

**Vakalahi, H. F. O., & Peebles-Wilkins, W. C. (2010). *Women of Color on the rise: Leadership and administration in social work education and the academy*. NY: Columbia University Press.**

**Reviewed by:** Veronica Hardy, PhD, MSW  
University of North Carolina at Pembroke

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The book titled, *Women of Color on the Rise: Leadership and Administration in Social Work Education and the Academy* (2010) is a compilation of narrative essays generated from a diverse group of women with experience in leadership and administrative roles within academia. Halaevalu F. Ofahengaue Vakalahi and Wilma Peebles-Wilkins served as the editors of this narrative work. Vakalahi has a history of fulfilling leadership and administration positions at various academic institutions and is currently a director of the masters level social work program at George Mason University. Peebles-Wilkins has been an administrator in public, private, and research settings. Furthermore, she is noted as an NASW Social Work Pioneer and is currently fulfilling the role of dean emeriti of the Boston University School of Social Work. The editors have sectioned the book into four parts that highlight the stories of women in various leadership and administrative positions including deanship and chair/directorship. To enhance the level of diversity within this writing, each essay contributor has yielded from one of the five racial/ethnic populations “federally defined” as “historically disadvantaged” (p. xi).

*Women of Color on the Rise* communicates the contributors’ devotion to the NASW Code of Ethics (1999) that is perpetuated through their positions of leadership. This writing gives credit to the accomplishments of persons in the past and present and provides both guidance and inspiration for those interested in academic leadership and administration. Each contributor shared her story about leadership within the framework of 13 questions. This framework allowed for themes including the influence of families and mentors, specific strategies for professional growth, coping

methods to address challenges, and guidance for future generations of leaders.

This writing has depth in communicating a strengths-based approach to self-evaluation, the impact of various systems on the career growth of individuals, in addition to the use of resilience, motivation, and application of positive coping strategies for goal achievement. As a result, this book may be used to enhance diversity, management, and indirect practice social work course content. In addition, the essays can be applied as a mentorship tool to influence student understanding of administrative roles in social work and encourage future growth in leadership competency. Furthermore, as this writing can help promote leadership development, it can also be a means to provide insight for the educator. As a result, educators may develop an increased understanding of what undergraduate social work students may be experiencing regarding familial influence, integration challenges into the academic environment, and the level of interest in mentorship.

Overall, the concepts expressed through this writing may be applied toward recruitment and retention efforts of both students and professionals in the academic arena. As *Women of Color on the Rise* highlights the realities of barriers to acceptance, challenges to self-esteem, and periods of isolation, the lessons of these stories provide action steps toward addressing those challenges and pursuing leadership development. As a recognizable aim of this book is to further promote “academic systems and institutions” (p. ix) that respond to the concepts of diversity, cultural strengths, as well as social change and justice, it may productively contribute to the further enhancement of the social work profession.