

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
UDC RESOLUTION NO. 2026 – 25**

**SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENT OF LEAH CLAIBORNE, D.M.A. AS
INTERIM ASSOCIATE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER FOR ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

WHEREAS, pursuant to 8B DCMR §210.1 the President is authorized to make executive appointments to designated positions in the Educational Service, in accordance with the provisions of 8B DCMR §§210 through 212; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 8B DCMR §210.2, each person selected by the President for an executive appointment shall be qualified based on a description of their position or their roles and responsibilities, and shall be approved by the Operations Committee; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 8B DCMR §212.2, the appointment of faculty members to serve in administrative positions which report directly to the CAO or a Dean shall be an executive appointment.

WHEREAS, pursuant to 8B DCMR §208.1, the Board determines executive compensation for administrators and non-administrators at Grade Level 1A and above, upon recommendation of the President through the Operations Committee or appropriate committee as determined by the Board Chair; and

WHEREAS, Leah Claiborne, D.M.A., has been recommended to serve as the Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs, based upon her knowledge, past accomplishments, and experience; and

WHEREAS, after review of her credentials, it has been determined that Leah Claiborne, D.M.A., is well-qualified for such a position and that the recommended salary adequately reflects the job duties and experience.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the University of the District of Columbia approves the appointment of Leah Claiborne, D.M.A., as Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs of the University of the District of Columbia, effective August 10, 2026, consistent with the terms and conditions of her appointment letter.

Submitted by the Committee of the Whole:

July 28, 2026

Approved by the Board of Trustees:

July 28, 2026



Warner H. Session
Chairperson of the Board

University of the District of Columbia



Maurice D. Edington, Ph.D.
President

July 28, 2026

Leah Claiborne
4004 Dresden Street
Kensington, MD 20895

Re: Executive Appointment, **Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs** at the University of the District of Columbia

Dear Leah Claiborne:

I am pleased to offer you an executive appointment as **Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs**, at the University of the District of Columbia effective **August 10, 2026**, pending Board of Trustees approval. Pursuant to applicable District of Columbia law, an executive appointment as Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs is “at will,” which means that the appointment may be terminated at any time without appeal or right to compensation, because you serve at the pleasure of the President. As Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs, you will perform the duties and responsibilities of the position as directed by the President and the Chief Academic Officer. You retain your faculty rank and tenure and years of service toward promotion to full professor. you have the retreat rights to your faculty position.

Your salary under this appointment will be **\$183,335.70 (Grade 1A, Step 9)** on the non-union Administrative Salary Schedule. You will be fully eligible for cost-of-living increases in accordance with the applicable University policy. You will also be eligible for and may participate in the University of the District of Columbia health insurance, life insurance, retirement, and disability programs in the same manner and under the same conditions as regular administrative employees hired on or about the date of this appointment. The University will contribute seven percent (7%) of your salary to your Teachers Insurance Annuity and Association (TIAA) retirement account. Your leave accrual rates are as follows: annual leave accrual, six and half (6.5) hours per pay period, and sick leave accrual, three and half (3.5) hours per pay period. subject to university guidelines.

Please indicate your acceptance of this offer by signing and returning this letter to recruit@udc.edu within three (3) business days.

Sincerely,

Maurice Edington, Ph.D.
President

cc: Official Personnel File

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4200 Connecticut Avenue NW — Washington, DC 20008

Phone: 202.274.6016 • www.udc.edu

I accept the terms and conditions of the foregoing executive appointment as **Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs** at the University of the District of Columbia.


Name _____

07/06/2026
Date _____

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Phone: 202.274.6016 ▪ www.udc.edu ▪ Facsimile: 202.274.5304

POSITION DESCRIPTION

University of the District of Columbia

Job Title: Interim Associate Chief Academic
Officer for Faculty Affairs
Reports to: Chief Academic Officer
Department: Office of the Chief Academic
Officer

Primary Location: Van Ness
Shift: Business Hours
Nights/Weekends: As Needed
Regular or Temporary: Regular
Local or Grant Funded: Local
Travel: As Needed

Position Summary

Instructions: Summarize general nature and purpose of position. Concisely describe how position relates to mission of the department.

