while stating hate words geared towards homosexuals and the ones that attending Morehouse College. When this incident made national headlines, it revealed the suppressed homophobia at Morehouse College. Many students during that time revealed that homophobia was a growing issue at Morehouse College, and if the issues continued to be unaddressed many threaten to leave the institution.

- In 2007, Hampton University was accused of denying recognition to a gay-straight alliance student organization. Hampton University is a private college located in the Virginia Peninsula. Students Promoting Equality, Action, and Knowledge, SPEAK, is the gay-straight alliance that was continually denied recognition in Hampton's student organization charter process. Hampton University had a strict charter process which only charter new student organizations every two years. SPEAK applied for recognition in 2004 and 2006 and were denied. Although the university denied the claims of discrimination, it failed to recognize the importance of a gay-straight alliance organizations and how it would increase inclusion and campus safety for LGBT students.
- In 2009, Morehouse College made national headlines for implementing an "Appropriate Attire Policy" which banned male students from wearing dresses,

make-up, high-heels, and purses. The dress code was implemented to regulate the attire of five male students who were wearing female clothing on campus. The university claimed that the student's attire did not represent the institutions idea of "Morehouse Men." Although Morehouse claimed to have met with the campus' Safe Space before implementing, the policy, many students felt as if the dress code violated student's freedom of expression. Also, many criticize the policy for its insensitivity to potential transgender students.

- In 2012, a student and drum major of Florida A&M University (FAMU) were beaten to death in an act of hazing after a FAMU and Bethune-Cookman University football game. The 26 year old, Robert Champion, died participated in a hazing ritual which was part of an initiation process into the university's marching Band. Champion received severe blows to his body which caused internal bleeding in his body that led his body into shock. Several months after the crime, the parents of Champion revealed that Robert Champion was gay and that the severity of his beaten was probably contributed to his sexuality. There are still speculations on whether or not the beating was truly based on Champion's sexuality.

## **LGBT Services**

LGBT services at some of today's U.S colleges and Universities date back to the late 1960s; however, HBCUs have lagged substantially in the higher education community in

providing resources for LGBT students. Out of 104 recognized HBCUs, there is only one institution that has an LGBT center, Bowie State University, which was recently established in 2012. There are only a handful of documented HBCUs that have recognized student organizations and safe places designed for LGBT and straight-ally students.

### **HBCUs with LGBT RESOURCE CENTERS**

Bowie State University- [LGBTIA Resource Center](#)

### **HBCUs with STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Bennett College- [Brides](#)

Bowie State University- [Eyes Wide Shut](#)

Central State University- [Glue](#)

City College of New York- [Straight and Gay Alliance](#)

Cuyahoga Community College- [Lambda Gay Straight Alliance](#)

Dillard University- [One People](#)

Howard University- [Blagosh](#)

Johnson C. Smith University- [LGBT Alliance](#)

Medgar Evers College- [In the Life](#)

Morehouse College- [Safe Space](#)

Morgan State University- [Rainbow Soul](#)

Norfolk State University- [LEGASI](#)

North Carolina A&T State University- **SWIM**

Spelman College- **Afrekete**

South Carolina State University- **Unity**

University of District Columbia- **Outlaw**

Virginia State University- **GLAD**

West Virginia State University - **SAGA**

## **Issues**

There is several issues LGBT students face that is similar at all institutions, and there are several issues specifically at HBCUs

- **Homophobia.** The term *homophobia* can be defined as an intense hatred or dislike for individuals who desire to have sexual interest of individuals of the same gender. Homophobia is a shared issue among all college and universities in the United States and could be represented in students, faculty, and administrators.

*For example, a student may express his extreme dislike for a student on the sole bases of his or her sexual preference may be perceived as being homophobic.*

- **Institutional Homophobia.** The term *institutional homophobia* can be given to a college or university that expresses homophobia as an institution. This may be

very common at HBCUs, since many of these institutions were founded on Christian principles.

