

## **Advisement Task Force Working Report**

The Advisement Task Force was formed in the Fall of 1998 to evaluate current practices in academic advising at UMBC and to make recommendations for change. Concerns about the quality and efficacy of academic advising have been raised for many years, most recently at the annual President's Retreat. The Task Force met throughout the late fall and spring semester to attempt to address some of these concerns. (A list of Task Force members is provided in Appendix A.)

The Task Force examined the many phases of students' academic advising experiences, from the orientation they receive as entering students to their experience during their first year at UMBC; from advisement prior to declaring a major to their experiences within academic departments; from transfer credit issues to graduation. The Task Force also looked at issues from the faculty perspective and from the vantage of various administrative units involved in the process. Lastly, the Task Force also considered what role technology should play in advisement.

In beginning our discussions we found that definition was an immediate challenge. What do we mean by "advising?" The Task Force felt there is a lack of clarity on campus as to what advising is and as to what the expectations of students and faculty in the advisement process are. All too often what is commonly referred to as "advising" is in fact a minor step in the registration process. Many students scramble at the eleventh hour to obtain registration authorizations and do not engage (or are not engaged) in true academic planning, even for a semester at a time. Registration and advising are inextricably linked: advisement leads to registration. The interfaces between the two often create confusion and problems. William Elliott, Vice President of Enrollment at Carnegie Mellon, recently commented that what most students think of as advising is considered registration by their faculty. Course demand and course availability have a significant impact on these perceptions. Students may receive good academic advising only to discover through registration that courses are not available. As one former department chair at UMBC has remarked, "If a student gets into all of their courses, he [or she] will say they got good advising." Conversely, students who do not get into their desired courses may perceive that they received bad advising. The

Enrollment Management Task Force report identifies some of the strategic and resource issues in high demand programs. The Advisement Task Force focused instead on policies and procedures that relate to existing problems of course availability.

Contributing to the confusion about what advising is or should be is the lack of a holistic approach to academic advising. While there are certainly exceptions, the Task Force perceived that most advising at UMBC tended to distinguish between advising on major requirements from advising on general education and other graduation requirements. Members of the Task Force who also serve on the Academic Standards Committee commented that the vast majority of appeals for exceptions for graduation clearance center on general education requirements. In most of these cases, faculty advisors support the student's appeal by indicating that they either failed to advise on general education requirements or advised the student incorrectly. This lack of continuity limits the effectiveness of academic advising. The Task Force believes that advising should address all academic requirements, both those of the major and of graduation. Long term academic planning should also be an important goal of advising.

Further, Task Force agreed that advising should also seek to connect the student's academic career to larger issues of career and values. Looking beyond academic planning across semesters, advising should encourage students to be forward thinking. Career exploration and planning is, perhaps, a more pragmatic aspect of such thinking. Career advisement and internships should be part of the discussion of academic advisement. The advantages of a liberal education, community service, internships, and study abroad should be explored in relation to graduate study, career planning, and quality of life. Students should reflect on questions of value and of the kind of people they seek to become. If higher education is to be a transforming experience for students this should be reflected in our approach to advisement.

In the simplest of terms, the primary goal of advisement is to get the right student into the right course as early as possible. As obvious as this seems it is not a simple task. Identifying the "right" student requires assessment, whether it be at the point of admission, placement testing, transfer credit evaluation, or progress through the curriculum of the student's major. The "right" course implies a thorough understanding of the curriculum, including graduation requirements, by both the student and advisor. "As early as possible" speaks to the availability, scheduling, and

sequencing of courses, as well as to the processes and policies involved in registering. None of these is a simple issue. If academic advising at UMBC is to go beyond this simple goal, there needs to be greater clarity and broader understanding of the roles and responsibilities of students and faculty (and other) advisors in the process. **To that end, the Task Force recommends that a “template” that describes a “standard” advising session be developed and adopted as a minimal expectation of any academic advisement session, regardless of the advisor.** This template would identify the minimum set of topics that should be covered in any advisement session, perhaps in a checklist format. The template should seek to integrate advising on both major and graduation requirements. Such a template would be used not only by advisors but by students as well; the responsibility of students to give thought to their academic plans prior to an advising session is crucial. The Task Force recommends that a small committee of faculty and staff from the Office of Academic Services be formed to draft such a document for consideration by the department chairs and Faculty Senate.

