

Department of Education
HOWARD UNIVERSITY
Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Request

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For partial support of Howard University, \$234,977,000, of which not less than [\$3,464,000] \$3,600,000 shall be for a matching endowment grant pursuant to the Howard University Endowment Act (Public Law 98-480) and shall remain available until expended.¹ (*Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2009.*)

NOTE:

Each language provision that is followed by a footnote reference is explained in the Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes document, which follows the appropriation language.

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>¹ ...of which not less than [\$3,464,000] <u>\$3,600,000</u> shall be for a matching endowment grant pursuant to the Howard University Endowment Act (Public Law 98-480) and shall remain available until expended.</p>	<p>This language establishes a minimum funding level for the endowment program. Endowment funds would remain available for obligation until expended.</p>

HOWARD UNIVERSITY
Amounts Available for Obligation
(\$000s)

	2008	2009	2010
Discretionary appropriation:			
Appropriation.....	\$237,392	\$234,977	\$234,977
Across-the-board-reduction.....	<u>4,147</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal, appropriation.....	233,245	234,977	234,977
Unobligated balance, start of year	3,526	3,464	3,464
Unobligated balance, end of year	<u>-3,465</u>	<u>-3,464</u>	<u>-3,600</u>
Total obligations.....	233,306	234,977	234,841

Obligations by Object Classification
(\$000s)

	2008	2009	2010
Grants, subsidies, and contributions	\$233,306	\$234,977	\$234,841

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Authorizing Legislation
(\$000s)

Activity	2009 Authorized	2009 Estimate	2010 Authorized	2010 Request
General support (<i>20 U.S.C. 121 et seq.</i>)	Indefinite	\$206,031 ¹	Indefinite	\$206,031 ¹
Endowment program (<i>P.L. 98-480</i>)	--- ²	--- ³	--- ²	--- ⁴
Howard University Hospital (<i>20 U.S.C. 128</i>)	Indefinite	<u>28,946</u>	Indefinite	<u>28,946</u>
Total definite authorization	---		---	
Total appropriation		234,977		234,977

¹ The University has discretion to allocate funds for activities authorized under the general statute for Howard University.

² Title II of P.L. 98-480, the Howard University Endowment Act, authorized \$2,000 thousand in fiscal year 1985 to establish an endowment program. Subsequent year appropriations language has authorized minimum funding levels for the endowment program under the terms and conditions of the Act.

³ The University must allocate at least \$3,464 thousand for the endowment program.

⁴ The University must allocate at least \$3,600 thousand for the endowment program.

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Appropriations History (\$000s)

	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2001	\$224,000	\$226,474	\$224,000	\$232,474
2002	232,474	242,474	232,474	237,474
2003	237,474	240,000	239,974	238,440
2004	237,474	242,770	238,440	238,763
2005	238,763	243,893	239,763	238,789
2006	238,789	240,790	238,789	237,392
2007	237,392	N/A ¹	N/A ¹	233,865
2008	233,866	237,392	237,392	233,245
2009	233,245	236,709 ²	233,244 ²	234,977
2010	234,977			

¹ This account operated under a full-year continuing resolution (P.L. 110-5). House and Senate Allowance amounts are shown as N/A (Not Available) because neither body passed a separate appropriations bill.

² The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 110th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

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(20 U.S.C. 121 et seq.)

FY 2009 Authorization (\$000s): Indefinite

Budget authority (\$000s):

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Change</u>
Howard University Hospital	\$28,946	\$28,946	0
General support	<u>206,031¹</u>	<u>206,031¹</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	<u>234,977</u>	<u>234,977</u>	<u>0</u>

¹ The University has discretion to allocate funds for activities authorized under the general statute for Howard University. However, the Department is proposing appropriations language requiring the University to allocate at least \$3,600 thousand for the endowment program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Howard University was established in 1867 as a federally chartered, private, nonprofit educational institution. As a comprehensive, research-oriented, predominantly African-American university, its mission is to provide a high-quality educational experience at reasonable cost. The annual appropriation for Howard University provides partial support for construction, development, improvement, endowment, and maintenance of the University and Howard University Hospital. Howard University has discretion in allocating funds for its academic, research, and endowment programs and construction activities. In May 2008, the Howard University Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Sidney A. Ribeau as the 16th president of Howard University. Dr. Ribeau came to Howard from Bowling Green State University where he was president for 13 years.

