

Spring 2021
Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity Report

Institution: University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)

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Section 1

At UMBC, diversity is defined in its fullest scope, embracing not only racial and ethnic groups and individuals who are or have been underrepresented in higher education, but also including religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, nationality, non-traditional student status, as well as other important characteristics. The UMBC Strategic Plan included in its preface, “[w]ith this plan, our UMBC community focuses on strategic steps toward the next level of inclusive excellence. The plan honors our founding commitment to serve the citizens of Maryland and welcome people of all backgrounds into the life of the university. It builds on our achievements as a selective, public research university strongly connected with the economic and civic life of the Baltimore region and the State of Maryland.” In addition, UMBC’s new vision statement which was adopted in 2016 states: “Our UMBC community redefines excellence in higher education through an inclusive culture that connects innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement. We will advance knowledge, economic prosperity, and social justice by welcoming and inspiring inquisitive minds from all backgrounds.”

When developing UMBC’s 2019 diversity plan, UMBC integrated the broad diversity and inclusion goals from its prior 2009 plan with the specific, diversity and inclusion-related goals originating from UMBC’s 2016 strategic plan. This planning process was inclusive of all campus stakeholders and identifies inclusion and diversity as both goals and recommendations in each of the four focus areas: the student experience, curriculum and pedagogy, extended connections and community and engagement and collective impact in research, scholarship and creative activities. Founded on the strategic plan, UMBC’s strategic planning implementation plan was developed by UMBC’s President and the Council of Vice Presidents and Deans, and published in 2018. UMBC’s Diversity Plan contains an annual update portion that integrates the specific, diversity-related strategies and initiatives derived from this implementation plan (identified for 2018- 2020 and continuing from 2016-17 and 2017-18).

It is important to note that UMBC frequently implements its plans for inclusion and diversity through programs and initiatives that form part of the normal course of daily operations of the University, without specifically designating them as diversity programs. In this way, UMBC has integrated many of its diversity related programs into the fabric of how it supports all students, faculty, staff, and through community engagement. Many of these components are nevertheless an important part of UMBC’s ongoing plan for supporting and enhancing cultural and racial diversity at UMBC.

Section 2

Some of the most successful institutional initiatives designed to address diversity include:

- **Inclusion Council (UMBC's Office of Equity and Inclusion):** An advisory body of 25 faculty, staff and students that represent diverse populations across our community. This body has divided into 10 subgroups. These subgroups include over 100 additional community members and have been working throughout the 2020-21 school year to provide recommendations in a variety of equity and inclusion issue areas to university leadership.
- **Interfolio and Diverse Faculty Recruitment:** UMBC requires each search committee to create a diversity hiring recruitment plan, which includes an active recruitment strategy, draft job advertisement, and preliminary evaluation criteria. Plans are reviewed and approved by the respective Dean and the Provost Office. Each Dean is also charged with using Interfolio: Faculty Search to monitor the diversity of the applicant pools and make adjustments to the search if necessary. The STRIDE Committee provides peer education to support colleagues in conducting searches that reflect UMBC's core values of diversity and inclusion.
- **Gender Identity Workgroup:** This group, formed in Spring 2018, has been working to implement changes to make our community more inclusive of people with diverse gender identities. In Summer 2020, the group launched a self-service tool for students to provide their gender identities and pronouns across university platforms. Moving forward, this information will be collected via the Common App for all incoming students.
- **Office of Academic Opportunity Programs (AOP):** Provides resources and support to students who are traditionally underrepresented such as: Educational Talent Search (provides exposure to postsecondary education options to low-income, first-gen middle and high school students in Baltimore County), Upward Bound (promotes enhancement of student skills in Baltimore City and County schools through academic and cultural enrichment including emphasis on STEM). AOP also houses the McNair's Scholars Program, the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation, the First Generation Network, U-RISE (increases representation in Ph.D programs and research careers in the biomedical sciences), and the Meyerhoff Scholars Program (nationally recognized for its success in increasing representation in science and engineering).
- **Student retention and academic success:** the Division of Undergraduate Academic Affairs offers the Returning Women Student Scholars program aiming to increase academic success. Additionally, UMBC offers the Discovery Scholars Living-Learning Community, First-Year Seminar, Introduction to an Honors University, New Student Book Experience, Summer Bridge Program, and Transfer Seminars. The Academic Success Center provides centralized support services to all undergraduate students at UMBC. Enrollment Management hosts reception events for academically talented African American and Latinx high schoolers, financial aid outreach

with Building Steps (encourages first gen and minority students in Baltimore City to attend college, focus on STEM), Golden Ticket Pre-Orientation Advising (provides first gen students and families the opportunity to learn more about academic requirements and planning tools), and partners with Raise.me to offer micro-scholarships to promote higher education to low-income, first gen students.

