

## CHARTER OF THE INTERIM ACADEMIC SENATE

President Sessoms announced today that the Board of Trustees of the University of the District of Columbia (“UDC”) has authorized the establishment of an Interim Academic Senate (“AS”) consisting of faculty, administrators, students, support staff, and other members of the University community as the chief deliberating body for the consideration of important academic issues impacting the well-being of the University. This body replaces the former University Senate, effective immediately. The role of the AS is to make recommendations to the Provost and the President on policies and standards on the following academic matters:

- Admission and retention of students;
- Award of degrees and certifications;
- Curricula, scholastic requirements, and academic programs; and
- Safeguarding of academic freedom.

The role of the AS is to facilitate open and frank communications between the President, Provost, the faculty and staff which ensures that they have an important voice on academic policies and standards. The goal is also to provide a forum for collaboration between faculty, students, administration and staff. The Interim Chairman of the Academic Senate, Shelly Broderick, Dean of David A. Clarke Law School and Trustee Dr. Rita J. Kirshstein, Ph.D., Managing Director, American Institutes for Research, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Engagement will convene an Executive Committee meeting within the next few weeks. On the revamping of the Senate, Trustee Kirshstein, said, “The establishment of the Academic Senate provides a wonderful opportunity for UDC faculty to become more involved across the University at this important phase of the University’s development into the premier urban land grant university in the country.”

The Board of Trustees created the University Senate by Charter in June 1995 to provide input on academic issues confronting the University and has dissolved it because it has not met its responsibilities under the charter. Its failures include: not responding to requests from the Board of Trustees for information, not performing the functions outlined in the Charter such as production of attendance records, minutes, records of votes, notices and agendas for each meeting. These continuous actions and refusal to respond to inquiries from the Board and its Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Engagement prompted the Board's action. This lack of input and perspective on vital University issues did not serve the students, faculty or UDC community.

The new academic senate will be drawn from a broad section of the campus including the following:

- One full-time faculty representative from each academic department or division and one faculty representative from the Learning Resources Division.
- The Interim Chair sitting as the Dean of the David A. Clarke School of Law.
- One faculty representative appointed by the President.
- One administrator appointed by the President.
- One student representative appointed by the President.
- Three adjunct faculty appointed by the President.
- The President of the Undergraduate Student Government Association.
- The President of the Graduate Student Government Association.

Non-voting membership shall be the following, serving as *ex officio*:

- The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The terms of office shall be:

- Elected representatives shall each serve a term of two years.

- Appointed representatives shall serve at the pleasure of the President.

The Board supports the efforts of the President and other academic leadership to review and reorganize, as necessary, the academic programs and the structure of the University to better meet the academic and fiscal challenges of providing quality public higher education opportunities for the citizens of the District of Columbia. The Board looks forward to the input of the entire university community in assisting the President in creating the new UDC. The decisions of the AS will play a significant role in this review and reorganization.

**BYLAWS OF THE INTERIM ACADEMIC SENATE,  
adopted BY THE IAS February 2009**

**Continuing Elections of Voting Representatives**

Election of voting representatives shall be by a majority within each department or unit. If a candidate does not have a majority on the first ballot, run-off elections will be held until a majority of votes is reached.

The election of Voting Representatives shall occur during the month of September in each eligible department or unit.

University departments or units must submit the names of new voting representatives to the Academic Senate Executive Secretary by September 30.

New Senators will take office effective October 1.

**Continuing Conduct of Voting Representatives**

Voting representatives must give notice to the Executive Secretary in the event that they must be absent from an Academic Senate Meeting. Such a notification, with good cause, shall constitute an excused absence.

Any elected representative with two (2) or more unexcused absences in an academic year will be considered as having resigned membership in the Academic Senate

Senators shall provide a monthly report of Academic Senate activities to their constituency, department or unit.

**Further Duties of Academic Senate Officers**

The Chair of the Academic Senate shall preside at meetings of the Academic Senate, shall chair the Executive committee, and shall perform other duties as required by a majority vote of the Academic Senate, or by request of the University President or Board of Trustees.

The Chair shall appoint committees as necessary and approved by majority vote of the members to be chaired by a sitting member of the Executive Committee. [this sentence does not make sense]

In the absence of the Chair, the Faculty Vice Chair shall preside over meetings of the Academic Senate and the Executive Committee.

The Executive Secretary shall serve as custodian of the official records and correspondence of the Academic Senate; shall keep and maintain the minutes and records of the proceedings, and post the minutes to the Academic Senate Website within five (5) business days of all meetings, and shall ensure notice of meetings and other notices are sent to every other member and appointee of the Academic Senate and University community.

Regular meetings of the Academic Senate shall be held on a monthly basis, and more often as needed. The schedule for the Academic Senate meetings shall be posted on the Academic Senate website. Regular meetings of the Academic Senate shall be called by the chair with a minimum of five (5) working days notice.

Special meetings of the Academic Senate shall be called by the chair with a minimum of three (3) working days notice, and posted on the Academic Senate website.

The chair shall approve committees as necessary with approval by majority vote of the members. Each committee, standing, temporary or other, shall be chaired by a sitting member of the Executive Committee. [should this say that the committees must be chaired by member of the EC or that chairs become members of the EC? – I would certainly prefer the latter]

The chair shall forward the duly adopted recommendations on academic, admissions, retention policies and programs, by the Academic Senate to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall preside over meetings of the Academic Senate and the executive committee.

### **Continuing Academic Senate Meetings**

The Senate Executive Committee shall propose a schedule of meetings, indicating the time of commencement and adjournment, for the next academic year and present it during the February Academic Senate meeting for action.

Members shall be notified at least five (5) working days in advance, in writing, when a Regular meeting is to occur and at least three (3) working days in advance, in writing, when a special Senate meeting is to occur

Each elected Voting Representative shall have one vote in the Senate with no provisions for proxy votes.

The Executive Committee shall set the agenda for all Senate meetings. All items to be considered for the Senate agenda should be submitted to the Steering Committee three (3) working days prior to any scheduled Academic Senate Meeting.

Regular Academic Senate meetings will be held between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM on the second Tuesday of every month during the academic year. In the event of holiday, school closing or some other event that prevents the Senate from meeting, the Senate will meet on the following Tuesday.