

## Faculty Senate : COVID-19 update

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

 3 attachments (336 KB)

2020.3.11.FSwutohMeeting.pdf; covid19\_aft-aaup\_guidanceprinciples\_031320.pdf; students2.pdf;

Good morning Colleagues,

The HU administration and board have said they "expect" that all HU courses will continue online for the rest of the semester. They've said faculty research on campus is being shutdown. They've said students are being "urged" to leave the dorms and have been told food and supplies are not guaranteed. They've said staff will be doing their work remotely, unless they are deemed "essential". These decisions were made without consulting the FS.

A couple of notes on an emerging consensus on FS operations during spring break and the next few weeks: (1) In context of the coronavirus, it is understood the senate's first priority is to save lives. Period. (2) The senate is clear headed about HU resources, infrastructure, administrative decision making, and FS authority. (3) The FS seems to work best when it takes time to deliberate and thinks honestly and soberly about its actions.

With the above in mind, we've gotten the following suggestions:

- A. Remind faculty that they need to stay safe and hunker down as best they can for the next month (or more). Their safety and the safety of students, administrators, staff, and our community is our top priority, per CDC recommendations.
- B. Regarding faculty moving their classes online, this is at the discretion of individual faculty. Academic freedom has not been suspended, only in person classroom attendance has been suspended.
- C. In addition, suspending on campus faculty research should also be at the discretion of individual faculty. Faculty members suspending student research in their labs on campus seems to be aligned with CDC recommendations.
- D. Regarding students and dorms, closing the dorms seems to be aligned with CDC recommendations, since venues for social interactions are temporarily closing, college dorms might become a de facto alternative. If students need assistance going home, I suggest we recommend the administration and board assist financially. In addition, what testing for the virus will be available to students before heading home?

E. Regarding FS operations, I think we can do a lot through phone calls, texts, emails, the senate forum, social media, cloud drives, and the senate website. However, I'm recommending we suspend most FS activities for a week through spring break until faculty can deal with their own safety, the safety of their families, and restructure their classes. After 3/23/20, we start officially dealing with senate functions again. Of course, we can talk among ourselves about what to do - and the forum will be open 24/7. Finally, I will ask all FS committees to make recommendations by Wednesday 3/25/20 in light of the coronavirus impacts on HU.

**Also, please consider:**

[Here are the CDC recommendations for colleges and universities:](#)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html>

[AAUP's coronavirus webpage:](#)

[https://www.aaup.org/coronavirus-information-higher-ed?link\\_id=2&can\\_id=5410c216ede365151bdcf13b6d326965&source=email-covid-19-and-faculty-governance&email\\_referrer=email\\_744381&email\\_subject=covid-19-and-the-faculty-role-in-decision-making](https://www.aaup.org/coronavirus-information-higher-ed?link_id=2&can_id=5410c216ede365151bdcf13b6d326965&source=email-covid-19-and-faculty-governance&email_referrer=email_744381&email_subject=covid-19-and-the-faculty-role-in-decision-making)

An attached American Federation of Teachers and American Association of University Professors Principles for Higher Education Response to COVID-19 (It can also be found on the above AAUP link) dated 3/13/20. **(covid19...pdf)**

An attached email discussion with Dr. Wutoh regarding students in the dorms. **(students2.pdf)**

An attached summary of a meeting with Dr. Wutoh on 3/11/20. **(2020.3.11.FSwutohMeeting.pdf)**

Please be reminded that the administration is apparently ordering laptops for some faculty - please contact your Dean and Dr. Wutoh for details.

I'll send invitations to the senate forum again later today. Please use it as a resource to make your voice heard within the FS. As a reminder, the current officers ran on a platform to make the senate and council work for the faculty. In other words, the faculty tell us what they would like to do, not the other way around. We'll try to provide space for remote instruction updates, documents, and discussions on the forum and website.

Please let us know your thoughts on these and other issues?

Stay safe,

Marcus

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