

**THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE
HOWARD UNIVERSITY
HOWARD PLAYERS**

**2010-2011 HOWARD PLAYERS EXECUTIVE
BOARD**

PRESIDENT
Brandyn Poole

VICE PRESIDENT
Aurie S

TREASURE
Neel McNeil

SECRETARY
Briana Morris

PARLIMENTARIAN
Kalea Selmon

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Ashley Bruce

PUBLIC RELATIONS/HISTORIAN
Naqui Palmer
Jeffery Glenn

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PREAMBLE

The Howard Players (founded in 1919) is a recognized student organization on the campus of Howard University. The Howard Players promotes the performing arts across campus and the DC Community. Our mission is to promote the highest standard of performance quality in order to dispel apathy and acquire discipline, confidence, and proficiency, and respect for ourselves, the stage, and our respective crafts.

ARTICLE I NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of this organization shall be the **HOWARD PLAYERS**.

ARTICLE II STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 1. We, the Howard Players, a student-based organization, in addition to striving for academic excellence, do hereby establish the following goals and purposes:

- Part A. The creation of a membership of theatrical artists from the Howard University community working in every capacity related to the performing arts.
- Part B. The recognition of the Howard Players as a distinguished and functioning artistic organization on the Howard University's campus in the Washington, D.C. community, and in the realm of theatre everywhere.
- Part C. The attainment of the highest standard of performance quality in order to dispel apathy and acquire discipline, confidence, and proficiency, and respect for ourselves, the stage, and our respective crafts.
- Part D. The growth and development of our members in the various areas of application wit in the discipline of theatre.

ARTICLE III HISTORY

Section 1. The Howard Players, the on campus theatrical organization at Howard University, has been a voice for the performing arts since 1907. Ernest Everett came to the University in 1909 as an instructor of English and together, with a number of students, organized the first drama group, known as the College Dramatic Club. For several years, this club gave performances annually at the Howard Theatre, a local theatre in Washington, D.C. The financial success of the College Dramatic Club was evidence by its donation of a clock to the Andrew

Carnegie Library, formerly the School of Religion. During the period from 1919 to 1925, drama at the University reached a peak both financially and technically. In 1919, T. Montgomery Gregory was appointed head of the Department of Speech. Under his direction, courses in Dramatic Art were offered for academic credit for the first time and the College Dramatic Club became known as the Howard Players by 1925. The practical work of acting, character portrayal, technical work for the stage, making of costumes, and production management became the course offerings in Dramatic Art. The Department had its own business office, costume rooms, and scenic workshop. The Players specialized in the production of plays of Negro life written by students. One of the most notable achievements of the Howard University Players was the presentation of Emperor Jones with actor Charles Gilpin recreating his original role. Some of the plays presented by the Howard Players during the period of 1919 to 1949 included Genifriede by Helen I. Webb; The Death Dance by Thelma Duncan; A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen; The Seer by James W. Butcher; The Monkey's Paw and The Proposal by Anton Checkov; Divine Comedy by Owen Dodson; the premier performance of Amen Corner by James Baldwin; Hamlet by William Shakespeare and the premier of Medea In Africa, by Robinson J. Jefferie. In 1949, under the leadership of Anne Cook Reed, the Howard University Players became the first college drama group to serve as ambassadors of goodwill, as they toured two plays throughout Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany for a three-month period. Succeeding his mentor, Anne Cook, Owen Dodson was later appointed chairman. During his tenure as chairman the Department of Drama, Art, and Music merged to form the College of Fine Arts. In 1960 the three moved into the newly erected Lulu Vere Childers Hall with its adjacent Ira Aldridge Theatre. Theatre critic Richard of the Washington Post labeled Ira Aldridge Theatre, "one of the finest facilities in Washington" and productions were often hailed as being creative and fine examples of College Theater. By the 1960's The Howard University Players were recognized, which they still are today, as "The Howard Players." These Players began to attribute Ernest Everett Just, Ann Cook Reed, and Owen Dodson as the three founders of their beloved organization.

ARTICLE IV THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Section 1. The Executive Board shall be composed of the duly elected President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Associate/Historian, Parliamentarian, and Production Coordinator.

- Section 2. The Executive Board shall be responsible for the overall direction and management of the organization. They shall be responsible for all planning programming.

