

Faculty Senate Summary - Summer

Alfred, Marcus

Fri 8/23/2019 8:19 AM

To: Alfred, Marcus <marAlfred@Howard.edu>

Dear Colleagues,

I hope your semester is beginning smoothly and without too many distractions. I'll try to send a summary each month of issues, news, and information from the HU Faculty Senate. For this first summary, I'd like to mention some things that occurred during the summer or will be demanding your attention within the next month. These are: (1) the handbook, (2) PPTF, (3) Middle States Accreditation, (4) the Ombudsperson hire, and (5) the Undergraduate Faculty Trustee.

(1) The handbook. The HU Board of Trustees voted to adopt a new handbook that is in violation of the Faculty, Administration, and Board approved 1993 Handbook amendment process (proposing only one substantive change at a time). This new version appears to have reduced tenure protections, weakened academic freedom, reduced provisions for shared governance, and is sometimes at odds with basic recommendations from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), and the American Council on Education (ACE). For example, the board made the following changes.

- 1a. The status of tenure was moved from the University to the Departments;
- 1b. In the event of financial exigency; severance pay has been reduced from 12 months to 120 days;
- 1c. Removal of the right to initiate the grievance process if terminated by the University due to financial exigency;
- 1d. Removal of the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure issued by the AAUP
- 1e. Removal of faculty senate authority to review matters important to probationary appointment
- 1f. Giving significant power to Administrators of various levels to initiate disciplinary actions on faculty

(2) PPTF. The PPTF process is coming to a close. Dr. Wutoh will be making recommendations in a preliminary report to Dr. Frederick within the next few weeks. It appears that Dr. Frederick will then present recommendations to the Board for approval. It also appears there will be closing of some units/programs. It should be noted that the changes to the handbook voted upon by the board may have enormous consequences on tenured faculty.

(3) Accreditation. The accreditation process is continuing this semester with completion of a narrative report and preliminary visit by Dr. Shirley Jackson, site visit chair, and the site review committee in the spring. The FS and other faculty members intend to make 3rd party comments based on your input.

(4) Ombudsperson. The senate will have to decide to recommend either a new search or a selection from remaining applicants. I strongly encourage a new search since legitimate concerns have been raised about the previous search and selection process.

(5) Undergraduate Faculty Trustee. The Board refused to seat the winner or either of the top two vote getters out of a field greater than three from the election of the spring semester. It appears the board violated their own by-laws by doing so.

Thanks and we will be sending out more information within the next week.

Best

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