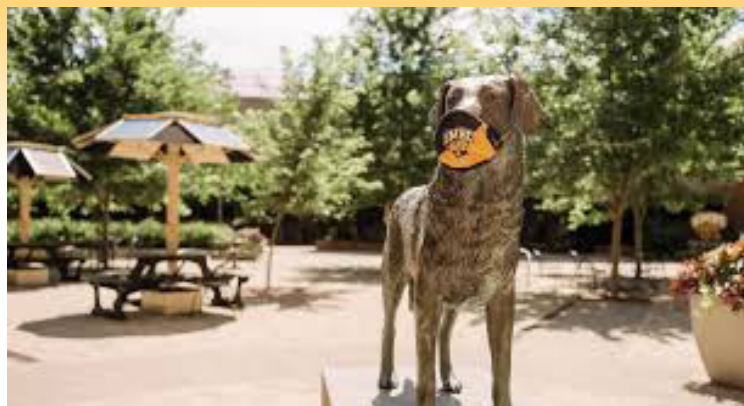




Issue 3 | September 2020

Welcome from the Wisdom Institute!



True Grit is doing his part by wearing a mask during the 2020 pandemic.

Table Talk

I like to think of autumn as a season of beginnings. On campus we typically regard the fall semester as the beginning of the academic year. The Jewish New Year is celebrated during this season. The bounties of harvests are collected while words of thanksgiving are echoed around the world. It is a time of remembrance, letting go, and watching the leaves turn into brilliant colors only to fall and provide our ears with the crisp brittleness crunching under our feet. This year, in our country, it is also a time to vote.

Although I was of an age to take civics in school, the liveliest discussions about American history, the meaning of democracy, and the responsibilities of every American citizen to actively engage and protect our democratic governance took place at the kitchen table. My parents used family dinners as classrooms. It was there we debated who was the best candidate, which referendums to support, and how best to voice our values. It was there we agreed to protest and pray with our feet. It was there I was first introduced to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kennedy, and the jungles of Vietnam. Perhaps your memories are like mine. Regardless, our responsibilities remain, so be sure to do whatever it takes to make your vote count. Encourage others to vote and help get the vote out as you can. And by all means, use your table as a place to explore ideas, discuss the pros and cons of current issues, and imagine the world as it might be, but is not yet.

Now, grab a cup of coffee, or your favorite beverage, and find your comfy spot. This issue of the Wisdom Institute Newsletter is packed full of information, updates, upcoming events, and interesting articles. We hope that you will enjoy each and every piece.

Happy Reading!

Dr. Diane Lee, Director, Wisdom Institute

Inside This Issue: Books, People and Working online



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Wisdom Institute Events- Hot off the Press!

Wisdom Institute Zoom Lunch Connections

We experimented with a zoom meeting in August to connect with any who wanted to join in. The first lunch was pretty wide-ranging in topics and fun. It was agreed by all attendees that it should be repeated. Keep an eye out for announcements of future lunch gatherings. Topics or themes might vary, but they will always offer a chance to catch up and connect. Registration is required to obtain the link, so please do sign up when you see the announcement, and pass the word on to other UMBC retirees. Check out the Wisdom Institute website, wisdom.umbc.edu, for updates and announcements.

Mark Your Calendars and Register at wisdom.umbc.edu "Watch for Coming Attractions at wisdom.umbc.edu"

As with all other aspects of life, the pandemic has put a stop to face-to-face events. Nevertheless, we have plans to have some fun and stay connected. We have several ideas in various stages of development that are listed below. Watch for notices of these events at wisdom.umbc.edu under "Events" as their dates and times become final. Please add your ideas for online activities we might offer in the future [email lmorgan@umbc.edu]. We are all in this together, and together we can make things better for everyone!

Recipe Share: Fall Favorites



When: October 14, 2020
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Where: TBA

Bring your favorite dish for this season to share [including Halloween & Thanksgiving], and explain how you created/ how you got it, and why it's a winner. Pre-submit the recipe and a photo of your dish....or bring the actual dish to show] See directions when you sign-up for the session.

