HOWARD INITIATIVE ON PUBLIC OPINION
(in collaboration with Graduate School and the
Ronald Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center
at Howard University)

As interest in assessing and understanding the opinions of specific subcategories of Americans grows, Howard University is uniquely positioned to grasp, through available methods for gathering opinion data and conducting attitude analysis, the sentiments of African Americans and other under-represented groups on the broadest range of political, socioeconomic, and ethical issues. Although some organizations (e.g., the Pew Research Center, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago) include small samples of African Americans in their research, no academically-based research center focuses on tracking and disaggregating strata of attitudes, preferences, and decision-making practices within the broadly diverse African American community in the United States. More importantly, there is no academic institution with Howard's history and faculty composition, which equips researchers with a developed capacity for conducting in-depth analyses of attitudinal and opinion variation that help interpret increasingly varying dimensions of the nation's racial, cultural, and class diversity. The work of this initiative allows Howard University to extend its traditional role in filling this enormous gap in assessment.

As the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black and brown communities becomes more apparent and awareness of the ways police brutality and systemic racism adversely impact African Americans grows, there is also growing interest in using public opinion data to inform decision-making practices by government and private entities. The university has a moral imperative to address these gaps by providing the data and analysis necessary to produce systemic change in policy and in cultural understanding.

Building on polling and analysis work done in years prior, the Howard Initiative for Public Opinion (HIPO) is an interdisciplinary project that carries out an ongoing program of research to monitor both shifts and continuities in the broader population of African Americans with regard to politics, economics, culture, media, and social issues. Staffed by Howard University faculty from a range of disciplines and supported by the Graduate School and the Ronald W. Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center, the initiative serves a broad need for reliable research reports on Black public opinion.

The initiative works in tandem with the university's research infrastructure to serve broader research agendas at Howard University. In this way, the initiative serves as a venue through which faculty and students alike can advance their research in ways that would not be possible if they also had to design and execute data collection methods that produce nationally representative samples of African American opinions and concerns. By assisting with collection, processing, and analysis of data, the initiative allows Howard scholars to contribute robust reporting and insightful interpretations on national issues, specifically as they relate to and affect traditionally under-represented populations.

Primary Areas of Research
Culture and Media
Economics and Consumerism

Policy and Politics
Social and Public Affairs
Historical Trends

Products
Data and Analysis
Reports
News Packages and Extracts
Academic, Trade and Popular Publications

Dissemination
Press Releases to Various News Outlets (i.e., newspapers, cable TV, local news stations)
Press Conferences
Website and Social Media Reports
National and Local News Outlets (e.g., CNN, MSNBC, NNPA)
Public and Private Agencies (e.g., ASA, ASC)
Businesses (e.g., Pfizer, Viacom, Time Warner)
National and Local Government Agencies (e.g., DHHS, NIJ, EEOC)
Academic and Professional Organizations (NABSW, ABPsi, NMA, NBA)

Current Projects
- The Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19 on Black and Brown Communities Polling & Analysis
- "We Rise Together" Podcast (on Pandemics & Protests)
- The Impact of COVID-19 on Social Relationships at HBCU Polling & Analysis
- Protests/Policing/Pandemic Polling & Analysis
- Virtual Symposium

Meet the Team

Terri Marie Adams is a Professor in Department of Sociology and Criminology at Howard University. She currently serves as the Deputy Director of the NOAA Cooperative Science Center in Atmospheric Sciences and Meteorology (NCAS-M) at Howard University and the lead investigator of the decision-support team for the "Building Extreme Weather Resiliency Through Improved Weather and Climate Prediction and Public Response Strategies" project supported by the National Foundation's Partnerships in International Research and Education Program. Dr. Adams's research takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining issues that have both theoretical and practical implications. Her specific research interests include emergency management, policing, gender studies, and the impact of trauma and disasters on individuals and organizations. Her work centers on the decision-making processes of both individuals and organizations in the face of crisis events. Dr. Adams's most recent publication *Policing During in Natural Disasters: Stress, Resilience, and the Challenges of Emergency Management* takes a critical review of the challenges faced by first responders before, during, and after natural disasters.

Carolyn Byerly is a scholar whose work takes an intersectionality approach (i.e., considering

gender, race, class, nationality and other dimensions of power) in the examination of media issues. Her research focuses on the macro-level and is concerned with the political economy of communication policies, media employment, and workplace issues. The majority of her work has been international in scope, such as the *Global Report on the Status of Women in News Media* (2011), and the *Palgrave International Handbook of Women and Journalism* (2013).

Greg Carr is Associate Professor of Africana Studies and Chair of the Department of Afro-American Studies at Howard University and adjunct faculty at the Howard University School of Law. He is a member of the College of Arts and Sciences Freshman Seminar Leadership Team and served as coordinator of the COAS Mellon Interdisciplinary Research Course Initiative. A former board member of the National Council for Black Studies, Carr has been named Professor of the Year several times by Howard students. He was also named 2013-14 and 2017-18 "HBCU Male Faculty Member of the Year" by "HBCU Digest."