Academic Programs—Howard University currently has approximately 11,500 students, of which 7,500 are undergraduate students, 2,000 are graduate students, and 2,000 are enrolled in professional degree programs. The University offers 28 bachelor of arts, 18 master of arts, 26 doctoral, and 5 professional degrees, as well as 11 certificated programs, in approximately 178 fields of study. There are 12 academic schools and colleges including: Arts and Sciences; Business; Communications; Dentistry; Divinity; Education; Engineering, Architecture and Computer Sciences; Graduate School; Law; Medicine; Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences; and Social Work. To support these academic programs, the University provides a wide range of administrative, library, computer, and technology resources. As part of Howard University's mission to provide disadvantaged students with a quality education at a reasonable cost, Howard's tuition, which is \$14,205 for an entering undergraduate student in academic year 2008-2009, is one of the lowest in the Nation for private schools. In comparison, the tuition for an entering undergraduate student at George Washington University is \$40,392 and at Georgetown University School is \$37,536. Howard's tuition and fees also compare somewhat favorably with local public schools. For example, the annual tuition and fees for the University of Maryland are \$8,005 for Maryland residents and \$23,076 for non-Maryland residents.

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Research Programs—The University’s research programs provide support for doctoral and post-doctoral research in scientific disciplines, pilot studies of interdisciplinary faculty teams, and the purchase of laboratory equipment. In addition, they provide new faculty with start-up research funding and offer bridge support for externally funded research programs.

Endowment Program—Howard University's endowment program is designed to assist the University in increasing its financial strength and independence by stimulating private contributions. To receive Federal endowment funds, the University must provide a one-for-one match through non-Federal contributions to the endowment. Through low-risk investments, the endowment fund continues to grow by generating income that may be used to pay University expenses. However, Howard University may withdraw no more than 50 percent of the yearly income, except in the case of a financial emergency or another unusual occurrence.

Construction—Howard University has discretion in allocating funds for capital construction and renovation of University buildings to maintain and improve the University’s ability to provide high-quality postsecondary education and research opportunities. The major construction projects currently underway include the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Center, which will include new facilities for biomedicine, computational sciences, and engineering.

Howard University’s Allocation of Resources for 2008 (\$000s)				
	Federal Appropriation	Tuition	Other Revenues	Total
Academic Instruction	\$111,968	\$55,122	\$16,500	\$183,590
Divinity School	0	3,983	259	4,242
Academic Support	14,233	8,175	0	22,408
Student Services	15,279	8,776	0	24,055
Scholarships and Fellowships	0	38,653	0	38,653
Research	4,614	0	5,424	10,038
Outreach and Public Service	4,736	846	0	5,582
IT Services	12,605	7,240	253	20,098
Institutional Support	21,058	21,285	9,141	51,484
Plant Operation & Maintenance	17,937	10,303	360	28,600
Faculty Practice Plan	6,200	0	14,692	20,892
Capital Projects	0	871	12,000	12,871
Debt Service	0	9,409	5,145	14,554

Howard University Hospital—Howard University Hospital was established in 1862 as Freedmen’s Hospital and was incorporated into Howard University by Congress in 1962. Today, Howard University Hospital serves as a major acute and ambulatory care center for the inner city of Washington, DC, receiving over 13,000 admissions and 47,000 emergency room visits annually. Hospital operations are financed through a combination of Federal funds, hospitalization insurance and Medicare payments, and contractual agreements for patient care services with the Washington, DC, government, and other local jurisdictions. The Hospital is also a major teaching and training facility for nurses, paramedics, and physicians, providing training for approximately 450 medical school students and 300 dentistry students annually. As part of the College of Medicine’s mission to provide disadvantaged students with a quality education at a reasonable cost, Howard’s medical school tuition is \$30,015. In comparison, the George Washington University School of Medicine charges \$45,013 and the Georgetown

