

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
MISSION AND GOALS STATEMENT  
2010**

**SUMMARY MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of University of Maryland University College is to offer top-quality educational opportunities to adult students in Maryland, the nation, and the world, setting the global standard of excellence in adult education. By offering academic programs that are respected, affordable and accessible technologically and through a variety of face-to-face formats, UMUC broadens the range of career opportunities available to students, improves their lives, and maximizes their economic and intellectual contributions to Maryland, the nation, and the world.

This mission is rooted in UMUC's institutional purpose as stipulated by State statute (Education Code, Section 13-101); specifically that the university shall:

- (1) Operate as Maryland's open university, serving nontraditional students who reside in Maryland, the United States and around the world;
- (2) Provide the citizens of Maryland with affordable, open access to higher education;
- (3) Continue as a leader in distributed education.

As the public state and national leader in distance and distributed education, UMUC awards associate's, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, as well as undergraduate and post-baccalaureate certificates. The university's academic inventory offers programs that are core to any public university, but UMUC's mission to the adult student results in an emphasis on workforce relevant programs. Consequently, the university awards degrees and certificates in the arts and humanities, behavioral and social sciences, business and management, health-related fields, computing, education and technology, including degrees in fields facing critical shortages, such as cybersecurity, information assurance and teacher training in STEM areas. As part of its emphasis on workforce needs, UMUC offers non-credit professional development programs such as those in executive leadership and, through its Inn and Conference Center and its Largo facility, hosts professional conferences and meetings that support the economic and societal needs of the State.

**INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY**

As underscored in the State Plan, UMUC is a well-respected and widely recognized leader in distributed and distance learning within the State, across the United States and around the world. The university stands apart within the State for its extensive technical infrastructure, trained faculty and staff and deep support services for teaching adult students at a distance, both online and face-to-face.

UMUC's focus is on the adult learner. This characteristic starts with the university's longstanding relationship with the Department of Defense and its military contracts in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. But it does not stop there. Half of UMUC's student population is not affiliated with the military. Taken as a whole, the average age of UMUC's student population is 32; most are employed, married and have children. As a group, these students have attended an

average of five other colleges or universities before coming to UMUC and require the university to gear its student and academic support services to the needs of these adult learners.

Given UMUC's mission and student population, it is a natural partner with community colleges within the State and across the nation. Consequently, UMUC has articulation agreements with all 16 community colleges within the State and with 56 other community colleges outside of Maryland. These relationships are part of the university's identity and account for the fact that more Maryland community college students transfer to UMUC than to any other college or university in the State.

As an open university committed to access, UMUC has a richly diverse student body, faculty and staff. In fall 2009 stateside, 37% of UMUC's undergraduate students and 41% of its graduate students were African American or Hispanic. Consequently, the university awards a large number of degrees to these groups each year. In FY 2009, 29% of UMUC bachelor degrees and 35% of its master's degrees were awarded to African American or Hispanic students, totaling more than 1,500 degrees. Thirty-nine percent of UMUC's full-time faculty and staff are African American or Hispanic.

UMUC's basic Carnegie classification is Master's L. The university offers adult students a broad range of academic programs in the arts and humanities, behavioral and social sciences, business and management, health-related fields, computing, education, technology and other fields. But the emphasis within the university has been and will continue to be on applied, workforce-related programs and related continuing education that answer market needs. UMUC is particularly adept at understanding and even anticipating workforce needs and quickly proposing and deploying certificates and degree programs to meet those needs, whether at the associate's, bachelor's, master's or doctoral level.

Excellence is a key value informing UMUC's academic programs and student services. The university seeks validation of its academic programs in objective ways, *viz.* through special accreditation where it is appropriate, through blue ribbon advisory groups of nationally-known practitioners, and through its learning outcomes assessment initiative. It also pursues endowed chairs in workforce-related areas to help ensure the currency of UMUC's applied programs. The university provides professional development opportunities to faculty in their academic disciplines and in the fields of adult and distance education. UMUC embraces metrics-based management at all levels of the university which ensures an ongoing review of business processes, staff training and infrastructure to enhance the range of student services and academic support.

UMUC is able to attract highly-qualified full-time and adjunct faculty who more often than not, like their students, have experience in the workplace and can leverage that experience in their teaching. The university's mission to serve adult students particularly benefits from adjunct faculty who are "practitioner scholars" engaged daily in their profession. The ability to employ adjunct faculty is critical to UMUC's capacity to quickly deploy academic and continuing education programs in response to workforce-related needs. This entrepreneurship and flexibility in establishing new programs is particularly important to the university, given its history of very limited state support.

