University of Maryland Baltimore County
First Steps to 2016: Staff Size and Hiring Group

Executive Summary

I. Introduction

The UMBC staff is a diverse group that plays many and varied important roles within the university community. These roles include nurse practitioner, middle and high level administrator, physical plant worker, police officer, student affairs professional, academic advisor, technician, accountant, administrative assistant, information technology professional, and many others who contribute to the delivery of the vision and mission of the university.

The achievement of the university's major goals, as well as supporting goals and objectives, is contingent upon the quality, motivation and professional performance of the UMBC faculty and staff, and the tools and support made available to them to enhance their chances for success. This document summarizes the first steps to be taken in creating a developmental framework to both meet immediate needs and to lay the foundation to build upon in establishing the Strategic Framework for 2016.

To accomplish our task, a twofold approach was used. First, we focused on the identification of values and principles to serve as guides for planning and decision making as they relate to the hiring, development, compensation, and performance of UMBC staff. Secondly, these values and principles were used to identify issues and to develop specific recommendations.

II. Values and Principles

Rokeach (1973, p.5) states that "A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence. A value system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end states of existence along a continuum of relative importance." Covey (1989, p.35) states that "Principles are guidelines for human conduct that are proven to have enduring, permanent value."

The following discussion focuses on the UMBC staff. This section identifies four (4) core values which form the basis upon which both guiding principles and specific recommendations are based, thus demonstrating the use of the core values and principles as guides for planning, decision making, and action. For purposes of this discussion, "UMBC" refers to every administrator, faculty member, and staff person. In other words, we all share in the responsibility to promote our core values.

The Four Core Values

As a community, UMBC:
1. Sets and pursues standards of excellence in the selection, management, performance, evaluation, and retention of staff.
2. Recognizes and promotes the individual worth and value of each staff member.
3. Encourages and supports staff contributions to the campus.
4. Promotes the professional and personal development of each staff member.

Essential to realization of these four core values is the identification of principles to guide our actions in decision making. Appendix A summarizes the four core values and 17 associated principles. These core values and principles serve as guides for planning and decision making as they relate to the hiring, compensation, development, performance, supervision, and retention of UMBC staff.

III. Specific Recommendations

The following items are examples of some of the recommendations that are being made to address some of the issues in the Staff Size and Hiring Group:

- **Develop a staff hiring plan that is based on the needs and priorities identified in the Framework for 2016, and on the results of staffing ratios, needs assessments, and salary plans that will be developed over the next few months.**

How many accountants does it take to support 40 faculty generating $12 M in research funding? How many specialized technicians, machinists, and trades people does it take to support the many highly specialized engineering, scientific, and social science research labs on campus? What types of individuals and skill sets are needed to support the HR, Student Administration, Enterprise Warehouse, Grants, and Finance People Soft modules? Can current staff levels successfully support the administrative, research and student support needs of UMBC? What are the competitive salaries necessary to attract and retain excellent and productive staff?

- **Require and develop impact statements to generate accurate information to be used in managerial decision making prior to approving any new programs, Centers or initiatives.**

New Centers and programs have been developed over the years on an assumption that they would not require any additional resources. Occasionally, these new initiatives have placed a tremendous burden on the staff that had to assume additional responsibilities, disrupted the normal work flow of offices, drained existing scarce resources such as funds, space and managerial time, and failed to deliver on the promise of generating additional resources for the University.

- **Develop specialized "Performance" or "Rapid Deployment" Teams to meet current and future research and administrative support needs**

Despite the addition of many new buildings over the past twenty years, the size of the physical plant staff is insufficient to meet the day-to-day demands of maintaining the UMBC physical plant and grounds. In addition, the University has witnessed the tremendous growth of highly specialized research labs that has presented another set of challenges to the understaffed Physical Plant; namely, having properly trained individuals skilled in maintaining the highly technical scientific equipment and systems (exhaust fans, hoods, boilers, etc.) associated with research labs. To develop such a group from the existing staff would further reduce the effectiveness of the Physical Plant. With this in mind, a new, innovative approach is needed to both meet the research support needs of the University and free the existing physical plant staff to handle the day-to-day demands of meeting the needs of the general campus. Specialized teams can also be formed that could respond to administrative issues such as providing additional help for managing or closing grants, assisting a Department in updating leave records, or assisting a Department that is short staffed due to a staff illness or unexpected increase in workload.

- **Develop more specialized centers such as College-wide or Departmental Cluster "Finance Centers" that would include payroll, purchasing and pre- and post-award grant responsibilities to reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts in campus departments.**

There are many individuals who serve as departmental payroll preparers despite having many additional responsibilities. The University needs to identify more efficient ways of developing college-wide payroll centers to reduce the numbers of people engaged in the payroll process. Similar centers could be developed for pre-award grant proposals, procurement or other combinations of responsibilities.

