

# Academic News

From the Chief Academic Officer  
July 2020

## CAO's Welcome Message to New Faculty

Dear New Faculty Colleagues:

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well. Welcome to the University of the District of Columbia (UDC)! It is my pleasure to send you my first official communication and to welcome you to our unique faculty learning community. One of the greatest joys in my role serving as the University's Chief Academic Officer is oversight for faculty recruitment, hiring, retention, development, evaluation, and advancement.

Each of you was hired during an unprecedented public health pandemic known as the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Your hiring process was unlike most in the history of recruiting faculty to UDC. Nonetheless, we are pleased that you were interested in our University and are excited to have you join UDC's faculty ranks.

As we prepare to reopen for Fall 2020, we will do so in an emergency remote instruction posture. Many of our course offerings will be offered through remote/virtual learning and a combination of hybrid and limited in-person instruction. This letter provides updates on Academic Affairs activities, as well as information that will be useful to you in preparing for your transition to UDC and your course syllabi for the coming semester.

As part of the University's welcoming and onboarding of new faculty, the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) hosts a year-long New Faculty Academy, which kicks off on August 14. The New Faculty Academy is led by Dr. Carl Moore — Assistant CAO for Assessment, Innovation & Faculty Development — and is designed as a faculty learning community that comes together over a series of monthly workshops. Each session is designed to introduce you to relevant information and resources as you begin your career at UDC. You will also have an opportunity to meet other new faculty as well as senior faculty and campus administrators. Attendance is required for all new tenure-track/tenure-stream faculty members.

Due to recommended precautions because of COVID-19, the New Faculty Academy for 2020-2021 will be a combination of online information sessions and (if circumstances allow) small in-person panels. Plans are currently in process.

Before you officially begin employment, you will start a virtual onboarding process with New Employee Orientation to UDC. The orientation is coordinated and hosted by the Office of Talent Management (OTM), which is led by Vice President Deborah Sullivan. You all should have received email correspondence from VP Sullivan or a member of the OTM team regarding registration for new employee orientation. The dates will span the end of July and go through the first week in August.



Dr. Lawrence T. Potter, Jr.

## Some essential items to be aware of:

- IDs for new personnel:** OTM and University Police are working on an online process for creating IDs for new students, faculty, and staff.
- Teaching Assignments/Workload:** By now, each new faculty should know what their teaching assignment and workload will be for fall 2020. This information would have been communicated to you by your Department/Division Chair or Academic Dean. The workload is an integral part of your annual evaluation. If you have not had the conversation, you should contact your Dean with a "cc:" to my attention: [Cao@udc.edu](mailto:Cao@udc.edu).
- Laptop computers:** As a new faculty member, you will be assigned a laptop computer (we are a Microsoft environment) to conduct your University and job-related functions. OTM will ship laptops to your home address within the next week. The laptop should be set up for you to follow the instructions enclosed in the package. Completing the virtual New Employee Orientation will be essential to validate your identity to access the laptop and log in to the University platforms.
- Online Teaching Certification (OTC):** All new full-time tenure-track faculty must be certified to teach online (OTC). The certification will be offered at no cost to faculty through the Center for the Advancement of Learning (CAL). All new full-time tenure track faculty will be registered to participate in OTC certification from August 20 through September 4. You will learn more about your OTC training as part of **your first virtual New Faculty Academy meeting on August 14.**  
**NOTE:** *If you have been previously certified by a university to deliver online courses and have your certification, you may opt to complete UDC's [Reciprocity Application](#) for review and approval. A person requesting consideration for reciprocity must have evidence of the ability to implement quality teaching online. Please note, having completed a certification at another institution does not automatically mean that person will receive the Reciprocity for UDC's OTC.*
- Banner SIS and Learning Management System (LMS):** All new faculty will need to learn Banner—our Student Information System. UDC's approved LMS is Blackboard. You will receive more information about Banner and Blackboard training on August 14. Once you have been granted direct access to your laptop after validating your identity, you will be able to log into Blackboard through the myUDC portal.
- Fall Academic Forum (Faculty Professional Development Days):** By contract, all full-time continuing faculty are required to participate in two annual faculty professional development seminars (fall and spring semester). The two-day Fall Academic Forum will take place on August 17 and 18. You should clear your calendar and plan to participate in both days, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. More information will be shared with you regarding the theme, calendar of events, and presenters.
- College/School Faculty Professional Development Day:** Following the Fall Academic Forum, your Academic Dean will host a college or school-specific professional development day on August 19. You should clear your calendar and plan to participate in this event virtually as well. More information is forthcoming.
- Teaching Remotely:** The OCAO and CAL have developed a robust intranet site on *Academic Continuity* inside the myUDC portal. Once you have your laptops and credentials to access the portal, you will see many of the resources available to support your start as a faculty member. When you are unable to teach in an in-person classroom setting on campus, the *Academic Continuity* website provides several tools that empower you to teach from anywhere. Learn more to access software, equipment, and support that will enable you to teach online courses, virtual labs, and/or conduct web conferencing. Also, OTM has collected resources to support and help faculty successfully transition to working remotely. Learn more about working on a remote team, prioritizing health and wellness, and balancing work and life.

