

VICE PRESIDENT OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

# LEADERSHIP PROFILE

The Search for the Vice President of University Research of the University of the District of Columbia



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# POSITION SPECIFICATIONS

**Position:** Vice President of University Research

**Institution:** University of the District of Columbia (UDC)

**Location:** Washington, DC

**Reporting Relationship:** President

**Institutional Website:** [www.udc.edu](http://www.udc.edu)

# THE OPPORTUNITY

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) is conducting a national search for a Vice President of University Research (VPUR). This position is part of a dynamic leadership team and contributes to enhancing the visibility and reputation of UDC. Join us and become an integral force in shaping the future of research at UDC, contributing to our ascension to R2 status, and making a lasting impact across our local and national communities.

The VPUR will drive transformative change and build a robust, sustainable cross-institution research production engine through the Office of University Research. This visionary leader will strategically advance research at our dynamic, urban, land-grant institution—placing particular emphasis on fostering multidisciplinary and collaborative research initiatives, including vital non-STEM disciplines.

The Vice President for University Research serves as a member in the University Leadership Team and is responsible for envisioning, planning, coordinating, and assessing research program initiatives at the University of the District of Columbia. They will work closely with other executive officers, deans, directors of major research units and faculty.

A top priority for the role/office will be to create pathways for increased partnerships, innovative research funding, and expanded platforms for success in securing external grants and contracts. The VPUR will manage and evolve an infrastructure that empowers researchers and awardees, ensuring sustained growth and support which will expand UDC's research portfolio, enhance its student research infrastructure, and evolve its contribution of applied research in the communities it serves.

As a University leader, the VP will join the President to actualize the overarching vision to position UDC as a leading national public urban university through the implementation of the new comprehensive strategic plan, [\*Delivering on the Promise \(2024 – 2029\)\*](#).

The ideal candidate for this position will have a PH.D preferably in a STEM discipline, from an accredited institution of higher education; five or more years of experience conducting funded research projects; five or more years managing sponsored program functions/research funding; extensive knowledge about research funding/sponsored program processes at government agencies, and foundations, along with extensive management/supervisory leadership experience and substantive knowledge of higher education issues, specifically, the role of research in build and maintenance of competitive academic experiences.



# THE POSITION

## NATURE AND SCOPE:

The Vice President for University Research (VPUR) will lead the reenvisioning of research at UDC. Empowered with oversight of the university's entire research portfolio, the VPUR is responsible for directing strategic priorities and approving the submission of major research proposals. This includes working closely with cabinet-level colleagues to drive business development, strategic planning, and resource acquisition—advancing visibility and propelling the university toward R2: High Research Activity classification.

The VPUR is responsible for a broad range of key administrative duties that ensure the smooth and compliant operation of the university's research enterprise. The VPUR will supervise both the Director of Sponsored Programs and the Director of University Compliance and provide oversight for the University Research Committee. In this role, the VPUR preserves the integrity of research activities by enforcing adherence to university, District, and federal policies and regulations. The VPUR prepares essential documents and reports related to university research, facilitating communication with the President, Board of Trustees, and both internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, the VPUR develops comprehensive annual plans, budgets, and assessment reports for the Office of University Research, ensuring that strategic goals and operational requirements are met with excellence.

The VPUR will identify and fortify opportunities to seamlessly integrate research operations with key university functions—Academic Affairs, Human Resources, Procurement, Advancement, Finance, Sponsored Programs, and Intellectual Property—ensuring synergy and efficiency across all departments. In collaboration with the Office of Government Relations, the role advocates for expanded investment and support for research and innovation, while developing forward-thinking policies aimed at increasing faculty support, enhancing Research Centers, and maximizing the impact of Land Grant and Title III funds.

The VPUR will play a pivotal role in building bridges and nurturing strategic relationships with communities, national laboratories, industry, non-profits, government, and other academic institutions.

## ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Foster an environment where stakeholders attract funding to support and expand faculty and student research opportunities.
- Develop and scale faculty-student collaborative research programs that align with UDC's academic success hub, promoting experiential learning and embedding research competencies across degree pathways and lifelong learning initiatives; and support advising and career readiness.
- Leverage UDC assets and relationships that impact the research, land-grant, workforce development, and P-12 continuum to meet the needs of the District and beyond.
- Provide leadership and implement a vision for strengthening and expanding the research enterprise consistent with the land-grant mission and strategic plan; and drive collaboration, identification, and development of emerging research opportunities.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for expanding physical and digital research infrastructure— including high-quality laboratories, shared research facilities, and secure data management systems— to support scaled, multidisciplinary research activity.
- Lead efforts to effectively organize and identify funding for interdisciplinary, campus-wide research.
- Provide an encouraging environment and support for faculty in seeking extramural funding and pursuing excellence in grant administration after a successful award.
- Provide oversight for the development and implementation of University research goals, policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Align major research to promote innovation and entrepreneurial initiatives and commercialization across the university and increase licensing of UDC intellectual property and patents. Support patent applications and assist in establishing licensing agreements.
- Develop formal relationships and meet annually with federal and district agency officials who fund sponsored programs. Advocate for and cultivate relationships with major public and private funding agencies to increase research dollars allocated to the university.

- Plan and oversee the execution of the University Research Compliance function, understanding the importance of compliance and regulatory matters.
- Promote UDC's existing high-potential Centers for Excellence as a resource for attracting increased external funding and partnerships.
- Facilitate expansion and increased extramural funding for new high-demand research areas such as AI and quantum computing/literacy.
- Oversee the planning and execution of UDC's annual Research Week, including coordination with expert guest speakers, community engagement, and the showcasing of faculty and student research across the entire university.

#### **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Ph.D. from an accredited institution of higher education.
- Five or more years of experience conducting funded research projects.
- Five or more years managing sponsored program functions/research funding.
- Extensive knowledge about research funding/sponsored program processes at government agencies, foundations.
- Extensive management/supervisory leadership experience and substantive knowledge of higher education issues.

#### **CORE COMPETENCIES**

- Excellence in customer service to faculty and staff throughout the grant lifecycle, proactively seeking and implementing improvement.
- Creativity and innovation in research programs and center development.
- An understanding of the principles and concepts for planning and program evaluation.
- Experience with intellectual property, patents, and innovation commercialization
- Demonstrated ability to gain cooperation and support from faculty and other individuals when initiating new programs.
- An understanding of the organization, mission, and programs under the jurisdiction of the University of the District of Columbia.
- Ability to work effectively when confronted with emergencies.
- Ability to provide professional guidance and supervision.
- Administrative skills in planning, organization, time management etc.
- Writing skills for editing and approving the work of others and for the creation of interesting and attractive promotion materials.
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate many projects at the same time.

**COMPENSATION - UDC offers an attractive compensation and benefits package commensurate with the successful candidate's background and experience.**

# ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The University of the District of Columbia is the only public institution of higher learning in the nation's capital. Dr. Maurice Edington was appointed the school's 10<sup>th</sup> president in 2023, and the Vice President of University Research will support the President's efforts to continue to maintain and make impactful partnerships with various District of Columbia agencies, expand the institutional infrastructure and continue developing UDC's rising stature in U.S. News and World Report's college rankings (currently #18 among all HBCUs, and #9 among public HBCUs). There has been unprecedented growth and stability at the institution over the past nine years, providing the next leaders a rich and fertile foundation to ensure UDC is recognized as an institution of "first choice" for District of Columbia students and an employer of choice for talented job candidates, locally and nationally.

The University currently offers more than 80 academic undergraduate, graduate and professional academic degree programs through the following colleges and schools: [College of Arts and Sciences \(CAS\)](#); [School of Education and Learning Sciences](#); [School of Engineering and Applied Sciences \(SEAS\)](#); [School of Business and Public Administration \(SBPA\)](#); [College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences \(CAUSES\)](#); [Community College \(UDC-CC\)](#) and the [David A. Clarke School of Law \(UDC Law\)](#). UDC also has a non-degree Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning Division (WDLL) that offers free training programs for District residents. Through these diverse academic units, UDC offers multiple pathways for its students to achieve success through educational advancement.

