

Howard University: An Overview

In November 1866, shortly after the end of the Civil War, members of the First Congregational Society of Washington considered establishing a theological seminary for the education of African American clergymen. Within a few weeks, the concept expanded to include a provision for establishing a University. Within two years, the University consisted of the colleges of Liberal Arts and Medicine. The new institution was named for General Oliver O. Howard, a Civil War hero who was both a founder of the University and, at the same time, commissioner of the Freedman's Bureau.

The University charter as enacted by Congress and subsequently approved by President Andrew Johnson on March 2, 1867, designated Howard University as "a University for the education of youth in the liberal arts and sciences." The Freedmen's Bureau provided most of the early financial support of the University. In 1879, Congress approved a special appropriation for the University. The charter was amended in 1928 to authorize an annual federal appropriation for construction, development, improvement and maintenance of the University.

Howard University as one of the nation's leading research universities is dedicated to educating students from diverse backgrounds at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional level, with a particular focus on African American students, as well as those of all other racial and ethnic groups from the United States and around the world. The University received its first accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in 1921 and has had its accreditation reaffirmed by the Association at every required interval thereafter.

Howard is a unique university with a special mission that addresses the higher education needs of the nation and the world. Since its founding, Howard has been open to men and women from all racial and ethnic groups. The University has awarded more than 100,000 degrees in the arts, sciences and humanities. Howard ranks among the highest producers of the nation's Black professionals in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, engineering, nursing, architecture, religion, law, music, social work and education. The University has long held a commitment to the education and advancement of disadvantaged persons in American society and throughout the world. The goal is the elimination of inequities related to race, color, social, economic and political circumstances.

The University's academic programs are offered by 14 schools and colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences; the School of Business; the Cathy Hughes School of Communications; the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts; the College of Dentistry; the School of Divinity; the School of Education; the College of Engineering and Architecture; the School of Law; the College of Medicine, the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences; the College of Pharmacy; and the School of Social Work.

The University library system, typifying Howard's commitment to research, contains more than two million volumes and is a member of the Association of Research Libraries. Among the system's many resources are the state-of-the-art, Louis Stokes Health Science Library and the Law Library. In addition, the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center houses one of the world's largest and most comprehensive research collections dedicated to documenting the history and culture of people of African descent throughout the world.

The University has an array economic, and informational of media outlets that address the educational, social, needs of the academic and wider communities. Its radio station, WHUR-FM, and television station, WHUT-TV, a PBS affiliate, serve the Washington metropolitan area and beyond. Each provides training laboratories that assist in preparing students for professional broadcasting and other careers.

In addition to its collegiate programs, the University maintains an Early Learning Program and a Middle School of Mathematics and Science. The Early Learning Program offers pre-kindergarten through kindergarten programs and the Middle School of Mathematics and Science District of Columbia Public Charter School providing curricula for grades 6 through 9.

The University's main campus is located in Washington, DC, within five miles of the United States Capitol and consists of more than 57 buildings on more than 89 acres of land. It also maintains a 22-acre West Campus in upper Northwest Washington, which houses the Law School and the School of Divinity. The 450 licensed-bed university hospital (Howard University Hospital) provides services for a significant segment of the Washington, DC metropolitan community, in addition to providing a clinical setting for training physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers.

The University competes in varsity sports, including basketball, football, golf, bowling, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, both indoor and outdoor track and volleyball. Howard has more than 13,000 students from virtually every state, the District of Columbia and more than 70 countries.

Its undergraduate students enjoy academic pursuits in more than 120 areas of study leading to undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. The University continues to attract the nation's top students and produces more on-campus African American Ph.D.s than any other university in the world. Over the past 25 years, the University has produced *Rhodes Scholars*, *Truman Scholars*, *Marshall Scholars*, *Fulbright Scholars*, *Luce Scholars*, *Goldwater Scholars*, *Schwarzman Scholars*, *Truman Scholars*, and *Pickering Fellows*. Additionally, Howard University has been a top producer of *Gilman Scholars* over the past 20 years.

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