

(DRAFT)

**Notes for presentation at
AAC&U 2010 Annual Meeting
Washington, D.C.
January 2010**

In the short time given to me today I shall endeavor to share with you a few efforts of the College of Arts and Sciences of Howard University to provide increased opportunities for exceptional educational experiences for students that prepare them for purposeful lives.

In his *State of the University Address - A Legacy Renewed* to the Howard University Senate on April 8, 2009, President Sidney A. Ribeau stated:

“We must be an international university, making sure that our faculty immerses our students in the realities of a changing world without boundaries and educating them to participate in the international world.”

A primary COAS initiative is the internationalization of its curriculum, consistent with the mission of the University and the compelling vision of its President, so that the College can better prepare young people for a rapidly changing, interdependent world that is becoming smaller and smaller as the result of the widespread application of technology in communication, commerce, the exchange of ideas and knowledge dissemination. The inclination of varying ideas, practices, methods, and philosophies to spread throughout the world is what is meant by globalization.

The exposure of students to experiences and activities that help develop and expand their world view is a key part of the above COAS initiative. Interacting with fellow students from other countries; attaining proficiency in languages [Spanish, French, German, Mandarin, Japanese, Swahili, Arabic, Russian] different from their own; studying, researching and traveling abroad [Italy, Greece, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Senegal, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Cuba, Nigeria, England, Rwanda, Australia, Thailand, Japan, Russia, Spain;]¹; participating in international conferences and meetings in this country and abroad [China and Africa Conference, Ghana at Fifty Years Conference, Appropriate Technology Conference]; visiting international organizations [United Nations, Organization of American States, World Bank]; and attending lectures on international issues given by leaders and specialists [Joseph E. Stiglitz (Nobel Laureate (Economics) and author of *Globalization and its Discontents* and *Making Globalization Work*), David Milliband (Foreign Secretary of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (President of Liberia)] are some experiences that have been available to COAS students in particular, and Howard University students in general.

¹ see also <http://www.coas.howard.edu/studyabroad/summerstudyabroad2009/index.html> and <http://www.coas.howard.edu/studyabroad/summerstudyabroad2010/index.html>

The inclination of ideas, practices, methods, cultures and philosophies to spread throughout the world is what is meant by globalization. According to Nobel Laureate (Economics) Joseph E. Stiglitz, “Globalization encompasses many things: the international flow of ideas and knowledge, the sharing of cultures, global civil society, and the global environmental movement.”² [*Making Globalization Work*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2006, page 4.] It is essential that this phenomenon be fully understood so that its powers may be harnessed to better humankind, rather than to create even greater disparities between those who have and those who do not.

In the time given to me today I shall endeavor to describe a few efforts at Howard University, particularly in its College of Arts and Sciences, which contribute to some of this understanding. These efforts have as their purpose the preparation of young people for purposeful and meaningful lives in a rapidly changing, interdependent world. This world is becoming smaller and smaller as the result of the widespread application of technology in communication, commerce, the exchange of ideas and knowledge dissemination.

Historical Sketch of Howard University

Chartered by Congress in 1867, Howard University is the world’s largest and most comprehensive university with a predominantly African American enrollment. It embraces persons of all colors, religions, creeds and national origins. It is one of 27 private institutions classified as Research Universities (High Research Activity) in the current classification scheme of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Howard, which is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, has 12 schools and colleges and a number of academic institutes and centers. Historically, Howard University has been a national repository of African American and Diasporic cultural experiences and a recognized center of African American thought and leadership. Its faculty, which consists of more than 1,100 full-time and 450 part-time members, is diverse and composed of nationally and internationally recognized scholars. Its 10,500 students pursue studies in more than 120 disciplines leading to undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees.

Memorable former presidents of Howard University include General Oliver Otis Howard (for whom the University is named), Mordecai Wyatt Johnson (first African-American President and longest serving president –24 years) and James Edward Cheek, Sr. (obtained support to enable the University to move to Research University status).

² Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2006, page 4.

Mission Statement of Howard University

Howard University, a culturally diverse, comprehensive, research intensive and historically Black private university, provides an educational experience of exceptional quality at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels to students of high academic standing and potential, with particular emphasis upon educational opportunities for Black students. Moreover, the University is dedicated to attracting and sustaining a cadre of faculty who are, through their teaching, research and service, committed to the development of distinguished, historically aware, and compassionate graduates and to the discovery of solutions to human problems in the United States and throughout the world. With an abiding interest in both domestic and international affairs, the University is committed to continuing to produce leaders for America and the global community.

