



2020 - 2025  
**A COMMITMENT TO  
EXCELLENCE AND GROWTH  
FOR PROGRESS**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Remarks from the Dean.....	3
II. Introduction.....	6
III. COAS Strategic Plan Priorities.....	9
IV. Howard University College of Arts and Sciences.....	10
V. The Strategic Planning Process.....	17
VI. Mission, Vision, and Core Values.....	23
VII. The Strategic Plan.....	25
Priority One: Establishment of a Board of Visitors.....	27
Priority Two: Modernization of the Academy.....	28
Priority Three: COAS Research Centers of Excellence.....	29
Priority Four: Experiential Learning.....	30
VIII. Conclusion.....	32





# I. REMARKS FROM THE DEAN



The Howard University College of Arts and Sciences has a noteworthy reputation for excellence in advancing “quality of life-enhancing scholarship.” Historically, COAS scholars have focused on knowledge to be mobilized in service of progressive social change, including expanding the opportunity structure and improving the lived experiences of persons in underserved communities, particularly those of African heritage. In a National Science Foundation report, Howard University was ranked as the leading producer of African American bachelor’s degree holders who subsequently earned science and engineering doctoral degrees. Moreover, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges, Howard produces more black medical school

applicants—primarily from the COAS—than any other institution in the United States. Additionally, Howard’s COAS faculty has produced more African American PhDs than any other Arts and Sciences College in this country. Consistently, Howard’s COAS has been a leader in the creative cultural production and the rigorous scholarly interpretation of African and African diaspora art and culture. We are all very proud of our impressive reputation in the academy and in the African American community. Currently in our history, however, we are especially proud to note how Vice-Presidential nominee Senator Kamala Harris, an alumna of Howard’s COAS, represents well the caliber of students who matriculate through our liberal arts programs. Maintaining our exemplary reputation, given today’s external pressures and our self-directed internal pressure for excellence, requires us to initiate relevant changes decisively, but strategically.

Great colleges and universities consistently take stock of their degree programs and administrative operations to assess how these essentials align with student demands, societal needs, career opportunities for graduates, and

administrative best practices. For our COAS to remain relevant, its goals must always be aligned with public priorities. We are thereby required to continually assess our programmatic offerings, the quality of our academic programs, the opportunities for revenue generation, and the efficiency and effectiveness of our administrative operations. All of these assessments require the guidance of a strategic plan. I am grateful that the Task Force has produced a strategic plan that was informed by and, thus, supports the University’s strategic plan, Howard Forward.

For Howard’s COAS to make notable progress and to gain the trust and confidence of faculty, staff, and students, we start by acknowledging an awareness of specific areas in need of improvement. For one example, we understand the day-to-day experiences of faculty and students are not completely what we want them to be. To initiate the progress needed, the Office of the Dean will work tirelessly on two categories of challenges to be addressed. First, administrative operations in the Office of the Dean will be improved: Our principal goal is to improve the success and satisfaction of students, faculty, and staff. This means that

the Office of the Dean is focused chiefly on students graduating on time at higher rates, faculty producing more high-impact research and scholarship, and staff experiencing more professional growth, and that all three categories of stakeholders are experiencing greater satisfaction in the process. Second, in recognition that the Office of the Dean is not the origin of some administrative challenges and that some solutions are largely beyond the Office of the Dean, we will work more effectively with central leadership and central administrative offices in the interest of improving predictability, efficiency, and effectiveness on behalf of students and faculty.

Concrete examples exist of internal COAS improvements already underway, including improvements in liaising with central administrative offices on behalf of students and faculty. A new COAS Office of Student Affairs was founded last year to facilitate the success and satisfaction of students. To cite a second example, the COAS Budget Officer position has been upgraded to Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration, which has allowed for the appointment of a highly accomplished professional to better serve the College. Improvements in predictability and logistical flow and processing of information between academic departments and the Office of the Dean and with central offices are currently evident and will continue to be a goal. A third

example is the one-thousand-dollar annual travel allocation that is budgeted for each tenured and tenure-track faculty member for research and conference participation, though now obviously delayed due to Covid-19. And for a final example, note that the Office of the Dean is now working with ETS to ensure that all full-time faculty members receive computers to perform requisite duties. ETS will buy new laptops for new faculty members, and the Offices of the Dean will purchase computers for full-time faculty members in cycles: every three to four years for PCs and every five to six years for Macs.

A large share of faculty dissatisfaction stems from the objectionable physical infrastructure of their workplaces and their lower-than-average salaries. Decades of decisions to defer much-needed maintenance have culminated in today’s unacceptable state of academic and laboratory spaces. President Frederick and his leadership team prioritized addressing student residences during the first five years of his presidency. As a result, over 90% of residential units are either new or substantially renovated. With high-quality, state-of-the-art student housing in place, priority has now shifted to the construction and renovation of academic, laboratory, and performance infrastructure. As a matter of fact, infrastructure upgrades beyond student residences are already underway, perhaps best illustrated by the

University’s new state-of-the-art data and voice network.

Additionally, President Frederick and Provost Wutoh are also committed to salary increases for faculty and staff. After commissioning a study of peer institutions, a task force was established to review compensation and develop a plan to bring faculty salaries up to a level comparable to that of peer institutions. Another source of frequent faculty complaint is support for faculty research. The perception is that the services provided are too inadequate to meet faculty needs. The Office of the Dean is appointing a Pre-award and a Post-award grant specialist to improve faculty research support. COAS is preparing to help Howard University re-achieve R1 research status.

“...preparing to help Howard University re-achieve R1 research status.”

Additionally, the COAS Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration now meets biweekly with central leaders to address ongoing issues constraining faculty research. Although COAS has operated in the past without a formal strategic plan, the wrenching changes to higher education that have been underway for quite a while—combined now with the COVID-19 pandemic-induced disruption to the academy—make a strategic plan essential in today’s environment. In other words, we need to be outpacing the un-





COAS will be **more focused**, will have a direction that **all can understand**, and will be able to **grow its reputation**, generate additional **revenue** and become more **efficient and effective** in its administrative operations.

avoidable financial, demographic, and technological changes racing toward us, not to mention the sweeping changes induced by a global pandemic. Maintaining and even further improving our excellent academic reputation require us to be a little narrower in our program offerings, though deeper and more collaborative relative to COAS departments and divisions.

At the end of the first year of our 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan, the four divisions of Fine Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences will be reduced to the latter three, as Fine Arts will constitute its own independent College within the University. At that time, the College of Arts and Sciences will likely undergo a name change since "Arts" would no longer be included. Consequently, our new college will include liberal arts and sciences. Over the next year, we will work with the Provost and the President on suggesting a new name for our newly configured College.