*For example, a college or university denying recognition of a LGBT student group on claims that the nature of the organization is against the institution's principles.*

- **Hate Crimes.** Hate crimes can be defined as any form of violence or crime where someone's sexuality was a motive for the act. Hate crimes can be found at many colleges and universities across the United States, and a major issue regarding campus safety for LGBT students.

*For example, a student that is severely beaten outside his residence hall based solely of his sexual orientation is considered a hate crime.*

- **Heteronormality.** The term *heteronormality* is defined as the idea or assumption that heterosexuality is the "normal" sexual orientation shared by all people. This is an issue that is shared at all types of institutions in the United States. Heteronormality generally affects inclusion of LGBT students in classrooms, curriculum, and policies implemented by a university.

*For example, a professor that based his lecture discussion on the assumption that everyone in the classroom is heterosexual may be exuding heteronormality.*

- **LGBT Insensitivity.** Many institutions across the United States have been accused of lacking sensitivity when dealing with LGBT issues. Sexual identity development or transformation may be a very challenging time for many college students; therefore, it is imperative that institutions train faculty, administrators, and students on how to deal with LGBT issues. LGBT insensitivity can be

expressed in the way conflicts are resolved, curricular formation, access in new and old facilities, and policies that are being implemented by the institutions.

*For example, an institution that fails to identify and create unisex or gender neutral restrooms may be insensitivity to students who are transgender or in the transition process of changing genders. The importance of unisex restrooms is often overlooked by many institutions. Many transgender students have experienced extreme discomfort using restrooms of their new identifying gender due to stress and fear associated with the potential reaction of others.*



# SECTION TWO

## Understanding **LGBT Identity Development**

Identity development is one of the most monumental and vital part of an individual's development and overall well-being. For decades, researchers have explored the identity development of college students, especially regarding LGBT students. Although, college students matriculate through their college experience constantly challenging their identity, students of color that identify within the LGBT community may experience a more challenging process in finding one's true identity. Many of these students may be challenged on what part of their identity should focus more on which may lead many to question, "should I focus more on being Black, or gay?" Also, many students may find it difficult to religious and gay, "can I be a Christian, and still be gay?" There are assortments of various identity dimensions that may intersect with a student's sexuality that may influence their identity development.

It is important for students, faculty, and administrators to understand how multiple dimensions intersect with student's sexual identity to form one's core identity; in addition to understanding the theory associated with sexuality identity development.

