

P/F option - HU Faculty Senate Update

Alfred, Marcus <marAlfred@Howard.edu>

Sat 3/28/2020 9:11 AM

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

 5 attachments (750 KB)

2020.3.22-DrWutohEmail.pdf; 2020.3.23-Question2Council.pdf; 2020.3.26.FS-passfail-response.pdf; 2020.3.27-decisionAnnouncement.pdf; COVID-19 Academic Response [HUSA Proposal] (1) (1).pdf;

Good morning Colleagues,

I hope you are well in these difficult times. I'm sure you are aware that the board and administration just decided to give many undergrad HU students an option for P/F grades rather than letter grades in many of their courses. This was based on a HUSA proposal. I'd like to share some of what's happened from the Senate perspective regarding the P/F option.

- On Thursday 3/19/2020, HUSA let me know they were working on a P/F proposal and sent me a draft. I sent the draft to the FS officers and asked their opinions.
- On Friday 3/20/2020, I wrote to HUSA that the FS officers were supportive. I also mentioned that once we got their final version, I'd introduce it to the council.
- On Saturday 3/21/2020, I received the official HUSA proposal. (COVID-19 Academic Response [HUSA Proposal] (1) (1).pdf)
- On Sunday 3/22/2020, Dr. Wutoh emailed to ask if the support was from the FS or just my own. I wrote that it was the view of the officers and that I expected I could give him an opinion and recommendation from the council on Tuesday. (2020.3.22-DrWutohEmail.pdf)
- On Monday, 3/23/2020, I sent the official HUSA proposal to the council Monday morning.
- The council members sent their responses, opinions, and concerns from Monday to Wednesday evening. (2020.3.23-Question2Council.pdf)
- On Thursday 3/26/2020, I summarized and sent the FS response to the proposal to HUSA, the council, and Dr. Wutoh. (2020.3.26.FS-passfail-response.pdf)
- The board and administration's response and procedure was sent to students by the administration yesterday. (2020.3.27-decisionAnnouncement.pdf)

A few brief points,

- 1. If you have not done so, please sign up for and use the senate online forum. Your voice matters!** The forum is neither run nor paid for by the administration nor board - they have zero input. The senate officers are paying for and administering it. I've resent invites this morning at around 8:30am. Please check your "Junk Mail" folders if you don't see it. The portal is at : <https://senateforum.hufaculty.com/login>
- 2. The board and administration are not following official faculty recommendations, particularly in academic matters. To begin to address this, please join AAUP if you have not done so.** Among other things, the HU faculty will need the support of the national organization of our profession to bring back shared governance to Howard University.
3. Regarding how to move forward on the P/F issue, the following was said on a recent council email thread,

"The Senate officially speaks for the faculty according to our board approved documents. We've an independent voice from the administration. Since faculty have primacy over academic concerns, the faculty voice should be the driver for academic decisions and policies. That being said, the council can vote to make a recommendation on the issue (one way or the other). If the council recommendation is not inline with the will of the faculty, the faculty can vote to overturn the recommendation at the full senate meeting. "
4. Finally, I'd like to emphasize, the FS response to the proposal included that students and faculty should agree in order for the P/F option to be exercised. It seems this point was completely ignored by the HU board and administration.

Please stay safe,

Marcus

Marcus Alfred
Associate Professor
Chair, HU Faculty Senate
Howard University
Dept. of Physics & Astronomy
Washington, DC 20059
202-806-6258
maralfred@howard.edu