I cannot be prouder of the COAS Strategic Planning Task Force, as it worked diligently with faculty, staff, and students from around the College to produce this smart and thorough strategic plan in nine months. Among the faculty participants, an Assistant Professor, an Associate Professor, and a Full Professor were appointed from each of the future three divisions of the College, namely, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social

Sciences. As a result of the Task Force's work, COAS will be more focused, will have a direction that all can understand, and will be able to grow its reputation, generate additional revenue and become more efficient and effective in its administrative operations. These attributes will contribute to COAS's participation in Howard Forward.

I want to thank Dr. Quinton L. Williams, Chair of Physics and Astronomy, for his robust leadership throughout this effort and bringing it to a quality conclusion. Dr. Williams and I are grateful to all Task Force members for their contributions to the Strategic Plan: Dr. Kola Abimbola, Dr. Terri Adams, Dr. Janelle Burke, Ms. Tanisha Eaton, Dr. Dinari Harris, Ms. Benita King, Ms. Autumn McNeill, Dr. Nikki Taylor, Dr. Mercedes Tibbits, Mr. NyJohn Washington, Dr. Rachel Watson, Dr. Traci Wyatt, and Dr. Amy Yeboah. Finally, special recognition is extended to COAS alumna, Dr. Kimberly Jeffries Leonard, who guided the strategic planning effort from start to finish. On behalf of COAS, I want to thank each of you for providing us with a roadmap for advancing the College over the next five years.

**Excellence in Truth and Service,**

**RUBIN PATTERSON, PH.D.**  
**DEAN, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**



## II. INTRODUCTION

In September 2019, the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS) Strategic Planning Task Force began its work to develop a five-year strategic plan to serve as a guide for COAS to fortify its ability to deliver a high-quality educational experience. The Task Force sought input from a wide array of stakeholders as it worked to capture as many voices and thoughts as possible. Input was received from faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni and other supporters of the College. This document is the result of nine months of many meetings, open discussions, conversations, debates and healthy, constructive arguments of priorities and ideology among various stakeholders as input was gathered and synthesized into recommendations for action. The strategic plan is a

culmination of expressed ideas from the collective and, hence, is built from the ground up. Ultimately, the plan will serve as a guiding document to help position COAS in attaining its inspirational goal of transforming into a more productive, efficient, and effective academic unit.

Key priorities of the strategic plan include forming a vibrant and purposeful Board of Visitors, modernizing the academy, infusing organized experiential learning into the curriculum, and establishing interdisciplinary and interdivisional COAS Research Centers of Excellence to help solve "Grand Challenges" of the 21st century. After several themes of high interest were identified with feedback gathered from all stakeholder groups,

research thrust areas came into clear focus, with two new interdisciplinary Research Centers of Excellence being proposed. Each proposed Center would represent the integration of scholars from the Divisions of Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. The first proposed Center, if approved, will focus on Environmental Sustainability, Human Development, and Global Justice; the second will focus on the Convergence of Human Security and Artificial Intelligence. Research projects will find their existence at the intellectual intersections of the three divisions that comprise COAS. Many interdisciplinary research projects fit well within these two proposed centers – including various COVID-19 focused activities as related to African American and other underserved communities



within the African Diaspora. Within this new structure, faculty will be empowered with a working environment that strongly encourages creativity and innovation in teaching and research. It must be stressed that the two Research Centers of Excellence as they are proposed would have to be approved by the Provost, the President, and the Board of Trustees.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 global health pandemic established its footing in America. At the time of this writing, this novel Coronavirus appears to be on the path of permanently altering life around the world as we know it. The key modernization priority of the academy is most timely, since it

provides a means to account for the new educational reality post-COVID-19. Technology is now being used by 100% of those in higher education, including teachers, researchers, and administrators. Consequently, our COAS must adapt quickly in response to the challenge at-hand, lest we risk being left behind in the aftermath of this seismic shift in the educational landscape.

The COAS Strategic Plan should be used to help harness the immense intellectual capital and talents of the Howard University faculty and staff while directing the education and learning of students. Upon graduation, students are prepared to serve the communities and the

global society from positions of leadership. The resulting plan, presented in this document, will aid the Dean and the College in maintaining a steadfast focus on a set of fundamental priorities as the University moves forward in a perpetually challenging and competitive higher education environment.

Serving as Chair of the Task Force afforded me the opportunity to meet with many individuals and groups and to hear thoughts from many different perspectives. I am very thankful to Dean Rubin Patterson for entrusting me with this assignment. I also want to acknowledge and thank Dr. Kimberly Jeffries-Leonard for her expertise and professional



leadership that helped to facilitate many of the discussions, town hall meetings, focus group sessions, and the online stakeholder survey. Her work was invaluable to the development of the strategic plan. Finally, I thank the full COAS Strategic Planning Task Force for their sustained work and dedication to ensure that no stones were left unturned while capturing the input from the community of stakeholders. Their persistence was commendable, as they continued to work through the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This dedication and commitment have ensured that the strategic plan provides the best course of action for COAS

for the years 2020-2025.

In closing, let us continue working with a renewed sense of purpose to help COAS and Howard University with delivering its commitment to Truth and Service. In the past and in contemporary times, COAS has played an integral role in the progress of African Americans and people of color from all over the world. We must now work more diligently than ever to continue contributing to this rich legacy despite unknowns and uncertainties awaiting us in the future. Finally, as we look ahead, we embrace the ideals of diversity and inclusion so that all will

find a home in COAS that welcomes and supports the very best that every individual has to offer. As Howard's flagship college, COAS has developed its strategic plan to enable it to deliver a unique experience that will produce more leaders who are equipped to handle the most complex future problems.

Academically yours,

**QUINTON L. WILLIAMS, PH.D.**  
**CHAIR, COAS STRATEGIC**  
**PLANNING TASK FORCE**  
**PROFESSOR AND CHAIR**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND**  
**ASTRONOMY**



### III.COAS STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES

Over a nine-month period, the COAS Strategic Planning Task Force gathered input from stakeholders that included faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni, and other supporters of the College to develop the top priorities. Key priorities, therefore, were determined as a result of opportunities for engagement established through the strategic planning process, which included a stakeholder survey, town hall meetings, a listening post, focus groups, and other sources for additional input. The following key priorities emerged:

**Priority 1: Establish a vibrant and purposeful Board of Visitors**

**Priority 2: Modernize academic programs**

**Priority 3: Establish new interdisciplinary Research Centers of Excellence**

**Priority 4: Formalize Domestic and International Experiential Learning**

*Presented in detail in section VIII.*



#### IV.THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE

Dr. Quinton Williams, Taskforce Chair, Professor of Physics and Astronomy

Dr. Kola Abimbola, Associate Professor of Philosophy

Dr. Terri Adams, Associate Professor of Sociology and Criminology

Dr. Janelle Burke, Associate Professor of Biology

Ms. Tanisha Eaton, Administrative Assistant III, Office of the Dean

Dr. Dinari Harris, Assistant Professor of Chemistry

Mrs. Benita King, Program Manager, COAS

Ms. Autumn McNeill, Undergraduate Student in COAS

Dr. Nikki Taylor, Professor of History

Dr. Mercedes Tibbits, Professor of World Languages and Cultures

Mr. NyJohn Washington, Undergraduate Student in COAS

Dr. Rachel Watson, Assistant Professor of English

Dr. Traci Wyatt, Program Coordinator, Honors Program

Dr. Amy Yeboah, Assistant Professor of Afro American Studies

*position titles as of September 2019*



### IV. HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (COAS)

The College of Arts and Sciences is at the heart of Howard University, which is recognized worldwide as a premier, comprehensive, research university. The College, located on Howard’s main campus, fosters a variety of academic and social activities for students. Because it is the oldest and the largest of the University’s 13 schools and colleges, COAS is often referred to as the flagship of the University. Its predecessor was founded in the second year of the University’s existence, and today it enrolls more than 3,000 students—making it by far the most popular choice among Howard’s undergraduates. In its current structure, the College of Arts and Sciences is comprised

of four divisions: Fine Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered among its 22 degree-granting programs. The curriculum of the College is designed to meet the needs and interests of a diverse, multicultural student body. A liberal education, in the traditional sense, is the central focus of programs that provide opportunities for self-discovery and reimagining the world while being rooted in to the College’s historical concern and sensitivity to social justice, the Black experience, and to underserved communities.

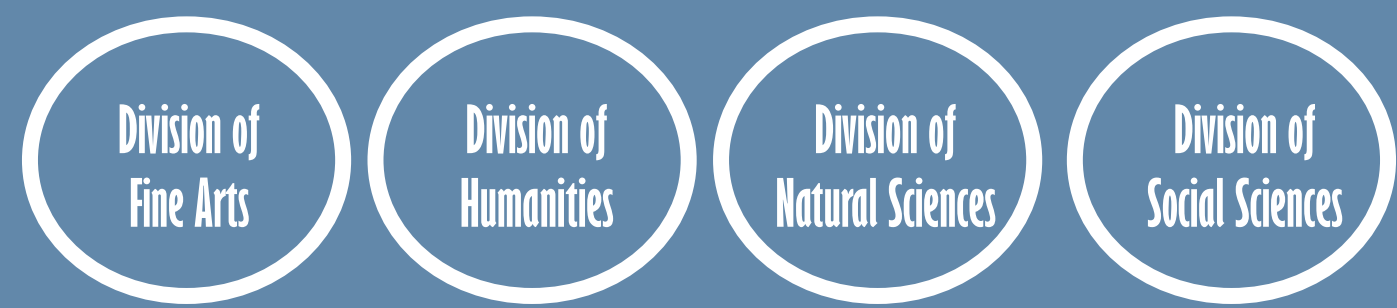
After its reorganization, which will be completed at the end

of fiscal year 2021, COAS will be comprised of three divisions, as illustrated in the Figure below: Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. COAS will use this strategic plan, aligned with the goals of Howard Forward, Howard University’s 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, to build on a bold, newly invigorated COAS that leverages those areas that its stakeholders identified as “strengths,” and mitigating those areas identified as “weaknesses.” The convergence of the three divisions in the Venn diagram below constitutes the intellectual space where research centers of excellence are imagined and built.

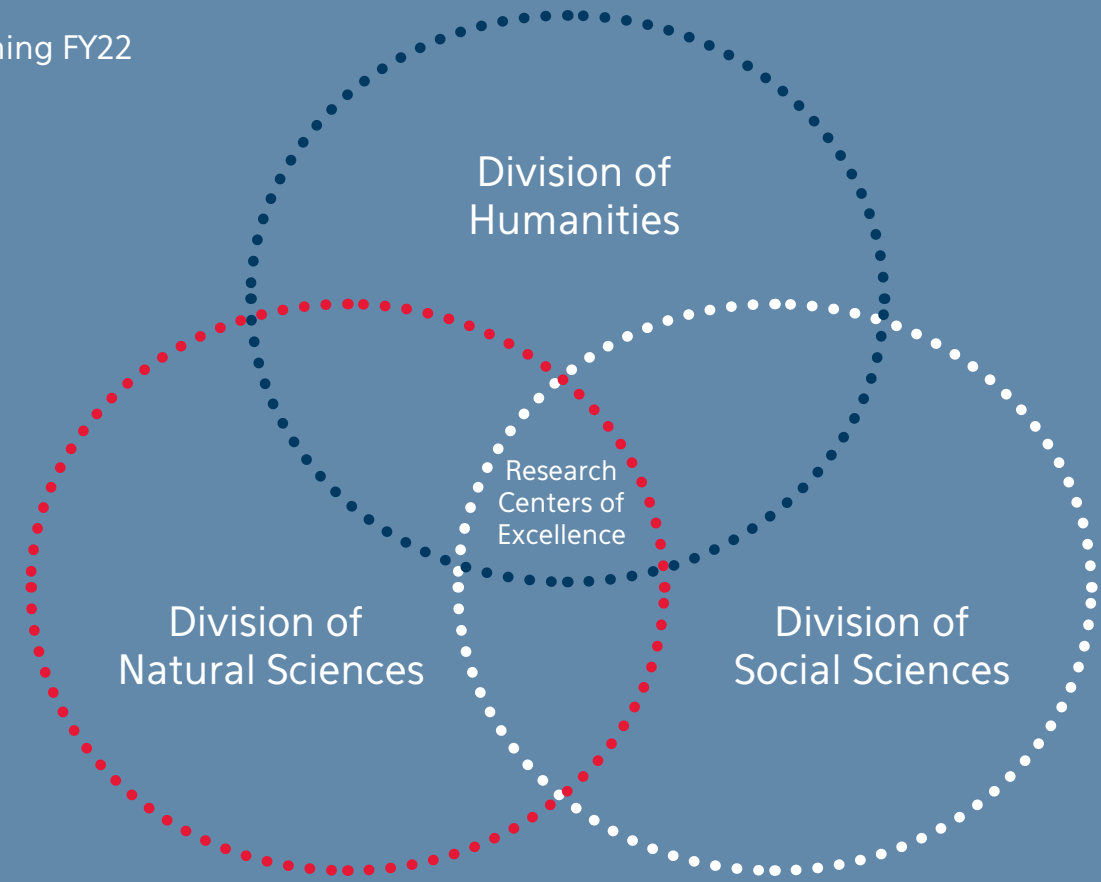


THE REORGANIZATION OF COAS

Through FY21



Beginning FY22



The broad experiences offered to our students is a hallmark of the College. Identified as a COAS strength in the COAS Strategic Planning Stakeholder Survey, a formal faculty-advising program augments the low student-faculty ratio and encourages student contact with faculty representing a variety of career goals and intellectual perspectives. These contacts are enhanced further

through departmental organizations and student associations. Howard University's location in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, supplements campus academic and extra-curricular resources with an inexhaustible pool of cultural, political, and recreational opportunities. Through the undergraduate experience

inside and outside the classroom, students acquire expertise in their chosen fields of study; strengthen and refine their powers of communication, reasoning, and judgment; and increase their capacities to lead productive, civically engaged lives. For academically gifted and highly motivated students who thrive in an atmosphere

of creative learning and intellectual exploration, the College offers the Honors Program, which enrolls more than 200 students annually. Admission to the program is by invitation only and the program has an intense curriculum of scholarship and research that culminates in a senior thesis. Additionally, the College maintains chapters of 13 national honor societies, including Phi Beta Kappa, with many departments offering discipline-specific honors.