- Section 3. The day and time of the meetings of the Executive Board shall be established by its members at the beginning of each semester. This meeting should take place at least once a month before the Howard Players general Body Meeting.

Section 4. Special meetings shall be called upon the discretion of the President

Section 5. Quorum of the Executive Board Members shall be two thirds of the body to conduct official business of the Howard Players.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Associate/Historian, Parliamentarian, and the Production Coordinator.

Part A. The **PRESIDENT** shall preside over all meetings of the Howard Players. He/ She shall be both official liaison with the faculty and the department, and the official spokesperson of the organization. He/ She shall review the constitution and insure that it remains current with practice of organization alongside with the Parliamentarian. The President shall have the power to appoint new positions and committees as needed. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. The President must be at least a junior during his or her term in office, and he/she cannot hold office for more than two consecutive years. He/ She must be a full-time theatre arts major and currently maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Part B. The **VICE-PRESIDENT** shall assist the President in performing the duties of his/her position. He/ She shall assume all responsibilities of the President in the event of that person's absence or removal. The Vice-President shall also be official overseer of administrative positions following the level of President. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. He/She must maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Part C. The **SECRETARY** shall be a full-time secretary to the organization. He/ She shall write and maintain a current file of official Howard Players communications (e g. programs, press releases, reviews, posters, flyers, etc). The Secretary is also responsible for maintenance and general upkeep of the Howard Players' Resident Artist file and recording of minutes from all meetings. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. He/She must maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Part D. The **TREASURER** shall be responsible for keeping all financial records of the Howard Players, and shall handle the disbursement of all funds as directed by the Executive Board with supervision for the Faculty Advisor. The Treasurer will give a financial status report at each Executive Board and General Body meeting. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. He/She must maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Part E. The **PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATE/HISTORIAN** shall compile a file of all programs and reports of performances, newspaper clippings and

criticisms, and pictures of performances and actors for all productions that involve the participation of the Howard Players in any of the University's Theaters or outside of the Howard University community. The Public Relations Associate/Historian will notify the student body about all meetings, productions, auditions, and outside engagements of the Howard Players. The Public Relations/ Historian shall be responsible for the Editor of the Howard Players Newsletter and be responsible for its distribution. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. He/ She must maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Part F. The **PARLIAMENTARIAN** shall keep order during all Executive Board and General Body Meetings of the Howard Players and will follow the Robert's Rules of Order and conduct. The Parliamentarian shall review the constitution and insure that it remains current with the practices of the organization alongside the Secretary. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. He/ She must maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Part G. The **PRODUCTION COORDINATOR** shall be responsible for the coordination of all production elements of the Howard Players. He/ She must be an active dues paying member of the organization. He/ She must maintain a grade point average of 2.7 or above.

Section 2. Non Fulfillment In Office

Part A. If for any reason the President of the Howard Players is unable to fulfill his/her term in office, the Vice-President shall assume responsibilities of the office of President for the remainder of the term. The Executive Board will then appoint a new Vice-President from the Executive Board. The prospective candidate shall submit a letter to the Executive Board stating his/her qualifications and desire to be considered for the vacant office. Then the Executive Board will follow the procedures listed in Article V, Section 2, Part B to fill the vacant position.

Part B. If for any reason any other member of the Executive Board is unable to fulfill his/her term in office, the remaining Executive Board shall appoint a new officer from the qualified membership to serve the remainder of their term in office. The prospective candidate shall submit a letter to the Executive Board stating his/her qualifications and desire to be considered for the vacant office.

Part C. The attainment of the highest standard of performance quality in order to dispel apathy and acquire discipline, confidence, and proficiency, and respect for ourselves, the stage, and our respective crafts.

Part D. The growth and development of our members in the various areas of application wit in the discipline of theatre.

ARTICLE VI ADVISOR FOR THE ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The Advisor for the Howard Players shall be a member of the Department of Theatre Arts Faculty or Staff. They will serve as the primary mentor to the organization. They will serve as a liaison between the University and the organization as well as the Department and the organization. The organization will not have more than two advisors per academic year.

ARTICLE VII MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The Howard Players shall be composed of the Executive Board and the General Membership.

Section 2. The general membership of shall consist of those existing students of the Department of Theatre Arts who fulfill the criteria established for continuing their membership, and those candidates for membership who meet the requirements set forth in ARTICLE VIII of this Constitution.

