

Academic Resources

At UMBC, students find many resources to help them achieve their academic goals. Listed below are special programs and facilities available to enhance students' academic pursuits.

Academic Services

Office of Academic Services

The Office of Academic Services coordinates and manages a comprehensive system of academic advising that begins at orientation prior to enrollment at UMBC and continues through graduation. Academic advising is provided primarily by departmental faculty in a student's intended major; however, undeclared majors and students pursuing allied health careers (such as Prenursing, Prepharmacy, Prephysical therapy) are advised by Office of Academic Services staff. preprofessional students in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and optometry receive advising from specialists within the Office of Academic Services who supplement the advising provided by the major department. A special Health Professions Evaluation Committee, composed of faculty and coordinated through the Advisement Center, helps students prepare for and gain entry to professional schools. Students experiencing academic difficulties also are advised by Office of Academic Services staff.

In addition to general advising, students are invited to participate in FUEL (For Undecided and Exploratory Learners), a comprehensive major exploration program to help students navigate through information in order to make informed decisions about their educational planning. In addition, the Advising Resource

Center allows students to explore the possible majors at UMBC, use online self assessments to investigate skills and interests, and browse through the advising library for major-related information. Peer advisors are also on hand to answer any questions you might have as you work in the center.

The Office of Academic Services also processes major declarations, reviews requests for exceptions to academic policies, conducts health professions workshops, maintains the health professions library, and provides written assessments of each student's progress toward meeting general university requirements and transfer credit evaluations.

The Office of Academic Services is located in room 102 of the Academic Services Building. Walk-in advising hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., or call the Advising Hotline at 410-455-2443.

New Student Orientation Programs

UMBC conducts New Student Orientation for new freshmen and transfer students prior to the fall and spring semesters. The program begins with Course Selection Day, a day-long event designed to provide students with information necessary to begin their academic career at UMBC. During the program, students will learn more about academic requirements, meet with an academic advisor, and register online for

classes. The program includes sessions designed to give students an introduction to the values of UMBC and life outside the classroom. New Student Orientation continues with Welcome Week, a week-long series of social and educational events.

In addition, a family orientation program is offered for family members who want to learn more about UMBC, as they too become part of the university community. During the program, families learn more about the activities and opportunities available to students at and around UMBC.

First-Year Seminars are available to students to assist in their transition to UMBC. **For more information about UMBC's orientation program, call 410-455-3244.**

Learning Resources Center (LRC)

UMBC's Learning Resources Center (LRC) provides free services to students who want to improve their academic performance. The LRC provides academic support services that complement instruction in 100- and 200-level courses and helps students to apply college-level learning and study skills. Specifically, the LRC has:

- ▶ A college placement and diagnostic testing program
- ▶ A free peer tutoring service for 100- and 200-level courses in biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics; for technology-based courses, including computer science, engineering and information systems; social science courses in economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, sociology and social work; for humanities courses in ancient studies, archaeology and philosophy; and for language courses in Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Latin, Russian, Spanish and English as a second language (ESL)

- ▶ Walk-in tutoring labs in the Albin O. Kuhn Library for assistance with writing assignments for any UMBC course and mathematics courses in the 100-level sequence through elementary Calculus II
- ▶ The Freshman-Year Intervention (FYI) Program, a mid-semester notification program that informs freshmen about their academic performance
- ▶ Skill development courses in ESL oral communication, reading, study skills and mathematics
- ▶ Services for non-native English speakers who wish to improve their spoken and written English
- ▶ Study skills resource materials for developing test-taking, college reading and notetaking skills and time-management strategies
- ▶ A staff of academic specialists who work with students and the community to develop programs or activities in mathematics/science, writing, English as a second language, reading and study skills.

For more information about LRC services, visit the center on the third floor of the Academic IV Building, B Wing, room 345, call 410-455-2444 or visit www.umbc.edu/lrc.

English Language Center (ELC)

The ELC offers courses for students admitted to the university who require additional academic English. ELC students who successfully complete level-four courses are eligible for conditional admission to undergraduate programs without taking the TOEFL exam.

Our Intensive English Program (IEP) offers 21-28 hours of integrated language skill instruction per week year-round.

The center provides:

- ▶ Online and traditional classes
- ▶ Tutoring
- ▶ Language software
- ▶ Student advising
- ▶ TEFL preparation

For more information, call 410-455-2831 or visit www.umbc.edu/elc.

International Education Services (IES)

As a vibrant research university, UMBC attracts a large population of international students who come to us from about 70 countries. UMBC's Office of International Education Services offers comprehensive assistance to the university's population of international students and scholars to ensure all international members of the UMBC community are able to complete their programs of study and research in legal status. The IES office assists international students with the documentation needed to obtain their F-1 or J-1 visas and reports arrival and enrollment data to the Department of Homeland Security via the Web-based SEVIS program.