Section 3

Some of the ways UMBC anticipates COVID-19 will most affect efforts to enhance diversity on campus include:

- **Diversity in Graduate and Undergraduate Enrollment:** For both graduate and undergraduate recruitment and enrollment initiatives, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a serious financial impact on students and their families. Students and families are rethinking their academic plans, considering options and even delaying their education. This changing financial landscape will require not only additional financial resources to support both the recruitment and retention of students but also flexibility in our approach to the delivery of instruction and academic and support services as students and families balance their responsibilities. UMBC's move to mostly remote instruction in March 2020 and continuing through the spring 2021 semester has had a disproportionate impact on students from low-income and other families with poor access to the internet and appropriate computing resources although we have developed comprehensive supports to mitigate such impacts. We continue to actively monitor, both individually and collectively the success of our students and provide a variety of intervention and support mechanisms such as those developed by our new Academic Success Center and Student Advocates. One positive impact of the move to remote instruction is our ability to serve over 120 returning students to complete their degrees through our Finish Line Program.
- **Diversity in Faculty Hiring:** During this pandemic and continuing movements for social justice and equality, UMBC is committed to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of underrepresented minority faculty, who are disproportionately affected by these crises. Due to COVID-19 and the resulting significant reduction of our State appropriation, our ability to hire new faculty and faculty replacements has been severely constrained. Notwithstanding these challenges, faculty diversity and inclusive excellence remains a guiding principle of our institution in any faculty hiring during FY21. We have prioritized faculty hiring through our Postdoctoral Fellowship for Faculty Diversity, we have successfully converted all three fellows from Cohort V to assistant professor positions at UMBC, and will welcome two new fellows, one of whom is the inaugural fellow for faculty diversity in the Arts, in Cohort VI in July 2021.
- **Diversity in Student Affairs and Services:** The Division of Student Affairs has been careful to take into consideration the various ways students are being impacted by COVID-19, ongoing racial unrest in our country, and the dramatic changes in employment and income across the

nation. Along with health, sense of belonging, and safety, exploring access, equity, and inclusion remain at the forefront of our decision making.

- **Office of Equity and Inclusion:** The Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) continues to receive reports through the online reporting form. Office staff have pivoted to offering intake, providing ongoing support and conducting investigations remotely. The transition to remote work provides additional equity and inclusion challenges for students, faculty and staff, and OEI continues to engage in new and innovative methods for hearing, responding to and resolving equity and inclusion issues for our community.

Section 4

Appendix: Diversity Plan

2019 Diversity Plan-UMBC INTRODUCTION

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) has established a commitment to diversity as one of its core principles for the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students and for the quality of the academic and campus community. Founded in 1966, UMBC is a selective, historically-diverse, public research university with a total student enrollment of 13,767 for Fall 2018. Diversity is defined at UMBC in its fullest scope, embracing not only racial and ethnic groups and individuals who are or have been underrepresented in higher education, but also including religious affiliation, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, foreign nationality, non-traditional student status, and other important characteristics.

UMBC's first Diversity Plan was written in 2009, in response to a state mandate. The original plan articulated four overarching diversity goals for UMBC. Over the intervening years, UMBC's wealth of diversity initiatives has deepened and grown, while the four overarching institutional goals have remained constant. The 2019 Diversity Plan for UMBC retains the four overarching UMBC diversity goals and integrates them with the two guiding diversity goals from USM, as required in the Diversity Report UMBC is mandated to submit annually.

In development of the 2019 plan, UMBC has integrated the broad diversity scaffolding with the specific, diversity-related goals from UMBC's recent strategic plan to form part one as the core of the plan. It is anticipated that part one of the 2019 Diversity Plan will warrant review for possible updating in 2024. Part two of the 2019 Diversity Plan is the annual update portion. This portion of the plan integrates the specific, diversity-related strategies (identified for 2018-2020 and continuing from 2016-17 and 2017-18) from UMBC's 2018 strategic planning implementation document. It is anticipated that part two of the Diversity Plan will be updated annually--as needed and based on

continued implementation of UMBC's strategic plan--at the time UMBC develops its annual Diversity Report.