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) is a comprehensive system of higher education that offers multiple points of access to degrees and workforce credentials for District of Columbia residents and broader local, national, and international audiences. A historically Black, public, and land grant institution, UDC has degree and certificate offerings at the workforce development, community college, four-year, graduate, and professional levels.

The University has a menu of more than 80 programs. The University's slate of academic offerings is supported by a diverse community of faculty members who are recognized for their scholarship, pedagogy, leadership, and advocacy. The University's faculty corps is divided across early, mid, and senior status faculty who cross rank (instructor to professor), and include continuing, visiting, and adjunct appointees, and tenured, tenure track, and nontenure eligible members. Better than 80% of all faculty have terminal credentials.

The UDC faculty community represents myriad pathways to the professoriate. The University has a longstanding commitment to the support of its faculty experience base. The addition of an Associate Chief Academic Officer (ACAO) for Faculty Affairs fortifies that commitment and continues the work of evolving needed infrastructure and securing concrete resources to sustain a robust academic community and ensure the success and satisfaction of faculty across appointment types and at all stages of the faculty lifecycle.

The ACAO for Faculty Affairs at the University of the District of Columbia is positioned to support all types of UDC faculty members at all phases of career by establishing, enhancing, and/or evolving its systems of engaging faculty members from recruitment through retirement. The role targets building comprehensive, integrated, and ongoing systems for hiring, orienting, and advancing faculty that align with their academic and public-facing scholar- teacher-service responsibilities and include targeted training, collaboration, feedback loops, networking, mentoring, coaching, and advocacy.

The ACAO oversees the University's centralized faculty success mission, strategic focus, and resource alignment and supports directors, chairs, and deans in delivering all programs and resources. The ACAO serves as a resource and partner to directors, chairs, and deans in the work. The ACAO serves a leadership, resource management, oversight, and accountability responsibility for all functions of the University's faculty success paradigm.

The University has two unionized faculty groups — full-time continuing faculty members are represented by the UDCFA/NEA, and adjunct faculty members are represented by the SEIU. The ACAO will support conversations with both bargaining units, including contract negotiations, and be a lead facilitator in ensuring that faculty representatives are engaged in sustained objective, cooperative, and

mission-centered interactions with management toward highest levels of performance in meeting institutional outcomes. The ACAO is the champion of all University faculty members and the adviser and supporter of chairs, directors, and deans in guiding the success of the faculty. She|He|They serve as the principal shepherd of the institution's faculty success initiatives and the primary conduit through which the University directs and optimizes its resources in founding faculty success.

Position Responsibilities

1. Development and continuity of a comprehensive faculty success framework that elevates community, inclusive participation, belonging, cooperation, and collaboration;
2. Development and continuity of a comprehensive, collaborative, and integrated faculty success initiatives menu that targets excellence in instructional design and assessment, high impact teaching and student engagement, research, scholarship/creative works, professional service, public scholarship, community engagement and service, and professional collaboration and networking;
3. Development and sustainability of creative programs for recruitment and retention of faculty;
4. Development and continuity of a comprehensive program for managing faculty talent, inclusive of search, onboarding, compensation, orientation, professional development, life cycle development, evaluation, promotion/advancement, recognition/reward, and step down/retirement protocols;
5. Development/revision and continuity of all policy guides that support /direct/influence the work and working environments of faculty and the faculty-administration relationships that support that work;
6. In conjunction with the Office Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, build of accountability guides, capacity metrics, and fiscal impact protocols to support faculty success program sustainability and direct program developments as driven by data/ outcomes;
7. Analysis of market forces to determine best approaches to faculty engagement and support;
8. Development and continuity of infrastructure for aligning faculty success initiatives with specific mission, Contract, and policy expectations; institutional resources and partnerships; and physical, technical, and technological infrastructure;
9. In conjunction with the Center for the Advancement of Learning, build and continuity of a comprehensive teaching excellence program;
10. Creation and sustainability of faculty success infrastructures to build necessary community that aligns with high quality student outcomes;
11. Build and continuity of a comprehensive promotion and tenure planning and preparation program; review of promotion and tenure portfolios of full-time faculty and reporting of recommendations to the CAO; and the training of faculty candidates on best practices for portfolio development;
12. In conjunction with the Office of University Research, advancement of faculty extramural engagement and productivity;
13. Periodic review of faculty success programs;
14. Oversight of proceedings related to procedural questions, concerns, and challenges; and
15. Collection, analysis, and reporting of data on faculty performance.
16. Review of sabbatical requests and provide recommendations to the CAO;
17. Development of a "Sabbatical Handbook" for sharing/publishing best practices.
18. Review and management of all University-supported academic leaves (i.e., Fulbright, faculty exchanges, etc.)
19. In conjunction with MARCOM, build a a Faculty Affairs webpage;
20. Maintenance of data on all faculty transitions, promotion statistics, etc;
21. Review of all adjunct appointments in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources;