- **Determine the appropriate staff to student and staff to faculty ratio necessary to support the mission of the University.**

Faculty to student ratios have been part of the higher education culture for many years. A great deal of effort and energy has been devoted to the quest of determining the ideal faculty to student ratio. University rankings are, in part, determined by this ratio. To insure that adequate support is given to the delivery of the university mission and vision and to increase the likelihood of successfully accomplishing our major goals, the university needs to put additional energy into determining staff to faculty ratios and staff to student ratios in various areas. For example, given the UMBC retention rate, what staff to student ratio is ideal in the advisement of first and second year undergraduate students? What staff to faculty ratio is ideal to insure proper faculty research support (i.e. technicians, physical plant employees, grants management staff, etc.)? What staff to faculty ratio is ideal in providing administrative support in departments?

- **Hire an individual in Human Resources to coordinate staff development and training at UMBC.**

The staff development position in HR was sacrificed during the lay-offs. A new staff development position, similar to the Faculty Development position, should be added to the HR office to serve as Coordinator of Staff Development and Training with responsibility to provide and/or arrange, among other things: supervisory training, specific People Soft related skill set training, enhancing staff performance, creating supportive and creative work environments, problem identification and resolution, how to hire exceptionally great employees, challenging and supporting employees, PMP training related issues, interpersonal communication skills, etc.

- **Develop and conduct an anonymous staff survey to assess the campus climate for staff, in terms of dignity, respect, and appreciation for professional contributions. Aggregated results should be shared with the campus, and each unit mandated to discuss the issues it reveals and develop action plans for matters of importance within their units. (Faculty and administrators must be included in this.) Where needed, the new Coordinator of Staff Development and Training in HR, and the Office of Human Relations can assist units with training in needed areas.**

All members of the UMBC community should be treated with dignity and respect. Staff are no exception and there are few, if any, on campus who would disagree with this statement. Yet, especially on a campus as diverse as UMBC, dignity and respect may be very much like beauty-located in the eyes of the beholder. In the course of our fast pace to meet the educational needs of students, the research and teaching needs of faculty, and the growing needs of our broad array of programs, there is a corresponding need across campus to take stock regularly of how all staff can be treated with dignity and respect, and that question can best be answered by individual staff members themselves.

- **Compensate all staff fairly in relation to qualifications, responsibilities, performance, and market value**

There is a special group of employees in the University who are not covered by Collective Bargaining or the Exempt Staff rules. They are represented by the Non Exempt Excluded Staff Senate (NEESS). In many cases, these individuals have been with UMBC for many years and often serve as role models and key staff members in their respective offices. Consistent with the University System of Maryland's commitment to review the Nonexempt Pay Program every two years to keep pace with current conditions, the nonexempt excluded group requests consideration in raising the salary levels of their pay ranges, creating positions that more accurately reflect their level of responsibility, and allow for in-range increases when a reclassification is inappropriate but a raise is needed for purposes of equity and just compensation.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in this planning activity and for your serious consideration of the aforementioned recommendations.

Appendix A

UMBC VALUES
ENDURING BELIEFS ABOUT WHAT IS IMPORTANT

UMBC PRINCIPLES
GUIDELINES FOR HUMAN CONDUCT

Set & Pursue Standards of Excellence	Recognize & Promote Individual Worth & Value	Encourage & Support Contributions to Campus	Promote Professional & Personal Development
Recruit, hire, retain, and promote outstanding staff	*Create climate of respect for human dignity and professional contributions of staff*	*Provide staff appropriate tools, support and resources for their work*	*Create nurturing climate to encourage professional growth through variety of means*
Set standards of excellence for supervisors in performance of staff management responsibilities	*Treat all staff with patience, fairness, and civility*	*Develop clear, reasonable, written expectations for roles and tasks that are appropriate to individual staff level of education, expertise, and interest*	*Set expectation and plan time for staff pursuit of professional development activities*
Provide regular training for supervisors in how to achieve excellence in skills of staff management	*Compensate all staff fairly in relation to qualifications, responsibilities, performance, and market value*		*Develop on-campus advancement opportunities for staff*
Expect, encourage, and reward outstanding job performance, integrity, responsibility, and creativity in staff	*Consult with and include staff in decisions that affect their present and future responsibilities and workloads*	*Regularly recognize staff for their work and contributions*	*Support staff needs for life balance and healthy lifestyles*
		Create climate that encourages and rewards staff service to campus community	*Create and support community-building activities*