Section 3. All Howard Players will be required to pay membership dues of \$5, \$10, or \$15, as decided by the Executive Board, each academic semester to be considered active. If the membership dues cannot be met, the Executive Board maintains the right to decide on how it shall be met.

Section 4. All Howard Players members must maintain at least a grade point average of 2.7 or above to continue their membership. And a grade point average of 2.5 or above to perform in any capacity, with the Department of Theatre Arts.

Section 5. Each member shall be issued a Howard Player card to be presented at all Howard Players functions.

ARTICLE VIII APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. New entrants to the Department of Theatre Arts will maintain a probationary status until successful completion of their first semester. Transfer students with a grade point average of 2.7 or above will be recognized as a Howard Player.

Section 2. All Students who are non-majors of Department of Theatre Arts, interested in membership as an actors, singers, dancers, or musicians, shall be scheduled by the Executive Board for an audition. All Students who are non-majors of Department of Theatre Arts, interested in membership as a playwrights, composers, directors, technicians, management/administrators, or designers, shall be scheduled by the Executive Board for an interview.

Section 3. The Audition and Interview.

Part A. Auditions and Interview shall be held between the first and third weeks of the semester twice a year for students outside of the Department of Theatre Arts.

Part B. Each auditioned must submit an application for membership and current resume to the Executive Board.

Part C. Each auditioned must demonstrate discipline, confidence, proficiency, and respect for their craft and the stage.

Part D. Auditions shall consist of:

- a. Actors - one monologue from a published play.
- b. Singers/Musicians- one song with sheet music or recorded music.
- c. Dancers - must demonstrate proficiency in one or more styles of the disciplines of dance.
- d. Directors/Designers/Technicians/Management/Administrators - must have prior experience in their area of concentration and complete a successful interview with the Executive Board
- e. Composers/ Playwrights – must demonstrate proficiency by displaying a copy of their work

Part E. Acting and vocal auditions shall be timed not to exceed three minutes and reviewed by the Executive Board and all membership applications shall be subject to their approval.

Part F. The specific requirements of the auditions will be posted for viewing prior to the first scheduled day of auditions

Section 4. An apprenticeship program shall be available for those auditioned who fail to meet the established criteria for membership and those candidates for membership may re-audition following one semester of apprenticeship. An apprenticeship consists of volunteering service to the Howard Players for the academic semester prior to re-application. Examples of volunteer service include ushering, concessions, etc. Directing apprentices can assist Howard Player directors, but only in an observatory capacity.

Section 5. If applicants are accepted as members they shall be required to pay membership dues.

ARTICLE IX MEETINGS

Section 1. The General Body meetings of the Howard Players shall occur on the first Monday of every month. All members are required to attend all general body meetings. All members will have the ability to have a vote in General Body meetings. Quorum will be established as three fourths of the Active General Body

Section 2. The day and time of the meetings of the Executive Board shall be established by its members at the beginning of each semester. This meeting should take place at least once a month before the Howard Players general Body Meeting. All Executive Board Members shall have one vote. Quorum for the Executive Board

Section 2. Failure of any existing Howard Player member to fulfill the requirements set forth in **ARTICLE IX** or **ARTICLE X** of the Constitution for the continuance of their membership.

Section 3. Unruly or improper conduct in violation of University regulations, during meetings, or during a rehearsal or showing of any Howard Players production and/or activity.

Section 4. Failure to meet any procedures of stipulations set forth by the Executive Board.

Section 5. Negligence of misuse of facilities designated for use by the Howard Players.

Section 6. Unruly or improper conduct in violation of University regulations, during meetings, or during a rehearsal or showing of any Howard Players production and/or activity.

Section 7. Failure to pay membership dues of the equivalent determined by the Executive Board.

Section 8. Failure of any officer of the Howard Players Executive Board to fulfill the duties of their respective office as set forth in **ARTICLE V** of the Constitution.

The above has been hereby established as due cause for removal from the Howard Players organization subject to the discretion of the Executive Board. Membership will be suspended for a period of one semester, at which time said party must make a written appeal to the Executive Board for re-admission.

ARTICLE XIII. IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL PROCEDURES

Section 3. The Executive Board

Part A. A letter shall be submitted to both the impeached officer and to the remainder of the Executive Board specifying the nature of the charges

Part B. The remaining Executive Board will schedule a hearing requiring the attendance of the entire membership at which time the party in question shall be allowed to respond to the charges.