Throughout the student's stay at the university, IES provides guidance on matters related to travel, work opportunities off campus, practical training and other matters related to life in the United States. All new international students are required to attend the orientation program sponsored by IES at the beginning of each semester. The program is designed to provide valuable information, as well as answer any questions they may have.

For further information, contact IES staff at 410-455-2624 or electronically at ies@umbc.edu or visit www.umbc.edu/ies.

Student Support Services (SSS)

The Student Support Services Department (SSS) has a federally funded program designed

to provide various supportive services to those students enrolled or accepted for enrollment at UMBC who have specific needs for academic support. Using UMBC placement tests and other academic data, SSS identifies those students whose academic profiles indicate they may experience difficulty with some introductory courses. Once identified, these students are invited to apply to participate in SSS. Applicants are screened to determine if they meet the federally defined eligibility criteria. They must:

1. Be first-generation, degree-seeking candidates (neither parent has a bachelor's degree)
2. Have family incomes below the maximum level established by the federal government for the current year.

Academic skills specialists are available to help in critical areas such as reading, English composition, study skills, mathematics, foreign languages and English as a second language. Also available are personal counseling services that assist participants in managing problems that may not be academically based. Participants who experience difficulty with courses may request and receive private tutoring for most lower-level and many upper-level courses. Academic and career planning services are available to all participants. Special-topic workshops, designed to help participants overcome some of the major pitfalls of college life, are offered regularly.

For more information about SSS, visit the office on the third floor of the Academic IV Building, B Wing, room 345; call 410-455-3250, or visit www.umbc.edu/ssc.

Services for Students with Disabilities

A resource and information center located in room 213 of the Mathematics/Psychology Building houses some adaptive equipment. Additional

adaptive equipment is available in the Albin O. Kuhn Library and Gallery. Services provided include note-takers; readers; books on tape (if available); scribes; mobility training; and American Sign Language, Signed English and Cued Speech interpreters.

The services are available commensurate to the needs of students who have any documented legal disability. Personal counseling and special orientation are provided as needed. Students with disabilities should make an appointment to discuss their specific needs for services and accommodations.

For more information about services for students with disabilities, visit the office on the second floor of the Mathematics/Psychology Building, room 213, call 410-455-2459 (voice), or 410-455-3233 (voice/TTY), or visit www.umbc.edu/ssc.

The Honors College

The UMBC Honors College is a special opportunity for students seeking to enrich their academic experience by taking small, intensive courses in areas of special interest. Many courses involve in-depth treatment of materials covered in regular class sections, while others resemble graduate seminars in their small size and depth and intensity of scholarship. Admission to the Honors College is highly selective. High school performance and test scores are weighed along with individual characteristics such as seriousness of purpose, intellectual promise and mature judgement as reflected in a recommendation and an essay. A separate application is required for admission to the Honors College. For a detailed overview of the Honors College and admissions procedures, please see that section of the catalog or www.umbc.edu/honors. You may visit the Honors College in the Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery, suite 216.

For more information, visit the Honors College Web site at www.umbc.edu/honors, call 410-455-3720 or e-mail honors@umbc.edu.

Library Resources

The Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery contains more than 950,000 books and bound volumes of journals; more than 2 million photographs, slides, maps, music scores, recordings, microforms and government documents; plus an extensive reference collection and more than 4,200 current subscriptions. Course reserves, many of which are online, and extensive computing, printing and photocopying facilities further assist studies. The library cooperates with other University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI) campus libraries through an extensive automated system featuring an online catalog of UMBC and USMAI university holdings and a research port for locating full-text articles. The library Web pages, at www.umbc.edu/library, also act as a gateway to the holdings of many other U.S. academic libraries providing online materials and document delivery on request. Online resources are accessible through the library's home page at www.umbc.edu/library. The reference collection includes many additional online databases. Highly skilled professionals are prepared to help students locate information needed for study and research.

Special Collections

The library's Special Collections include one of the nation's major photographic archives, with photographs by Lewis Hine, Barbara Crane, Ralph Gibson, Alfred Stieglitz, Ansel Adams and many others. These photographs are valuable resources in the study of art, as well as the diverse fields of the social sciences and humanities. The Special Collections also contain the Archives of the American Society for Microbiology and several other associations in biology through the center for

Biological Sciences Archives, the Joseph L. Arnold Maryland Collection, the Aziel Rosenfeld Science Fiction Research Collection and numerous other collections of rare books. The Library Media Collection supports academic programs across the curriculum with audio and video recordings, as well as provides music and film offerings for recreational use. The library has been a selective depository for U.S. documents since 1972 and a full depository for Maryland state documents since 1984.

