

# Creating Connections

A Newsletter for First-Year University Students

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

WINTER/SPRING 2008



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Academic Calendar	2
University Resources	2
Why UDC?	3
Customer Service	3
Bookworm	3

## Charting a Course of Excellence by Dr. Bertha D. Minus

Associate Provost for Student Retention, Professional Development and International Programs

Greetings New Student!

Welcome to the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and to the many educational opportunities that await you here! UDC is the nation's capital's land grant university where excellence is the expectation, character is the cornerstone, and achievement is a way of life. We are delighted that you have chosen this University, an institution where the goals and aspirations of our students matter.

Just as the title of this Newsletter suggests, we are constantly *Creating Connections* for your success! We want you to realize your dreams and aspirations, and we want you to have a vibrant academic life here at UDC.

We are committed to providing you with a rigorous and challenging learning environment, relevant academic student support services, and exciting student life activities ---- all designed to engage and connect you with campus life at UDC. I encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity to connect with other students, faculty members, and staff.

Our office is dedicated to promoting student retention and student success, and we firmly believe that *Retention is Real* at UDC. We will assist in whatever way we can to ensure that you receive high quality academic preparation as you *matriculate* at UDC, and that you are uniquely qualified when you *graduate from* UDC.

Best wishes for a wonderful academic journey and remember to Get Connected!

*"It is not your environment, it is you—the quality of your mind, the integrity of your soul, and the determination of your will—that will decide your future and shape your life. . ."*

~Benjamin Elijah Mays



Believe it and achieve it.

## UDC Insights: A Student Perspective on the First Year of College

Sean Fuller  
Sophomore/Computer Science

If you are reading this article, you are about to begin a very demanding yet rewarding time of your life. Your initial year in college will challenge you at home, at work and at school. As a sophomore who stood in your shoes only last semester, there are a few words of advice that I would like to pass on to you that I believe will make your freshman year more productive.

My first word of advice is that you remember your main reason for being at UDC - to earn your de-

gree. The world of college, although filled with countless opportunities, comes with many distractions that have the potential of throwing new students off track. As you venture into your first year at UDC, try to have as much fun as possible but don't let the fun interfere with your academic goals.

Get to know someone outside of your classes. I believe that getting to know new people is one of the most important things that a college student can do, yet it is the most neglected. Getting to know new faces may seem time consuming due to the amount of work that your classes will require, as well as home and work responsibilities, but people are your greatest resources. So as you go through

your freshmen experience try to get to know someone new even if it is a faculty or staff member.

During the spring 2008 semester you may have many academic or logistical questions that may be answered in your Freshmen Orientation course. An important thing to remember is not hesitate to ask for assistance. There are many who have fallen from the race toward earning their degree simply because they failed to ask for help when they needed it. At UDC, faculty and staff make it possible for students to seek help when they need it. I wish you all the best during your first semester and wish you success for a great academic year.



# DATES TO REMEMBER

## JANUARY

New Student Orientation	9
New Student Registration	10-11
Late Registration	14-15
Classes Begin	16
Add/Drop	18 & 22
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (University Closed)	21
Classes Resume	22
Withdrawal Deadline for 100% Refund (Tuition Only)	22

## FEBRUARY

President's Day (University Closed)	18
Founder's Day	20

## MARCH

Mid-Term Week	5-11
Spring Break (Classes Suspended)	17-23
Last Day to Withdraw from Classes Without Academic Penalty	31
Continuing Students' Advisement Period for Fall 2008	3/31 –4/11

## APRIL

Continuing Student Registration for Fall 2008	4/14—5/2
Emancipation Day (University Closed)	16
Last Day of Classes	30

## MAY

Commencement	10
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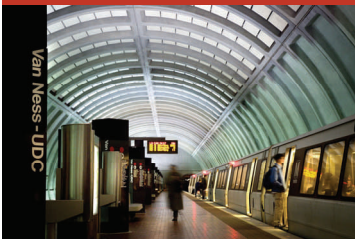
**2007-2008  
University-wide Retention  
Committee**

**Dr. Sandra Yates**  
*Chairperson*

- Mrs. Joyce Batipps**
- Ms. Sylvia Benatti**
- Dr. Janice Borlando**
- Ms. Susie Cato**
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- Mr. Morgan Renwick**
- Mr. Charles Smith**
- Ms. Marian Smith**
- Dr. Vernise Steadman**
- Ms. Godtheson Thomas**
- Dr. Patricia Thorstenson**
- Ms. Charlissa Watson**
- Dr. Ernesta Williams**

## WHERE IS IT? UNIVERSITY RESOURCES JUST FOR YOU

Academic Affairs	Building 39, Room 301D, 202/274-5072
Admissions	Building 39, Room A12, 202/274-6110
Athletics	Building 47, A31, 202/274-5083
Counseling & Career Dev.	Building 39, Room 120, 202/274-6000
Financial Aid	Building 39, Room 101, 202/274-6050
Health Services	Building 44, Room A33, 202/274-5030
Office of the Registrar	Building 39, Room A08, 202/274-6200
Student Accounts	Building 39, Room A09, 202/274-5168
Student Affairs	Building 38, Room A10, 202/274-5210



**Why Did I Choose UDC?** *Crystal Cooper, Sophomore/Theatre Major*

The University of the District of Columbia is not just a college it is a starting point for what you want to do with your life; a place where you can explore career options. This University was the best choice for me because it is convenient (it is close to home) and affordable. I applied to other schools but the financial aid was not sufficient to cover my expenses without putting me in lots of debt. At UDC, I am able to pay out of pocket without taking out any loans or worrying about being in debt.