Recipe Share: Holiday Treats



When: November 12, 2020
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Where: TBA

Whether it's a main course or a special dessert or treat of the season, everyone has a holiday recipe that always works! Join us to share your favorites. Bring the actual dish/treat or pre-submit photos of it and pre-send the recipe to swap with others.

WI Roundtable: Sharing Our Favorite UMBC Stories



When: October 21, 2020
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Where: TBA

Given our time at UMBC, many of us have stories or experiences that are uplifting, funny, poignant, impactful or "oh so UMBC." Join us to share your story and enjoy your lunch while listening to stories from others.

WI Roundtable: 2020, A Challenging Year.



When: December 8, 2020
12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

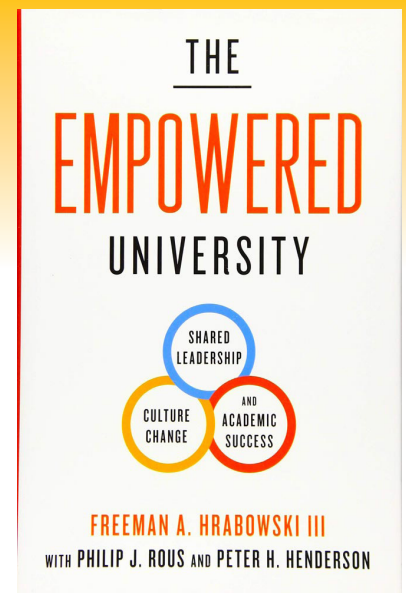
Where: TBA

Open discussion of the challenges, successes, surprises and failures that have marked 2020 as a particularly challenging year. Feel free to enjoy your lunch during the discussion.

Wisdom Institute's Third Annual Signature Event

Instead of gathering around tables facing one another as we have in the past, we faced one another on computer screens and enjoyed an informative conversation with Drs. Freeman Hrabowski, Philip Rous, and Peter Henderson. Their book, *The Empowered University*, opens with a three word heading, "It's About Us." Our session began with questions about our shared journey and then continued with discussion about how the university has met current challenges including the pandemic, social unrest, and the economic downturn. Dr. Henderson focused on the national landscape at the time they were writing the book and more recently. Dr. Rous spoke to the pivotal role shared governance has played on campus and extended our thinking to include an emphasis on shared responsibility. Dr. Hrabowski reflected on "looking in the mirror" collectively as a pathway to assuring "success is never final." He also shared his thoughts about looking in the mirror when he stood alone and saw only his reflection.

If you were unable to join us at this event, you may still do so by visiting our website, wisdom.umbc.edu, and clicking on the link to the recording of our conversation. It was a meaningful and vibrant conversation reflecting on our UMBC family, past and present.



Wisdom Institute Fiddle Fest

On August 28th, the Wisdom Institute was pleased to have Dr. Timmie Topoleski, Professor in the Mechanical Engineering Department at UMBC, offer a 90-minute virtual presentation of Celtic Music Traditions. Tim has studied violin since he was a child (he has been a member of the Columbia Symphony Orchestra for more than a quarter century), but became intrigued by traditional fiddle music while an undergraduate. During the presentation, Tim discussed the evolution of Celtic music including the seven major Celtic fiddle traditions, the differences between a jig and reel, a jig and slip jig, and much more in the way of styles and ornamentations—the musical details that can define a tune. The presentation included Tim playing a broad range of traditional songs through which he was able to demonstrate the variations in songs, fiddle techniques, and musical moods. Everyone in attendance had a wonderful time and it was almost impossible not to tap along with Tim as he played. We are deeply appreciative of the effort and time Tim put into preparing for the presentation. For those who might have missed the performance, fear not—it was recorded.



Please send your ideas for events, activities, and/or programs the Wisdom Institute could offer to: lmorgan@umbc.edu

Online Resources!

Looking for free online resources for learning, investigation, and just plain fun? Don't forget to check out the Wisdom Institute website for lots of ideas and links. Whether it is an opera at the Met, or a wellness program in a natural setting, you will find it there.