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University School of Medicine charges \$44,444. The tuition and fees for the School of Medicine at Howard University also compare favorably with local public schools. For example, the annual tuition and fees for the University of Virginia School of Medicine are \$32,650 for Virginia residents and \$42,650 for non-Virginia residents.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2005	\$238,789
2006	237,392
2007	237,392
2008	233,245
2009	234,977

FY 2010 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration's request for Howard University is \$235 million for fiscal year 2010, the same as the fiscal year 2009 level. Federal funds, which provide approximately 48 percent of Howard University's operating costs, are needed for the University to maintain its current level of educational services. This request supports the Administration's goal to increase access to postsecondary education, particularly for low-income students. As a congressionally chartered HBCU serving students throughout the Nation, Howard University plays an important role in providing disadvantaged individuals, particularly African Americans, with access to a high-quality postsecondary education.

Of the amount requested, \$206 million would be allocated under General Support to the University. General Support includes Howard University's academic programs, research programs, endowment program, and construction. Of the General Support funds, \$3.6 million would be earmarked to continue building Howard University's endowment. The University would be required to increase the endowment by at least an equal amount. The Administration believes that earmarking a minimum dollar level to be allocated for the endowment will continue to encourage the University to increase its financial strength and independence from Federal support. The Administration's request also includes \$28.9 million for the Howard University Hospital. Federal support for the Hospital enables it to provide medical, dental, and other health-related education, research, training, and service opportunities for students.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Student population by enrollment:			
Number of full-time undergraduate students	6,470	6,440	6,400
Number of full-time graduate students	<u>3,130</u>	<u>3,230</u>	<u>3,250</u>
Total number of full-time students	9,600	9,670	9,650
Total number of undergraduate students	7,510	7,470	7,400
Total number of graduate students	<u>3,990</u>	<u>4,110</u>	<u>4,150</u>
Total number of students	11,500	11,580	11,550
Student population by race:			
Number of black U.S. undergraduate students	6,850	6,815	6,800
Number of other U.S. undergraduate students	135	135	135
Number of foreign undergraduate students	525	520	465
Number of black U.S. graduate students	3,200	3,295	3,325
Number of other U.S. graduate students	410	420	450
Number of foreign graduate students	380	395	375
Student population by family income:			
Number of undergraduates with family income of less than \$40,000	2,100	2,175	2,175
Number of graduate students with family income of less than \$40,000	1,980	2,005	2,000
Undergraduate student financial aid:			
Number of U.S. students receiving Federal aid	5,115	5,225	5,250
Average amount of aid	\$12,905	\$13,250	\$13,250
Number of foreign students receiving Fed'l aid	78	70	75
Average amount of aid	\$11,260	\$11,260	\$11,260
Number of U.S. students receiving non-Fed'l aid	3,025	3,045	3,050
Average amount of aid	\$11,725	\$12,750	\$12,750
Num. of foreign students receiving non-Fed'l aid	380	370	370
Average amount of aid	\$13,100	\$13,650	\$13,650
Graduate student financial aid:			
Number of U.S. students receiving Federal aid	2,500	2,575	2,600
Average amount of aid	\$24,710	\$24,875	\$25,000
Number of foreign students receiving Fed'l aid	65	65	70
Average amount of aid	\$24,200	\$24,260	\$24,300