Finally, it is important to note that UMBC frequently implements its plans for diversity through programs executed in the normal course of daily operations of the University, without designating them as diversity programs. For example, a large proportion of UMBC's transfer students are persons of color. Because UMBC is strongly committed to ensuring the success of its transfer students, UMBC actively supports the racial and cultural diversity in its student population through programs that support transfer students. Because UMBC has thus woven many of its diversity programs into the fabric of how it supports all students, faculty, and the campus community, some of the initiatives included in part two of this plan may not include descriptors such as "diversity" but are nevertheless an important part of UMBC's ongoing plan for supporting and enhancing cultural and racial diversity at UMBC.

Overarching Diversity Goals of USM and UMBC

USM Goal 1: Increase the numerical representation of traditionally underrepresented groups among students, staff, and faculty.

UMBC Goals:

- To ensure access to educational and employment opportunities for a diverse, student, faculty, and staff community
- To encourage and support individual development and advancement
- To provide conditions for personal success

USM Goal 2: Create positive interactions and cultural awareness among students, faculty, and staff on campus.

UMBC Goal:

- To provide a culture of safety, inclusion and respect

PART I

Core Diversity Plan, 2019-24

Excerpts from *Our UMBC, A Strategic Plan for Advancing Excellence* that support and advance USM's and UMBC's overarching diversity goals

Strategic Plan Preface

With this plan, our UMBC community focuses on strategic steps toward the next level of inclusive excellence. The plan honors our founding commitment to serve the citizens of Maryland and welcome people of all backgrounds into the life of the university. It builds on our achievements as a selective, public research university strongly connected with the economic and civic life of the Baltimore region and the State of Maryland.

University Mission

UMBC is dedicated to cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility, and lifelong learning.

University Vision

Our UMBC community redefines excellence in higher education through an inclusive culture that connects innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement. We will advance knowledge, economic prosperity, and social justice by welcoming and inspiring inquisitive minds from all backgrounds.

FOUR FOCUS AREAS OF STRATEGIC PLAN

Focus Area One: The Student Experience

Strategic Goals

Leverage the strength of UMBC's compositional diversity by increasing the cultural and global competencies of all students.

Supporting Objectives

3.1 Develop communities of practice that deliberately focus on developing skills, attitudes, and experiences that promote global and cultural competency. Consider adding global and cultural competency as the fifth area of student competency.

Students can clearly articulate how interactions and connections with diverse people on campus can translate to their lives and careers post-graduation.

3.2 Increase significantly the diversity of tenure-track faculty.

Aggressively recruit and retain underrepresented minority faculty with the goal of increasing the diversity of UMBC faculty to, at a minimum, mirror the diversity of UMBC's student population.

3.3 Research student perceptions of staff diversity to better understand the effects of staff compositional diversity in the student experience and guide staff diversity priorities.

Conduct an assessment of and develop recommendations concerning the impact of staff compositional diversity in the student experience.

5.1 Improve student services

FOCUS AREA TWO: Collective Impact in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement

Primary Goal

Elevate UMBC as a nationally and internationally recognized research university strongly connected with the economic and civic life of the Baltimore region and the State of Maryland. The key drivers in achieving this goal are: creating an inclusive environment for faculty, students, and staff developing excellence in new intellectual frontiers; and fostering multidisciplinary and inter-institutional approaches that build research across the campus.

Strategic Goals

1. Potential focus areas for the development of multidisciplinary scholarship, creative activity, and research excellence include, but are not limited to, environmental studies, health, national security, data science, and civically engaged and global/transnational scholarship.
2. Increase UMBC's research prominence through sustained investment in faculty and staff hiring, retention, and development.

Supporting Objectives

2.1 Recruit, support, promote, and proactively retain a more diverse, research-active faculty at both the junior and mid-career levels to build research capacity, productivity and excellence.

Support significant, sustained growth in ethnic, racial, and gender diversity among tenure-track faculty and exempt and non-exempt staff.

2.2 Attract a highly diverse graduate student body, based on UMBC's national model of undergraduate diversity and success.

2.4 Increase the number of faculty, in all disciplines and interdisciplines, with national and international reputations for the quality and impact of their scholarship or creative activities.

FOCUS AREA THREE: Innovative Curriculum and Pedagogy

Supporting Objectives

1.2 Increase the size and diversity of full-time faculty and their engagement in first- and second year student learning experiences.

Steadily grow the diversity of full-time faculty.