<https://wisdom.umbc.edu/resources/online-resources/>

GOLDEN YEARS

By Joan Costello

Most of you know that this spring marked the 50th anniversary of UMBC's first graduation. But you may not know that it was also the 50th wedding anniversary of two of the Golden Anniversary graduates, Bob Dietrich '70, Biological Sciences, and Mimi Haw Dietrich '70, American studies. They met in the bio building (Academic I back then), where Bob was doing prep work for the labs and Mimi was working for Ceil Nedeloff at the switchboard - one ringy dingy (yes, the old fashioned plug-in system).

After graduation Bob worked at the Johns Hopkins labs and the University of Maryland, Baltimore. Then, biology chair Marty Schwartz convinced Bob to come back and run UMBC's labs. He eventually became the facilities manager for the two buildings and worked at UMBC for 40 years.

Mimi taught English to middle-schoolers for three years and realized it wasn't exactly what she wanted. She got a job with Stretch n' Sew, which was showcasing a new way of sewing knits. She learned the techniques, and a career in teaching with fabrics was born. So was her first child, who received a quilt made by Mimi--and she was off and running. She has since written 17 quilting books; developed two lines of fabric, numerous patterns and articles; and taught all over the U.S. In March 2019 the Maryland Historical Society exhibited her quilts in "Hometown Girl: Contemporary Quilts of Mimi Dietrich," which ran until March 2020. Mimi's specialty is hand appliqué in the Baltimore Album Quilt tradition. As a member of the Quilters Hall of Fame, she has been dubbed UMBC's "Rock Star of Quilting."

Greatest UMBC memories (aside from meeting each other)? Bob's was playing lacrosse for UMBC, and later, as an employee, working on the addition of Schwartz Hall and the renovation of the original biology building. Mimi's was touring Italy with the Ancient Studies department's trifecta Drs. Walter Sherwin, Rudolph Storch, and Jay Freyman - what a great way to travel! Bob and Mimi differ in some interests: Mimi is creative indoors with her fabrics and writing and Bob is the outdoorsy nature guy. As an assistant Boy Scout master, Bob taught kayaking, biking, and hiking. He has only recently retired from scouts after 35 years, and still Bob bikes the Patapsco trails every other day as a bike park ranger.

Their interests take them all over the country. In Hawaii, while visiting family friends, Mimi sought out a crazy quilt done by the palace-imprisoned queen. Thanks to Mimi's quilting workshops on board cruise ships, the couple has also been to Alaska twice, where they boated with whales and Bob tried out some bike adventures. Bob enjoyed a Grand Canyon trip with his son Ryan, where they hiked 10 miles down to camp at a Native American reservation. Mimi has lectured and taught classes all over the U.S.

But they truly enjoy their hometown life in Catonsville. While working at UMBC, Bob heard that former library director Tony Raimo was moving into a larger house of a biology colleague. Bob went right over to the library and struck a deal with Tony for his home--and it has been the Dietrichs' forever house ever since. The couple has two sons, who each of whom has a boy and a girl. They babysit two days a week and look forward to the "job" continuing as the family grows. Two older grandchildren visit during the year. This summer, one asked if Mimi would take her driving and, of course, they went to UMBC to practice. How many of you have brought your teens over to UMBC to practice driving?

The Dietrichs are actively engaged with the campus. As basketball season ticket holders for over 20 years, they cheered on the Retrievers vs. Georgetown at the NCAA's Big Dance in 2008. Bob also attended the famous UVA game in 2018 with Mimi's brother John (also an alumus), and Freeman and Jackie Hrabowski sat behind them. It was a night they will never forget.