NOTE: All data have been provided by Howard University. The data reflect activity during the University's academic year, which runs from July 1 to June 30.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Graduate student financial aid (continued):			
Number of U.S. students receiving non-Fed'l aid	1,296	1,300	1,325
Average amount of aid	\$12,730	\$12,760	\$12,800
Num. of foreign students receiving non-Fed'l aid	235	237	240
Average amount of aid	\$17,300	\$17,375	\$17,400
Degrees awarded by type and race:			
Baccalaureates awarded to Black U.S. students	1,200	1,205	1,200
Baccalaureates awarded to other U.S. students	35	37	35
Baccalaureates awarded to foreign students	<u>160</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>165</u>
Total number of Baccalaureates awarded	1,395	1,405	1,400
Degrees awarded by type and race:			
Ph.D.s awarded to Black U.S. students	69	65	65
Ph.D.s awarded to other U.S. students	2	3	5
Ph.D.s awarded to foreign students	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Total number of Ph.D.s awarded	91	88	90
Faculty and staff:			
Number of paid faculty	1,095	1,095	1,095
Number of faculty serving without compensation	<u>446</u>	<u>446</u>	<u>446</u>
Total number of faculty	1,541	1,541	1,541
Total number of staff	1,955	1,955	1,955
Median faculty salaries by academic status:			
Professor	\$92,000	\$92,000	\$92,000
Associate Professor	68,807	68,807	68,807
Assistant Professor	59,752	59,752	59,752
Instructor	51,316	51,316	51,316
Construction:			
Total construction expenditures	\$19,504	\$24,453	\$20,000
Endowment program:			
Federal appropriation	\$3,526	\$3,465	\$3,465
Match funds raised by University	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,500</u>	<u>4,250</u>
Total new contributions	\$7,526	\$7,965	\$7,715
Market value of total University endowment	\$525,950	\$565,396	\$560,000
Endowment investment income	\$11,800	\$12,154	\$12,000
Investment income as percent of endowment	2.2%	2.1%	2.1%

NOTE: All data have been provided by Howard University. The data reflect activity during the University's academic year, which runs from July 1 to June 30.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Howard University general support:			
Federal appropriation	\$205,207 ¹	\$204,299 ¹	\$204,299 ¹
Other Federal funding	<u>70,000</u>	<u>71,680</u>	<u>70,000</u>
Total Federal funding	275,207	275,979	274,299
Revenue from tuition and fees	\$167,768	\$178,563	\$180,000
Other non-Federal revenue	<u>109,976</u>	<u>113,916</u>	<u>114,000</u>
Total non-Federal revenue	277,744	292,479	294,000
Total University revenue	\$552,951	\$568,458	\$568,299
Total University expenditures	\$552,951	\$568,458	\$568,299
Federal funding as percentage of total revenue	49.8%	48.6%	48.3%
Tuition and fees as percentage of total revenue	30.3%	31.4%	31.7%
Howard University Hospital:			
Federal appropriation	\$29,075 ¹	\$29,466 ¹	\$28,946 ¹
Other Federal funding	<u>43,703</u>	<u>45,014</u>	<u>46,000</u>
Total Federal funding	72,778	74,480	74,946
Revenue from patient services	\$40,648	\$41,867	\$42,000
Other non-Federal revenue	<u>180,341</u>	<u>185,751</u>	<u>186,000</u>
Total non-Federal revenue	220,989	227,618	228,000
Total Hospital revenue	\$293,767	\$302,098	\$302,946
Total Hospital expenditures	\$293,783	\$293,783	\$303,461
Federal appropriation as percent of total revenue	9.9%	9.8%	9.6%

NOTE: All data have been provided by Howard University. The data reflect activity during the University's academic year, which runs from July 1 to June 30.

¹ Amounts shown include 25 percent of prior-year and 75 percent of current-year appropriations to correspond with the University's academic year.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2010 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

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Goal: *To assist Howard University with financial resources needed to carry out its educational mission.*

Objective: *Maintain or increase the undergraduate graduation rate.*

Measure: The percentage of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking, undergraduate students who graduate within 6 years of enrollment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2005		67.3
2006		67.5
2007	69	69.3
2008	69	
2009	70	
2010	70	

Assessment of progress: This measure was revised in 2005 to make it consistent with newly created performance measures for other programs that focus on strengthening institutions serving large minority populations. The revised measure explicitly defines the graduation rate as completion of a 4-year degree within 6 years of enrollment at the University. Furthermore, the measure uses data taken from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) database maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) rather than directly from the University, which should increase the consistency and credibility of the measure.