Within this broad framework of what academic advising should be, the Task Force grappled with a number of specific issues and concerns:

**Orientation:** New student orientation is generally a student’s first experience in academic advising at UMBC. It has long been an area of concern for the campus. Expectations and desires must be tempered by the pragmatic concerns of matriculating more than 2,500 new students each summer. The Task Force made a number of recommendations for the orientation programs.

The Task Force agreed on broad goals and emphases for the orientation programs. Prime among them was to accentuate the University’s academic program and academic expectations for the students. The programs should equip students to understand UMBC’s academic policies and requirements, ideally within a framework that provides context for them. For example, the philosophical underpinnings of the general foundation requirements should be presented cogently to the students before delving into the specifics of the requirements. The goal is to have entering students have some appreciation for the reasons for academic rules and requirements so that they do not simply perceive them as bureaucratic. So that students may give some thought to

course selection prior to arriving for orientation, the recently implemented practice of mailing students catalogs and schedules of classes prior to orientation should be continued and enhanced. Starting in the summer of 1998, students were sent information about their placement tests and language placements (see Appendix). **The Task Force recommends that such materials sent to students prior to registration be further enhanced.** For example, departmental recommendations for math course selections could be incorporated. Materials on selecting a schedule (see Appendix) could be strengthened into an Orientation Handbook. Information should be sent to students as early as possible. Similarly, supporting departmental communications should be developed. Welcoming letters from chairs, departmental "tip sheets" on selecting fall schedules, and similar correspondence would encourage students to give thought to their schedules before orientation and begin to build connections between the students and their departments.

Students should also be introduced to academic tools such as the web-based registration system (EASI) and UMBC's computing facilities and services. Beginning in the summer of 1998, advisement at orientation took place at workstations; students registered themselves through EASI. All students receive their e-mail accounts at orientation and attend a session on computing at UMBC. This summer a CD-ROM was developed by University Computing to provide students free software, including Netscape, utilities for connecting to UMBC, an undergraduate catalog, and an overview of the campus (including a video welcome from President Hrabowski). These materials will likely be expanded for next year's programs. Students should also be introduced to academic and social opportunities at UMBC and to the various services available to them as students. The Student Affairs division provided a full day of programming to assist students in making the transition to the university. Broadly speaking, the goal is to begin to develop a connection with the institution and to generate a sense of community that has as its core the academic endeavor.

Faculty participation in summer orientation has long been an area of contention. Many students and parents expect that academic advising in the summer will not only be performed by a faculty member but one in the student's chosen department. Others expect that this advisor will be the student's academic advisor for their entire academic career. As a research institution, it is unrealistic to expect a large faculty turnout for

summer orientation programs. Most faculty are on nine month contracts, and the summer is traditionally an important period for research. **While faculty participation should be encouraged, the Task Force recommends that the current practice of utilizing trained graduate students and staff members in addition to faculty advisors be continued.** It should be noted that participation in summer advisement, especially by faculty, was up significantly this summer.

At the same time, the Task Force believes that exposure to faculty for entering students is highly desirable, as well as developing connections not only to the university as a whole but to the student's chosen academic department. **The Task Force therefore endorsed the approach of utilizing a faculty keynote speaker to set the tone for orientation programs.** Following the practice begun last year, top faculty are solicited to provide an introduction to academic expectations at UMBC; a modest honorarium is provided. Keynote speakers have come from a variety of disciplines; again this summer, they have been very well received by both students and parents.

**The Task Force also endorsed the "New Majors Week" piloted last year as a vehicle for connecting students to their departments and fellow majors early in the fall semester.** A week is designated as "New Majors Week" and academic departments are asked to host an hour session for new majors. Students can be introduced to members of the faculty, current majors, and other new majors; departments can share information about their curriculum; departmental opportunities can be highlighted. Holding these sessions early in the fall allow the largest number of students and faculty to attend and makes the departmental connection at the start of the student's UMBC career. Last year's pilot program suffered from a late launch. This year information was provided to students during orientation. Greater promotion (as well as earlier planning) is needed to encourage larger turnouts.