22. Oversight of the issuance of annual re-appointment letters to NEA faculty;
23. Maintenance of faculty records, ensuring faculty are properly credentialed and that appropriate documentation is collected and stored securely in a database;
24. Creation of faculty recognition events/ceremonies – for both full-time and adjunct faculty; and
25. Review of applicants for faculty positions in all units at the CAO level.

Essential collaborators include the Chief Academic Officer, Associate CAO for Academic Programs, Director of the Center for the Advancement of Learning, academic deans and chairs, Director of the Learning Resources Division, faculty governance leaders — Presidents of the faculty unions (UDCFA/NEA and SEIU) and the Chair of the Faculty Senate, Office of the General Counsel (including Compliance and Title IX), VP for the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Director of Assessment, VP for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and Chief Student Development and Success Officer.

Physical Requirements & Equipment Used

Instructions: List any physical demands related to this position such as walking for long periods of time, carrying heavy objects, etc. Please list the equipment that this position will use. Include machines, tools, and chemicals (if applicable).

This position is primarily sedentary in nature, requiring the ability to remain in a stationary position for extended periods while performing desk-based tasks. The incumbent must be able to operate standard office equipment, including a computer, telephone, and other technology, requiring manual dexterity and visual acuity. Occasional movement within the office and access to file cabinets or office supplies may be necessary, including bending, reaching, or lifting items up to 15 pounds. Verbal communication is required for meetings, telephone conversations, and interactions with colleagues. This description reflects the physical demands typically associated with office work and is not intended to be exhaustive. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the position, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable local laws and policies.

Required qualifications

Instructions: Specify the required minimum education and experience; as well as related competencies.

The ACAO for Faculty Affairs will hold a terminal degree, have experience as a promoted and tenured faculty member with not fewer than seven years of full time faculty service, have a record of scholarly engagement that embraces traditional and contemporary expectations for faculty work, have a record of excellence in teaching/student engagement, have experience building and implementing faculty development programming, have experience working in or leading in a collective bargaining environment, have experience leading scholarship of teaching|learning|practice initiatives, and have experience leading instructional quality initiatives and/or programs. Additionally, the ACAO for Faculty Affairs will have a background in building inclusive and collaborative teams and noted expertise in responsive approaches to faculty support.

The Associate Chief Academic Officer for Faculty Affairs reports to the Chief Academic Officer and works in tandem with the Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs toward excellence in academic outcomes. In alignment with the scope of work detailed above, the specific skills and expertise required for the role include:

1. Working knowledge of national best practices in faculty development with emphasis on scholar-

- teacher identity, scholarship of teaching and learning, academic narrative, translational scholarship, high impact engagement, workload, evaluation, promotion, tenure, inclusive excellence, and academic integrity;
2. Working knowledge of local market drivers for faculty compensation;
 3. Working knowledge of all University policy, practice, and protocol governing or informing faculty engagement, governance, work and workload, evaluation, advancement, compensation, and development;
 4. Working knowledge/skill in professional development program design, implementation, and assessment;
 5. Working knowledge of research design and implementation;
 6. Working knowledge of research infrastructure creation and maintenance;
 7. Working knowledge of administrative and funding models for faculty success;
 8. Acquaintance with and/or participation in national support resources for faculty success;
 9. Expertise leading development of academic communities;
 10. Demonstrated skill building programmatic infrastructure; and
 11. Demonstrated skill in policy and procedure development, review, and codification.