The Library Gallery

UMBC is exceptional among universities in having a major Gallery in its library building. The Gallery's mission is to provide exhibitions with accompanying publications and educational programming across a range of subjects, media and aesthetic purposes that support the UMBC campus mission. In the context of a research university, the Gallery serves as a crucible for the discovery of and encounter with ideas greater than any single book, object, image or concept. Exposing viewers to a broad range of exhibitions is a primary goal of the Gallery. Historical and educational exhibitions, significant photography and materials from the Special Collections department are presented for our students, faculty and staff, and the citizens of the region and the state. The Gallery, thus, contributes to UMBC's status as a center of cultural and intellectual activity.

Office of Information Technology (OIT)

As a technologically advanced campus, UMBC offers students access to an array of computing services for research and study, as well as for communication and collaboration. Computer labs are available seven days a week with consulting support and high-speed postscript printing, including color printing. Various platforms are provided, including Macintosh, Windows and Linux workstations, which emphasize graphical inter-

faces. All computer labs are linked to the Internet. All students may receive a myUMBC computer account for e-mail. Through this account, they can access the Internet. Through myUMBC, a campus Web portal for personal information and tools, students can use the Web to register for classes, retrieve grades, check course availability, set up personal links and use Web-based e-mail. Students, faculty and staff have access to software at UMBC, including all major programming languages, various statistical packages, database and text processors, and many special-purpose packages supporting mathematics. These include Oracle, SAS, Maple, Matlab, Java, C++ and Mathematica Alias. In addition, the UMBC bookstore has special academic pricing for most major software packages.

UMBC's Office of Information Technology provides a state-of-the-art infrastructure to support the campus's research, instructional and business computing needs. OIT provides more than one terabyte of disk space for use for e-mail, personal Web publishing and storage, in addition to space dedicated for research and administrative use. Multiple Linux, Silicon Graphics and Sun servers are available for general purpose use. Resources targeted for research computing include a 68-processor Linux system, [IBM 24-processor, Silicon Graphics R10000, Power Challenge XL], an eight-way IBM Pentium 4 Xeon server with 24G of RAM and a 32-64-processor node Beowulf cluster installed by the math department. OIT is a member of Internet2, bringing high-speed network connectivity and access to advanced applications to the entire campus. The network extends to wireless access and over 400 wireless access points cover the campus and provide wireless connectivity through all academic buildings. Your myUMBC account provides access to multiple general and fixed-purpose accounts for academic use and instruction, pro-

viding access to Windows, Linux and Silicon Graphics Apple workstations for students and faculty. Campus computing labs include 360 Windows XP2000 workstations and 200 Macintosh computers.

Your myUMBC account also provides access to Blackboard (Bb), a Web-based course/content management system (CMS) used by nearly all of UMBC's 14,000 students, faculty and staff in more than 700 courses and 230 organizations every semester. Blackboard provides a password-protected Web space for relevant course or community documents and announcements, and it is also used for online discussion boards, practice quizzes, electronic assignment collection, surveys and access to grades. Notable uses of Bb include the Student Government Association's (SGA) annual elections each spring.

Connected Classrooms

The Office of Information Technology provides and maintains academic media support on campus for classroom technology services, all audiovisual presentation equipment and lecture halls and the UMBC Film/Video Library, which contains more than 3,000 educational titles. OIT also manages the Multimedia Production Center, the Faculty Media Development Lab and the International Media Center (IMC).

International Media Center

The International Media Center has equipment and study materials for independent learning, including an extensive library of foreign-language audio and video cassettes, films, slides, reading materials and computer-assisted software. Additionally, the IMC houses two computer labs (PC/Mac) dedicated to learning foreign languages. The IMC also stores and circulates audiovisual software for engineering, bilingual education, biology, geography and other academic areas. OIT manages the UMBC portion of the University of Maryland Interactive Video Network,

which allows UMBC students to enroll in upper-level and graduate courses taught at other campuses of the University System of Maryland.

OIT Student Job Opportunities

OIT provides many job opportunities for students, including networking, help desk, desktop support, new media and AV services. Students with experience in computer technology are encouraged to apply for a position with the Office of Information Technology.

CERA: Conservation and Environmental Research Areas

Established in 1997, the Conservation and Environmental Research Areas (CERA) of UMBC were created to support environmental education, research and conservation at UMBC. At present, CERA covers about 50 acres of the UMBC landscape and is located in two areas. The larger tract, covering approximately 45 acres of the south end of the main campus, comprises a variety of ecological conditions: mature upland forest, early- and mid-successional forest, and riparian and wetland environments. The second, much smaller CERA area (about three acres) surrounds Pigpen Pond. There are also several areas within CERA where evidence of previous human occupancy and use can be found. In addition to teaching opportunities for faculty, CERA offers a wide range of opportunities for students and faculty to undertake short- and long-term research projects in various disciplines. Management of CERA is guided by the need to maintain these landscapes as natural areas to be preserved and protected for approved uses in education, research and wildlife observation. Faculty and students who want further information or who wish to use CERA for research and teaching are encouraged to contact the CERA Steering Committee (Sandy Parker, chair, cera@umbc.edu) or visit www.umbc.edu/cera.