FOCUS AREA FOUR: Community and Extended Connections

Primary Goal

To build, nurture, and extend connections with diverse internal and external partners to enrich campus life, local neighborhoods, the state, and the surrounding region.

Strategic Goals

Promote a campus-wide culture that recognizes, supports, catalyzes, and celebrates collaboration and partnerships with groups at the local, state, regional, national, and international levels, including the K-12 education system.

Supporting Objectives

1.1 Adopt a common framework of best practices for developing and maintaining community connections and partnerships that includes ways to recognize and reward community connections and community-engaged scholarship.

Increase the number and quality of community connections.

Increase engaged scholarship and learning.

3.5 Better communicate availability of campus services and events to community

PART II

2019 Annual Update to UMBC Diversity Plan

Excerpts from UMBC's *Strategic Plan Implementation Document, August 2018*, that support and advance USM's and UMBC's overarching diversity goals

FOUR FOCUS AREAS AND FOUNDATIONS OF STRATEGIC & IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Selected from Next Steps for 2018-20 and continuing initiatives from 2016-17 and 2017-18

FOCUS AREA ONE: The Student Experience

The Student Experience 2.1

- Continue to support the MOU Data Sharing agreement with feeder schools, to improve experiences of transfer students (IRADS)
- Continue to implement STEM Transfer Student Success Initiatives (CNMS)
- Continue to implement BUILD Initiatives/Hill-Lopes Scholarship to support students placed at high risk (CNMS)
- Continue to increase participation in the Summer Bridge Program through enhanced marketing and the newly established Retriever Jumpstart Scholarship (UAA; EM)

The Student Experience 3.1

- Expand Interact - a pilot program designed to develop basic listening and interaction skills to help first year students navigate culturally diverse contexts - to all first year residence halls (SA)
- Participate in the American Council on Education 2018-2020 Internationalization Laboratory, a cohort-based program that will enable UMBC to further develop the international dimensions of our strategic plan
- Participate in MIEC retreat and plan activities for AY 2019

- Develop an updated vision for diversity and inclusion in COEIT (COEIT; CWIT)
- Expand New Student Orientation “Dawg Days” optional excursions to include “Dawg Days Abroad” to introduce new students to the many benefits of study abroad (EM; IES)
- Transition Study Abroad Fair to Global Opportunities Fair to encourage student participation in both on- and off-campus global learning programs (IES)
- Continue to expand New Student Orientation “Dawg Days” optional excursions to include “Dawg Days Abroad” to introduce new students to the many benefits of study abroad (EM; IES)

The Student Experience 3.2

- Conduct 10 more searches from the multi-year hiring plan (CAHSS)
- Conduct searches for the next cohort of Pre-Professoriate Fellows (CNMS, COEIT)
- Conduct searches for the next cohort of new Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity
- Where appropriate consider conversion of current Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity and Pre-Professor Fellows to tenure-track positions
- Conduct assessment to respond to issues related to staff diversity and student experience
- Continue to support the five-year initiative to promote diversity and inclusion in the humanities through a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (CAHSS; Dresher)
- Continue to bring in and support international professors, researchers and scholars to UMBC via the US Department of State’s Exchange Visitor Program (IES)

The Student Experience 3.3

- Develop the work plan of the Director of Inclusion in Student Affairs, to assess and respond to issues related to staff diversity and student experience (SA)

The Student Experience 4.1

- Continue to work with the International Student Exchange Program, a study abroad consortia, to help students study abroad for about the same cost as studying at UMBC (IES)

The Student Experience 5.1

- Implement an online immigration case management system for international students (IES)
- Hire an additional advisor to increase access to international student support services (IES)
- Continue to offer a financial literacy introductory session as part of our mandatory new student orientation program
- Continue to provide Financial Smarts Cash Course to hundreds of students
- Continue to pilot the “Financial Smarts Grant,” a program designed to encourage financially neediest students to complete our online financial literacy course (EM; FS)

The Student Experience 5.3

- Expand promotion of arts and culture events to students
- Continue to develop intercultural development workshops and simulations for faculty and staff (IES; HR)

The Student Experience 5.4

- Continue to expand the ‘Study Abroad Ambassador Program’ to fall and spring semester study abroad programs (IES)

FOCUS AREA TWO: Collective Impact in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement

The Student Experience 3.2

- Conduct searches for the next cohort of new Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity

- Where appropriate consider conversion of current Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity and Pre-Professor Fellows to tenure-track positions
- Launch Request for Proposals for multi-disciplinary ILSB-related convergent research initiatives

Collective Impact in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement 1.2

- Explore ways to leverage the Federal Work Study Program to support more diverse student participation in undergraduate research (EM, UAA)
- Continue to explore ways to leverage the Federal Work Study Program to support more diverse student participation in undergraduate research (EM, UAA)

FOCUS AREA THREE: Innovative Curriculum and Pedagogy

The Student Experience 3.2

- Conduct searches for the next cohort of new Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity
- Where appropriate consider conversion of current Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity and Pre-Professor Fellows to tenure-track positions

FOCUS AREA FOUR: Community and Extended Connections

Community and Extended Connections 1.4

- Continue to prepare local high school students from low-income and first-generation college backgrounds to succeed in higher education through the Upward Bound Program
- Continue to work with the “Math Coach” program we launched at Lakeland Elementary Middle School (UAA)
- Staff, students, and faculty continue to play a leadership role in Breaking Ground Imagining America

Community and Extended Connections 3.2

- Develop partnerships with other arts and culture organizations in Baltimore (CAHSS)
- Continue to work with the Choice Program at UMBC which was chosen by Starbucks to be the community partner for their new Baltimore City opportunity cafe under construction in East Baltimore
- Continue to establish the Sherman Center for Early Learning in Urban Communities to improve STEM, literacy, and mathematics education in early childhood
- Continue to partner with Northrop Grumman Foundation and Northrop Grumman Mission Systems to create the new Lakeland Community and STEAM Center
- Continue to implement a professional development program for math teachers at Lakeland Elementary Middle School and expand it to four other schools in Baltimore (UAA)

Community and Extended Connections 3.4

- Continue to offer Summer Enrichment Experiences (SEE) program to 273 K-12 students on campus (DPS)
- Continue to enhance the Office of Extended Learning to offer additional programs for youth and adults, including Summer Enrichment Experiences, Home Visitor Program, How Girls Code, and Maryland Leadership Workshop (DPS)

Community and Extended Connections 3.5

- Continue to develop the website on Race, Equity, Inclusion, & Justice to provide a calendar of relevant events, a list of courses, and links to campus resources (CAHSS)
- Continue to develop the Diversity & Inclusion website to share our institutional values, resources, and policies (OIA)

FOUNDATIONS

- Support transfer students by 1) re-purposing a vacant admissions line for transfer student recruiting, 2) dedicating consulting resources in the PeopleSoft 9.2 upgrade for transfer credit evaluation, 3) hiring a full-time transfer credit evaluator, and 4) piloting EAB's Transfer Collaborative Tool (EM; DOIT)

The processes for reporting and investigating hate crimes are outlined in the annual Diversity Report.

Section 5

UMBC is dedicated to cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility and lifelong learning. UMBC is also committed to disrupting structural racism in order to create an equitable learning environment for all. UMBC recognizes the following areas that are opportunities to combat systemic barriers related to race, gender and identity.

- **Talking about racial justice:** the murder of George Floyd in the Summer of 2020 reignited conversations about racial justice at UMBC. The university continues to welcome these conversations and has worked to institutionalize efforts to discuss and address racial injustice. The Office of Equity and Inclusion has hosted a series of “town hall” discussions where experts from a variety of fields discuss issues of equity and inclusion. These events have been incredibly successful and are often attended by hundreds of community members. Additionally, the Inclusion Council has begun work on “Retriever Rise”, which has set out to be a campaign to increase the visibility of the racial justice work that is being led by the Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Inclusion Council. This campaign will be used to increase communication and transparency, and will also highlight existing work, engage constituents across campus in racial equity efforts, and communicate what work still needs to be done.
- **Enacting antiracist policies and providing resources:** an effort is underway to create comprehensive antiracist policy and resources including generating scholarly research, educational tools, and policy analysis geared towards dismantling racism. This effort is held institutionally by the Office of Equity and Inclusion but has existed since before the office's inception. These efforts include stakeholders from across campus communities and involve immediate and long term efforts including: creating guidance for and enacting antiracist pedagogy within UMBC curriculum, and creating antiracist syllabus language for UMBC educators to provide in their syllabi.
- **Engaging the UMBC community in restorative practices:** our campus community is working to elevate the work being done already at UMBC around restorative practices including efforts in residence life, student conduct, and the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Campus stakeholders are

working to incorporate restorative practices into curriculum, policy and procedures across campus.