Transfer orientation presents different challenges. The availability of information, most particularly transfer credit evaluations, has a dramatic impact on the efficacy of the programs and the quality of students' experiences. Both students and their advisors need information that is timely and useful. The current transfer credit process does not adequately meet these goals. The format of the transfer credit evaluations is difficult to navigate and does not address how students (and advisors) use

this information in academic planning and advising. Some problems of timing are irreducible, as transfers typically apply and are admitted far later in the cycle than freshmen. **However, the Task Force recommends that modifications be made to the format of the transfer credit evaluation form and that an assessment be made as to the resources needed to provide timely turnaround of transfer evaluation.** The Office of Academic Services has begun work on this project; it is recommended that departments, especially those with large numbers of transfer, be consulted in the process.

Departmental involvement in advising is perhaps more critical for entering transfers than freshmen. The challenge remains of providing that involvement during the summer. One member of the Task Force recommended that a departmental review of the transfer credit evaluation be considered a “necessary condition” of advisement. By reviewing the evaluations, departments could make recommendations as to courses and sequencing, at least for courses within the major. To do so requires faculty time, mostly in the summer, and a timely transfer credit evaluation process, both of which are challenges. **The Task Force recommends that the Office of Academic Services work with a number of departments (primarily those who attract large numbers of transfers) to facilitate departmental review of transfer evaluations where possible.** The Biology department, for example, has committed to reviewing transfer credit evaluations for its entering students and providing preliminary recommendations prior to orientation.

“New Majors Week” is intended to serve transfers as well as freshmen and will hopefully provide an early contact and connection with the department. However, contact with (and advising from) the departments prior to orientation could do much to ease the transition for entering transfer students. **The Task Force recommends establishing “departmental visit days” during which admitted transfer students could meet with faculty in their departments.** A pilot program should be developed for this spring’s orientation programs to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of this approach. Participation by departments should be optional. Again, in our discussions the issue of course availability was repeatedly raised. Transfer students apply and are admitted later in the year; they also require more services through the transfer credit evaluation process. As a result, they register later in the

process. Transfers often have completed much of their general requirements and are often focused on key courses within the major. This reality should be taken into consideration when developing academic plans for transfers. The Enrollment Management Task Force Report calls for increased undergraduate enrollments. The process of matriculating transfer students is more complex than that for freshmen. This reality should temper the goal of increased enrollment. **The Advisement Task Force recommends that transfer students not be admitted unless adequate time is available to perform the transfer credit evaluation prior to orientation and registration.**

**First Year Advising Issues:** Currently the majority of freshmen are advised by the Academic Advisement Center during their freshman year. This policy was instituted many years ago in an attempt to insure the availability of advising for first year students. Over time modifications have been made. Computer Science and engineering majors, for example, are advised in the College of Engineering their first year. Students admitted to the Honors College are assigned to the Honors College as advisees their first year. Entering students in Visual Art are advised in the department. In addition to these students, the Advisement Center also handles all current students without a declared major. The six advisors in the Center, in addition to other duties, serve approximately 2,000 students each semester as primary advisors. Several departments would not only be willing to take their students during the freshman year but are anxious to do so. **The Task Force recommends that departments be given the option of having their students assigned as advisees during the freshman year.** The Task Force recognizes that for some departments a large influx of new students could not be accommodated; these students would remain in the Advisement Center. A number of logistical issues need to be resolved to facilitate the transfer; the Advisement Center should begin discussions with departments to determine their interest in participating. Decisions will also need to be made as to when the move to the departments should take place: during the fall for spring advisement and registration or during the spring for fall advisement and registration.

Undeclared majors, both current and entering, are advised by the Advisement Center. There was much discussion about the concept and processes of declaring a

major; that discussion is reflected later in the report. **The Task Force recommends that undeclared majors continue to be advised by the Center. We further recommend that a faculty advisory group be established to work with the Center in shaping the academic advising these students receive.** A component of the “New Majors Week,” for example, should be a session on selecting a major. For some departments undeclared or undecided majors are an important source of enrollments. Greater coordination with the Advisement Center could facilitate the movement of students into those programs.