The long-term goal has been to increase Howard University's graduation rate to above the national average for comparable institutions, defined as other institutions in the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange. According to the IPEDS data, in 1998, the Consortium average was 52 percent, while the graduation rate for Howard University was only 41 percent. By 2003, the Consortium's rate had increased to 57 percent while Howard University's graduation rate had increased significantly to 69 percent. Howard University's graduation rate has increased further since 2003 and was 69.3 percent in 2007, just above the established performance target. It remains considerably higher than the Consortium's rate, which was 57 percent in 2007. Data for 2008 will be available in December 2009. At this time, the long-term goal of the program is to maintain Howard University's performance at a level that is above the average for comparable institutions.

Objective: *Maintain or increase the retention of full-time undergraduate students.*

Measure: The percentage of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking, undergraduate students who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year.		
Year	Target	Actual
2005		90
2006	90	90
2007	90	85
2008	90	83
2009	84	
2010	85	

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Assessment of progress: This measure was also revised in 2005 to make it consistent with newly created performance measures for other programs that focus on strengthening institutions serving large minority populations. In the past, the Department used a measure that tracked the University's attrition rate, which is the inverse of persistence. The revised measure, which now focuses on persistence, utilizes data taken from NCES' IPEDS database rather than directly from Howard University.

The long-term goal for the persistence measure has been for Howard University's rate to exceed the national average for comparable institutions, defined as institutions in the Consortium. NCES only added a question on persistence to IPEDS in 2003. Data provided by Howard University show that, in 1997, the student attrition rate at Howard University was 20 percent, while the Consortium's rate was 27 percent. By 2004, the University had improved its attrition rate to 13 percent, whereas the Consortium's attrition rate had declined to 38 percent. Data from IPEDS show that Howard University's persistence rate held steady at 90 percent from 2003 to 2006, before dropping to 83 percent in 2008. By comparison, the Consortium's average persistence rate was 77 percent in 2007, the latest year for which there are data. In light of the drop in the actual performance data, the targets have been adjusted to gradually bring performance back up to the 90 percent level. At this time, the long-term goal of the program is to maintain Howard University's performance at a level that is above the average for comparable institutions.

Objective: Increase student enrollment over the long term.

Measure: The number of full-time, degree-seeking, undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Howard University.		
Year	Target	Actual
2005		9,663
2006		9,834
2007		9,614
2008		9,161
2009	10,055	
2012	12,120	

Assessment of progress: This measure utilizes data taken from NCES' IPEDS database to track the enrollment of full-time students at Howard University. The target for this measure represents a 1 percent increase in enrollment annually until 2012. Enrollment increased steadily each year from 2003 to 2006, before dropping in 2007 and 2008. Future data will indicate whether the 2007-2008 data are an aberration or part of a larger pattern.

Efficiency Measures

The efficiency measure tracks the cost of a successful outcome, where success is defined as graduation. This measure ties in with the program's performance indicators.

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Measure: Federal cost of degrees and certificates awarded by Howard University.		
Year	Target	Actual
2005		\$83,445
2006	\$95,333	87,995
2007	95,333	88,181
2008	95,333	
2009	88,000	
2010	88,000	

The efficiency measure is calculated by dividing the total funds appropriated for Howard University in the Department of Education Appropriations Act by the number of students successfully completing degree or certificated programs. The 2007 value reflects the 2007 appropriation (exclusive of hospital funding) of \$208 million divided by the number of degrees and certificates awarded, which was 2,358 in that year. Data for 2008 will be available in December 2009. This measure will allow the Department to track program performance in terms of cost to the Federal Government and the efficiency of Federal funds in achieving successful outcomes. A similar efficiency measure has been established for the higher education programs authorized under Titles III and V of the Higher Education Act (HEA) as well as for Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. This metric may enable the Department to assess relative program performance across institutions with similar types of missions.

