

HOWARD UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE  
Approved Issues Agenda  
2023-2024

(In no particular order)

**1. Shared Governance**

- 1.1. Reinstatement of Faculty Trustees
- 1.2. BAC Transparency

**2. Faculty Handbook**

- 2.1. Ombudsperson
- 2.2. Faculty Grievance Commission
- 2.3. Tenure – Now residing within departments
- 2.4. Faculty Welfare
  - 2.4.1. Covid 19 Related Issues
- 2.5. Faculty Workload
- 2.6. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators

**3. Research and Teaching Process and Infrastructure**

- 3.1. PPTF/SPC
- 3.2. General Education Model

**4. Recruiting and retaining African American Faculty and Students**

**5. Social Justice**

**6. Campus Development plan**

- 6.1. Infrastructure and Environment

---

Issues Agenda Detailed Summary

**1. Shared Governance**

The Board of Trustees-approved HU Faculty Senate Constitution provides practical, AAUP aligned mechanisms for shared governance at HU. Faculty continue to say the erosion of shared governance at Howard University is a top priority. In particular, HU faculty have expressed that when the HU Administration and Board of Trustees either do not seek, or they ignore or disregard HU faculty Senate recommendations on teaching and research, it is an issue.

The Administration and Board of Trustees need 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 of Trustees, and Faculty Senate in shared governance of Howard University continues to undermine the Health and Welfare of the Academy.

1.1. Faculty Trustees have been unduly eliminated. The change minimizes the role of the Faculty Senate towards shared governance.

1.2. 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.

## 2. Faculty Handbook

The current 2019 Faculty Handbook has shortcomings that have become more apparent over the last 4 years; and faculty have said are an issue.

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 “notwithstanding clause” of the 1993 Faculty Handbook.

2.1. Ombudsperson- should be selected by the Faculty Senate.

2.2. Faculty Grievance Commission- Selection procedure for panelists was changed.

2.3. 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. Where does tenure belong? What happens when departments are closed? Wasn't there a contract between faculty and the administration when tenure was granted? How can the contract be changed without mutual agreement? Also see 3.1.(b)

2.4. 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) 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

2.4.1. COVID-19 Related Issues - ongoing need to regularly update faculty regarding “hot spots” on campus. Inadequate ventilation in classrooms is still expressed by faculty as a point of concern.

2.5. Faculty Workload - There is a need to review the Faculty Workload Policy and to take steps to ensure that it is followed equitably across all schools and colleges.

2.6. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators:

Inclusive of 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.

### **3. Research and Teaching Infrastructure**

The HU faculty have documented process and infrastructure problems that make clear that doing research at HU is cumbersome, disincentivizing, and almost impossible for many faculty. The lack of seeking Senate input and positive action on Senate recommendations by the HU Administration and Board regarding research and teaching processes and infrastructure is an issue.

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]
- (e) CBT Travel. CBT charges hotel expenses significantly higher (30-50%) than the market prices.

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

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? This is problematic in light of the changes in the Faculty Handbook (where tenure now resides within the department).

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

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.

### 3.2. 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.

## **4. Recruiting and retaining African American Faculty and Students**

Representation matters to a large part of the community HU serves. The lack of seeking Senate input and positive action on Senate recommendations regarding the drop in the numbers of African American faculty (tenure track in particular) and students (graduate students) in some HU departments and schools/colleges is an issue.

## **5. Social Justice**

Faculty have expressed that as stakeholders, we (faculty, administration, Board of Trustees, students) should use our collective expertise and resources to support social justice movements in a practical way. It is an issue that Senate input and recommendations are either not sought, or are ignored by the administration and Board of Trustees regarding HU social justice activities.

## **6. Campus Development Plan**

The lack of seeking Senate input and adoption of Senate recommendations regarding campus development is an issue.

### 6.1. 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
- (d) Enrollment growth plans within schools