UMBC currently has no policy requiring a declaration of major. The “official” major of entering students is determined by the area of academic interest listed on their admissions application. That major continues to roll over each semester unless the student takes action to change the major by filing a form with the Advisement Center. While most undecided students tend to declare a major along the way, there have been instances where students do not declare their major until they apply for graduation. **The Task Force recommends that a policy be established requiring students to declare a major by the time they have earned 60 credits; transfer students entering with 60 or more credits would be required to declare a major by the end of their second semester at UMBC.** Recommendations about the process of declaring a major found later in the report.

Students receive advising from a number of sources. The Honors College, Meyerhoff Scholars program, Humanities Scholars program, and Athletic Department all require their students to receive some form of advising through these programs. Other forms of advising (*e.g.*, pre-law, pre-med, allied health) are also available. While not exclusively an issue for first year students, the need for greater coordination is perhaps most important in the freshman year. **The Task Force recommends providing greater clarity of the goals of these forms of advisement and greater coordination with academic departments to help minimize confusion.** These forms of advising should enhance but not supplant major advising in the departments. Consideration should be given to limiting the ability to authorize registration to the student’s major department.

**The role of the faculty:** There was much discussion about how faculty view their role in academic advising, and some disagreement as to how problematical this is. The fact that there was considerable discussion suggests that here too greater clarity is needed. **The Task Force recommends that the campus reaffirm, in writing, its expectations of faculty with regard to academic advisement.** These expectations, as well as advisor training, should be made part of the orientation of new faculty.

The issue of faculty reward and recognition was also hotly debated with little consensus. Some argued that advising should be specifically considered in promotion and tenure decisions. Others argued that advising falls either under service or teaching and is thus already a part of the process. Some argued that specific consideration of advising was inappropriate for a tenure decision; others suggested that a change in campus culture on this issue was impossible. The general perception remained, however, that the importance of faculty advising is not often rewarded or recognized. Beyond annual merit raises, other mechanisms were proposed, including faculty development grants and a faculty award comparable to the Presidential Teaching and Research awards. The Task Force was unable to reach consensus on a recommendation for specific action. At the minimum, chairs should be encouraged to recognize and reward advising in their merit considerations. The issue deserves further attention, perhaps by the Faculty Senate.

During the current academic year a merger of the Registrar's Office and the Academic Advisement Center has begun. In addition to hiring a new Associate Registrar, the search for a Director of Academic Services is nearing completion. The re-minted Office of Academic Services is being reorganized to provide more consistent and effective services for students. Additionally more efficient services for faculty are needed, from registration to records to advisement. A new Assistant Director of Faculty Services was recently hired to spearhead this effort. In order to advise effectively, faculty must receive regular training and support. **The Task Force recommends that the Office of Academic Services continue its efforts to provide faculty outreach through regular advisor training, training on EASI and other electronic tools, and improved responsiveness to faculty needs.** Developing

other tools, from written materials to web-based advisor training, will help insure that faculty can stay current.

Department chairs on the Task Force expressed a desire for more information about their students, both those currently enrolled as well as those entering. The Enrollment Management office now provides information by major for those students entering through orientation. More information would be useful: *e.g.*, enrollment trends by major; information on students changing majors; information on who is giving registration authorizations to students within the department; etc. **The Task Force recommends that Academic Services work with departments to provide them a set of standard reports with pertinent information about their students.**

**Advising models:** The Task Force recognizes that advising demands vary dramatically by program. Some departments have very large numbers of majors; the size of faculty varies by department; graduate advising varies by program. With 8,410 degree seeking undergraduates last fall (many of whom have multiple majors and minors) and continued enrollment growth projected, the task is obviously large and the solutions are not simple. Several models currently exist among departments. Some large departments, notably Computer Science and Visual Arts, have hired associate staff with specific responsibilities for providing academic advising. The College of Engineering has also established a position with broad responsibilities for providing advisement and other student services within the College. Other departments, notably Information Systems, have full time lecturers and staff who, in addition to their teaching duties, have significant advising responsibilities. Most departments utilize faculty for advising; the approach to distributing advisement responsibilities varies by department, size of faculty, and numbers of majors. The Task Force believes that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to advisement. **Departments are encouraged to reassess their current approaches to advising by taking into consideration alternate departmental models and the issues raised by the Task Force report. To assure the equitable distribution of resources for advisement, the Task Force recommends that advising be part of the campus’ planning and budget process.**