UDC is not just a good school because of the price. The academic programs are great as well; the classes are smaller then at a

bigger university so there is always “hands on” attention from all of the professors. The university is accredited, so I have no worries about the quality of the education I am receiving. The location works for me; I did not want to go far away for school. UDC allows me to go to school and come back home to the support of my family on a daily basis. That is important to me.

The campus life is another reason I picked this university. It is easy to make friends here unlike a college with 10,000 students where it might be hard to get around and meet people. At UDC, there are always activities to keep the students involved. Since I

have been here I have made many friends, over 50 friends alone this semester. Also, the admissions and registration processes were so easy. I was not a student who took high school seriously and my SAT scores and GPA reflected that. So to have an option that did not require SAT or ACT scores or a professionally written essay was great for me. I was able to get in the door, and I was given a chance to prove myself.

My decision to come to UDC opens a new chapter in my life. I am ready to move forward and get the best college experience that the University can offer me. I want to complete undergraduate

and graduate degrees. I know this will require considerable dedication and motivation, and I am ready to meet the challenge. When I look back on my UDC experience, I want it to reflect that I took advantage of all of the University’s resources and gained a first rate education. I look forward to letting everyone know that I earned my degrees at one of the finest colleges in the District of Columbia.



**CUSTOMER SERVICE: WHAT TO EXPECT AT A UNIVERSITY**

*Dr. Ernesta Williams, Title III Officer*

Dear Freshman,

Welcome to the home of the FIREBIRDS! Many of the faculty and staff here at UDC can remember being students ourselves at various colleges and universities, and we, too, at first felt somewhat invisible—until we connected with others at the institution and began to participate more in the life of our respective campuses. There is an adjustment period everywhere, and UDC is no different. In considering the state of customer service on our campus, I think of hard-working colleagues, all of whom have spent many years assisting our new and returning students. They have amassed valuable experience and prepare each year for what they expect will be a great freshman

class. Nevertheless, we are aware that you have expectations as well.

When you do have a problem, we know that you expect to be listened to and to be taken seriously. You expect to be spoken to pleasantly by someone who will handle your situation when you call or seek an appointment. You expect that when you need information or have a legitimate complaint, you can feel free to call or come to the appropriate office and be received hospitably. We will work to meet your expectations.

And now that you are here, we ask a few simple things of you in return:

- Spell your name the same each time.
- **READ** your student handbook, course schedule, and posters.

- Attend all classes and get to know your instructors.
- Adhere to deadlines.
- Check your email.
- Make 2 appointments each semester to talk with your advisor.
- Treat others as you want to be treated.
- Always have the necessary information and documents handy for our employees to really help you effectively.

Together, we can build a culture of mutual respect and FIREBIRD pride. *Welcome to UDC!*

**THE SKY IS NOT THE LIMIT** by Neil De Grasse Tyson

The Sky is Not the Limit is the captivating story of Neil De Grasse Tyson, whose life and work are as unique and inspiring as the stars above. Becoming an astrophysicist is not an easy task for anyone, and for Tyson the road was no less bumpy or tedious. He earned money to buy his first telescope in junior high school by walking neighborhood dogs, only to be frequently approached by the police while stargazing because his neighbors thought he was a burglar on the roof. In graduate school, he once considered exotic dancing to earn more money, then realized the obvious alternative was to become a math tutor. Instead of lending his services to the local university, however, Tyson helped maximum security prisoners with their GED exams.

Source: <http://aalbc.com/books/theskyis.htm>



**BOOKWORM CORNER**



## Putting You in the Know



### ***FYE (First-Year Experience)***

*For submission information, please contact  
Twyla Jones, International Admission Advisor  
Phone: 202/274-5710  
Fax: 202/274-6341  
tjones@udc.edu*

- Can you describe the University's governance structure and corresponding offices and officers?
- Who is the University's highest ranking academic officer?
- Can you name the deans and assistant deans for the Schools of Business and Public Administration, Engineering and Applied Sciences and the College of Arts and Sciences?
- What are the functions of the Office of the Registrar?
- Provide the web address for the University's online student records manager.

### ***FYE (First-Year Experience)***

#### ***Connecting YOU to a New World!***

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4200 Connecticut Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20008*