## MISSION

Embracing its essence as a public historically Black urban-focused land-grant university in the nation's capital, the University of the District of Columbia is dedicated to serving the needs of the community of the District of Columbia and producing lifelong learners who are transformative leaders in the workforce, government, nonprofit sectors and beyond.

## VISION

All students will achieve their highest level of human potential.

## CORE VALUES

- Excellence
- Collaboration
- Sustainability
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Inclusion



The University's corporate and community partnerships have proven to be mutually beneficial for UDC stakeholders and broader constituents. Building on this foundation, UDC is strengthening its role as the District's public urban land-grant institution and a central driver of workforce development, economic mobility, and community advancement. The University's academic, research, and service activities are increasingly aligned to uplift local communities through applied research, workforce-aligned education, and partnerships with District agencies, employers, and community organizations. This work reflects a deliberate focus on translating scholarship and innovation into tangible outcomes that support District residents, employers, and public priorities.

UDC is positioned to answer a distinctive call of service to the District of Columbia and the nation as a model for public, urban higher education that integrates research, workforce alignment, and community impact. Following the disruptions of the COVID-19 period, the University has reversed prior enrollment declines and is experiencing sustained enrollment growth, signaling renewed confidence in UDC's mission and relevance. At the same time, UDC has expanded partnerships with District agencies and corporate partners to advance applied research, workforce innovation, and economic development initiatives that directly support the city's evolving needs.

To guide the institution through this next phase of growth and impact, UDC is advancing a clear strategic direction under President Edington's leadership through *Delivering on the Promise (2024–2029)*. This strategic plan emphasizes enrollment growth, student success, workforce alignment, and institutional performance, providing a strong foundation for expanding the University's research enterprise in ways that reinforce UDC's mission and contribute meaningfully to the District's long-term economic vitality.

## HISTORY

The University of the District of Columbia is historic and modern, all at the same time. Public higher education in the District is rooted in the school for “colored girls” that Myrtilla Miner founded in 1851 in Washington, DC, which came to be called the Miner Normal School. Washington Normal School, a school for white girls established in 1873, was renamed Wilson Normal School in 1913 after James O. Wilson, Washington's first superintendent of public schools. In 1929, Congress enacted a statute that converted both normal schools into four-year teacher colleges. For several years, Miner Teachers College and Wilson Teachers College were the city's only public higher education institutions. After the landmark U.S. Supreme Court school desegregation decision, *Brown v. Board of Education (U.S. 1954)*, the two colleges merged in 1955 to form the District of Columbia Teachers College. Over the next decade, DC residents petitioned for an expansion of higher education that would provide training for careers other than teaching. In 1966, Congress enacted the District of Columbia Public Education Act, establishing Federal City College and Washington Technical Institute.

Although these schools were new, many Washingtonians continued to advocate for a comprehensive university. The City Council authorized the consolidation of the three schools, and in 1976, the monumental task of creating a new University of the District of Columbia began. In 1977, UDC began consolidating its academic programs. These efforts culminated in the establishment of five colleges: Business and Public Management; Education and Human Ecology; Liberal and Fine Arts; Life Sciences; Physical Science, Engineering, and Technology; and University College and Continuing Education.

Today, UDC continues to transform itself to meet the changing needs of its students and the community.

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## CAMPUSES

UDC's flagship campus, the Van Ness Campus at 4200 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., invites students to an attractive setting amidst bustling urban life. The campus houses classrooms, business offices, a library, theater, student center and sports complex. The David A. Clarke School of Law is on the Van Ness Campus. The UDC Community College is located at the Lamond-Riggs Campus at 5171 South Dakota Avenue, N.E. The Division of Workforce Development & Lifelong Learning is located at the Old Congress Heights Campus at 3100 Martin Luther King Jr. S.E.