**Policies and Procedures:** As mentioned before, where advising ends and registration begins is often unclear. Policies and procedures, especially in the area of registration, create confusion and problems for students and faculty alike. The Task Force considered a number of these in light of our organizing principles.

The number of different types of authorizations and clearances needed to register a student is confusing. Students often confuse receiving an authorization to take a course with permission to enroll in a closed course, for example. **The Task Force recommends that the number and nature of registration and advisement clearances be reduced and simplified.** We suggest a small group including faculty representatives and staff from Academic Services and University Computing Services review current practices and recommend changes.

A number of issues surround the treatment of closed courses and the use of hold lists. During the scheduling process the decision to establish a hold list for an individual course is made by the instructor. There is no consistency within departments, let alone across the campus, as to which courses carry hold lists. More importantly, there is no consistency as to how (or even if) hold lists are used by instructors. Students, especially new students, often assume that placing themselves on a hold list for a closed course will establish some claim or priority for a seat in the course should one become available. They are often extremely frustrated to learn that this is not the case.

The problems associated with the use of hold lists are exacerbated by the current policy of treating closed courses. Courses that reach capacity are closed and remain closed until the first day of classes, even if seats become available through other students dropping the course. To register for a seat in the course a student must obtain a "permission to enroll in a closed course," generally from the instructor of record. Students face the challenge of tracking down instructors (especially challenging during the summer), and faculty face the prospect of students contacting them and arguing their individual cases. The Task Force recommends that academic departments should be consulted with the goal of changing these policies and practices. A consistent policy on the use of hold lists should be developed. Programming changes to help automate the hold list process should be explored.

At least one member of the Task Force remained a proponent of the current closed course policy, arguing that it provides a means for the instructor to place

students who were registering later in the cycle into appropriate courses. This led to a discussion of pre-requisite checking and the proliferation of “permission required” courses. Many departments, especially in high demand areas, use the blunt instrument of permission courses to insure that the appropriate students with the appropriate backgrounds enroll in their courses. Again, this practice creates tremendous overhead for students and faculty alike. Faculty are forced to manage every enrollment in their courses and students must again track down faculty in order to enroll in the course. Recognizing that a solution to this problem is neither simple nor immediate, **the Task Force recommends that systems enhancements be pursued to automated pre-requisite checking as part of the registration process. Until such enhancements are available, the Task Force recommends that other mechanisms less cumbersome than “permission required” be explored.** For example, in some cases a certain percentage of seats could be made available for general registration, reserving seats for later registrants that could be allocated on a permission basis.

As mentioned earlier, the Task Force recommends that students be required to declare a major upon reaching 60 credits. Those who have not done so would be blocked from further registration. **The Task Force recommends that enhancements to the registration system be explored to facilitate the declaration of major. We recommend that a step be added to the registration process that would require a student each semester to reaffirm or change their official major(s).** If the major changed, an e-mail could be generated both to the current and new department.

In addition to improving the transfer credit evaluation process, policies governing transfer credit need to be reassessed. The Enrollment Management area has established an articulation committee to begin reviewing current policies. The committee will also work with departments to insure that the information contained on USM's articulation system (ARTSYS) is both current and accurate. Departments, especially those with large numbers of transfer students, should be encouraged to work with key feeder community colleges to develop academic plans for prospective students that help them integrate the curricula of two institutions.

Lastly, international students are a growing undergraduate population. Timely evaluation of their transcripts is critical to their academic success and the department's ability to advise. An assessment should be made of the resources needed to provide more timely evaluations; outsourcing should be explored.