Bob and Mimi believe in giving back and staying engaged. They carry on the tradition of Bob's mother, Mary Dietrich, who worked in the history department and set up an endowed scholarship in Bob's name that benefits lacrosse students. Mimi and Bob love meeting the recipients. The couple became involved with the Alumni Association during UMBC's 25th birthday celebration. Both have served on the Alumni Board. For the university's 50th anniversary, they helped to form the Founding Four committee, which created - a memorabilia exhibit, reception, dinner, and "Stoop Stories" from experiences of the first-class students, faculty, and staff. It was great fun with much camaraderie. The committee continues with a newsletter and events and planned a wonderful set of activities in May 2020 to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the first graduating class in 1970. It included a tour of the campus, reserved seating for alums at each graduation, and a reunion luncheon, but it was not to be. As for their own 50th anniversary, the pandemic has altered many things. But if there is one thing about the Dietrichs--, they can always make lemonade out of lemons. They are a very supportive and respectful couple. Even their own 50th anniversary evolved from a party to a wonderful card they sent to friends encouraging thinking of the couple, hugging their family and friends, and telling folks they are loved.

We love you, too, Bob and Mimi!



Working and connecting with students during the pandemic

By Kathlyn Miller

I spoke with a few Graduate School staff members about working and connecting with students during the pandemic. The Graduate School staff receives a large volume of paperwork from students and faculty. In an effort to make that information available for processing as soon as possible, many technological improvements have been made over the years. Instead of handling paper forms, the forms are scanned into a database that can be viewed online, lessening the chance of lost or misfiled forms. This technology served well when the pandemic began. In fact, some staff were already working from home one day per week before the pandemic, so they were prepared when the pandemic began and required to work from home.



Jill Bar, Associate Vice Provost, Graduate Education and Senior Assistant Dean, Graduate Enrollment, said, "We were preparing for the pandemic without realizing it." Jill, who worked on the 2007 edition of the UMBC emergency preparedness manual, said that "technology has improved so much since 2007." Scanning forms and having that information online made working from home possible.

Jill said that although many international students were unable to get visas and had to defer their educational plans for spring and fall, domestic students maintained enrollment. "Online education is attractive for those without research or labs. It's convenient, too. No having to leave work early to get to class, traffic, or searching for parking."

As a manager, Jill said she misses the opportunity to stop in the office of those she manages, just to chat and see how things are going. She uses Google Chat or Instant Messaging, but it's not the same. Likewise, lunches with colleagues are non-existent these days, where she would catch up with what others were working on. She sees a future of a combination of those working from home and those working in the office, which will relieve the need for office space.

Mike Suica, Manager, Recruitment and Admissions, said that recruitment fairs were already on the decline. Considering the cost of labor, supplies and travel, the fairs were expensive, but poorly attended by prospective students. So they were already on the path to increase digital marketing, but the effort has been accelerated. Mike has plans to attend a virtual graduate school fair for McNair Scholars students.

Mike has been with the Graduate School for some time and has held positions as a student worker. Since there are no student workers these days, Mike goes into the office twice a week to collect the mail from the mailroom and scan the forms. He said he is the only one working in the office and the time goes fast. There was already a Graduate School email account that students were familiar with, so students continue to send emails. Or if they leave a phone message, the call is returned. Mike said that Julia Celnieks, the Graduate School Recruitment Coordinator, hosts virtual office hours for students. Students may schedule a chat with Julia and that seems to be working well.

Mike also mentioned that Dan Neeley, Graduate School Operations Manager, just completed the new Graduate School application system in December 2019, which has solved so many problems. It reduced paperwork. The new process plus transcripts being available electronically made them able to function.

Mike looks forward to somehow flipping a switch and having everything go back to normal some day, although he knows that some things will not go back to the way they were. Some folks will continue to work from home and some will work in the office.

In the beginning, says Denise Atkinson, Executive Administrative Assistant II, everyone thought it would only be for two weeks. She enjoyed not having to commute to and from the office, the less wear and tear on her car, saving gas and eliminating travel time. But as it became apparent that it would last a while, she found she needed the double computer screens she was used to working with in the office, she missed the camaraderie of her coworkers, and found working from home somewhat lonely at times.

In addition, without a commute there didn't seem to be an end to the workday. The computer (and work) was right there in her home begging for her to check one more email and it was hard to resist. Eventually she had to set a time when she would not look at work after a certain hour.