The following are brief sketches of the Division of Humanities; the Division of Natural Sciences; and the Division of Social Sciences.

Humanities Division

The Humanities Division includes the degree-granting Departments of English, Philosophy, and World Languages and Cultures. This Division, therefore, affords students the opportunity to gain a grounding in the fundamental beliefs and values of the human experience. The Howard University Humanities Division is especially well attuned to the unique cultural heritage of its student body, and adept at tailoring the study of the humanities to best prepare its

students to be thought leaders in our community and our nation. In this era of rapid change and constant technological revolution, through study of the humanities, students gain a timeless frame of reference by which to understand and judge the significant events of life that we are witnessing daily.

In the Humanities Division, the subject matter is not a set of disciplines to be preserved or conserved, but rather a set of utilitarian and applicable principles that must continue to nurture intellectually through relevant research, inclusive discourse, and community experience. The Division's goal is to develop and share with students and colleagues the models and values necessary to navigate today's endless and unpredictable stream of new challenges. Essentially, the Humanities Division provi-

des students with linguistic and cultural tools necessary to operate effectively in an inter-connected yet diverse world. The Division significantly contributes to the University's mission to develop distinguished and compassionate graduates who are committed to discovering solutions to human and social problems in the United States and throughout the world.





and dried for future research. (Figures 1 and 2) (Meineke, 2018)

**Objective** - To investigate the changes in first flowering in *Salix nigra* and *Salix humilis* in the Mid-Atlantic United States, if there is any.

- Using herbarium specimens and online records from the last 150 years, the changes in first flowering phenology in *Salix nigra* and *Salix humilis* were investigated.
- Comparisons were made between the species as well as between the different sexes within the individual species.

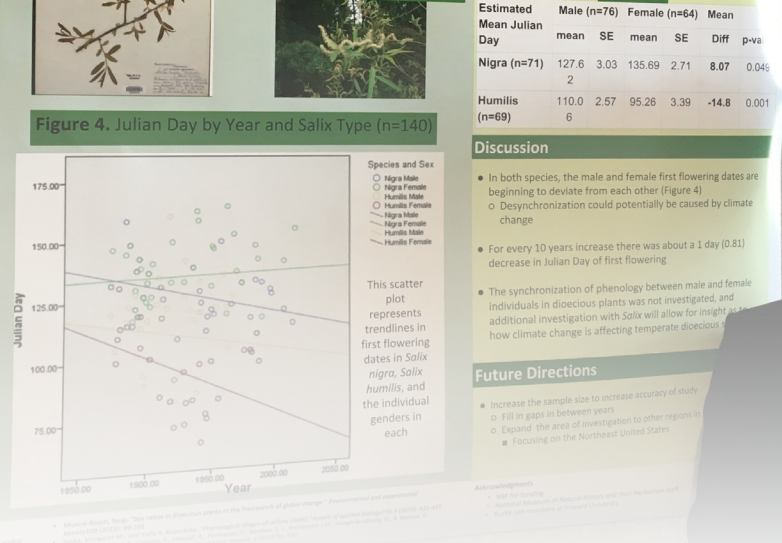
In light of increasing spring temperatures, we hypothesize first flowering dates will occur earlier in the season in both *Salix nigra* and *Salix humilis*, in both male and female plants.

#### Methods and Materials

- Data was collected on plant specimens from the National Museum of Natural History and the Mid-Atlantic Herbaria website, Fall 2018.
- Plant specimens analyzed were from the United States Mid-Atlantic area, which includes the DC, MD, VA, NJ, PA, and DE.
  - 71 *Salix nigra* specimens and 69 *Salix humilis* specimens were analyzed
- Data collected included observed flower sex, Julian date, and phenological stage (flowering, fruiting, or sterile).
- Data were only analyzed for spring flowering dates
- A preliminary data was analyzed using Excel: the student T test, and a regression model in SAS
- A regression model was run to analyze the preliminary data
- Statistical analyses were completed with 0.05 cutoff for P values

University of Maryland

Figure 4. Julian Day by Year and Salix Type (n=140)



## Natural Sciences Division

The Division of Natural Sciences provides a solid foundation through teaching, research, and professional development of its students based upon rigorous scientific thought and procedures. It includes two of the University's most popular majors: Biology and Psychology. The Division also includes departments of Chemistry; Health, Human Performance, and Leisure Studies; Mathematics; and Physics and Astronomy. With its traditionally

huge offering of technologically focused programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level, this Division plays an important role in STEM training, especially among African Americans. The Division of Natural Sciences, therefore, contributes significantly to the production of more undergraduate African American students who continue to pursue doctoral STEM degrees, which accounts for the Division's consistent high ranking among the nation's largest producers of the Ph.D.

degree to African Americans in the natural sciences. Faculty within this Division engage in diverse studies at the frontiers of research that is often supported with extramural funding from major funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Defense (DoD), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).



## Social Sciences Division

The Social Sciences Division includes the following academic programs: African Studies, Afro-American Studies, Economics, History, Political Science, and Sociology and Criminology. Aligned with the mission of the College of Arts and Sciences, social science majors provide an education grounded in academic vigor and social justice awareness and application. The educational programs under this division encourage the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills that prepare students for graduate and professional school as well as for rewarding career opportunities. Our programs also emphasize the importance of engaging in scientific studies and social justice endeavors, as well as leaning into an empathetic imagination of exploring the human condition. Many of our faculty are involved in cutting-edge research activities that offer students hands-on experience with the collection and analysis of primary and secondary data, and increasingly with "Big Data." Additionally, some of our majors either require or strongly encourage students to participate in an internship and to respond positively to social justice opportunities that help prepare students for employment in their desired fields. The location of Washington, D.C., affords our students a wealth of internship and employment opportunities in the federal government, local government, research institutes, private agencies, and think-tanks.





