Every organization has a way of doing business. The business of the Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation at Howard University is evident in its name. But let’s be clear, the assessment and evaluation of the “institution” is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Ultimately, the mission, vision and goals of the institution are the “ends” to which we aspire. Assessment is the tool we use to gather data and information from stakeholders – students, faculty, staff, alumni, and employers -- about our efforts and outcomes. Evaluation helps us make value judgments about well or how effectively we are progressing towards or accomplishing our mission and goals. This is our inaugural issue of our data-rich newsletter. Help us find a proper name for it. Your opinion matters!

2008 Howard University Self-Study Surveys

In preparation for Howard University’s reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in 2009, the Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation (OIAE), in collaboration with the University Self-Study Office and Steering Committee, developed and administered surveys to four stakeholder groups – students, faculty, senior and middle-level administrators, and staff. The administration of the surveys occurred near the end of the Spring Semester 2008.

Student Survey

*Degree to which your Department’s curriculum develops a student’s ability to form independent judgments
E:26%, G:56%, F:12%, P:3%, DK:3%, n=172, and M=3.1, Std=0.73

*Degree to which your Department’s curriculum develops a student’s ability to interact effectively in a culturally diverse world
E:29%, G:36%, F:23%, P:9%, DK:4%, n=195, and M=2.9, Std=0.94

*Degree to which the curriculum prepares students for leadership and service to the nation
E:31%, G:36%, F:24%, P:6%, DK:3%, n=194, and M=3.0, Std=0.90

*Degree to which the curriculum prepares students for leadership and service to the global community
E:32%, G:38%, F:21%, P:6%, DK:2%, n=155, and M=3.0, Std=0.90

*Degree to which academic programs in your School or College prepare students for life in the 21st century
E:28%, G:42%, F:21%, P:7%, DK:2%, n=650, and M=2.9, Std=0.89

*Availability of academic programs in your Department that meets your educational/career needs
E:25%, G:43%, F:24%, P:6%, DK:1%, n=173, and M=2.9, Std=0.86

Notation of the abbreviations and scales:

* Used a 4-point scale:
  Excellent=4, Good=3, Fair=2, Poor=1; Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1.
* E=Excellent, G=Good, F=Fair, P=Poor; SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree
* VS=Very Satisfied, S=Satisfied, Dis=Dissatisfied, VD=Very Dissatisfied; DK=Don’t Know, NA=Not Applicable
* M=Mean, Std=Standard Deviation
Faculty Survey

- Availability of academic programs offered in your Department that meets students’ educational/career needs
  E:25%, G:53%, F:18%, P:4%, NA/DK:0%, n=68, and M=3.0, Std=0.78

- Adequacy of resources, including faculty, to support all academic programs
  E:1%, G:26%, F:48%, P:23%, NA/DK:1%, n=69, and M=2.1, Std=0.75

- Degree to which the curriculum of your Department prepares students for life in the 21st century
  E:20%, G:45%, F:27%, P:7%, NA/DK:1%, n=150, and M=2.8, Std=0.84

Senior Administrator Survey

- Degree to which the educational offerings at Howard University are aligned with the University’s mission
  E:14%, G:59%, F:22%, P:0%, NA/DK:5%, n=63, M=2.9, Std=0.62

- Degree to which the educational offerings of your Unit are aligned with University’s mission
  E:27%, G:48%, F:13%, P:3%, NA/DK:10%, n=63, and M=3.1, Std=0.76

- Degree to which appropriate assessment tools are being used to determine if expected outcomes in your Unit are being achieved
  E:5%, G:25%, F:37%, P:24%, NA/DK:10%, n=63, M=2.1, Std=0.87

- Adequacy of resources, including faculty, to support all academic programs at Howard University
  E:0%, G:11%, F:46%, P:31%, NA/DK:11%, n=61, and M=1.8, Std=0.66

- Degree to which the academic programs at Howard University prepare students for life in the 21st century
  E:8%, G:56%, F:26%, P:0%, NA/DK:10%, n=62, and M=2.8, Std=0.59

- Degree to which the curricula of your Unit prepare students for life in the 21st century
  E:16%, G:58%, F:16%, P:0%, NA/DK:10%, n=62, and M=3.0, Std=0.60

2008 College Students Needs Assessment Survey (CSNAS)

The College Student Needs Assessment Survey (CSNAS), developed by the American College Testing Program (ACT), is designed to evaluate the educational and personal needs of college students in order to identify and develop programs and services that may address those needs.

Overall Areas of Greatest Need: Howard University Students and Normative Sample from Private Colleges

- Obtaining adequate funds to finance my education
- Learning more about other sources of financial aid available
- Obtaining work experience in career areas of my interest
- Arranging to discuss my career interests with people in my planned career area
- Learning about educational opportunities after graduation

- HU
- NATIONAL
2009 NSSE and FSSE

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) obtains, on an annual basis, information from hundreds of four-year colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. Survey items on the National Survey of Student Engagement represent empirically confirmed “good practices” in undergraduate education. They reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) is a parallel instrument to NSSE, which is administered to faculty.