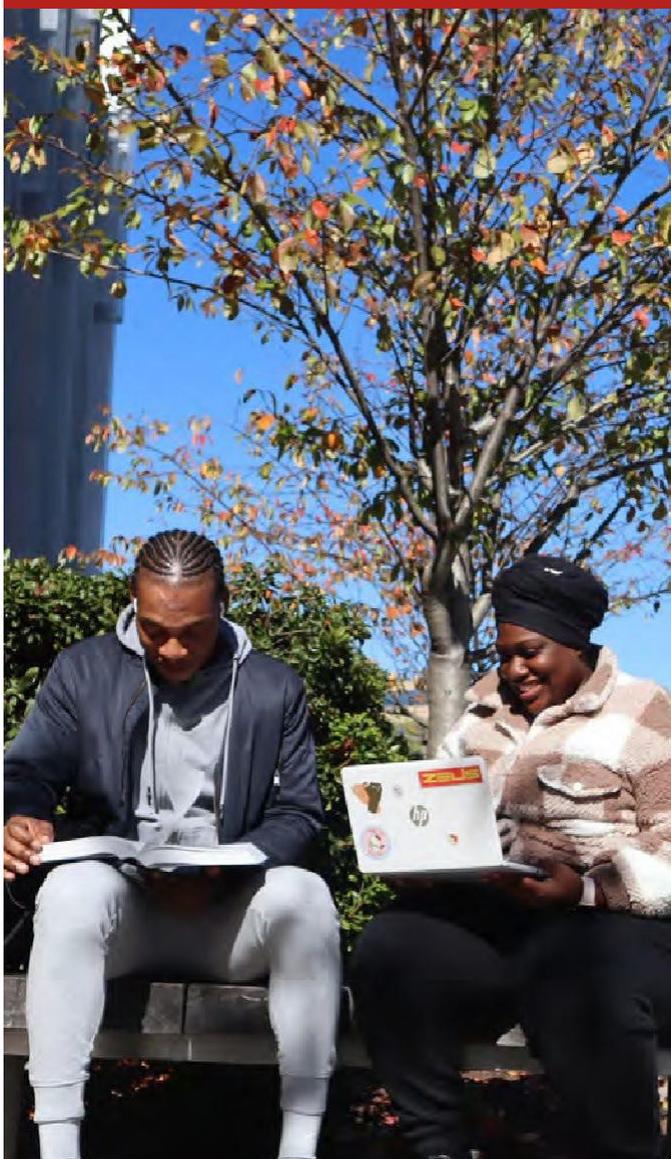


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## GOVERNANCE

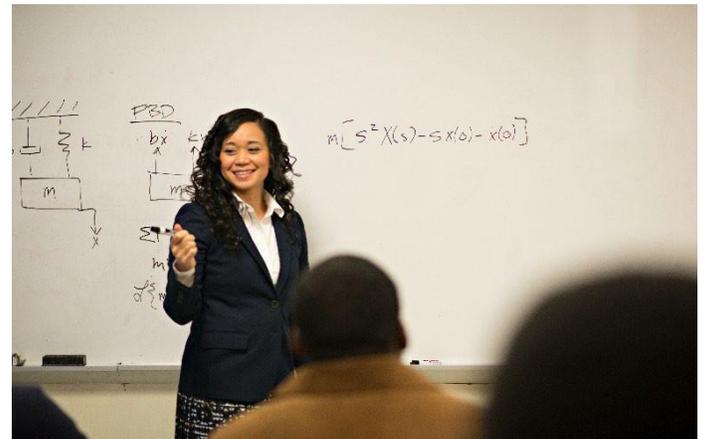
The University of the District of Columbia is an independent agency of the District of Columbia Government, which provides a significant subsidy for University operations. The University is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees. Eleven of the trustees are appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia and confirmed by the District Council. Three trustees are elected by UDC alumni, and one trustee is elected by students as the student representative.

The Chair of the Board is elected by the trustees in accordance with Board regulations. The District allocation to the UDC budget is adopted by the Board and submitted to the Mayor and District Council for final approval.