UDC Service Standards

COURTEOUS

Treat people with respect
Show empathy and compassion
Be kind and polite (Smile)
Be attentive and approachable
Act with integrity

RESPONSIVE

Communicate, deliver timely and accurately
Engage in active listening
Send clear and accessible messages
Take ownership and be helpful

EFFECTIVE

Be knowledgeable of the job and how it interfaces with stakeholders
Appropriately apply policies and procedures which govern the role
Respond with accuracy and urgency
Problem solve and prioritize the needs of stakeholders

EFFICIENT

Do it right the first time
Act in anticipation of future needs, problems, or changes
Produce results without waste
See things through to completion

Employee Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the duties, responsibilities, and expectations outlined in this position description. I acknowledge that this document is intended to describe the general nature and level of work required of this position and does not represent an exhaustive list of all duties that may be assigned. I understand that the position description may be reviewed and updated periodically, and I agree to fulfill the duties as assigned to the best of my ability.

Employee Signature

Printed Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Manager Signature

Printed Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Human Resources Only

FLSA: Exempt

Classification Date: 6/26/2026

Job Series/ Salary Pay Plan/ Grade: DS0058/1A

Collective Bargaining Status: Non-Union

Essential Employee: No

Job Code:

Approved by: Rachel Walsh

Date: 6/26/2026

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
lclaibornepiano@gmail.com

Curriculum Vitae

Executive Academic Leader & Associate Chief Academic Officer Profile

Expert in Curriculum Engineering • Faculty Advocacy & Development • Public Scholarship Translation • Strategic Pipeline Building

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CULTIVATING MARKETABLE, FORWARD-FACING CURRICULA

Having navigated my own academic journey frequently as the sole Black student in my institutions, I possess a unique, firsthand perspective on the "silent gaps" in traditional curricula—the critical elements missing that directly impact student belonging, engagement, and recruitment.

My research and international consultancies allow me to analyze global shifts and macro-trends in higher education. By understanding these external forces first, I equip faculty with the tools to modernize their syllabi, incorporate diverse voices, and elevate their own scholarship. Ultimately, this pedagogical framework models how to prepare students to be dynamic, culturally competent, and highly marketable in a rapidly changing global workforce.

STRATEGIC INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS & TRANSFERABLE CAO IMPACT

National Book Tour Partnership: Dr. Eddie Glaude (NYT Top 10 Bestseller) & Senator Cory Booker (2026)

- **What I Did:** Invited as an expert scholar on Black music and cultural history to join a high-profile national tour celebrating the nation's 250th anniversary. I am performing a commissioned, interdisciplinary piano work that musically anchors a broader historical narrative, while participating in public scholarship dialogues alongside leading national thinkers on the journey of Black Americans.
- **Transferable Value:** Illustrates an elite model of **cross-disciplinary translation**—proving that scholarship must not live in silos, but should instead cross boundaries (combining music, history, political science, and sociology) to frame a larger human story. As Associate CAO, I will leverage this blueprint to help faculty amplify their research on public, national platforms, elevating our university's prestige, establishing regional intellectual pipelines, and transforming standard faculty scholarship into a high-visibility institutional asset.

Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) & Oxford University Press (2022 – Present)

- **What I Did:** Identified as a global scholar specializing in educational trends and curriculum development. Retained as an international consultant by ABRSM—founded in 1889, the world's oldest and largest music exam board, administering over 600,000 assessments across 90 countries annually—to architect and shape their 2027–2028 global curriculum and examinations. Concurrently authoring major scholarly volumes for Oxford University Press to contextualize and support these critical curriculum advancements. (See publications)
- **Transferable Value:** Represents the ultimate exercise in large-scale, long-term curriculum modernization. Demonstrates an elite proficiency in navigating complex, historic legacy systems and successfully auditing them to align with 21st-century global realities. I bring this blueprint to help departments systematically audit their academic programs so they are globally relevant, innovative, and directly aligned with modern workforce and recruitment trends.

University of Michigan Senior Residency & Artist Alumni Award (2023)

- **What I Did:** Led comprehensive institutional initiatives focused on *Syllabus Modernization as a Blueprint for Retention*. Embedded deeply with university faculty and students to restructure rigid, legacy course frameworks, aligning them directly with the lived experiences and global contexts of the current student body while delivering masterclasses and public lecture-recitals on inclusive scholarship.
- **Transferable Value:** Demonstrates how to transition a syllabus from a stagnant administrative document into a living recruitment and retention tool that centers student goals and increases engagement across any discipline. This intense work resulted in being

named the 2023 University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance Alumni Award Recipient.

Texas Music Teachers Association at Baylor University (2024)

- **What I Did:** Delivered a major keynote address to 3,500 academic professionals and directed workshops on *Navigating Politics vs. Pedagogy*. Coached faculty on how to bypass politically charged friction points by focusing strictly on actionable curriculum content, cultural competency, and creative excellence.
- **Transferable Value:** Establishes a scalable blueprint for academic leaders to successfully implement inclusive, comprehensive excellence and curriculum innovation without getting bogged down in institutional or regional political pushback.

Penn State University Pipeline Initiative

- **What I Did:** Built systemic frameworks for *Centering Diverse Curricula through Pipelines*. Focused on creating intentional, sustainable mentorship networks and post-graduation corporate/institutional partnerships for students.
- **Transferable Value:** Provides a scalable, high-impact model for any university department looking to strengthen its enrollment pipeline, boost graduation rates, and ensure alumni are immediately employable upon completion.

Minnesota Music Teachers Association State Conference

- **What I Did:** Acted as State Conference Headliner and Keynote Speaker, analyzing socioeconomic diversity and structural equity. Developed administrative and pedagogical frameworks addressing *How We Value Education* when standard financial metrics vary, helping educators identify alternative open-access materials to bridge institutional resource gaps.
- **Transferable Value:** Offers deep strategic insight into navigating regional socioeconomic variances to ensure educational quality, recruitment, and accessibility remain equitable across diverse student demographics.

HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP & ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

University of the District of Columbia (2018 – Present)

Associate Professor of Piano & Coordinator of the Keyboard Area

- **Curriculum Engineering:** Oversees, audits, and implements major curriculum updates across the keyboard studies division to align with modern workforce demands.
- **Faculty & Student Recruitment:** Spearheads regional and national recruitment strategies, directly driving enrollment and retention within the department.
- **Instructional Excellence:** Designs and instructs courses bridging history, theory, and practical execution, including *History of African American Music*, *Piano Pedagogy*, *Piano Literature*, and advanced core competencies.

Claiborne Academic Piano Studio (2019 – Present)

Founder and Executive Director

- **Pipeline Development:** Developed an elite pipeline program resulting in student placement at premier global institutions, including the University of Michigan, Eastman School of Music, University of Maryland, and Spelman College.
- **Global Recognition:** Coached students to top-tier placements in national and international competitions, culminating in high-visibility public showcases at Weill Hall and Carnegie Hall.