- 63% of Howard first-year students report never having participated in a community-based project; 48% of HU seniors report the same.
- 44% of Howard first-year students report having received prompt written/oral feedback from faculty on their academic performance often or very often; 51% of HU seniors report the same. 92% of lower division and 85% of upper division faculty report that they provide such feedback often or very often (FSSE).
- 79% of Howard first-year students report that coursework emphasizes analyzing basic elements of an idea, experience or theory quite a bit or very much; 85% of HU seniors report the same.
- 68% of Howard first-year students report that coursework emphasizes synthesizing ideas, information or experiences quite a bit or very much; 70% of HU seniors report the same.
- 69% of Howard first-year students report that coursework emphasizes making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods quite a bit or very much; 71% of HU seniors report the same.
- 73% of Howard seniors report having had practicum, internship, co-op, or clinical/field experiences. 82% of lower division and 96% of upper division faculty cite such experiences as important or very important (FSSE).
- 27% of Howard seniors report having worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements. 78% of lower division and 63% of upper division faculty cite these experiences as important or very important (FSSE).
- 47% of Howard seniors report having had a culminating senior experience (e.g., capstone course, senior project/thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.).
- 78% of Howard first-year students report that their experiences have contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in the area of thinking critically and analytically quite a bit or very much; 85% of HU seniors report the same.
- 75% of Howard first-year students report that their experiences have contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in the area of learning effectively on their own quite a bit or very much; 81% of HU seniors report the same.
- 50% of Howard first-year students report that their experiences have contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in the area of solving complex real-world problems quite a bit or very much; 61% of HU seniors report the same.

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Intellectual Skills Development

Large proportions of students responding indicated having some level of perceived needs for assistance with a substantial number of critical general education areas. These areas of need for a majority of freshman students reporting include improving study skills/habits and improving test-taking skills (approximately 84% and 81%, respectively). A great proportion of students responding also indicate the need for help in increasing mathematics skills and in improving problem-solving abilities and reasoning skills (approximately 79%, 77% and 74%, respectively).

Slightly smaller proportions of students indicate perceived needs in strengthening their ability to express their ideas in writing, increasing their understanding of the arts, and learning how to better use library facilities (approximately 70%, 69% and 69%, respectively). Critically, well over half of those students responding indicate the need for assistance in improving reading comprehension and increasing reading speed (approximately 64% and 61%, respectively).
2009 Undergraduate Graduating Student Exit Survey (UGSES)

The Howard University Undergraduate Graduating Student Exit Survey is administered annually to prospective candidates for graduation enrolled in all undergraduate programs. The primary purpose of the survey is to obtain information about students’ satisfaction with a range of academic and co-academic experiences during their matriculation and to inquire about their plans for the future. The survey was administered by the Office of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation (OIAE) through a web-based format for the first time in 2009. There were 888 respondents.

Please indicate your level of overall satisfaction with:

♦ Your Academic Program
VS:21%, S:56%, Dis: 16%, VD: 5%. DK: 1%, NA: 1%, n=867
♦ Quality of Your Educational Experience
VS:20%, S:63%, Dis: 11%, VD: 4%. DK: 1%, NA: 1%, n=867
♦ Educational Experience Met Expectations
VS:19%, S:56%, Dis: 17%, VD: 6%. DK: 1%, NA: 2%, n=866
♦ Your Departmental Faculty
VS:28%, S:53%, Dis: 12%, VD: 4%. DK: 2%, NA: 1%, n=867
♦ Quality of Courses Offered
VS:16%, S:60%, Dis: 18%, VD: 5%. DK: 0%, NA: 1%, n=866
♦ Overall Quality of Instruction
VS:17%, S:66%, Dis: 11%, VD: 4%. DK: 1%, NA: 2%, n=866
♦ Courses were Intellectually Stimulating
VS:19%, S:63%, Dis: 12%, VD: 3%. DK: 1%, NA: 1%, n=866
♦ Availability of Evening Courses
VS:9%, S:48%, Dis: 13%, VD: 7%. DK: 9%, NA: 14%, n=866
♦ Availability of Academic/Tutorial Service
VS:8%, S:48%, Dis: 17%, VD: 5%. DK: 13%, NA: 9%, n=866
♦ Access to Laboratories, Study Areas, & Student Lounges
VS:8%, S:48%, Dis: 29%, VD: 13%. DK: 2%, NA: 2%, n=866
♦ Classrooms, Laboratories, Studies, & Technical Centers
VS:6%, S:37%, Dis: 35%, VD: 20%. DK: 1%, NA: 2%, n=866
Access to Mentoring
VS:13%, S:40%, Dis: 23%, VD: 10%. DK: 9%, NA: 5%, n=866
♦ Availability of Academic Advisors
VS:18%, S:45%, Dis: 23%, VD: 11%. DK: 1%, NA: 2%, n=866
♦ Critical Thinking and Analysis Skills
VS:28%, S:58%, Dis: 9%, VD: 3%. DK: 1%, NA: 2%, n=867
♦ Research Skill Development
VS:23%, S:57%, Dis: 12%, VD: 4%. DK: 3%, NA: 2%, n=867
♦ Team Work Skill Development
VS:23%, S:64%, Dis: 7%, VD: 2%. DK: 2%, NA: 2%, n=867
♦ Ability to Demonstrate Leadership
VS:39%, S:53%, Dis: 4%, VD: 1%. DK: 1%, NA: 2%, n=867

2009 Graduate/Professional Graduating Student Exit Survey (GPGSES)

The Howard University Graduate and Professional Graduating Student Exit Survey is a parallel instrument to the undergraduate exit survey, which is administered to graduate and professional students by OIAE. There were 581 respondents.

Please indicate your level of overall satisfaction with:

♦ Your Academic Program
VS:26%, S:59%, Dis: 9%, VD: 3%. DK: 2%, NA: 1%, n=568
♦ Quality of Your Educational Experience
VS:27%, S:56%, Dis: 12%, VD: 2%. DK: 2%, NA: 1%, n=568
♦ Your Graduate/Professional School Advisors
VS:20%, S:48%, Dis: 15%, VD: 8%. DK: 6%, NA: 4%, n=568
♦ Your Departmental Faculty
VS:27%, S:57%, Dis: 9%, VD: 2%. DK: 2%, NA: 3%, n=568