UMUC is a truly globalized American campus whose academic, technical and business operations are integrated across Europe, Asia and the Middle East, requiring staff to work together routinely across time zones and allowing students to move seamlessly from one division to another. The globalized character of the university is the result in part of UMUC's contracts with the Department of Defense (DoD), which has prepared the university to pursue international relationships outside of the contracts with universities in Russia, Turkey, South Africa and Japan.

UMUC has an active alumni association that provides financial support, advocates for the university and stands as a compelling testimony to the value and viability of a UMUC degree. Members of the Board of Visitors share their expertise and insight—representing the highest ranks of leadership in the public and private sectors, the military, and higher education—as they advise UMUC's president on matters related to strategy, planning, and operations.

The university serves the State and its citizens by preserving and exhibiting the UMUC Art Collection, which includes one of the world's largest collections of the work of Maryland artists (including The Art of Gladys Goldstein, The Art of Herman Maril, and The Doris Patz Collection), as well as a significant collection of Asian art (including The Art of China and The Japanese Art Collection). UMUC's newest art installation is the Leroy Merritt Center for the Art of Joseph Sheppard. Located in a newly refurbished gallery designed by well-known Baltimore architect Jim Grieves, the Merritt Center in the UMUC headquarters in Adelphi provides a showcase for Sheppard's sculpture and paintings as well as celebrating the legacy of Maryland philanthropist and businessman Leroy Merritt. Opened in 2010, the Merritt Center furthers the university's goal of promoting lifelong learning and serves as a unique focal point for the university's highly acclaimed visual art collections. Members of UMUC's Art Advisory Board act as advisors, enthusiasts, and advocates for the art program.

## **INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITIES**

UMUC is a teaching institution firmly focused on teaching and in particular on the instruction of adult students. It is in support of the teaching mission that UMUC offers research and extensive professional development opportunities for its faculty in their academic disciplines and in adult education and in distance education itself. UMUC has developed an extensive IT infrastructure, student support services, library resources and business process to offer its programs not only face-to-face here and abroad, but online reaching a state-wide, national and international student population.

This delivery and support system is matched by a broad inventory of degree and certificate programs developed so that they can be offered online, including those that are directly targeted on workforce needs. All university degree programs are mapped to core competencies desired of UMUC graduates and curricular improvements are informed by a sustained learning outcomes assessment program. Important to the university's strategy of maintaining the currency of its workforce programs is the use of high-level advisory boards of industry and government representatives and through endowed chairs in selected areas, such as management and technology.

Surrounding these core capabilities, the university has built a strong Institutional Advancement Office to raise scholarship funds and other resources for UMUC students. Its Office of Institutional Research and Planning and Accountability houses a robust data warehouse, Business Intelligence tools and an analytic staff to conduct datamining. In all of the areas of its activity, academic and administrative, the university has defined key metrics to regularly monitor its performance. These metrics roll up to an institution-wide dashboard that identifies the most critical areas of the university's activity and produces systemic accountability for results.

These capabilities allow UMUC to serve the goals of the State plan in a variety of ways, including the following.

**State Plan Goal 1: Maintain and strengthen a system of postsecondary education institutions recognized nationally for academic excellence and effectiveness in fulfilling the educational needs of students and the economic and societal development needs of the state and the nation.**

- Major curricular redesign at both the undergraduate and graduate levels to align programs with core competencies and to redesign courses to help student hone these competencies. These include critical thinking, written communication, information literacy, quantitative literacy, technology fluency, scientific literacy, cultural and diversity awareness, and competency in the major field of study.
- Strong learning outcomes assessment program to provide data about the success of the university in developing student competencies and a faculty culture of using data to improve curricula over time. Among the measures used by UMUC is the ETS Proficiency Profile (EPP) to measure the value added of the UMUC experience comparing entering and graduating student groups.
- Pursuit of special accreditation where practical and appropriate. UMUC has and will continue to seek opportunities to show that its programs meet external standards of excellence as formulated by professional societies.
- Targeted interventions to support student retention and degree completion. This is supported by the university's datamining initiative to better understand UMUC's students and what makes them academically successful. The quality of UMUC's datamining effort has recently been recognized by a \$1.2 million award from the Kresge Foundation to fund a joint datamining effort with Prince George's Community College and Montgomery Community College.

**State Plan Goal 2: Achieve a system of postsecondary education that promotes accessibility and affordability for all Marylanders.**

- UMUC is unique among public four-year higher education institutions in Maryland in utilizing an open enrollment admissions system. By focusing on access rather than selectivity in admissions, UMUC provides underserved segments of the population with an opportunity to earn a college degree.

