

March 7, 2011

Dear University Community:

I would like to take this opportunity to address concerns that have arisen regarding the recommendations, currently going through the prescribed University processes, to suspend new admissions to, and potentially reconstitute or discontinue, 18 major degree programs. Given that there is a good deal of inaccurate information circulating about the recommendations, I would like to clarify some key points:

First, as outlined in the attached executive summary of the program review recommendations, and reasons therefore, *most of the programs in question are recommended for reconstitution as minors or concentrations within other degree programs.* This transition would allow a larger number of students across many different degree programs to take courses in these content areas while enabling the University to invest limited resources in those degree programs most in demand by students. If, over time, students show renewed interest in these minors and concentrations, and the programs demonstrate that they are effective in serving student academic and career aspirations, they may be reconsidered.

Second, *our commitment to providing students with a high quality education extends to other measures outlined in the attached summary.* They include a set of university-wide and program-specific improvement strategies for implementation over the next 12 – 24 months to raise the quality, currency, and efficiency of all academic offerings. We have already started this process. Among other efforts, we have re-designed our General Education Program, Advising Office, and Academic Support Center; launched a university-wide effort to establish learning outcomes and career pathways for all degree programs; and established a Retention Committee that will soon pilot a host of retention initiatives. While progress may not come as rapidly as we all might like, we are committed to change that benefits students and believe that, with the already rising reputation of the University, you have already begun to experience those benefits.

Third, *the most significant motivations behind the recommended transitions are to provide students with a high-quality education, improve our ability to support students through to graduation, and to better prepare students for successful entry into, and upward mobility within, the workforce.* Many of the programs addressed have small numbers of students (as low as 5-10), few faculty members and, in some cases, curricula that are outdated and ill-suited for preparing four-year and graduate students with the critical knowledge and skills they need to succeed. At the same time, UDC, like most universities across the country, faces significant funding pressures on already limited resources. Without the resources to support an extensive array of small, specialized programs at a high level of quality, and with the future of UDC at stake, we must make tough choices. We must focus our attention and our resources on ensuring that those programs that we do offer meet the quality standards that our students and our community deserve.

Fourth, not one of the many individuals who engaged with the program review process takes lightly the decision to recommend reconstituting or discontinuing programs. *The recommendations as well as all the program investment and improvement strategies are based on an 18-month process that included:*

- *The University-wide strategic planning process—which invited the ideas and opinions of all stakeholders;*
- *Internal and external reviews of every degree program including its curriculum, instruction, currency, and relevance to UDC's mission and strategic plan;*
- *Collection and analysis of current and historical data on program majors; retention rates; graduation rates; the qualifications, currency, and productivity of faculty; student demand, locally and nationally; occupational and industry trends, locally and nationally; and program and university expenditures and revenue; and*
- *Extensive discussions among faculty, department chairs, program directors, deans, and Academic Affairs staff.*

Fifth, as of today, *I am rescinding the suspension of new student admissions to the programs recommended for change.* The decision to suspend admissions to the programs was motivated by a desire to ensure that new students were not given false expectations about enrolling at the University with the intent of majoring in a program that may not exist in the foreseeable future. However, all such decisions require review from the Academic Senate, the President, and final approval by the Board of Trustees. *Thus, until the review process is complete, new or undeclared students may choose to major in these programs knowing that the programs may be discontinued, in their current forms, in the near future.*

The University has a teach-out process for any programs that are discontinued, which means that current majors can earn the credits they need, within a reasonable timeframe, to graduate with the degrees they are now pursuing. Though no decisions are finalized, students with questions about this teach-out process, the programs under consideration for suspension, or how to declare or change their majors should meet with an Advisor in the Academic Advising Center located on the "B" level of Building 32.

Finally, I am encouraging all departments, programs, and schools to reach out to and engage with the students under their mentorship and care, on a regular and consistent basis, and to consider their feedback regarding courses, programs, and any other issue that concerns their futures—which is the future of the University.

Thank you for your patience during this time of significant change for the University, and we look forward to engaging in an open and honest dialogue with you about how we can all work together to improve our University and our community.

Sincerely,



Graeme Baxter, J.D.
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

[Preliminary – Pending Review by Faculty Senate, President, and Board of Trustees]

Executive Summary

I. Recommendations informed by:

- University Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan.
- Current priority needs of the District of Columbia and the Region.
- Program reviews conducted by departments and external parties:
 - Quality and currency;
 - Productivity - # majors; # service enrollments; # graduates and graduates per major; # and qualifications of faculty;
 - Potential
- Deans/Provost Office one-on-one meetings with Department Chairs and Program Directors to share findings and discuss potential recommendations—all Chairs and Directors were provided multiple opportunities to submit their own recommendations to the Dean for improvement
- Professional Opportunities Inventory/Occupational Growth Analysis.
- Academic program demand study
- Review of the academic structure and offerings of UDC competitor institutions
- University expenditure and revenue forecasts for the foreseeable future

II. Overview of results:

- Too many programs with too few students, lack of currency, low student demand and enrollment potential, and poor alignment with job opportunities.
- Broad areas for priority investment: Business, STEM, Health Professions, Human Development and Services, and the Center for Urban Education.
- Significant status changes for 18 degree programs.
- Creation of minors and concentrations in areas of high student demand and occupational growth within almost all majors.
- Opportunities for greater efficiency and collaboration through cross-school, interdisciplinary, joint and accelerated degree programs and offerings.
- Need to use clear, commonly understood program identifiers to reach prospective students.