AVERAGE  
SAT SCORES  
OF OUR  
HONORS PROGRAM STUDENTS

↑ 1350

HOWARD UNIVERSITY HAS PRODUCED

50%

OF ALL AFRICAN AMERICAN AND

30%

OF LATINX PHDS IN  
ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES



IN 2017, HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
BECAME THE FIRST AND ONLY

HBCU

TO HAVE A MELLON MAYS  
UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP  
PROGRAM

C O A S  
HONORS PROGRAM STUDENTS  
HAVE A  
GRADUATION RATE OF

93%



As a College that reflects excellence in truth and service, the following are exemplars of excellence from the three divisions within COAS:

The Honors Program offers students of high academic potential (average SAT 1350) a unique opportunity to extend their intellectual horizons. The students are provided an intellectually challenging and rewarding course of study covering a broad liberal arts spectrum of disciplines. Also, through their experiences with independent research and highly skilled faculty, students are eminently prepared for graduate and professional school. Of special note, Honors Program students have a four-year graduation rate of 93%, and many graduates of the Honors Program receive nationally and internationally prestigious scholarships and fellowships.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Cooperative Science Center for Atmospheric Sciences and Meteorology (NCAS-M) is making a national impact in the production of African American PhDs for the Atmospheric Sciences workforce. COAS provides leadership for this collaborative interdisciplinary program with contributions from the Graduate School and the College of Engineering and Architecture. Howard University has outpaced the entire nation by producing 50% of all African American and 30% of Latinx PhDs in Atmospheric Sciences,

with a 98% employment rate in their desired fields of study. Over the past three years, thirteen students from the partnership have been hired into the NOAA mission workforce. NCAS-M alumni, students, and faculty also spearhead diversity and inclusion efforts at NOAA and in several leading professional societies (e.g., American Meteorological Society and American Geophysical Union) and in several universities in the United States. This value-added dimension has national impact on the diversity in geosciences.

The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program (MMUF) recruits the strongest undergraduate students with a genuine interest in pursuing a Ph.D. in the Humanities and becoming college professors. Throughout most of its history, Mellon Mays programs have been hosted at the most elite colleges and universities in the United States. In 2017, Howard University received a grant to establish its own program, making Howard the first and only HBCU to have an MMUF program. In Spring 2020, the first cohort of Howard University Mellon Mays fellows graduated. During the following year, four of the five went on to pursue graduate degrees: Northwestern University (2), University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and Columbia University. Three of the four received full tuition scholarships plus generous stipends to pursue their dreams of becoming Humanities professors.

ADDITIONAL  
ACHIEVEMENTS ARE  
FEATURED BELOW:

Black and Urban Digital Protections and Democratic Knowledge in Washington, D.C., is a project designed by faculty from the departments of Political Science, Sociology and Criminology, History, and Philosophy, as well as two campus centers.

The goal of this project is to examine the use of digital media in coordinated disinformation campaigns in black and urban communities by nefarious actors for the purpose of sowing discord in the American electorate.

This project concerning the intersection of race and internet governance will result in near-term public policy recommendations and is funded by the Knight Foundation.



# V. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

One of the most important roadmaps for the purposeful growth and development of an organization is its strategic plan—a plan that encompasses the input of all stakeholders and considers what is and what could be. Shortly after being appointed Dean, Dr. Rubin Patterson formed a Task Force within the College of Arts and Sciences to facilitate the development of a COAS Strategic Plan to accomplish these stated goals. Charged with spanning the timeframe of 2020-2025 and complementing Howard University’s Howard Forward Strategic Plan, the COAS Strategic Planning Task Force (CSPTF) was appointed by Dean Patterson and led by Dr. Quinton Williams. Faculty participants were selected from a pool of faculty members who were nominated and self-nominated.

In order to support the CSPTF efforts and inform the public of the strategic planning work, a webpage was placed on COAS’s website that introduced the CSPTF and included dates of Task Force meetings, strategic planning tools and resources, and stakeholder engagement opportunities.



The strategic planning process started with identifying the COAS stakeholders, first, and then structuring opportunities to receive feedback from them. Stakeholders consisted of Howard University and COAS students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and members of the community. Each of these groups plays a role in or has a stake in the success of Howard University’s College of Arts and Sciences and was given a voice in shaping COAS’s forward strategic movement for the next five years. After identifying the stakeholders, the CSPTF then determined that multiple levels of feedback opportunities were necessary to receive as

much information as possible. These feedback opportunities included a COAS Strategic Planning Stakeholder Survey, a series of Town Hall Meetings, a Listening Post, and two Focus Groups. The information received from each of these stakeholder touchpoints was analyzed and utilized to develop the COAS 2020-2025 Strategic Plan. Each engagement opportunity yielded valuable information, with the Listening Posts and Focus Groups providing a deeper understanding of the emerging themes.

## COAS Strategic Planning Stakeholder Survey

The COAS Strategic Planning Stakeholder Survey was devel-

oped by the Task Force and the Task Force facilitator. The survey was launched on October 16, 2019, on the Survey Monkey® platform and closed on February 6, 2020. The survey, delivered through Survey Monkey® in the following ways, reached the broadest audience of stakeholders: 1) via e-blast to all members of the COAS family, including students, faculty, staff and administrators; 2) posted on the COAS website on the strategic planning task force webpage; and 3) via QR code posted across the campus on fliers. Multiple e-blast reminders were sent to COAS stakeholders encouraging completion of the survey. In addition, survey completion was encouraged at

in-person gatherings of COAS stakeholders, including faculty meetings, Town Hall Meetings, and the Listening Post.

**Survey Design:** The COAS Strategic Planning Stakeholder Survey was comprised of 22 items and was designed to accomplish the following: capture from all stakeholders quantitative and qualitative information specific to the draft mission and vision statements; identify ways in which COAS, as a College, could support the overall priorities of the University’s strategic plan, Howard Forward; draft strategic priorities for COAS; identify COAS’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; obtain feedback on 21st century

challenges that should be addressed through interdisciplinary research and education from the respondent’s perspective; and identify the most important issues to be raised as COAS prepared for strategic planning.

“Each engagement opportunity yielded valuable information, with the Listening Posts and Focus Groups providing a deeper understanding of the emerging themes.”

**Survey Respondents:** The survey had 281 respondents that included 110 current undergraduate students, 13 current graduate students, 11 alumni, 100 faculty, 37 staff, and 10 administrators. Among the respondents, 228 indicated that they were affiliated with the College of Arts and Sciences; 34 with the Humanities Division; 88 with the Natural Sciences Division; 66 with the Social Sciences Division; and 10 with Special Academic Programs (which include the Honors Program, Military Science, and Pre-professional education). Seven respondents designated “not applicable,” and 18 respondents designated the “other” association.



KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

The COAS Stakeholder Strategic Planning Survey provided feedback on key areas of the strategic plan:



Most of the survey respondents agreed with the draft mission (88.12%) and vision (89.11%) statements.



Ideas for ways in which COAS could support Howard Forward emerged, which were consistent with the four proposed COAS Strategic Priorities.



Most of the respondents felt that no additional priorities should be added to the four that were identified.



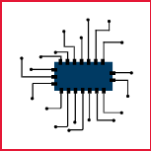
SEVEN BROAD THEMES EMERGED FROM THE QUESTION ON THE **TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY CHALLENGES** THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION:



SOCIAL JUSTICE



FINANCES



SCIENCE & TECH



EDUCATION



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES  
INCLUDING HEALTH RESEARCH



CULTURE



GLOBALIZATION  
AND/OR  
INTERNATIONALIZATION

THESE THEMES WERE USED AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE TOPIC AREAS IN DEFINING THE TWO PROPOSED RESEARCH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.



In addition, the survey provided feedback on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of COAS from the respondent’s perspective. The following themes emerged from the content of the SWOT analysis that was generated by the stakeholder survey.

Themes that emerged as COAS strengths: 1) visionary leadership; 2) quality of faculty; 3) diversity of academic offerings and majors; 4) diversity of human capital; 5) well-prepared students; 6) committed staff; 7) COAS legacy; 8) COAS graduation rates; 9) departmental interrelated research interests; 10) Passport Initiative and the opportunity for students to study abroad; 11) the University’s geographical location in the world’s power center; 12) symposia offered and the speakers engaged; 13) African-American based curricula; and 14) community focus.

Themes that emerged as COAS weaknesses: 1) external funding incommensurate with our potential; 2) low student and faculty morale; 3) lack of infrastructure, research facilities, physical plant and information technology; 4) heavy teaching load; 5) limited interdisciplinary research opportunities and programs; 6) failure of most students to gain international experience ; 7) issues of course scheduling/curriculum/online courses; 8) quality of faculty; 9) low pay; 10) lack of technical support and outdated technology; 11) staff issues, including understaffing, high

staff turnover, lack of professionalism; 12) operational inefficiency; 13) inadequate career services/internships; 14) lack of a COAS Development Officer; 15) administrative overburden; and 16) lack of transparency and communication.

Themes that emerged as COAS opportunities: 1) interdisciplinary collaboration and research; 2) experiential learning; 3) financial security and fundraising; 4) vision of new leadership; 5) alumni base and network; 6) support of junior faculty ideas and development; 7) location for external D.C.-based collaborations; 8) Howard University branding; 9) technology; and 10) morale. These themes were overwhelmingly viewed as opportunities for COAS to be better leveraged.

In addition, the following are the secondary themes that emerged from the content analysis: 1) online courses 2) jobs and internships in the social sciences; 3) communication; 4) globalization and partnerships; 5) environmental sciences; 6) a new optimism regarding COAS; 7) cultural diversity; 8) immigration; 9) resources and infrastructure; 10) modernization of COAS curriculum; 11) environmental concerns; 12) international opportunities; 13) staff sufficiency; 14) service learning; and 15) the inclusion of more undergraduate research.

Themes that emerged as COAS threats: 1) infrastructure issues; 2) questionable

resources; 3) inadequate leadership and upper administration; 4) funding issues; 5) resistance to modernization and outdated curriculum; 6) student/faculty and staff morale; 7) Board of Trustees ineffectiveness; 8) quality of faculty; and 9) lack of faculty support.

“When presented with the proposed priorities for COAS, most of the respondents felt that no additional priorities should be added to the four that were identified.”

In addition, the following are the secondary themes that emerged from the content analysis: 1) student-to-faculty ratio; 2) transparency; 3) external/internal support in the Humanities; 4) student preparation for post Howard University; 5) research collaboration; 6) faculty retention; 7) liberal arts majors; 8) wages; 9) STEM as the only focus; 10) standards and accountability; 11) student retention; 12) governmental landscape; 13) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan and officer; 14) accreditation status; 15) mentorship; 16) robustness of other academic institutions; 17) bridge program; 18) staff/faculty environment; 19)strategic planning; 20) translational work; and 21) salary compression.





**Town Hall Meetings**

Two Town Hall meetings, held on November 7, 2019, and January 22, 2020, widely advertised and open to all COAS stakeholders, informed the COAS community of the progress of the strategic plan development and gathered input to guide the preparation. At each Town Hall Meeting, attendees received updates on the Stakeholder Survey and were led through guided discussions on topics critical to the development of the strategic plan. These topics included the Research Centers of Excellence, SWOT analysis, modernization of the academy and the concept of COAS interdivisional, interdisciplinary learning.

**Listening Post**

A Listening Post serves as a forum to receive input on a specific subject. One Listening Post was held on December 5, 2019, to present the proposed Research Centers of Excellence and to receive feedback on their underlying themes that were generated from the COAS Stakeholder Survey.

**Focus Groups**

Meetings with two Focus Groups were held on January 28, 2020, to discuss the concepts of the Research Centers of Excellence. Each focus group was specific to one

Research Center of Excellence idea, and the discussion was tailored to the “Grand Challenge” that would drive the Research Center of Excellence. The Focus Groups were comprised of faculty and students from a cross section of COAS. A facilitator moderated the discussion and a notetaker was present. The details of the two Focus Groups are below.

- 1. Focus Group A: Center focusing on Environmental Sustainability, Human Development and Global Justice. January 28, 2020, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

This session was comprised of twelve participants representing the following COAS Departments and Programs: African Studies; Biology; Classics; Economics;

Health, Human Performance, and Leisure Studies; History; Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies; Military Science—Army ROTC; Physics and Astronomy; Psychology; and World Languages and Cultures.

- 2. Focus Group B: Center focusing on Convergence of Artificial Intelligence and Human Security. January 28, 2020, 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

This session was comprised of eleven participants representing the following COAS Departments: African Studies, Economics, English, Mathematics, Military Science—Air Force ROTC, Philosophy, Physics and Astronomy, Political Science, and Psychology.



# VI.MISSION, VISION & CORE VALUES

## Mission

In accordance with the mission of Howard University, the College of Arts and Sciences provides students with a rigorous and distinguished education that facilitates self-discovery and preparation to lead, create, discover, and apply knowledge to real-world problems locally and globally.

Our liberal arts education contributes solutions to human, social, and scientific problems, particularly in the African diaspora and under-resourced communities. Discernibly embedded in the humanistic, natural, and social scientific scholarship generated and disseminated throughout the College are critical thinking and critical consciousness.

With a wide range of degree programs, emphasis on synthesis of knowledge and a sense of personal and social responsibility, the College of Arts and Sciences provides a haven for intellectual curiosity and a nurturing environment for culturally diverse students of all academic pursuits.



## THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: VISION & CORE VALUES

*The Howard University College of Arts and Sciences strives for preeminence among liberal arts institutions by educating the whole individual for personal, civic, and professional success. The College is committed to offering powerful learning experiences through independent research, service-learning, and locally and nationally based internships, as well as through study-abroad opportunities. We will continue building a culture of academic excellence and rigor to solve local and global problems, particularly those that impact peoples of African descent and other under-resourced communities.*



### EXCELLENCE

A standard of excellence permeates COAS classrooms, labs, studios, clinics, and research, and is inculcated in our students, faculty, and staff. Excellence is the yardstick by which we measure the quality of our teaching, research, and service.



### PURPOSE

The research undertaken and produced by COAS is purposeful in its intention and efforts to serve and improve the lives and outcomes of people in the African Diaspora.



### INTEGRITY

The main pillars of integrity include truth, accountability, transparency, and responsibility. COAS strives to ensure that the research, teaching, productions, and business of this college exhibit integrity at all times.



### INSPIRATION

Through the production of exemplary education, research, and service programs, COAS strives to use every opportunity to inspire students to be compassionate thinkers in the critical consciousness tradition, problem solvers, and leaders who leave their mark on their community and humanity.





# A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND GROWTH FOR PROGRESS

## THE STRATEGIC PLAN: PRIORITIES AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



### ESTABLISHMENT OF A BOARD OF VISITORS

COAS is composed of inspirational faculty and goal-oriented scholars whose intellectual interests and pursuits span across the Division of Humanities, the Division of Natural Sciences, and the Division of Social Sciences.

Establishing a vibrant and purposeful Board of Visitors is set as a strategic priority. The Board is to be populated in a manner such that each member would contribute to achieving at least one of the other priorities, such as establishing research centers of excellence, providing data-driven recommendations on new online degree and professional development programs, or executing development activities.



### MODERNIZATION OF THE ACADEMY

Modernization of the academy is set as a strategic priority for COAS in anticipation of the future needs of our students and in response to the new operating environment post-COVID-19. Going forward, COAS must be consistently innovative in its curriculum, courses, and pedagogies.



### COAS RESEARCH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

In relation to the goals of the two proposed Research Centers of Excellence, COAS seeks to develop a critical mass of complementing faculty to deliver high-quality instruction and generate research and scholarship at the forefront of STEM education and progressive human and social development. COAS faculty will continue seeking opportunities to work at the vanguard of transdisciplinary knowledge advancement and provide impactful leadership and solutions, focusing on the African Diaspora and the broader global society. The two proposed Research Centers of Excellence are the Center for Environmental Sustainability, Human Development and Global Justice and the Center for the Convergence of Human Security and Artificial Intelligence.



### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The educational journey is augmented significantly through cocurricular experiences. Given that all COAS students can greatly improve their competitiveness by participating in these types of impactful cocurricular activities, Experiential Learning is set as a strategic priority.





ESTABLISHMENT  
OF A BOARD OF  
VISITORS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

Establish a  
vibrant and  
purposeful Board  
of Visitors

Conventionally, COAS is composed of faculty and developing scholars whose intellectual interests and pursuits span across the Division of Humanities, the Division of Natural Sciences, and the Division of Social Sciences. Although resources needed by the three divisions of COAS range far and wide, they are still inextricably linked by the common denominator of fiscal resources and external partnerships to build new innovative programs. To help COAS on this front, the priority of establishing a vibrant and purposeful Board of Visitors is set as a strategic priority.

**Recommendation 1:**

Assemble a Board of Visitors where members are able to significantly aid the realization of Priorities 2, 3 & 4.

**Recommendation 2:**

Select Board Members with diverse backgrounds who can leverage their networks in the most effective way to help COAS serve its broad community of scholars.



MODERNIZATION  
OF THE ACADEMY

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

Modernization of  
the Academy

There is no doubt that Howard University, founded in 1867, has successfully undergone many changes and transitions over its existence. The grit and resilience of its stakeholders have enabled the University to endure challenging experiences. However, conditions can occasionally change so suddenly and drastically where the need arises for an organization to invoke revolutionary, rather than mere evolutionary, change. A severely declining U.S. economy, coupled with the global COVID-19 pandemic, has produced an unprecedented shock to higher education. Modernization of the academy is set as a strategic priority for COAS in anticipation of future needs of our students and in response to the new operating environment of post-COVID-19. Going forward, COAS must always be innovative with its curricula, courses, pedagogies, and administrative operations.

**Recommendation 1:**

Review all program curricula to ensure that course offerings and program requirements are aligned with cutting-edge scholarship, student interests, and public priorities. Enhance pedagogical approaches to refresh mature courses, create new courses reflecting societal shifts and advancing discoveries, all while taking care to include co-teaching by faculty from two or three different disciplines associated with the Divisions of Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences, where appropriate.

**Recommendation 2:**

Improve the technology infrastructure of classrooms and instructional labs to facilitate optimal teaching and learning in face-to-face and distance learning.

**Recommendation 3:**

Develop online degree and professional development program offerings and establish a corps of online-only faculty.

**Recommendation 4:**

Infuse computer usage and digital information literacy into each curriculum e.g., Big Data, data science, data analytics, and digital humanities.

**Recommendation 8:**

Utilize Air Force ROTC and Army ROTC programs to incorporate leadership development into the curriculum.

**Recommendation 5:**

With the support of CETLA, ensure training in online teaching for all current and future COAS faculty, as well as teaching assistants where appropriate, using the best practices available for this mode of instruction.

**Recommendation 6:**

Be more intentional about executing robust assessment of teaching and learning outcomes where feedback supports continuous improvement.

**Recommendation 7:**

Build impactful international partnerships for synergistic research and other professional activities as well as to provide platforms for facilitating the development of COAS students as future global leaders.

KEY  
RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY  
RECOMMENDATIONS







COAS RESEARCH  
CENTERS OF  
EXCELLENCE



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

Establish new  
interdisciplinary  
Research Centers  
of Excellence

KEY  
RECOMMENDATIONS

It is now widely recognized that the resolution of complex problems involves a combination of disciplines and that the research needed to solve most contemporary problems is interdisciplinary in nature. In relation to the goals of the two proposed Research Centers of Excellence, COAS seeks to develop a critical mass of complementing faculty to deliver high-quality instruction and generate research and scholarship at the forefront of STEM education and progressive human and social development. COAS Faculty will continue seeking opportunities to work at the vanguard of the advancement of knowledge and provide impactful leadership and solutions for the African diaspora. Within the College, a few interdisciplinary research programs and a Department of Interdisciplinary Studies exist. The College will now greatly expand its efforts in interdisciplinary activities and programs to encompass the entire College of Arts and Sciences. Going forward, many existing COAS faculty will begin directing their research efforts toward a set of 21st century grand challenges, and new faculty additions will be required to advance research programs that fit under the umbrellas of one of the proposed Research Centers of Excellence. To satisfy these assumed realities, establishing COAS Research Centers of Excellence has been set as a priority.