Denise's work changed, too. Before the pandemic she processed travel, hotels and scheduled meetings for the Dean of the Graduate School, Janet Rutledge. Now the meetings were virtual, so the work was different. Where before she had a process for scheduling conferences, it now seemed clumsy. When before she could walk down the hall to ask a coworker a question, now she would phone, email or Instant Message the person with her question. "It's just not the same," she said. When asked about the future, Denise confirmed with a laugh, "we can only get better at this."

Patricia Winborn, Graduation Manager, sees the inconvenience of working from home a trade-off for her long commute. She goes into the office every 2 or 3 weeks, handling returned diplomas or other items arriving in the mail. There was a learning curve in accessing reports from home. She began working at home on her laptop only to realize that she needed her computer with double screens to check reports.

Patricia communicates with students by email or phone. Before, students could drop in or make an appointment if they had questions. She continues to check her email after work hours simply because the computer and her work is right there at home, but that is a trade off with taking a few minutes to put dinner in the oven or clothes in the washer.

The Graduate School events, the May and December Commencement ceremonies and the Candidacy celebration, were virtual this year. These very personal celebrations were something students looked forward to attending in person with their families. The pandemic has reduced this opportunity to a virtual celebration and it's not the same.

Patricia sees the future where some staff will mostly work at home and not have an office, but there would be a few cubicles available for folks to use when they come into the office.

Shirl Curtis, Program Management Specialist, was instrumental in organizing virtual Graduate Council meetings the last several years. The Graduate Council is a joint council with University of Maryland, Baltimore. Before the virtual meetings, monthly meetings alternated between UMB and UMBC. The virtual meetings allowed faculty to stay on their own campus and attend the meeting, saving travel time and parking.

Shirl used this same technology to arrange the virtual Graduate Program Directors (GPD) meetings. This also increased attendance. More GPDs could attend the online meetings.

Shirl said that although she likes the convenience of attending virtual staff meetings, they were not the same. She missed the chance to say hello to folks before or after the meeting. Online meetings are just that, log onto the meeting, attend the meeting and log off.

Shirl continues to communicate with students with email or phone and Google Chat. She sees a future where there is more working from home. She misses the chance to have colleagues available to answer questions. She also had to set a time to stop work, because the temptation to continue to check emails after work was strong.

Having a Work-Life balance challenged Shannon Mize, Business Services Specialist. When the work from home change occurred in March, her children were also home from school. It was overwhelming trying to manage work and manage her children's online school work at the same time. Shannon was able to shift her work hours to accommodate the situation.

Aside from the flexible schedule, Shannon was "paper driven" and has gone from mostly all paper forms to paperless since March. Employees had prepared timesheets online for some time. Tuition remission forms are now scanned. She prepares the paperwork for new graduate students and new staff. She said having scanned forms and DocuSign, a method for signing forms online, has been an adjustment, but a blessing.

In addition, Shannon's immediate supervisor, Kathy Coleman, retired on May 1, and her work was redistributed. Cross training someone on how to use the Departmental Campus Card for purchases was challenging. It's easier with someone sitting next to you or across from you when you talk about entries on the form, etc. Answering students' billing questions is handled by email or phone. The work in July and August was intense.

Shannon said that Dean Rutledge has been amazing on the transition. There are monthly staff meetings. Everyone attends and shares what is working or not working, thus bonding even more during the pandemic. They have had quick scavenger hunts during the monthly meetings and even held a retirement party for Kathy Coleman online.

Shannon sees a positive future with positive challenges, working together and good enrollment will continue.

I enjoyed visiting by phone with a few of my former colleagues and still believe the UMBC Graduate School is a great place to work!

Help Maryland Retirees keep their Prescription Drug Coverage!