III. Flagship programs for new investment (track record of success and/or areas of high student demand and occupational growth in the Capital Region.)

- Accounting

- Allied Health Professions/Community Health
- Applied Statistics (M)
- Architecture (BS/MS)
- Biology
- Business Management (BA/MBA)
- Center for Urban Education (M)
- Chemistry
- Civil Engineering
- Communications (Mass Media Arts)
- Community Health initiative
- Criminal Justice (Administration of Justice)
- Government (Political Science)
- Human Development
- Information Technology
- Psychology
- Counseling (M)
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Speech and Language Pathology (M)
- World Languages initiative

IV. Program Status Changes (Programs lacking evidence of viability or currency; consistent record of low enrollments, retention, and/or graduation performance; and/or do not provide the appropriate credentialing required for the labor market are recommended for reconstitution to improve academic quality and prioritize limited resources. In some cases, programs are recommended for discontinuation)

- Clinical Psychology (M)
 - Replaced by Counseling and Rehabilitation Counseling programs
- Early Childhood Education (BA)
 - Offered as concentration within Human Development
- Elementary Education
 - Offered as Masters in Teaching within Center for Urban Education, and related undergraduate content offered within Human Development
- English Composition and Rhetoric (M) - Discontinued
- French
 - Courses offered in new World Languages Program
- Graphic Communications
 - Offered as Graphic Production concentration within Graphic Design
- Nonprofit Leadership Certificate Program

- Moving to graduate level and integrated with Masters in Public Administration program
- Mathematics (MST)
 - Replaced by Applied Statistics masters program and M.A.T. in Urban Education
- Physics
 - Offered as a Minor
- Procurement and Public Contracting
 - Offered as a certificate program and concentration within Management
- Respiratory Therapy (BA)
 - Courses offered in Nursing and in new Community Health initiative
- Security Studies (B.A.)
 - Suspended until curriculum revised to meet online quality standards
- Spanish
 - Offered as a Minor in new World Languages Program
- Special Education (BA)
 - Offered as Masters within Center for Urban Education; related undergraduate content offered within Human Development
- Special Education (M)
 - Suspended until curriculum revised, in collaboration with DCPS Superintendent, and offered within Center for Urban Education
- Speech and Language Pathology (BS)
 - Offered as concentration within Human Development
- Theater
 - Offered as a Minor in Visual and Performing Arts
- Urban Studies
 - Sociology courses to include more modern urban focus

V. Structural and Curricular Redesign (comprehensive effort to restructure and strengthen all programs to ensure currency, high-quality, and consistency with student demand and occupational opportunities/competency requirements)

- Reorganize departments and programs to promote intellectual collaborations and synergies.
- Rename departments, degree programs, concentrations, course titles, and other academic units consistent with student demand, trends in the field, and occupational growth.
- Revamp program major requirements, and associated course content, titles, and descriptions, to reflect current trends in the field.
- Maximize academic efficiency by streamlining credit hour requirements; encouraging common requirements among related programs; and eliminating duplicative course offerings.
- Develop Minors and Concentrations that reflect student and employer demand.
- Develop an Interdisciplinary Studies degree.

- Develop accelerated and joint degrees that increase student enrollments and strengthen career pathways while saving students time and money.

VI. Reorganizations and Name Changes (Restructure departments to promote efficiencies and visibility of high demand programs; align names with student interests, current trends in the field, and occupational growth areas.)

- Reorganize Business School Departments and names to group similar programs and promote visibility of high demand areas:
 - Department of Accounting and Finance
 - Department of Management, Marketing, and Management Information Systems
 - Department of Public Administration and Economics
- Rename CAUSES Department names to promote visibility of high demand areas:
 - Department of Architecture and Urban Design
 - Department of Nutrition and Food Science
 - Department of Environmental Science and Sustainability
- Streamline Arts and Sciences departments so no department has excessive numbers of programs; reorganize and rename departments to promote visibility of highest demand programs:
 - From existing Department of Mass Media, Visual and Performing Arts, create **Department of Communications and Public Relations** and separate **Department of Visual and Performing Arts**
 - From existing Departments of Language and Communication Disorders; English; and Psychology and Counseling; create **Department of English and World Languages** and separate **Department of Psychology, Counseling, and Human Development**
 - From Department of Urban Affairs, Social Sciences, and Social Work, create **Department of History, Government, and Global Studies** and a **Department of Criminal Justice, Sociology, and Social Work;**
 - Rename existing Department of Nursing and Allied Health as **Department of Nursing and Health Professions**
 - Rename existing Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences and Departments of Chemistry and Physics as **Department of Biology and Chemistry**
 - Rename existing Department of Mathematics as **Department of Mathematics and Applied Statistics**
- Rename degrees to reflect currency, student demand, and occupational growth:
 - Environmental Science to **Environmental Studies**
 - Mass Media Arts to **Communications**
 - Political Science to **Government**
 - Administration of Justice to **Criminal Justice**
 - Sociology and Anthropology to **Sociology**