**The Role of Technology:** In order to maximize human resources, UMBC must continue to pursue technological tools to support advising. UMBC has acquired a new web-based degree audit system. Known as Degree Navigator, this system allows students and advisors to track their progress toward their degree, providing them information on requirements fulfilled and options for meeting remaining requirements. The system tracks major requirements as well as general education and other graduation requirements. It also provides students the opportunity to ask "what if?" questions about changing majors, adding minors, and so forth. The Office of Academic Services is currently testing a beta version of the application. A small number of departments will be invited shortly to join in that testing. A considerable amount of work is needed, not only to test the accuracy of the rules as written but also to accommodate issues such as transfer credits without equivalencies. Once the system is ready for production, the Assistant Director of Faculty Services will first introduce it to the faculty and staff advisors, through departmental outreach and through group demonstrations and training sessions. Similar outreach activities will introduce the system to current students. New students will be exposed to the system as part of orientation. Such outreach will be critical to the success of the system. A full production version of the system should be available before the end of the 1999-2000 academic year.

The same vendor has developed a product (Registration Navigator) that integrates the degree audit system and registration, providing pre-requisite checking in the process. **The Task Force recommends the campus evaluate Registration Navigator and, if viable, purchase it.** The ability to check for pre-requisites could dramatically reduce departments' dependence on permission courses and improve the process of registration by insuring the right student could get to the right course more quickly.

The degree audit system, once implemented, will dramatically improve the accuracy and accessibility of advisement information for both students and faculty. To be most effective, Degree Navigator will need to be integrated with other tools such as EASI and AIMS, a transcript system. University Computing has begun an initiative to overhaul the interface to these systems; work on the new approach has already begun. Further enhancements should also be considered: *e.g.*, online advising files that could be accessed by both the student and advisor; search tools to identify available courses that meet specified requirements, etc.). Similarly, the Learning Resources Center has begun development of on-line academic support services. As these become available they too should be linked to advisement tools and systems. The Task Force recognizes that such enhancements are not simple and will require considerable time and effort. We are, however, encouraged by these developments.

**New directions:** Much of the Task Force's work focused on "traditional" academic advising, specifically at the undergraduate level. Other approaches also need to be explored. UMBC is considering offering a flexible Masters program in Information Technology that will require rethinking many student services, including advising. The solutions should not look narrowly at "distance education" students but should help inform our approach to other "traditional" students. A freshman from California might participate in orientation from a distance; a working transfer student might need advising in the middle of the night. Synergy in this area should be encouraged.

The Advisement Center currently provides significant advising services for "allied health" students (*e.g.*, pre-physical therapy, pre-pharmacy, etc.) and for pre-med students. The Political Science department provides valuable pre-law advising. Many departments provide assistance to students applying for graduate and professional schools. The need for other such specialized advising should be assessed. Similarly, the Career Development and Placement Center provides career advisement as well as placement. Many departments also provide advice to students on career opportunities and internships; the Shriver Center is another source of valuable advisement. The Task Force recommends that such specialized advising continue to be enhanced and more clearly linked to academic advising.

**Next steps:** Further campus input is needed on the issues raised by the Task Force. The Advisement Task Force Working Report will be broadly distributed to encourage campus discussion of these many important issues. Individual feedback is encouraged. Additionally, the Task Force, through the Provost's Office, will arrange for a number of specific discussions: Student Government Association; Faculty Senate; Classified Senate; PASS; Department Chairs; administrative Directors; and two open forums. Responses and comments should be sent to the Task Force in care of the Provost's Office. After feedback has been received, the Task Force will reconvene to consider revisions and additional recommendations. The final version of the report will be presented to the President's Council for adoption and action. **The Task Force recommends that a progress report on actions items be provided to the campus at least annually.**