An Excerpt from an Honor's Convocation Address

Delivered by Professor James J. Davis, Chairman of the
Department of World Languages and Cultures
November 2008

“ ... The term intercultural adaptability has an extensive meaning which certainly encompasses the development of skills in a second language as well as the ability to interpret behaviors and actions in different cultural contexts and the ability to apply social or experiential learning in new cultural contexts. I reiterate that intercultural competence must include knowledge of a language other than your native tongue as well as the ability to adapt to the unspoken cultural context. What is not spoken is sometimes more important than that which is spoken... students [should] understand that learning a second language must include a full understanding of small-c culture, that is, what other cultures do and think, so that they will not view other cultures through their own cultural lenses. Doing so will prevent you from entering a new world with varying perspectives, views, and thoughts on humanity.

Intercultural adaptability has become necessary for survival not only in international business transactions but also in interpreting international events and media transmissions. On November 5, the day after, what was for me, Barack Obama's marathonic, Olympic and uplifting conquest, newspapers and other media outlets launched headlines in many languages from many world cultural groups. I will show a sampling of those headlines. My purpose here is simply to show you the impact a single United States event had on the world. This demonstrates, in my mind, that we cannot afford to be cocooned in our own world—in the United States, Jamaica, Nigeria, Canada or whatever your country of origin is. Your world is indeed international and you must be able to understand it and interpret it. ...”

An Excerpt from Remarks to COAS Alumni and Friends

James A. Donaldson

October 2009

“ ... It is my fervent hope one day in the not so distant future that all students graduating from the College will have had some experience living, studying and traveling in a country different from their own. Further, the possession of a valid passport will be a requirement for admittance to the College of Arts and Sciences. ...”

The Ralph J. Bunche International Affairs Center

The Ralph J. Bunche International Affairs Center established in 1993, is at the center of the University's many and varied international activities and interests. During, a single semester the Center has hosted programs on women's issues, economic development, Russia, ethnic conflict, democratization, civil wars and the global financial crisis, featuring lecturers ranging from professors to heads of state. The Center serves, in addition, as Howard's point of contact for a range of inquiries from entities outside the University: foreign embassies, governments, universities and corporations, as well as U.S. government agencies. The Center hosts heads of state and government, Cabinet officers, and a broad range of scholars and officials involved in international affairs.

The Center's responsibilities include the following:

- Administering Semester/Year Study Abroad Program
- Programming leaders from other countries
- Serving as University Liaison to the diplomatic and international communities

The College of Arts and Sciences

The College of Arts and Sciences, the Flagship of Howard University, was established on September 21, 1867, as the Collegiate Department, with an academic program that included courses in English, Greek, Latin, French, German, Spanish, mathematics, philosophy, and botany. Today, with nineteen (19) academic departments, the College of Arts and Sciences is the largest of the University's twelve (12) schools and colleges. It offers broad programs in the fine arts, the humanities, the natural sciences and social sciences. The College of Arts and Sciences delivers the general education curriculum to all undergraduate students at Howard University, and it addresses ongoing concerns in society, especially those confronting people of African descent.

In the College one will find

- Summer Study Abroad Programs
- A language Requirement for graduates
- Faculty and Study Exchange programs
- A Language Flagship Center

- International Conferences are organized regularly
- A Natural Disaster Relief Fund
- Faculty approved international affairs degree program

In December 2009 a group of five faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences were part of the Salzburg Global Seminar in Salzburg, Austria. This week-long seminar provided an ideal respite for thoughtful reflections on globalization and its importance for the further progress of humankind. We came from the seminar with a determination to expedite the infusion of global ideas in our curriculum. To be sure, at Howard University there are currently unsystematic instances of global activities and experiences; however, it is our desire that the words “unsystematic instances” be replaced by “intentional programs.”

Conclusion

The College of Arts and Sciences is responsible for delivering the general education curriculum for all Howard undergraduate students. It is committed to re-imagining programs to ensure that its graduates are able to contribute in a rapidly changing world. I thank you.

Howard University Presidents

1867 Charles B. Boynton
 1867 – 1869 Byron Sunderland
 1869 – 1874 Oliver Otis Howard
 1875 – 1876 Edward P. Smith
 1877 – 1889 William W. Patton
 1890 – 1903 Jeremiah E. Rankin
 1903 – 1906 John Gordon
 1906 – 1912 Wilbur P. Thirkield
 1912 – 1918 Stephen M. Newman
 1918 – 1926 J. Stanley Durkee
 1926 – 1960 Mordecai Wyatt Johnson (Howard’s first black president)
 1960 – 1969 James M. Nabrit
 1969 – 1989 James E. Cheek
 1990 – 1994 Franklyn G. Jenifer
 1994-1995 Joyce A. Ladner
 1995 – 2008 H. Patrick Swygert
 2008 – present Sidney A. Ribeau