## PROFILE: FALL 2025

- Year established: 1851 (predecessor institution); 1977 (University of the District of Columbia)
- Academic programs: 80+ degree programs, certificates and workforce development pathways
- Schools/Colleges:
  - College of Arts & Sciences
  - School of Education & Learning Sciences
  - School of Engineering & Applied Sciences
  - School of Business & Public Administration
  - College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability & Environmental Sciences
  - Community College
  - David A. Clarke School of Law
  - Division of Workforce Development & Lifelong Learning
- 4,247 total students
- 3,643 undergraduate students
- 365 graduate students
- 2,488 Black/African American students
- 641 first-time in college (FTIC) students
- 239 law students
- 7:1 student-faculty ratio
- 251 full-time faculty
  - 220 have terminal degrees
  - 114 are tenured
  - 73 are tenure-track
- 654 full-time staff
- \$222 million FY2025 operating budget (not inclusive of the capital budget)
- \$29.5 million FY2025 capital budget (the FY2025-FY2030 approved Capital Improvement Plan totals \$95.5 million)



# POINTS OF PRIDE

- The Carnegie Classification designated UDC as a **Research College & University (RCU) in 2025**, recognizing its research and scholarship.
- Ranked **#18 among all HBCUs** and **#9 among public HBCUs** (2025 U.S. News & World Report Best HBCUs)
- Ranked **#19 for Clinical Law Training**
- The **nation's only** exclusively urban public land-grant institution
- **Regional leader** in urban agriculture, food production and green infrastructure
- **Free workforce training** for DC residents
- **Continuing and Professional Education Program** offers flexible and affordable courses and certifications
- Received more than **\$43M in research awards and grants**, including from the NSF, NASA, Department of Energy, NIST and the NIH
- Named a **Fulbright HBCU Institutional Leader**
- For every dollar invested by the District of Columbia Government, UDC returns four dollars to the city, a **4:1 ratio of return on investment** (2020 Economic Impact Report)
- Yields **\$406 million in annual economic impact** for the District, and **\$535 million** for the Greater Washington metropolitan region (2020 Economic Impact Report)
- Ranked **#1 Best Affordable Bachelor's Degree** in DC; **#1 Best Affordable Mechanical Engineering Degree** in the nation; and **#1 Best Affordable Business School** in the nation (affordableschools.net)
- **Eight tons of fresh produce donated** on average annually through UDC's Firebird Research Farm
- **Renamed UDC sports complex** after the "grandfather of Black basketball" alumnus, Dr. Edwin B. Henderson



# ACADEMICS

**The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)** strives to be an inclusive space founded on diversity, multiculturalism, and equity, while upholding the principles of cultural pluralism. The College's 24 academic programs and complementary extracurricular activities are responsive to the diverse constituencies of the District of Columbia and resonate with students in communities worldwide. They provide models for translating the interactions and problem-solving work of the classroom, lab, and community to the global world. The evolving design of arts and sciences education at UDC centers on the study, integration, and application of the arts and humanities, as well as social, behavioral, natural, and learning sciences, to demonstrate how the "greater good" is underpinned through the academic experience. The College strives to be a place of understanding and continuous dialogue regarding inclusivity, affinity, and intersectionality. Within CAS, the diverse community of UDC is represented across a broad range of orientations, origins, perspectives, and social contexts.

**The School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) (ABET-Accredited)** develops creative leaders through an environment conducive to learning and research, where an experiential learning culture is practiced and promoted. In recent years, SEAS has received numerous research grants from federal agencies, with the ongoing grants in 2022 amounting to an estimated \$35 million. The School has established programs with several companies in the region. Graduates are well-prepared for high-demand careers in engineering and computer science and are regularly recruited by companies nationwide. UDC is one of only four universities in the nation's capital providing ABET-accredited undergraduate programs, in addition to high-quality graduate and doctoral degrees in engineering and computer science.



