

**UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ACADEMIC SENATE**

March 6, 2009

**Minutes of the
Task Force on Admission and Retention**

Members Present:

Dr. Carolyn Cousin
Dr. Arlene King Berry
Dr. Rosie Sneed
Professor Elgloria Harrison
Dr. Hailemichael Seyoum

Members Not Present:

Mr. Mark Farley

Guest Present:

Dr. Bertha Minus

1. Meeting called to order by Professor Harrison at 1:15 PM in Room 307 C Building 44. Professor Harrison indicated that Dr. Minus was invited to the meeting to discuss UDC's Student retention plan.
2. Professor Harrison reminded everyone that a prior meeting the retention proposal was distributed by Dr. Cousin. Professor Harrison provided additional copies for those who did not have this document. Dr. Minus was invited to talk about retention at UDC.
3. Dr. Minus reports that from the proposal that was submitted there are retention efforts under way at UDC. The highlights of Dr. Minus discussion is as follows:
 1. University and Community colleges are required by the federal government to track student retention over time (6 years for 4 year college and 3 years for 2 year college)
 2. The national retention rate for a Liberal arts college with selective admission is 68%, open admission is 64.4% and UDC 58.5%.
 3. UDC has more part-time freshmen students (57%) than full-time freshmen students (44%).
 4. As a result of the retention plan a number of university wide retention committees were developed for the purpose of promoting student success.

This resulted in a UDC retention rate increase from 37% to 58.5% in 4 years.

5. The retention plan provided the following:
 - Mandatory academic advising
 - Active university-wide retention committee
 - Seamless first-year experience
 - Collaboration on retention strategies between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs
 - National recognition gained for retention initiatives

6. Dr. Minus further reports that in 2009 there are a number of initiatives that has been planned for this academic year; they are as follows:
 - Hiring of a Director of the First-Year Experience
 - Director of Academic Advising
 - 3 Full-time Advisors
 - Center for Academic Advising-currently the center is located in Building 41 A06; however there are plans to relocate the center to Building 39 on the A level so that all services are in one area to create a seamless experience for first year students.
 - SOAR (Scholars on a Roll) Learning Community that offer ongoing support to First year students
 - Freshman Orientation as a required course for all first year students.

7. Dr. Minus ended the discussions with what she believed are the next steps in the Retention process, and they are:
 - Collect empirical data on the impact of these retention strategies
 - Focus on strategic recruitment and admissions
 - Hire a Director of Enrollment Management-this would separate the duties of the Office of Recruitment and Admissions from those of the Registrar.

Additionally, Dr. Minus indicated that the BEAMS Team has applied for a grant from the Walmart Student Success Foundation to support a forthcoming student retention initiative – SOAR4 – a learning community project for students enrolled in developmental courses.

8. While the committee thanked Dr. Minus for this wonderful report, Dr. King Berry made a recommendation to Dr. Minus to add to her presentation, add a slide that discusses the recognitions of UDC retention efforts and the data that supports improved retention rate from year 2003 through 2008. Retention went from 38% to 58%.
9. The committee discussed the following that could alert the faculty when a Student considers withdrawing from a class. Each of us have experienced when student enroll in class and by the time they take that first exam and discover that they are not doing well, they withdraw. The committee recommends that before a student can withdraw from a class they must have the faculty signature before they can submit paperwork to the registrar's office. This information can be shared during freshman orientation and further reiterated in the freshman orientation class.
10. The committee further recommends that each year the Admission and Retention committee receives ongoing updates of the activities of the University retention efforts in order to report this to the Academic Senate.
11. The committee agreed that the retention plan presented by Dr. Minus is excellent and appear to meet the needs of this university.
12. The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 pm.