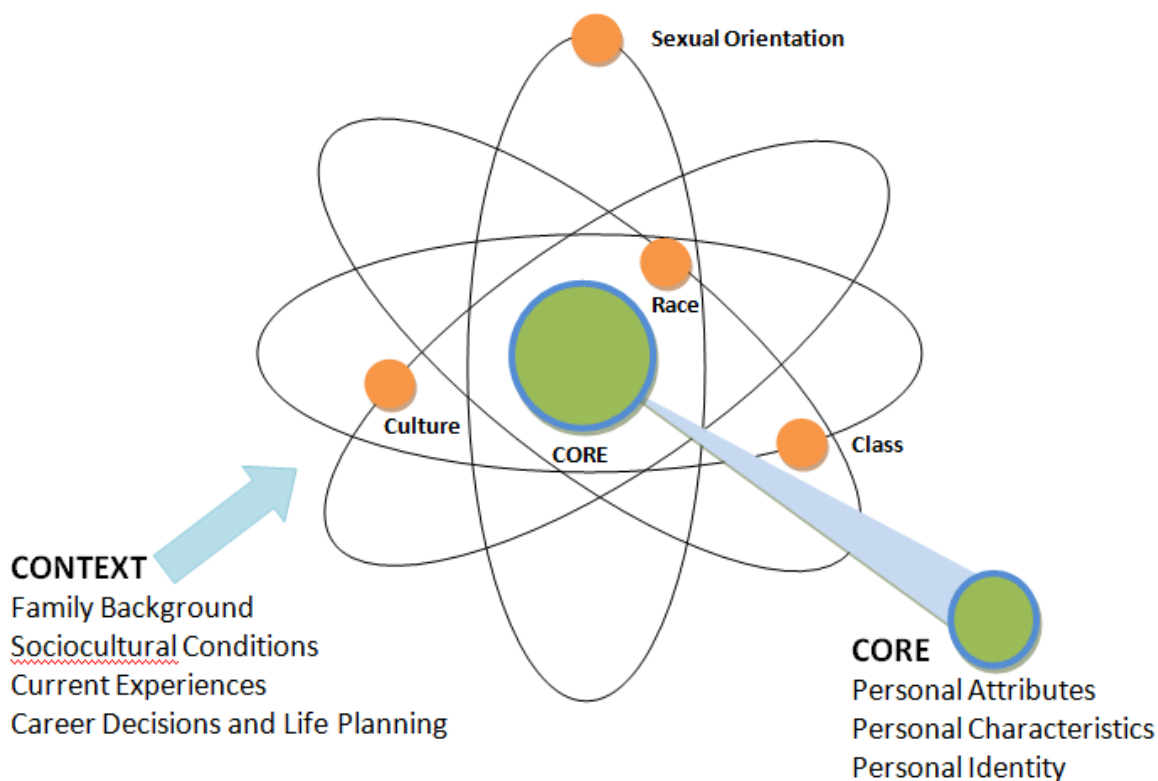
One of the reference models and theories to understanding multiple dimensions of identity and sexual identity in students is the McEwen & Jones Multiple Dimension of Identity Model and Vivienne Cass' Gay Theory.

### **Jones and McEwen's Multiple Dimension of Identity Model**

Susan R. Jones and Marylu K. McEwen's Multiple Dimension Models use a unique approach to understanding the multiple identities that intersect to develop one's core identity. Their model is one of the most referred models to understanding multiple dimensions within individuals. The model is based on conical structure with varying radii and height to represent the interactions and intersection of multiple identity development within individuals. Each individual's length and circumference is different within the conical structure; therefore, increasing lengths and circumference represents a greater complexity within an individual. The length and circumference is heavily influenced by factors such as: age, experiences, education, and reflection change. The two dimensional cross section within the conical structure represents the development of the individual at the particular time. These dimensions intersect to display that dimension cannot be understood from a singular dimension.

There are two parts of the model; the core and the intersection intersecting circles of identity:

- **The core.** The core is the center of the model, which represents the individual's core identity. This is believed to be the personal characteristics and attributes the individual values the most. The core is one of the most instrumental aspects of the model because it represents the individual's inner self. The other external dimensions such as: gender, race, culture, and religions are connected to the core of the individual.
- **The intersecting circles of identity.** The intersecting circles of identity represent the various facets of identities within the individual (e.g. race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender). The interactions between the various circles and their proximity to the core determine the salience of the identity.



Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity. Adapted from Jones and McEwen (2002).

## **Vivienne Cass' Sexual Identity Development Model**

There are many theories on sexual identity development; however, Vivienne Cass' Sexual Identity theory (1979) is the first model to be published and most highly cited theory in regards to understanding sexual identity formation. Many of today's leading literature regarding gay identity development references Cass' sexual identity development model. Cass uses a six-stage linear model to explain sexual identity development in individuals.

The six stages consist of: identity confusion, identity comparison, identity tolerance, identity acceptance, identity pride, and identity synthesis:

- **Stage One: Identity Confusion.** During this stage, the individual begin to develop feelings, thoughts, and behaviors associated with homosexuality. This state of confusion initiates a sense of exploration within the individual, which leads the individual to the next stage.
- **Stage Two: Identity Comparison.** As the individual explores their newly noticed homosexual thoughts, behaviors, and feelings, the individual becomes self-alienated. During this period of alienation, the individual becomes more aware of potential similarities and differences within themselves and homosexuals. This stage is very important and intricate stage within the developmental process, because revelations revealed during this self exploration could either lead individuals to further explore or discontinue their sexual identity.