## Appendix A

### Members of the Advisement Task Force:

Tom Taylor, Enrollment Management, Chair  
Alicia Arkell-Kleis, Academic Services  
Carlo DiClemente, Psychology  
Charles Fey, Student Affairs  
Jay Freyman, Ancient Studies and Honors College  
Lydia Jackson-Fryer, Academic Services  
Joe Kirby, University Computing Services  
David Langford, Athletics  
Diane Lee, Education and Provost's Office  
Andy Miller, Geography and Environmental Systems  
Gust Mitchell, Social Work  
Angela Moorjani, Modern Languages and Linguistics  
Sandy Parker, Geography and Environmental Systems and Faculty Senate  
Jill Randles, College of Engineering  
John Schwartz, Information Systems  
Tim Topoleski, Mechanical Engineering  
Carl Weeber, Biological Sciences  
Victor Wexler, History and College of Arts and Sciences

## Appendix B



June 5, 1999

██████████  
██████████ MD 21040 2505

Dear ██████████,

Welcome to UMBC. The information contained in this packet is intended to help you prepare for your upcoming Orientation Program. Please take some time to read through the materials.

We have enclosed a UMBC Catalog, which will be an important resource to you throughout your academic career. In it you will find information about the academic programs offered at UMBC, the University's academic requirements, and descriptions of the courses we offer. We will review the Catalog with you during the Orientation, but you will find it helpful to look through it before the program. We have also included a Fall 1999 Schedule of Classes, which will give you information about what courses are being offered at what times this fall.

The Advisement Profile will help you decide where to begin your studies in some important areas, such as English composition, math, and foreign language. "Choosing Your Fall Schedule" offers some tips to get you started in putting together a proposed schedule of classes. The Schedule Worksheet lets you see how the courses you select fit together.

Your Orientation Program will be most meaningful if you take some time to put together a proposed schedule. Please fill out the worksheet and bring it, along with your Catalog and Schedule of Classes, to your program. Our advisors will work with you to finalize your fall classes and get you started at UMBC. You will receive your UMBC computer account during the program and will be registering on-line with our web-based registration system.

I look forward to seeing you during the Orientation Program. Remember to bring casual clothes and a bathing suit for the swim party.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Tom Taylor  
Assistant Provost

# UMBC

## Advising Profile

This Advising Profile is intended to help you develop your fall semester schedule of classes. In completing your degree at UMBC you will need to meet a number of requirements, both within your major and as part of the University's General Foundation Requirements. These requirements will be explained to you in more detail during your Orientation. The information on this sheet indicates where you can begin course work in some of these areas. The information is based on your admissions application, your transcripts, and your placement tests.

On your admissions application you indicated that your intended major was **Biology**. You will have an opportunity during Orientation to update this information if it has changed. Details about the requirements of each major are found in the UMBC Catalog. If you are undecided as to your major, you will receive advice about exploring your options and selecting a major.

One of the University's requirements is completion of an English composition course. Your English placement is listed below. *(If you have not yet taken a placement test or have only recently taken it, these sections may be blank. If you have not taken the placement tests, please call the Advisement Center at (410) 455-2500.)*

**Begin with ENGL 100, Composition: entry level workshop in writing; meets Composition requirement.**

UMBC also requires all students to complete an approved math course. Your math placement is listed below. In some cases a number of courses will be listed; you may also choose to begin your math studies at a lower level than your placement. You should look at your major requirements when selecting your math course, as some programs have specific math requirements.

**Begin with MATH 150, Pre-Calculus; meets Math/Science General Foundation Requirement**

Demonstrated proficiency in a foreign language is a graduation requirement. This will be discussed in more detail at your Orientation Program. Listed below is your projected placement in language, based on the information in your transcripts. *(In some cases, this information does not reflect course work taken in the senior year. You will have the opportunity to update this information at*

*Orientation.*) Our records indicate that you have completed the following level of study in foreign language(s):

**Four years of German**

Based on this information, your options for beginning foreign language study at UMBC is as follows:

**Begin with German 202; meets language proficiency requirement**

For further information about the language and culture requirements, please see the General Foundation Requirement worksheet or visit [www.umbc.edu/ml/gfr.html](http://www.umbc.edu/ml/gfr.html).

Lastly, a note about Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate credits: unfortunately, official score results are usually not available this early in the summer. If you have taken the qualifying exams for such course work, you may receive credit for some of these required courses. Please review the information in the UMBC Catalog to see how these credits may be applied to your studies at UMBC. You will have the opportunity to discuss any AP or IB credit during Orientation.