For those reading the Wisdom Institute newsletter for the first time, here is a little background about the endeavor to preserve the prescription drug program that UMBC employees and other State of Maryland employees expected to have available during retirement. In 2011, the Maryland General Assembly eliminated prescription drug coverage for State retirees who were Medicare eligible. To become Medicare Part D eligible, a retiree has to retire disabled or be 65 years of age or older. The Maryland Department of Budget and Management informed UMBC retirees of this elimination in May, 2018 indicating that, for coverage to be effective on January 1, 2019, we would have to choose a Medicare Part D plan for Rx drug coverage between October, 15, 2018 and December 7, 2018. What's the problem with Medicare Part D plans? Many Medicare Part D plans do not cover the prescription drugs we need to preserve our health and the more inclusive plans have high premiums and co-pays that can threaten retirees' ability to purchase life-saving medications. Many retirees with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, cancer, glaucoma, kidney, or heart disease may no longer be able to afford required medicines. Mr. Ken Fitch, a State of Maryland retiree, filed a suit in federal court to maintain the prior Rx coverage. A temporary injunction was obtained that keeps our previous coverage in place during the litigation to make the injunction permanent. More information about Mr. Fitch and his efforts is below.



In 2019, Maryland State Senator Kathy Klausmeier said that she supported rescinding the law that cancelled the State Prescription Drug benefits for retirees. However, when her bill was set to be heard, it was cancelled. Another bill, SB946 was passed instead. SB946 allows those retired by December 1, 2019, to receive reimbursement of prescription expenditures exceeding \$1500; and allows those retired by December 1, 2020, to receive reimbursement of prescription expenditures exceeding \$2500. This will not be imposed until the case is settled. Retirees continue to receive State Prescription Drug benefits.

The President of the Senate, Bill Ferguson, who was elected in 2010 and was voted to succeed former President Thomas V. Mike Miller in January 2020, does not know with the status of the Prescription Drug Plan issue after all this time. They are waiting for the Court case and will do nothing while the case is pending, although SB946 was passed while the case was pending.

The Wisdom Institute continues to monitor the ongoing legislative action or inaction and believes that now is the time to phone or email your representatives in Annapolis to let them know what you think. Please read below for ideas. Please note, the Speaker of the House, Adrienne Jones, is a UMBC Alumna.

To sign up for updates about Ken Fitch's efforts, contact Mr. Fitch at:

Ken Fitch
RX Drug Coverage Group
P.O. Box 465
Cockeysville, MD 21030
MDRetireesRX@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook: RX Drug Coverage Group

(Cont'd next page. See: *Call To Action*)

CALL TO ACTION

The following information is from Ken Fitch:

We need to call and email Bill Ferguson's office [President of the Maryland State Senate] and tell him that he needs to do a bill to reinstate our drug coverage. Ferguson wants the Courts to straighten this out the mess the Legislature created. No. The legislature needs to address this and Ferguson's attitude needs to change.

If you email Bill.Ferguson@senate.state.md.us

Senate President Bill Ferguson. My name is _____ and I worked _____ years for the State of Maryland.

- In 2011 you and other Senators and Delegates eliminated my prescription drug coverage when I turned 65 because I was a State Retiree.
- That is a benefit I earned from my years of service and was guaranteed in my retirement package.
- Your actions have affected almost 90,000 people and essentially have issued a death sentence to them. Please do the right thing.
- Allow the State to maintain its integrity and honor its commitments to its employees.
- The State employees affected have all invested in the Health program that includes prescription drug coverage before July 1, 2011.
- We should be grandfathered in, not left in the cold.
- Repeal SB946 and grandfather in the State retirees who will die without their prescriptions.
- If you do not grandfather in the affected employees you will be reinstating the Death Penalty.
- And the only people sentenced to die will be senior citizens who are the most vulnerable of this State's population.
- Save their lives. Do the right thing.

Try to call him once a day. Flood his email inbox. Remember we do not work for them - they work for us.

You can also contact your representatives by going to <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/members/index/senate>

-Click on the top menu item on the left sidebar, "Find My Representatives"

-Over the map, click on "Lookup"

-Type in your address and zip code, click "Find"

-Your legislative representatives will be displayed. You can click on "EMAIL" to contact your checked legislators, or get contact information for each legislator by clicking on their name to see their email address and create your own email.

SPS benefits system information! Be Alert!

New procedures will be put in place for health care selections this Fall. The State of Maryland will be communicating directly with retirees via snail mail with log on information for the new system. Retirees will be getting mailed notices when it is time for them to convert to the new system, and anyone who has received an email from UMBC now should wait until the written information is received from the State of Maryland.