## APPLYING HBCUs

This is a very intricate stage for many individuals of color, especially attending HBCUs. Some HBCUs have campus climates that are based on cultural, societal, and religious norms associated with the African American community. HBCUs should provide a welcoming and safe environment during a student's period of alienation to assist in this period of self discovery. Unwelcoming and insensitive environments during this period of self discovery may lead to future developmental issues.

- **Stage Three: Identity Tolerance.** Within this stage, the individual become more committed to their homosexuality. The individual begins to seek homosexual friends and associations. Individuals in this stage limit their disclosure of their sexuality identity to heterosexual, which usual causes them to live double lives.

## APPLYING HBCUs

This is a highly sensitive stage for many individuals of color, especially attending HBCUs. Most HBCUs have relatively small student populations, with a large percentage of those students residing on campus. It is important for students, faculty, and administrators to know the importance of allowing students to disclose their information at their discretion. It is normal for students to live two lifestyles as they try to discover their true sexual orientation. This is an opportunity for HBCUs to provide assistance and guidance for students seeking support during this time of exploration. Forcing students to disclose their sexual orientation could lead to psychological issues or institutional transfers

- **Stage Four: Identity Acceptance.** The initial interactions with homosexuals and their associations in stage three plays an instrumental role in stage four. If the initial contacts were perceived well, then the individual will move rapidly to accepting their new sexual identity. The individual begins to disclose their new identity to close friends and family.

- **Stage Five: Identity Pride.** Individuals in this stage will start develop a sense of pride for their sexual identity. In addition, the individual develops a stern loyalty to the homosexual group by devaluing and discrediting heterosexuals. This view towards heterosexuals could be associated by societal views of devaluing homosexuals
- **Stage Six: Identity Synthesis.** This stage marks the end of the sexual identity configuration. The individual becomes congruent and fully accepts all aspects of their sexual identity. This congruency represents the individual's ability to view their sexuality as one aspect of their total identity. During this process, the individual will begin to merge their private and public life.

### **Summary**

It is extremely important for students, faculty, and administrators at HBCUs to understand the multiple dimensions within LGBT students, and how those intersecting identities affect the sexual identity development of students. HBCUs should continuously strive to create a campus environment that fosters a safe and supportive environment for these developmental processes to take place.

# SECTION THREE

## Homophobia and Campus Climate

The term *homophobia* can be defined as an intense hatred or dislike for individuals who desire to have sexual interest towards individuals of the same biological sex. Over the past decades, researchers have explored homophobia and its implications on society and the LGBT community. There are various ways individuals define and describe homophobia. Some people perceive homophobia as any range of negative emotions or attitudes towards individuals who identify with being homosexual. Others may define homophobia as an intense fear of homosexuals. Nevertheless, homophobia can be displayed in a multitude of ways; which may create an assortment of issues for individuals within the LGBT community, especially attending colleges and universities.

Many may agree that there is a link between homophobia and hate crimes in the United States, especially on college campuses. Throughout the limited resources regarding LGBT students and HBCUs, many highlight the various factors that contribute to a campus climate that is unsupportive of LGBT students on the campus of HBCUs. These factors include: negativity from the African American community and church:

### **African American Community Influence**

It is commonly perceived that African Americans are one of the least accepting groups to accept homosexuality within their friends and family. Since HBCUs are predominately African American students, the negative ideology about homosexuality within the African American community is perpetuated on the campuses of HBCUs. Many students struggle and even hide their sexuality to avoid being disowned family or alienated by individuals on campus and in the community. Some students even fear losing social standing at their universities if their sexuality is revealed. Since many of the student organizations, fraternities and sororities are still heavily influenced by the African American community, many students experience difficulties joining due to their sexual orientation.

