

Hartt Commitment Committee AY2023-24 Annual Report

The meetings of the Hartt Commitment Committee were open to all Hartt students, full-time and part-time faculty, and staff and were conducted by Microsoft Teams to be accessible by the largest number of attendees. The Committee met on October 27, 2023; December 8, 2023; March 1, 2024; and April 12, 2024. Suggestions for agenda items were requested, and topics were communicated in advance of the meetings. The meetings also included time for open-ended discussions of issues and solutions.

Actions Resulting from Committee Discussions

- The Dean's Student Liaison continued to act as a peer resource for students to express concerns directly with a neutral person (a "safe space") in a confidential or anonymous manner as desired by the student. This work included monitoring the online student concern form by which students submit concerns electronically and confidentially or anonymously.
- Dean Merrill and Associate Dean for Academic Innovation, Donna Menhart, attended two sessions of the US 150 Student Success classes for each division in the fall. Dean Merrill conducted division-specific town hall meetings and lunches with Hartt students. All these meetings enabled Dean Merrill to engage with students directly on division-specific issues, including voicing concerns about DEIJB issues, and to provide an identified resource for future conversations.
- Dean Merrill used viewpoints from Committee discussions when developing questions to ask finalists in Hartt's faculty searches (assistant professor of Music Composition and associate professor of Choral Music and Director of Choral Activities) and in assessing the finalists for each position.
- Hartt recruitment continues to seek out ways to make prospective students feel like they belong—and will fit in—at Hartt.
- Hartt academic leadership and faculty are making themselves available for one-on-one and group conversations with students to ease their transition to college, and they are responding to the whole human—not just the performing artist.
- Hartt faculty continue to reexamine their syllabi for inherent biases.
- Dean Merrill will use the committee's suggestions for DEIJB training when he schedules the August 2024 Hartt and Art School Faculty and Staff retreat.

Actions Items Under Examination from Committee Discussions

- Improving Hartt's efforts in making safe spaces for students to discuss their Hartt concerns and their Hartt-adjacent concerns (e.g., social media) by teaching civility and by taking student ideas and concerns seriously, acting on them, and communicating results.
- Increasing opportunities for cross-program collaborations to erode program silos and integrate the Hartt student body.
- Providing safety training for students, faculty, and staff to address concerns of threats to emotional and physical well-being.
- Enabling University name badges to include a person's pronouns.
- Increasing Hartt's visibility in external communities and showcasing students' work to increase donations and obtain new donors; soliciting student input on how to use donations
- Examining the curricular revision process holistically across Hartt to eliminate barriers to meaningful change and being sure faculty understand the purposes and benefits of curricular revision.