



Rachel M. Petty, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

March 24, 2014

Dr. Tito Guerrero, III
Vice President
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680

Re: UDC Faculty Senate Concerns Regarding the Need for a Substantive Change
Request to Middle States

Dear Dr. Guerrero:

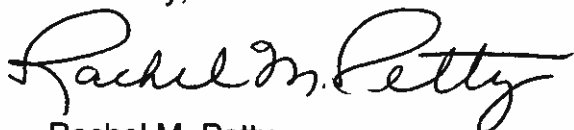
The University Faculty Senate has voiced a concern that the University should have submitted a substantive change request prior to the Board of Trustees' approval of the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. In a Faculty Senate Motion, dated January 14, 2014 (see enclosed), the Senate referenced the Middle States' Policy related to "Substantive Change": Its members believe the University should have addressed this with Middle States, prior to the Board's approval of the plan.

President Lyons and I have discussed the issue and share the view that none of the changes proposed in the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan (Plan) is substantive. The changes in the mission statement language, the elimination of academic programs, the proposed expansion of online programs, in addition to other initiatives in the plan, will not occur at a level that would require a substantive change request. In an effort to address these concerns, I have provided the Senate our views on this issue, both in writing and during a Senate session that I attended.

Nevertheless, the Senate continues to disagree with the University's view. I am writing to seek your review to determine if any of the changes is substantive and must be reported to the MSCHE prior to implementation. I have attached an e-copy of the Plan and provided below a

comparison of the old and the new versions of the mission statement. I know that you are quite busy, as you prepare for your visit to our campus next week. However, it would be helpful to get your views on this issue, and for you to anticipate this topic as one of the issues that may come up for discussion during your meeting with the Faculty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel M. Petty". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Rachel M. Petty
Interim Provost

Enclosures: Faculty Senate Motion #2 (01/14/14)
UDC Mission Statement Comparison
UDC Vision 2020 Strategic Plan (electronic copy)

cc: James E. Lyons, Sr., Interim President
Clarence Pearson, President of the UDC Faculty Senate

APPROVED FACULTY SENATE MOTION # 2

(01/14/2014)

Whereas, the University of the District of Columbia continued accreditation is tantamount to its success; and

Whereas, the university is about to embark on a self-study review; and

Whereas, according to Middle States' Policy Statement on Substantive Change Request, a principle of institutional accreditation is that everything done in the name of the institution is covered by its accreditation. Conversely, anything done without appropriate concern for consistency with an institution's stated mission and concern for quality and integrity may threaten the accredited status of the entire institution; and

Whereas, according to Middle States' Policy Statement on Substantive Change Request, institutions planning a substantive change have the responsibility to inform the Middle States' Commission in advance, following the procedural guidelines; and

Whereas, according to Middle States' Policy Statement on Substantive Change, prior approval of any plan for substantive change is required before such change is included in the institution's previously granted Candidate or Accredited status; and

Whereas, the university is aware of the substantive change policy; and

Whereas, on November 19, 2013, UDC's Board of Trustees voted on the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan and voted to change the mission of the university and eliminate numerous 4-year degree programs; and

Whereas, an institution must receive Middle States' Commission approval prior to implementing any change in the established mission or objectives of the institution; and

Whereas, an institution must receive Middle States' Commission approval prior to implementing the institutional closure or institutional status requiring a teach-out plan for approval; and

Whereas, an institution must receive Middle States' Commission approval prior to implementing the initiation or expansion of distance education or correspondence education wherein 50% or more of the courses or credits in one or more academic programs are provided through the alternative delivery; and

Whereas, an institution must receive Middle States' Commission approval prior to implementing additional courses or programs, including Title IV - eligible certificate programs not related to existing degree programs that represent a significant departure from the existing offerings of educational programs, or method of delivery, from those previously included in the institution's accreditation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the University, adhering to the Middle States' Substantive Change Request guidelines, provide the Faculty Senate an opportunity to review the revised "Vision 2020 Plan" and future revisions to the "Vision 2020 Plan" and give the Senate adequate time to formulate its recommendations before submitting the Plan to the Board of Trustees and the Middle States.

COMPARISON OF THE OLD AND NEW VERSIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Old Version of the Mission Statement

The University of the District of Columbia is a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) and an urban land-grant institute of higher education. Through its community college, university and graduate schools, it offers affordable post-secondary education to District of Columbia residents at the certificate, associate, baccalaureate and graduate levels. These programs will prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce, the next level of education, specialized employment opportunities or life-long learning.

New Board Approved Mission Statement (Vision 2020 Strategic Plan):

The University of the District of Columbia is a pacesetter in urban education that offers affordable and effective undergraduate, graduate, professional, and workplace learning opportunities. The institution is the premier gateway to postsecondary education and research for all residents of the District of Columbia. As a public, historically Black, and land-grant institution, the University's responsibility is to build a diverse generation of competitive, civically engaged scholars and leaders.