### **APPLYING HBCUs**

**HBCUs can play a major role in educating and creating dialogue about homosexuality within the African American community. Since HBCUs have close connections with African American students and constituents from the African American community, these institutions can be pioneers for improving the relationships between LGBT African Americans and the community. It is imperative that HBCUs understand how the African American community influences campus climate, and should work on creating programs that will create awareness to ensure a safe and inclusive campus for LGBT students.**

### **Black Church Influences**

Many of today's HBCUs were established by Black churches in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since their existence, Black churches are continuously involved in HBCUs; which makes Christianity still plays a major aspect at these institutions. Therefore, it is not surprising



that many of these institutions still have Christian undertones at both private and public institutions.

Since homosexuality is generally not a lifestyle accepted by the Christian community, many of those concepts are perpetuated at HBCUs. Because HBCUs were founded on Christian principles and the predominately practiced religion at many HBCUs, LGBT students may endure negative attitudes from students, faculty and administrators of the Christian faith.

### **APPLYING HBCUs**

**Christianity will always be a cultural aspect of HBCUs; however, it is still the institution's duty to provide a safe and inclusive environment for LGBT students. Although many of the students, faculty, and administrators are of the Christian faith; HBCUs should encourage healthy dialogue between the various constituents of the university and religious community.**

# SECTION FOUR

## Safe-Zone Training

Safe-Zone training is a program that is implemented by many colleges and universities across the United States. Safe-Zone training gives many universities the opportunity to train and educate students, faculty, and administrators on issues regarding LGBT students; while giving them the resources to create safe spaces for all students in need of support on a college campus.

Safe-Zone training is something that is very needed at HBCUs. At most college campus, Safe Zone training is implemented by LGBT resource centers, peer-educator groups, or other psycho-social departments within an institution. Since many HBCUs lack these resources, it is imperative that HBCUs utilize the resources provided on campus to organize these initiatives. Below are some recommendations for HBCUs to develop safe-zone trainings.

### **Finding a Facilitator(s)**

Since HBCUs lack some of the resources that are found at other institutions; it is imperative that HBCUs find a professional staff or faculty to execute the training session.

The person(s) should have a clear understanding of issues regarding LGBT students and the community, especially dealing with the various factors and influences on the campus of an HBCU. The person(s) does not have to be an expert in the field of LGBT relate, but should have a passion for sharing knowledge about this sub-population of students.

Listed below are some great qualities of facilitators for Safe Zone Training:

- Knowledgeable
- Understanding
- Advocate
- Supportive
- Patient

Student or student groups can act as peer-educators and assist in facilitating Safe-Zone training sessions. It is also imperative that students are properly trained to facilitate in these discussion and training, since many of the issues and topics highlighted in the trainings may be sensitive for some individuals. A professional staff or faculty should fully train students before they begin facilitating in a Safe-Zone training.

### Types of Safe-Zone Trainings

There are several creative ways HBCUs can plan Safe-Zone training for the campus community. Listed below are several suggestions of types of training HBCU can use to better serve the campus community.

- **General Safe-Zone Training.** A general Safe-Zone training allows students, faculty, staff, and administrators an opportunity to learn in a collective environment about issues regarding LGBT issues. Having a general Safe-Zone training showcases how all constituents of the campus community has a common interest in learning about LGBT issues and how to create safe spaces of support for all students.
- **Staff & Administration Safe-Zone Training.** Staff & Administration Safe-Zone Training gives these professionals an opportunity to gain an understanding about LGBT issues and how it could possible relate to their areas within the university. This is a great opportunity for these professionals to learn the skills needed to provide support and create safe places for students to come and share their thoughts and feelings. In addition, safe zone training geared towards staffs and administrators can also improve the relationship with students, faculty, and local community regarding LGBT sensitivity, access, and resources.
- **Faculty Safe-Zone Training.** Faculty Safe-Zone Training allows faculty to gain an understanding of LGBT issues regarding the classroom. Although, this Safe-Zone training will allow faculty an opportunity to learn about the challenges these students face within a college community; but also gain insight on how

insensitivity within the classroom can affect LGBT students. This training should strongly highlight LGBT sensitivity in a learning environment and using inclusive language. For example, inclusive language would be refraining from dialogues that could be a presumption that everyone in the classroom is heterosexual. Faculty based training could also evaluate whether diversity, sexual identity, and gender expressions are topics being highlighted in the curriculum at the institutions.

