

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Howard University Faculty Senate

ISSUES AGENDA 2019-2020

General Topics

1. Shared Governance
2. Faculty Handbook
3. PPTF/SPC
4. General Education Model
5. Faculty Welfare
6. Research and Teaching Infrastructure
7. Infrastructure and Environment
8. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators
9. BAC Transparency
10. Tenure



2019-2020 Issues Agenda Detailed Summary

1. Shared Governance

Continued need for the Administration and Board of Trustees to honor and implement shared governance as required by the Faculty Senate Constitution (Article XI, Section C). Neglect of processes and programs that ensure co-leadership of the Administration, Board, and Faculty Senate in shared governance of Howard University continues to undermine the Health and Welfare of the Academy.

2. Faculty Handbook Revision

Cooperative engagement of the Faculty Senate and Office of the Provost to complete the process of revising the new University-wide Faculty Handbook, especially with regard to the removal of the current “notwithstanding clause” of the current (1993) Faculty Handbook.

3. Program Prioritization Task Force (PPTF) and Strategic Planning Committee (SPC).

In the absence of a clear Vision for Howard University, the success of the PPTF/SPC initiatives is undermined by the failure of the Administration to consult with the Faculty Senate in the conception, design, and timelines for these undertakings.

4. General Education Model (HUGE 21).

In the absence of a clear Vision for Howard University, the success of the HUGE 21 initiatives is undermined by the failure of the Administration to consult with the Faculty Senate in the conception, design, and timelines for these undertakings.

5. Faculty Welfare

Direct and meaningful consultation between the Administration and the Faculty Senate in both (1) budgetary matters, and (2) working environment dynamics involving the Administration:

- (a) Alleviation of Salary Compression
- (b) Faculty workload
- (c) Gender Equity (Salaries and Promotion)
- (d) Faculty Workload
- (e) Healthcare and Retirement Benefits (pensions, matching retirement savings)
- (f) Retiree Benefits

- (g) Faculty Development
- (h) Transparent Merit Pay
- (i) Administrative Retaliation Against Faculty
- (j) Hostile Work Environments Established by Administration
- (k) Maternity/Family Leave

6. Research and Teaching Infrastructure

The Faculty Senate asserts that a research-intensive university is undergirded by dedicated and adequate support for graduate education. This is undermined by the following recurring dynamics:

- (a) Deficient Maintenance of Infrastructure and Facilities
- (b) Lack of Research Equipment and Core Laboratories
- (c) Inadequate Number of Graduate Student Stipends and Teaching Assistantships
- (d) Persistent IT Issues [Lack of Improvement and Upgrade of Information Technology]

7. Infrastructure and Environment

The leadership of Howard University must ensure the safety of the Faculty workplace with respect to:

- (a) Occupational Health and Welfare
- (b) Personal Safety Issues
- (c) Physically Unsafe Workplace Environment

8. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators: Chairs, Deans, Provost, and President

Although regular and multi-tiered review and evaluation of Faculty abound, there is no comparable process for the multi-tiered levels of the Administration. Performance evaluation, if its primary purpose is to improve performance, must be holistic within the University.

9. Greater Transparency with Respect to the Budget Advisory Committee

Faculty and Administration are partners in the shared responsibility for the academic and educational enterprise at Howard University. The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) must develop an open, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Faculty in strategic planning and prioritization of budget allocations and resources. The BAC must engage the Faculty in a process of review and comment on proposed university funding strategies and revenue generation).

10. PPTF

One important ongoing issue to discuss is the Program Prioritization Task Force (PPTF). The committee's report is being/has just been finalized and will no doubt be released this semester. While the PPTF's job was not to make any recommendations, the results will, in fact, be used to trim/consolidate/enhance/expand programs, as Marcus has pointed out.

There are three aspects of the PPTF report that the faculty need to deal with:

(a) Who will make the decision about which programs to cut and which to shore up/expand? Will the faculty have a voice in this process?

(b) If faculty have tenure in a Department and the program they are part of is terminated, then is their contract voided as well? As Marcus has said, this is really problematic in light of the recent changes in the Faculty Handbook (tenure in departments, not the university).

(c) Since assessment is part of our long-term future, what provisions are being made to correct/refine/rethink the program evaluation process? Working as an evaluator, we found that a lot of people were confused by the questions (including us!) and by what they were intended to measure. How does one guarantee comparability & fairness across diverse disciplines?

11. Salary transparency.

The salary structure of public institutions are part of the public record. Data shows that when this is the case, there are fewer instances of persistent salary gaps based on demographics (race, gender), and it makes for better overall fiscal transparency. While a forensic audit would be an obvious step toward making things clear - and right - it is probably too large a step for the institution to take. This, however, is a model that peer and competitor institutions have deployed for years to bring some successful consensus-building around fiscal matters and shared governance.

12. The formation of the separate School of Fine Arts.

While there was a period the School of Fine Arts was separate from the College of Arts and Sciences, so there is precedent for it being separate again, in the current atmosphere, it seems proper shared governance requires a Faculty vote to do a major re-organization of a University unit like this. It is a proposal that should be carefully weighed and with faculty input and consent.

13. Situs of Tenure

This locus of tenure issue vis a vis the new faculty handbook remains critical, particularly in light of anticipated changes following Middle States review.