9. **On-campus presence:** There will be a limited presence on campus during fall 2020. The mode of operation will be situational telework for all employees who are categorized as non-essential (faculty are classified as non-essential). The only time a faculty member will be permitted on campus is: (a) teaching assignment requires the use of a lab, clinic, specialty instruction, or faculty research lab **OR** (b) permission is requested through the Academic Dean and approval granted by the CAO. As referenced above, UDC will conduct remote/virtual classes and a combination of hybrid and in-person instruction for Fall 2020. All your teaching assignments and their mode of instructional delivery have been predetermined by your Department/Division Chair and Academic Dean.

10. **Access to campus** for all personnel: If you are approved to access campus (whether teaching an approved course or permission granted by the CAO), everyone must complete a short survey on the LiveSafe App [which you will need to download] regarding your health/well-being. **The survey must be completed on the day you require access and at least one hour before your approved arrival time.** LiveSafe will return a GREEN checkmark or a RED checkmark, indicating approval or not to enter the campus.

11. **Textbooks:** New faculty should work with Department/Division Chairs or the Academic Dean to place textbook orders for their courses if they have not done so. All textbooks will be part of the Follett All Access digital resources program. **The University has moved to e-textbooks and digital resources, which will be linked through Blackboard and available to students on Day 1 of class.**

12. **Academic Policies and Guidance in Course Syllabi:** Due to COVID-19 and the combination models of instruction (e.g., remote, hybrid, in-person) offered during fall 2020, UDC is sensitive to making sure there is a consistent code of conduct followed during this critical time. Related to COVID-19 requirements for Fall 2020, instructors should:

- Include a University statement of classroom behavioral requirements in all course syllabi  
COVID-19 related requirements include the appropriate wearing of face coverings and social/physical distancing requirements. Depending on the classroom and the nature of the course, instructors may add other



requirements (e.g., directional guidance in laboratories).

- ◆ Instructors are encouraged to consider including compliance with these requirements as part of the overall participation grade in the course.
- ◆ Sending an email and/or posting an announcement on Blackboard to remind students about the requirements before the semester begins may help set the tone.
- Verbally review classroom requirements at the beginning of the semester and spend a few minutes on these requirements during class periods before the end of the drop/add period.

## DRAFT Sample Syllabus Statement (continuously evolving based on new guidance)

*"We know from existing data that wearing a mask in public can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the community" (Lyu & Wehby, 2020; CDC, 2020; Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2020). Following the DC Department of Health regulations and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The University of the District of Columbia has determined that everyone will be required to wear a face mask in University buildings, including classrooms. You MUST wear a mask appropriately (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) in the building if you are attending class in-person. Masks will be provided for students, instructors, and staff, and everyone is expected to wear one while inside any University building.*

*This is to protect the health and safety of classmates, instructors, and the University community. Anyone attending class in-person without a mask will be asked to put one on or leave. Instructors will end class if anyone present refuses to wear a mask for the duration of class appropriately. Students should also be sure they are situated at least six feet away from their fellow students and seated in a seat that is designated to ensure that distance. Students who refuse to wear masks appropriately or adhere to other stated requirements may face disciplinary action for the Student Code of Conduct violations. On a case-by-case basis, students may consult with Accessibility Resources Center for accommodations if they cannot wear a mask.*

Today, you are among the newest members of the Firebird community — a community joined by a strong commitment to diversity, respect, inclusion, and learning from one another. We are a community where bias and hatred are not tolerated. Become a full, active, and engaged member of the UDC community.

I look forward to meeting each of you over the coming months. My office will be reaching out to you during the academic year to set up an informal virtual gathering—with Associate CAO, Dr. Scott Krawczyk, and Assistant CAOs, Mr. Terry Prescott and Dr. Carl Moore—so that we have an opportunity to get to know each other. In the meantime, I wish you the best as you make a smooth transition to UDC—thank you again for joining us! Sincerely, I am



A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read "Lawrence T. Potter, Jr.", is written over a white, wavy graphic element.

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