- **Student Safe-Zone Training.** Student Safe-Zone Training an excellent opportunity for students and student organizations to understanding issues regarding LGBT issues. This training is gears specifically for students and how students can become allies to the LGBT community. These training could assist in improving campus climate; as well as, provide knowledge and a healthy dialogue about this often marginalized community.
- **LGBT Specific Safe-Zone Training.** LGBT Specific Safe-Zone Training provides training for the specific communities within the LGBT community. This gives the university the opportunity to focus on the issues specifics to certain groups within the LGBT community.

### **Suggested Training Topics**

- LGBT issues Campus/National/Global
- LGBT in the African American Community
- LGBT in the Black Church

- Heteronormativity
- Homophobia
- Hate Crimes
- Discrimination in Student Organizations
- Becoming Straight Allies
- Creating Safe Spaces
- HIV/AIDS Awareness

# SECTION FIVE

## Student Organizations

Student organizations are a very important aspect of college life; and contribute to co-curricular learning and development for many college students. Although, many HBCUs have a plethora of student organizations, there are a very limited number of institutions that have student organizations geared for LGBT students and developing straight ally.

LGBT student organizations can serve various purposes on the campuses of HBCUs. These organizations can utilized as support, educational, social, informative, and social tools to help being the LGBT community, as well as contributing to creating straight allies. The term *straight allies* are given to individuals who identity with being heterosexual and one who takes a special interest in providing a safe and inclusive environment for individuals of the LGBT community. Educating and creating straight allies for a college campus contributes substantially to well-being and safety of LGBT students at HBCUs

Listed below are several recommendations and suggestions for forming LGBT student organizations on the campus of HBCUS

### **Student vs. Institution formed Student Organizations**

Amongst the thousands of LGBT student organizations on the campus of colleges and universities across the United States, many of these organizations were formed by students or the institutions. In both cases, student or the institutions saw an important need for establishing an organization to educate, support, and build community for the LGBT and campus community.

- **Student Formed Organizations.** A large percentage of LGBT organizations were established by students, especially the ones established at HBCUs. Student formed organizations are established by a select group of students who has determined that there is an important need to provide a supportive outlet for students in the LGBT community. This is a great opportunity for students to design an organization that fits the need and culture of the institution. Also, allowing students to form their own organizations gives these students a sense of ownership and empowerment; in addition to a sense of feeling of inclusion at the institution.



## APPLYING HBCUs

**It is very important that HBCUs acknowledge and respect the establishment of LGBT organizations by students. Many institutions have certain requirements for student organizations in order to gain recognition on a college campus; therefore, decisions on whether to grant recognition to LGBT organizations should not be based on biasness of the student organization recognition committee. It is imperative that the institutions understand the importance for acknowledging an LGBT student organizations if their currently not one available for students.**

- **Institutional formed.** There are several institutions that have LGBT student organizations that are establish by the institution. Institutions may organize these student groups as a way to acknowledge the need for a support LGBT. Many of the LGBT student groups formed by the institutions are also funded by the institutions; unlike some student groups at other institutions which are non-funded. In addition, in many cases these type of LGBT student groups also has a professional staff person that advises this student group.

### Finding an Advisor

For many institutions, an active advisor is required for student organizations to gain official recognition by the institutions. Student organizations that are not provided an advisor by the institutions should really take the time to find the appropriate advisor at HBCUs. Listed below are some qualities an advisor should possess for advising an LGBT student organization.