Heidi Gerber-Salins is an assistant professor in the School of Communications at Howard University, where she teaches courses in audio technology and audio production. She will be one of two lead faculty serving as audio engineers for the project.

Clarence Lusane is a full Professor and former Chairman of Howard University's Department of Political Science. He is an author, activist, scholar, lecturer, and journalist. For more than 40 years, he has written about and been active in national and international human rights, anti-racism politics, Diaspora engagements, U.S. foreign policy, democracy building, and social justice issues such as education, criminal justice, and drug policy.

Carolyn Malachi is an assistant professor in the School of Communications at Howard University, where she teaches courses in audio technology and audio production. She has programmed numerous podcasts series; she will be one of two lead faculty serving as audio engineers for the project.

Lorenzo Morris is professor emeritus and former chair of Political Science at Howard University. He held the Tocqueville-Fulbright Distinguished Chair at the University of Paris. He taught previously at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has been a Research Fellow at the Brookings Institution and at other institutes. He has served as a lecturer and analyst on voting behavior and rights in numerous countries. He is an author and consultant on electoral behavior, survey analysis, black politics, and public policy. He has provided frequent television, radio and newspaper commentary on public affairs in the U.S. and abroad. He has published five scholarly books and more than a hundred fifty articles. He has held offices in numerous professional associations including the American Political Science Association and the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, as its president. He is the former chair of the Howard University Faculty Senate. He directed the Census Information Center, the Community Development Minor, Phi Beta Kappa and other academic programs at Howard. Born in Poughkeepsie, NY, he received his B.A. from Fisk University and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in political science from the University of Chicago.

Elsie Scott is the Founding Director of the Ronald W. Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center. She has held leadership positions with the New York City, DC, and Detroit police department. She has also served as the executive director of the National Organization of Black

Law Enforcement Executives and has served on the faculty of several universities. She is a political scientist by training.

William Spriggs is a Professor of Economics and former Chair of the Department of Economics at Howard University. He is currently on the Advisory Board to the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank Opportunity & Inclusive Growth Institute and on the editorial boards for *Public Administration Review* and the *Journal of the Center for Policy Analysis and Research*. He previously served on the joint National Academy of Sciences and National Academy of Public Administration's Committee on the Fiscal Future for the United States and as Senior Fellow of the Community Service Society of New York. He recently completed service with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Committee on Closing the Equity Gap: Securing Our STEM Education and Workforce Readiness Infrastructure in the Nation's Minority Serving Institutions that produced the report: *Minority Serving Institutions: America's Underutilized Resource for Strengthening America's STEM Workforce* (2019).

Jennifer Thomas is an Associate Professor in the Department of Media, Journalism and Film at Howard University. The former CNN executive producer and veteran award-winning broadcast journalist has covered major events such as the September 11th Terror Attacks and Hurricane Katrina. She was named the 2019 Scripps Howard Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (AEJMC) Teacher of the year. At Howard, she has produced live election specials for PBS affiliate WHUT TV, supervised broadcast coverage of the 2016 Democratic National Convention, and reported from the U.S. Mexico border with the U.S. Border Patrol. She speaks internationally on issues of World Press Freedom. As a published author, her research interests include the dissection of current practices and pedagogies in journalism, the transition from professional to professor, and the complex facets of women, media, and images.

Dana A. Williams is Interim Dean of the Graduate School and Professor of African American Literature. Prior to serving as Interim Dean, she served as Chair of English at Howard University for nine years. In recent years, she has served as chair of the Executive Committee of the African American Forum of the Modern Languages Association, president of the College Language Association (the oldest and largest professional organization in the US for faculty of color who teach languages and literature), and president of the Association of Departments of English. She currently serves as president of the Toni Morrison Society, as a member of the Executive Council of the MLA, and as a founding board member of the August Wilson Society. In 2016, she was nominated by President Barack Obama to serve as a member of the National Humanities Council. In addition to her work at Howard, she has held faculty positions at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Northwestern University, Evanston, IL as a Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow; and Duke University, as a faculty fellow of the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute. The author and editor of dozens of essays and books, she has published extensively on African American literature and culture.

Support Staff
Kemet Azubuike is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Sociology and Criminology at Howard University. His research interests include the future of work, environmental sociology, urban sociology, and social philosophy.

Jimisha Relerford is a Master Instructor in the First-Year Writing program and Special Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School, as well as a graduate student in the Department of English. Her research interests include contemporary African American literature, African American rhetorics, digital humanities, and archival studies.

Shannell Thomas is a 5th year PhD student in the Department of Sociology and Criminology. Her research interests are centered around black political power and black liberation movements, with a specific focus on how suppression of the black vote is enacted and resisted. Shannell is a member of multiple professional organizations (including the American Society of Criminology, the American Sociological Association, and the National Conference of Black Political Scientists) and currently serves as an Associate Editor for *Social Problems*, the official journal of the Society for the Study of Social Problems.

Read a copy of the COVID-19 in black and brown communities here.