A COAS Research Center of Excellence, as proposed, is an interdisciplinary and interdivisional center that focuses on research, best practices, and training, guided by rules of change; it may be led by one of the three Divisions but incorporates all Divisions in varying degrees relative to its focus area.

- Each proposed Center must satisfy the following three criteria:
1. The Center should have the potential to make a significant impact on a multigenerational grand challenge of the 21st century.
  2. The Center should have enough “space/elasticity” to accommodate interdisciplinary research and education by faculty from the future three COAS divisions.
  3. The Center should have high potential for attracting external funding to support its ongoing operations and contribute significantly to the COAS enterprise and the University’s priorities.

The Covid-19 pandemic serves as a reminder that transformative external factors can quickly impose themselves on institutions. Accordingly, although two Research Centers of Excellence are proposed at this time, COAS will remain nimble so as to address emergent challenges and pursue new opportunities; therefore, other centers will be proposed should additional needs arise. The proposed Research Centers of Excellence, along with descriptions of their attendant grand challenges, are the following:

**Center for Environmental Sustainability, Human Development and Global Justice**

The aim of this Center is to develop cutting-edge applied scholarship concerning the new advancements and approaches in the production and distribution of resources to address the needs of energy, food, water, and shelter in metropolitan areas. As climate change continues to alter the environment and impact lives, myriad challenges must be overcome to ensure environmental sustainability. Additionally, for a world population of nearly 8 billion people, access to life’s necessities—including quality

education and adequate health care—is expected to become more constricted for vulnerable communities around the world in the absence of action led by science and compassion. Science-led and compassionate governance is needed throughout the supply-chain, including the production, distribution, and consumption of material goods, education, and health care by citizens throughout the world, particularly the most marginalized citizens.

COAS faculty and students conducting research within this Center will use scientific methods to examine environmental variability and inform approaches for better protecting ecosystems, employ social scientific methods to examine the impacts of public policies and market activities, as well as formulate new public policies; finally, the faculty and students will employ approaches from the humanities to interpret and create discourses and cultural practices concerning environmental sustainability and global justice.

**Center for the Convergence of Human Security and Artificial Intelligence**

The aim of this Center is to examine the intersection and impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on human security. More societal and economic matters are being relegated to AI, defined as the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks that normally required human intelligence. As such, decision rules, public policies, and codes of ethics must be applied to ensure that preventative measures are in place to avoid the recreation and reinforcement of historical racial hierarchy, as these tools are implemented throughout the country and around the globe. Human security—defined as an approach to identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival and dignity of people—is based on the notion that people have a right to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. The global economy is rapidly shifting towards a smaller, more productive workforce that is being replaced, not simply aided, by digital technology. With wrenching changes to the workplace due to all aspects of AI, even more careful attention must be given to diversity and inclusion to ensure the human security of individuals of the African diaspora and the rest of humanity. One of many consequential outcomes of the implementation of AI via machine learning, automation, data science, and data analytics across industries is the sharp reduction

in human labor. It has been projected that as much as a half of all jobs are vulnerable to automation. Through research, the Center’s faculty and students will address the discourses, policies, and applications of AI, data science, and data analytics on the one hand, and human security and diversity implications on the other. The production and utilization of this scholarship are critically important for mitigating the effects of demagogues seeking to scapegoat vulnerable communities for broadly experienced downward social mobility during a fundamentally realtering economy.

**Recommendation 1:**  
Direct existing faculty to begin working with colleagues to identify and develop proposals for conducting research in support of a specific Research Center of Excellence.

**Recommendation 2:**  
Hire tenure-line faculty with expertise that directly supports the aim of a specific Research Center of Excellence while also contributing to a specific department or departments.

**Recommendation 3:**  
Connect COAS student education and training to the Research Centers of Excellence.

**Recommendation 4:**  
Ensure that issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are addressed in the work of the Research Centers of Excellence.





EXPERIENTIAL  
LEARNING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

Formalize  
domestic and  
international  
experiential  
learning

KEY  
RECOMMENDATIONS



Today, more college students are involved with social activism and community service, not to mention completing internships. Additionally, students are traveling much farther and frequently than in past times due to an improved transportation network that readily connects them to the world. For a variety of reasons, limited numbers of African Americans receive study abroad experience, thereby missing out on the attendant high impact outcomes such as higher graduation rates, a new sense of self in the world, and further preparation for global leadership. Technological innovations are also presenting new platforms that no longer confine university students' learning experiences to the main campus.

Howard's COAS students can study with other students on different continents via digital platforms as well as work on challenging problems right here in Washington, D.C., problems that may not be unlike those that may be found in cities where they are from or will live in the future. The educational journey is augmented significantly through these cocurricular experiences. Given that all COAS students can greatly improve their competitiveness by participating in these types of impactful cocurricular activities, Experiential Learning is set as a strategic priority.

**Recommendation 1:**

Establish an Office for Experiential Learning to plan/coordinate activities and logistics for COAS as related to domestic and international experiential learning.

**Recommendation 2:**

Provide domestic and international experiential learning opportunities for COAS students whereby semester credit hours can be formally recorded on the transcript.

**Recommendation 5:**

Infuse high-impact experiential learning throughout COAS such that all students receive at least one internship or externship at a D.C.-based institution, and the majority of students experience some form of study abroad experience.

**Recommendation 3:**

Establish formal relationships with D.C.-based public-sector, private-sector, and nonprofit-sector institutions to facilitate experiential learning.

**Recommendation 4:**

Ensure that each degree program has experiential learning courses so that students can receive credit hours toward degrees for their internships and community engagement research and activities.



## VIII. CONCLUSION

The COAS Strategic Plan is dynamic and allows for the College to be nimble as it seeks and identifies new opportunities for learning and growth. The Strategic Plan belongs to every Howard University COAS stakeholder and presents a path forward that embraces the legacy of COAS and its commitment to preparing graduates for meeting and successfully conquering the "Grand Challenges" of this century. Each Strategic Plan priority, as listed, will be continuously assessed for effective change.

This information will be used as input for ongoing real-time adjustments to ensure that successful outcomes are experienced from the Plan's implementation. In the spirit of Howard University's mantra of excellence in truth and service, the College of Arts and Sciences commits itself to excellence and progress for all.



A **COMMITMENT** TO  
EXCELLENCE AND GROWTH  
FOR PROGRESS





2020 - 2025  
A COMMITMENT TO  
EXCELLENCE AND GROWTH  
FOR PROGRESS