**The School of Business and Public Administration (SBPA) (AACSB-Accredited)** prepares students to become adaptive, innovative, and ethical leaders with a global perspective and real-world solutions to issues that challenge public and private organizations. SBPA prepares students for the dynamic and complex world of business. The guiding educational philosophy is to deliver pertinent knowledge for successful leadership acumen by integrating knowledge from various disciplines, including accounting, finance, economics, marketing, and management, into a meaningful whole. SBPA combines theory with a practical and pragmatic approach to achieve effective and efficient resource utilization. Careful attention is given to the increasing importance of resource scarcity and an understanding of the global environment in which the business community operates.

**The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES)** offers research-based academic and community outreach programs that enhance the quality of life and economic opportunities for people and communities in the District of Columbia, the nation, and the world. CAUSES embodies the land-grant tradition of UDC. In addition to offering innovative academic programs in architecture, urban sustainability, community health sciences, nursing and nutrition, and an innovative doctoral program in urban leadership and entrepreneurship, CAUSES offers a wide range of community education programs through its land-grant centers: (1) The Center for Urban Agriculture and Gardening Education, (2) The Center for Urban Resilience, Innovation and Infrastructure, which includes the Water Resources Research Institute, and (3) The Center for Nutrition Diet and Health, which includes the Institute of Gerontology.

**The School of Education and Learning Sciences**  
Established in November 2025, the School was created to advance the University's mission of preparing highly effective educators, while honoring the legacy of DC Teachers College, a predecessor institution recognized for its historic contributions to the District of Columbia's educational workforce. The school's formation introduces a refined organizational structure that provides program leaders with enhanced autonomy to define strategic priorities, strengthen program identity, and cultivate sustainable partnerships, thereby increasing the reach, relevance, and long-term impact of the University's education offerings.



**The University of the District of Columbia Community College (UDC-CC)** is a vibrant and energetic institution where students can thrive and learn. Associate degree programs are designed to cultivate students' intellectual abilities, develop their knowledge and skills, and prepare them to think critically, analytically, and creatively. The Career Technical & Education (CTE) programs combine academic and technical training to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in today's workforce.

**The David A. Clarke School of Law (UDC Law)**, the District of Columbia's only public law school and one of only six law schools at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), is committed to the practice of law in the public interest, providing countless hours of pro bono legal services to low-income residents each year through the law school's legal clinics and multifaceted set of experiential programs. UDC is ranked the No. 1 law school for minority students and No.1 law school for nontraditional students by *The Princeton Review*. With one of the most robust student clinical requirements of any U.S. law school, UDC Law's No. 19-ranked clinical program (2025 U.S. News & World Report) provides students the opportunity to gain experience in direct representation and policy advocacy. These commitments have earned UDC Law a No. 2 ranking by Reuters (2024) for government and public interest job placement. UDC Law also boasts a significant representation of women, people of color, and older students, with top-10 rankings from the Princeton Review (2024) for being the greatest resource for minority students (No. 1) and the most chosen by older students (No. 1).

**The Division of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning (WDLL)** aims to reduce unemployment and underemployment in the District of Columbia by enhancing the skills of its residents. WDLL achieves its mission by providing courses at no cost to DC residents in industry-recognized, high-demand, high-wage career fields/occupations in the DC Metropolitan region. The Division's programming targets economically disadvantaged residents in the District. WDLL offers in-person, hybrid, and online learning opportunities across all in-demand career training pathways.

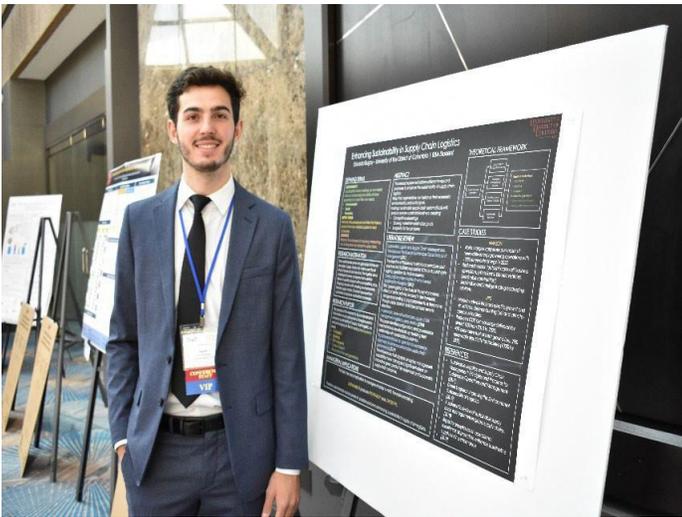
## ACCREDITATION

The University of the District of Columbia is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

# RESEARCH

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) has been [designated](#) as a Research College & University (RCU) in the 2025 Carnegie Classification, a recognition that underscores UDC's scholarship and expanding investment in research.