- Awareness

- Advocacy
- Dependable
- Resourceful
- Supportive
- Active

Student organizations may vary in organizational culture, style, size, and autonomy; which may requires a different advising style by the advisor.

### **Constitutions & By-Laws**

Many student organizations have constitutions and by-laws to assist in maintaining order and outline the roles and responsibilities of officers within the organization. Many institutions require student organizations to provide copies of their constitutions and by-laws and gain official recognition from the university.

#### **Constitution**

A student organization's constitution is a document that provides the mission, structures, and rules of the organization. An organization's constitution should be a very strong document that upholds the integrity of the organizations as leadership transitions each year.

Some of the suggested items that should be included in a constitution:

1. Formal Name of the Organization

2. Purpose of the Organization
3. Membership Qualifications
4. Organization Officer Positions
  - a. Duties
  - b. Officer Election Qualifications
  - c. Sub-Committees
5. Voting
6. Meetings
7. Quorum
8. Advisor
9. Organization Funding
10. Amends to the Constitution
11. Ratifications

### **By-Laws**

The by-laws of a student organization is a document that provides an outline of the procedures for operating the organizations. Generally by-laws include information about:

- Membership (e.g. rights, expulsion, and resignation)
- Responsibilities of Officers
- Order of Business
- Agenda of Meetings

- Formation of Special Committees
- Other special policies our procedures that may be specific to the organization

### **Funding**

Some LGBT organizations are either funded through budgets allocated by the university or other through campus organizations; such as the Student Government Association.

Depending on the institution, funding may be based on a request basis by the student organization to a department within student affairs that deals with student life, activities, or organizations. It is imperative that by whatever means an organization is funded, it should take time to appropriately budget each year

### **Programs**

LGBT organizations organize a plethora of programs on their respective campuses.

These programs range from social, informative, educational, and service; while providing a multitude of co-curricular opportunities for LGBT students and straight allies. Listed below are some common programs organized by LGBT student organizations

- Drag Shows
- Free HIV testing
- National Coming Out Day Celebrations
- Pride Month of Events
- LGBT Discussion Panels
- Safe Zone Student Training

- Lavender Graduation
- Gay Prom
- Any additional programs that may be suitable or needed for the campus community

# SECTION SIX

## Glossary of Terms

**Ally.** An ally is a referred to a person that takes a special interest in advocating for LGBT rights.

**Bisexual.** An umbrella term associated for individuals who identify with having sexually attractions to individuals of the male and female biological gender.

**Closeted.** A term associated with individuals who refuse to reveal their sexual orientation.

**Coming Out.** A term most commonly associated with a process of an individual sharing their sexuality openly with family, friends, or peers.

**Cross dresser.** Is a term associated with individuals who wear clothing of the opposite biological sex.

**Down Low.** A term associated within the African American community as a lifestyle of men who secretly have sexual encounters with other men, while portraying an actively heterosexual lifestyle. In many cases, these individuals maintain relationships with women while having sexual encounters with other men and do not identify as being homosexual or bisexual.

**Drag Queen.** A drag queen is an individual who enjoys wearing women's clothing and portraying a woman in performance. These individuals do not identify as transgender, since they do not desire to be a woman.

**Gay.** An umbrella term associated for males who identify as having sexual attractions to other males.

**Gender queer.** A term given to individuals who do not identify as being male or female.

**Homophobia.** An intense hatred or dislike for individuals who desire to have sexual interest of individuals of the same gender.

**Heteronormativity.** An ideology or assumption that heterosexuality is the "normal" sexual orientation shared by all people.

**Lesbian.** An umbrella term given to females who identify as having sexual attraction to other females.

**Transgender.** An umbrella term associated with individuals who identify as being of the opposite biological gender.

**Straight-Ally.** A person who identifies as being heterosexual, but advocates for LGBT rights.



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