Part C. Following the hearing the general membership shall suggest a motion to either dismiss or retain said party and the motion will then be voted on.

Part D. The Executive Board shall then inform the officer of the decision of the membership regarding his/her status.

ARTICLE XIV VOTING PROCEDURES

Section 1. Each member of the Executive Board and General Membership shall have one vote.

Section 2. A two thirds majority vote shall be required to pass all motions made by the Executive Board and the General Membership.

ARTICLE XV FINANCES AND SIGNING POWERS OF THE HOWARD PLAYERS TREASURY ACCOUNT

Section 1. Authorization for access to the treasury account of the Howard Players shall be given to the President, [Vice-President], Treasurer, and [Faculty Advisor]. If, at any time, one of the aforementioned officers resigns or takes leave from his/her position, the Vice President of the Howard Players shall assume the responsibilities of handling funds from the account. The number of signatures required for withdrawing funds from the treasury account is two (2). Upon completion of their terms in office, the Executive Board members holding signing powers with the account must relinquish the status. The procedures for relinquishment are as follows:

Section 2. Traveling to and from the bank where the account is held with the individuals who will be the successors to the account responsibilities

Section 3. Signing off the rights to withdraw and handle money in the account
The transfer of signing power from one administration to the next must be completed no later than one week after the election of new officers.

ARTICLE XVI SCREENING PRODUCTIONS

Section 1. All proposals for full-scale productions (i.e., productions incorporating all aspects of theatre production including lights, sound, set design, costuming) submitted to the Howard Players Executive Board for approval must include at least a rough draft of the script requested for production and a tentative organizational chart to be presented at the time the production request is made. Said chart shall include:

- a. Props and costumes
- b. Setting selection
- c. Technical needs
- d. House arrangements (ushers, box office and dressing room attendants, programs, display for the marquee)
- e. [Production schedule and staff]

A final script and organizational chart shall be submitted to the Executive Board upon approval of the proposed production. Original and Works-in-progress submissions are subject to change.

ARTICLE XVII HOWARD UNIVERSITY THEATERS (IRA ALDRIDGE, ENVIRONMENTAL THEATRE SPACE)

Section 1. The Howard University Theaters are to be staffed and managed by the Howard Players for the purpose of displaying the talents of Howard Players' composing, designing, literary, performing, managing/administrating and technical artists and

to bring a source of revenue [for student-produced productions by the Howard Players.] Admission prices for the student-produced activities shall be determined by the Howard Players Executive Board.

ARTICLE XVIII AMMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1. The Howard Players Constitution shall be reviewed at the end of each academic term to ensure its relevance and validity.

Section 2. During the academic year if the constitution shall be amended on the if needed.

ARTICLE XIX PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order, Revised will govern in all matters not provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE XX AFFILIATIONS

Section 1. The Howard Players Organization will maintain a partnership with the Howard University, College of Arts and Sciences, Division of Fine Arts, Department of Theatre Arts. The organization will serve as the liaison between the department and the student body. The organization will also serve as a producing agent for at least one departmental agent every year.

ARITCLE XXI ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HOWARD PLAYERS AS A BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

Section 1. By the acceptance of Constitution by the Executive Board and the general membership, and by fulfilling the University's requirement of placing a copy of said Constitution on file in the Office of Student Life, the Howard Players shall be recognized as a bonafide student organization.

Part A. The Howard Players reserve the right to solicit funds and to promote any fundraising projects for the purpose of staging productions [and activities.]

Part B. In the event that any production is mounted solely by funds raised by the Howard Players, monies received from the patrons of said production shall be placed in the Howard Players Treasury Account to be used for any future Howard Players productions [and activities.]

Part C. The Howard Players office shall maintain a Howard Players' Resident Artist file in which the resume and work samples of designers, composers, choreographers, playwrights, poets, directors, actors, dancers, singers, managers/administrators, technicians, and other theatre artists shall be kept. This file shall be maintained by the Howard Players Secretary and is to be at the disposal of the Executive Board.

Part D. The Howard Players office, located in the [practice room area of the Division of Fine Arts Building, shall be available for the use of the general membership when scheduled by appointment.]

ARTICLE XXIV RATIFICATION

Section 1. The constitution will go into effect by 2/3 majority vote by members present
Last Ratification Date