HIGHER EDUCATION ROLES, CONSULTING, & SYSTEMIC AUDITS

- **Curtis Institute of Music (2025):** Invited Guest Clinician; conducted institutional masterclasses for advanced performers and discussed post graduate opportunities to leverage while still a student.
- **Peabody Conservatory / Johns Hopkins University (2023, 2025):** Multi-year Guest Lecturer. Collaborated with leadership and faculty to embed inclusive frameworks into higher education music syllabi.
- **Manhattan School of Music (2023):** Guest Clinician and Consultant; led masterclasses focusing on expanding repertoire parameters.
- **National Association of Negro Musicians (2025):** Appointed as the youngest Keynote Speaker in the 109-year history of the organization; addressed national trends in cultural preservation and academic advancement.
- **Oregon Music Teachers Association State Conference (2025):** Invited Conference Headliner; delivered the keynote address on modernizing intermediate-level literature benchmarks.
- **Messiah College Residency (2025):** Led interdisciplinary workshops for faculty and students on carving non-traditional academic pathways and embedding gender equity into classical curricula.

- **New School for Music Study (2022):** Artist-in-Residence; engineered specialized diverse curriculum modules for faculty implementation.

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP, PUBLICATIONS, & MEDIA AMPLIFICATION

Executive Editorial & Board Service

- **American Music Teacher (AMT) Journal (2021 – Present):** Founding Editor of the *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* Column. Established the first-ever dedicated column tracking national DEI trends, research, and systemic impacts across higher education. Serve concurrently on the National Editorial Board.
- **Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) (2022 – Present):** Active member of the National Conference Planning Committee and the National DEI Committee, standardizing best practices for academic compliance across the United States.

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters & Major Print Media

- **Oxford University Press (2025):** Author: "Trends in the Piano Teaching Studio: A Critical Examination of Research and Practice," *Oxford Handbook of Piano Pedagogy*.
- **Cambridge University Press (2025):** Author: "Taking Inventory in Efforts to Reach More Diverse Populations," *The Cambridge Companion to Piano Pedagogy*.
- **Hal Leonard Publishing (2023):** Author & Compiler: *Expanding the Literature: Piano Music by Black Composers (Books 1 & 2)*. (Winner of the President's Choice Award for "Changing the Fabric of Literature"; standard acquisition in libraries at The Juilliard School, Peabody Conservatory, and University of Michigan).
- **American Music Teacher (2022):** "What-Ifs: Intentional Inclusion of Black Composers in Music Education." *Featured National Cover Article*, syndicated by MTNA to all Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) nationwide.
- **Music Teacher Magazine, United Kingdom (2024):** "Achieving Greater Depth: Piano Music by Black Composers in the Classroom."

Global Curriculum Media, Audio Production, & Curatorial Projects

- **Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy (2024):** Executive Producer and Creator of *Piano Teaching Through the Lens of DEI*, a global digital curriculum uniting 31 international experts. Deployed across higher education institutions in the US, Canada, and South America.
- **Parma Recordings & The Sphinx Venture Fund (2024 – 2025):** Principal Investigator and Executive Producer for a major field-wide research project funded by the Sphinx Venture Fund. Audited and recorded 122 historical works representing 300 years of unreleased compositions. Produced the internationally acclaimed album *Arise and Shine*, featured on BBC Radio 3 and recorded at Yamaha Recording Studios.

NOTABLE INTERDISCIPLINARY PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

- **United States Navy Band Historic Premiere (2023):** Curated and performed the world premiere wind band orchestration of Helen Hagan's Piano Concerto (the first concerto written by a Black American woman). *Note: Due to 2025 federal policy changes, this historic preservation project was removed from public platforms, highlighting the critical need for resilient, institutionally-backed archival scholarship.*
- **College Music Society National Lecture (2023):** Presented "Challenging White Supremacy in Music Audition Requirements," a systemic audit of institutional gatekeeping in higher education admissions.
- **Strathmore Concert Hall & Georgetown University Series (2020 – 2023):** Developed high-profile public humanities programs linking musical performance with historical and authorial narratives, including the *Phenomenal Woman* project pairing Black female authors with corresponding musical historical data.

INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION, HONORS, & GRANTS

- **Sphinx Venture Fund Grant (\$150,000+) (2024):** Sole national recipient, awarded for projects demonstrating "field-wide impact with the ability to change the fabric of classical music."
- **Yamaha Artist Designation (2024):** Inducted into Yamaha's elite global network recognizing market influence, innovation, and artistic-pedagogical excellence.
- **Yamaha "40 Under 40" Most Influential Music Educators in America (2023):** National award honoring exceptional leadership and systemic impact in education.
- **Stecher and Horowitz Power of Innovation Award (2022):** Inaugural national winner presented by MTNA, recognizing excellence across the intersecting spheres of pedagogy, performance, scholarship, and academic entrepreneurship.
- **Pro Musicis International Father Merlett Award (2020):** Awarded for performance excellence matched with a demonstrated commitment to scalable social outreach.

- **University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School Fellowship (2017):** First pianist in institutional history to receive this prestigious award, reserved for doctoral candidates whose dissertations are "unusually creative, ambitious, and impactful to their field."

FOUNDATIONAL LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

Ebony Music Inc. (2021 – Present)

Founder and Executive Director

- **Infrastructure Design:** Founded a non-profit organization that built and maintains the largest public database of music by Black composers in the world, addressing an international resource gap.
- **National Endowments:** Established and sponsors the *Ebony Prize* at the MTNA National Piano Competition to incentivize and award the scholarship and performance of historically excluded repertoire.

Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy (2021 – Present)

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- **Systemic Oversight:** Serves on the executive leadership team to design, fund, and launch national initiatives, publications, and digital products aimed at modernizing music pedagogy globally.

Community Music Pipeline Creator (2015 – 2018)

- **Grants & Scale:** Designed an urban youth group music curriculum from the ground up. Wrote and secured a \$10,000 University of Michigan Excel Grant to purchase physical capital (keyboards) for students.
- **Growth Metrics:** Designed the teacher training framework and successfully tripled enrollment within 24 months, establishing a sustainable community-to-university recruitment pipeline.

EDUCATION

University of Michigan

Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance and Piano Pedagogy (2018)

Major Teachers: Dr. Arthur Greene and Dr. John Ellis

University of Michigan

Master of Music in Piano Performance and Piano Pedagogy (2014)

Major Teachers: Dr. Arthur Greene and Dr. John Ellis

Manhattan School of Music, New York City

Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance (2012)

Major Teacher: Dr. Marc Silverman (chair)

Fiscal Impact Statement

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Managing Director of Finance *David A. Franklin*

DATE: July 28, 2026

SUBJECT: Executive Appointment of Leah Claiborne, D.M.A., as Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs

Conclusion

It is projected that there are sufficient unrestricted funds in the budget allocation of the University of the District of Columbia's FY26 budget – and beyond – to cover the cost of the salary and benefits associated with the appointment of Dr. Leah Claiborne as Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs at the University of the District of Columbia. The role will report to the Chief Academic Officer.

Background

The proposed resolution is to appoint Dr. Leah Claiborne as Interim Associate Chief Academic Officer for Academic Programs. Dr. Claiborne's appointment will be effective August 10, 2026, for a period not to exceed one (1) year. This appointment is an "at will" appointment, serving at the pleasure of the President and terminable at any time without appeal or right to compensation.

Dr. Claiborne currently serves as Associate Professor of Music in the College of Arts and Sciences and has served in this capacity since October 2018. Her faculty service at the University began in 2018. Dr. Claiborne retains her faculty rank and tenure and years of service toward promotion to full professor. She has retreat rights to her faculty position.

Financial Impact

The salary for this appointment will be Grade 1A, Step 9 of the non-union administrative salary schedule, paying \$183,335.70 per year, with approximate related benefits of \$47,667.28. The employee will be fully eligible for cost-of-living increases in accordance with applicable University policy. She will also be eligible for, and may participate in, the University of the District of Columbia health insurance, life insurance, retirement, and disability programs in the same manner and under the same conditions as regular administrative employees hired on or about the date of her initial appointment. The University will contribute the equivalent of seven percent (7%) of the employee's salary to her Teacher Insurance Annuity Association (TIAA) retirement. The employee leave accrual rates are as follows: annual leave accrual of six and half (6.5) hours per pay period and sick leave of three and half (3.5) hours per pay period.

There are no anticipated risks at this time.