Other Performance Information

In recent years, concerns have arisen regarding the efficacy of internal controls in place at Howard University. Howard University's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) left in 2001, and the University operated with only an interim CFO until 2005 when the current CFO was hired. During the interim period, findings in the University's annual Management Audit and annual A-133 Audit of Federal awards grew steadily more serious in the areas of oversight, compliance, and internal financial controls. In addition, a 2005 audit by the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Office of the Inspector General identified significant weaknesses in these same areas.

The 2005 Management Audit contained 13 major findings, of which 4 were considered material weaknesses. The primary concerns were the lack of sufficiently skilled staff and technical capacity at the University, and inadequate internal controls and deficient compliance systems, especially in the areas of bank reconciliations accounts, tax compliance, and grant compliance. The 2005 OMB Circular A-133 Audit Report contained 24 findings involving internal control and noncompliance issues. The NSF Report contained five main findings relating to internal controls, cost sharing issues, sub-recipient monitoring, faculty salary costs, and stipend payments.

In response to these concerns, Howard University's new CFO took steps to upgrade the technical skills of Howard staff and improve the policies and structures relating to oversight, compliance, and internal controls. To upgrade technical skills of the University's financial staff, the new CFO established a list of the 69 critical positions within his office where new staff would need to be hired. By the time of the 2008 site visit, more than 18 months after this target list was established, only 65 percent of the positions on this list had been filled. Howard University

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staff acknowledged that it had taken more time than expected to assess, target, and hire the people needed. Moreover, as a result of these hiring delays, the University has not been able to revamp its internal policies and structures relating to oversight, compliance, and internal controls as quickly as had initially been expected. At the time of the 2008 site visit, only a handful of new policies had been approved and implemented, although a greater number were in the approval pipeline.

A primary indicator of the success of any reforms is the number of findings on annual Management Audits and A-133 Audit Reports. With full implementation of the necessary changes delayed, the most recent Management Audit showed little progress. While no material findings were directly linked to the direct appropriation grant, the audit did highlight internal control issues and instances of noncompliance with requirements laid out in OMB Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement. The findings could be grouped in four primary areas: (1) effort reporting, (2) sub-recipient monitoring, (3) internal controls, and (4) recordkeeping. In all, the 2007 A-133 Audit included 46 findings and questioned costs relating to the Federal funding. None of the findings were significant enough to hinder Howard University from accomplishing its primary mission of recruiting, enrolling, retaining, and graduating well-prepared undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from nationally competitive and fully accredited academic degree programs. Further, the Report of the Independent Auditors issued an unqualified audit opinion regarding the overall condition of Howard University's financial position. However, the 2008 site visit report expresses concern with the lack of progress with regard to reducing the number and severity of findings on the A-133 audit, calling the overall picture disappointing.

Program Improvement Efforts

The Department is undertaking the following improvements efforts for this program:

- *Conduct annual site visits as required by the authorizing law.* The Department has instituted annual monitoring site visits, the first of which was conducted in November 2006. The Department is planning the next annual site visit in spring 2009. These visits focus, in part, on Howard's performance on annual Management Audits and A-133 Audit Reports and actions that the University is taking to address issues raised in these audits.
- *Work with Howard University to develop a system to document its expenditure of Federal funds.* The Department has worked with Howard University to obtain documentation on expenditures of Federal funds including the expenditure data included in the Program Description section of this request. Howard University is currently implementing new financial software and it is expected that this system will allow Howard to more efficiently track these expenses, thereby enabling the Department to perform a more detailed review of appropriation expenditures.
- *Complete the study on the financial health of minority serving institutions of higher education and utilize the results to validate program performance measures and improve program performance.* The study is currently underway and is expected to be published in June 2009. Data from the financial health study, along with other performance data, will be used to identify opportunities for targeted technical assistance, as well as to improve program performance and validate program performance measures.