- UMUC will not only continue to offer a large inventory of degree programs online but will continue, through its own development or through vendor relationships, to offer these to a state-wide, national and international audience through the most appropriate learning management platform. Likewise, UMUC will continue to participate in regional higher education centers around the State, to offer programs on military installations, and to seek educational partnerships with corporate and government entities to serve specialized workforce development needs.
- The university will leverage its alliances with all 16 community colleges within the State to provide seamless transfer opportunities for community college graduates across a broad range of programs. The model for these relationships is 2+2+2, with students completing an associate's degree having a clear pathway to a UMUC bachelor's and master's degree.
- UMUC will continue a strong emphasis on seeking scholarships for students in critical need areas, such as cybersecurity, STEM certification fields within the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), among others.

**State Plan Goal 3: Ensure equal opportunity for Maryland's diverse citizenry.**

UMUC's mission as an open university serving adult students through online and face-to-face formats ensures opportunity for a diverse student population. Likewise, the university's scholarship program focused on needs-based criteria supports the opportunity of those who traditionally have not easily been able to pursue postsecondary education. Finally, the university has and will continue to implement a strong achievement gap program to help ensure that African American students and other minorities graduate at the same rate as the student population as a whole.

**State Goal 4: Achieve a system of postsecondary education that promotes student-centered learning to meet the needs of all Marylanders.**

- Student centered learning. UMUC is completing an ambitious project to re-design the entire undergraduate curriculum, in order to provide consistent and predictable learning experiences for students, provide a seamless pathway for students to complete a program worldwide, maximize opportunities for student success, and to unify the educational program into a cohesive academic model. The undergraduate project takes into account the distinct learning needs of UMUC students, and will more firmly anchor curriculum development in learning outcomes.
- Support for faculty development. UMUC has a cadre of strong teaching faculty. To support its faculty, the university has a well-funded Center for Teaching and Learning which is the locus for a wide array of faculty training from the initial course in online teaching to numerous specialized online workshops intended to help faculty develop their skills in targeted areas. CTL also funds external conference participation and other forms of professional development for both full-time and adjunct faculty. UMUC will continue

to offer teaching opportunities to large numbers of adjuncts and will likewise invest in their development as faculty.

**State Goal 5: Promote economic growth and vitality through the advancement of research and the development of a highly qualified workforce.**

- UMUC contributes to the economic growth and development of Maryland through its focus on the education and training of the State workforce. Examples are its programs in cybersecurity and STEM certifications within its MAT program. UMUC's business plan provides for tracking workforce needs and developing academic programs through the doctoral level as appropriate to meet such needs. The impact of these programs is enhanced through the variety of formats in which UMUC can offer them.
- UMUC seeks opportunities to enhance the development of knowledge and technology to supplement its focus on the education and training of a highly-trained workforce. One such example is the establishment of the UMUC Security Studies Laboratory, which is recognized as an Information Assurance Education Center of Academic Excellence by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security. UMUC also offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate certificates to address specific educational needs of working professionals, and when appropriate, develops partnerships with Maryland employers to provide need training and education to their employees. Also, through the National Leadership Institute, UMUC offers Maryland's employers the opportunity to develop the leadership skills of their managers. Indeed, UMUC's offerings appeal to the entire spectrum of Maryland's workforce.

**INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

UMUC's objectives for the duration of the 2009 State Plan in some cases overlap two or more goals of the State Plan, reflecting the inter-relatedness of themes throughout the Plan itself.

**Excellence, Effectiveness and Student-Centered Learning (Goals 1 and 4)**

- Lead the implementation of the next generation of adult higher education through ever more effective approaches to this mission including curricular design, transfer pathways, course development, delivery, faculty training and andragogy.
- Increase retention and graduation rates while maintaining high academic standards and continuing to address students' diverse and specific educational needs, including the need to monitor and close any achievement gap.
- Using aggressive and comprehensive techniques, build a strong global cadre of faculty who are distinguished by their professional experience, academic achievement, and ability to foster student learning.

- Create a work environment incorporating our core values where employees are empowered, supported, and provided with professional career development to enable UMUC to recruit and retain high-quality, student-focused faculty and staff.

### **Access, Affordability and Opportunity (Goals 2 and 3)**

- Develop a student population of a diversity and size that meets the growth targets and financial goals of UMUC while serving the state of Maryland's national and international educational interests.
- Grow and enhance our leadership position in the education of individuals who are serving in or affiliated with the military.
- Develop incremental revenue that will enable a new business model rooted in a more highly diversified revenue portfolio, including a healthy endowment.
- Strengthen our fiscal viability by improving effectiveness and efficiencies.

### **Promotion of a highly qualified workforce (Goal 5)**

- Ensure that our academic programs and services are of high quality and responsive to a changing workforce and a changing world, including workforce needs in the STEM and other areas.