UDC has increased research expenditure under the Office of University Research and the Office of Sponsored Programs, doubling its NSF research expenditures from FY2020 (\$4.6 million) to FY2021 (\$8.1 million), furthering the university's exploration of a Carnegie R2 designation.



## FY2024-25 RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS:

- Fifty-seven (57) proposals submitted in FY2024 (forty-two (42) submitted in FY2023); 36% increase
- FY2024 dollar value of proposals submitted = \$43M (FY2023 dollar value of proposals submitted = \$33M); 30% increase
- Thirty-eight (38) UDC faculty submitted proposals in FY2024
- There were twenty (20) federal awards in FY2024 with a total value of \$12.5M
- UDC Research Week 2024 attracted 411 participants from across UDC's six (6) colleges and schools, as well as external funders DC Public Schools, US Department of Agriculture, and DC Department of Energy and the Environment.
- For FY2023, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) Office of University Research (OUR) reported research expenditures of \$7.9M to the National Science Foundation Higher Education Research & Development (NSF HERD) Survey.

# ATHLETICS

As an integral part of the University, the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics embodies the overall mission of the NCAA, with an emphasis on the Division II strategic positioning platform. This platform “provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high-level athletic competition, and development of positive societal attitudes in service to the community.” The Department fosters a competitive environment that respects fairness, courtesy, and ethical conduct among its members. The Department upholds the fair and equitable treatment of all persons and conducts its programs consistent with Title IX, University guidelines, and NCAA rules and regulations.



## INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS PROGRAMS

The University of the District of Columbia Firebirds compete as members of the East Coast Conference on the NCAA Division II level in the following sports:

- Basketball (men & women)
- Lacrosse (men & women)
- Cross Country (women)
- Indoor and Outdoor Track & Field (women)
- Soccer (men)
- Tennis (men & women)



# THE UDC FOUNDATION

The UDC Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation that is organized to support the mission of the University of the District of Columbia. Governance of the Foundation rests with the President of the Foundation, who serves as Chair of the Foundation’s Board of Directors. The Board is required to report annually to the UDC Board of Trustees on the activities of the Foundation. All University fundraising is directed to the Foundation.



# PRESIDENT'S OVERARCHING VISION

Position UDC as a leading national public urban university through excellence in student achievement, strong alignment with local workforce needs, and impactful service to the community

## **Strategic Priorities**

- Increase student success outcomes
- Strengthen academic programs
- Foster faculty and staff excellence
- Increase access and pathways into and through the University
- Enhance academic and workforce alignment
- Increase student financial support
- Upgrade academic facilities
- Expand the University's network of supporters and advocates

## **Anticipated Outcomes**

- High-quality and affordable education
- Strong student success outcomes
- Inclusive and student-centered environment
- Workforce and economic mobility engine for the district
- Trusted community partner
- Hub for research and innovation

# HOW TO APPLY

Nominations and applications are now being accepted. Dossiers should include 1) a complete CV/résumé and 2) cover letter of interest that addresses the responsibilities, competencies and requirements, the applicant's motivation to apply and interest in UDC. The search will be conducted with a commitment to confidentiality until finalists are selected. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made.

The University of the District of Columbia is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution. Minorities, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. For a full version of the University's EO Policy Statement, please visit [www.udc.edu/equal\\_opportunity](http://www.udc.edu/equal_opportunity).

## **Submit applications here:**

- [UDC VP of University Research](#)

**All inquiries and nominations should be addressed to:**

### **Marion Frenche, SHRM-CP**

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