It is important to emphasize that the state of Maryland is the benefit administrator for Retirees, not UMBC, and instructions to retirees will be sent directly to them from the State. UMBC doesn't manage retiree benefits or have access to them once they retire. So, even though retirees may still have access to UMBC emails, any directions or changes will be communicated to the retiree group directly from the state. The state confirmed that retirees will get a mailing from EBD, with the instructions. The state will also follow up with Retirees via email if they have an email address in the SPS Workday system.

Keep an eye out for information from the State of Maryland. Questions should be directed to the State of Maryland for current information.

<https://sra.maryland.gov/retirees>

NEW NORMALS: TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

by Dr. Pamela Williams Morgan

Be honest! If anyone told you that you would watch a grown man cover half his face with a mask or bandanna before entering a bank or other establishment and you did not dial 911, you would not have believed it. You probably would have never imagined participating in drive-by birthday parties, baby showers, bridal showers, or graduation celebrations. You also never thought about becoming best friends with your mail carrier, the UPS person, the FedEx driver, your Instacart shopper, or the Amazon delivery person after doing the bulk of your shopping online. Such is life in this era of COVID-19. Such are our new normals!



Guess what? Education has been no exception to adapting to new normals, even higher education! We have heard about or possibly experienced the challenges and successes of PreK-12 public schools as educators, parents, and their students struggle to continue the teaching-learning process. We have even seen fits and starts with the reopening of university campuses nationally after being forced to shift to online learning and virtual commencements, orientations, convocations, and professional development.

During my 46 years as an educator, I have taken and taught my share of online courses, with a preference for hybrid models (face-to-face and online) whenever feasible. What happens when online delivery is mandatory, not optional? Will higher education faculty view their new normals as opportunities to enhance the teaching-learning process for themselves and their students rather than as obstacles?

What more appropriate faculty to respond than those who by profession are teacher educators? Teacher education faculty must model their expectations constantly as they prepare aspiring teachers to be knowledgeable, resourceful, flexible reflective practitioners and lifelong learners. How are UMBC Education Department faculty faring in this COVID-19 era? My quest for answers led me to pose the following questions to three of my former colleagues, Drs. Keisha McIntosh Allen, Cheryl North, and Jonathan E Singer (Department Chair).

- How has your teaching practice changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What challenges have you faced or are you facing?
- What successes have you experienced?
- Based upon your teaching experiences last semester, what will you do differently in the upcoming semester?

Although their experiences varied, patterns still surfaced that conveyed the attributes they endeavor to instill in their students, such as flexibility, resourcefulness, and reflective practices.

Flexibility and Resourcefulness

Since all courses in the professional program require education students to complete a field experience, the lack of access to public school students became a challenge. For aspiring teachers in his EDUC 412/602 course, Jonathan Singer turned to social media and other venues to recruit “practice students” with whom his students could try out new instructional practices that are traditionally done in an after-school program at a local school. He turned to children from his wife’s established social media connections, those of colleagues, as well as children enrolled in Upward Bound and the Maryland Home School Network. In preparation for the Fall 2020 semester, Dr. Singer will collaborate with one of his former students who is a UMBC Secondary Education program completer and grant manager, Dr. Jacqueline Krikorian. Dr. Krikorian’s students are aspiring teachers who are enrolled in the Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) at Western High School in Baltimore City Public Schools. Since they are being introduced to the profession of teaching while in high school, they are a logical audience to observe Jonathan’s students demonstrate new instructional practices and to offer them feedback.

During the same quarantine period, Keisha Allen said she learned the power and importance of flexibility, compassion, and self-care in response to a student’s health condition and pandemic-prompted anxiety. Admitting that she too was anxious, Dr. Allen made an effort to address the students’ varied levels of capacity. She designed her written assignments to be more practical and her reading assignments to be more flexible. It is her hope that she modeled the compassion, grace, and care that she hoped her students will extend to their future students.

While being attentive to her students’ needs as learners, Keisha faced a personal challenge. She is the mother of two young children, one of whom had to adjust to online learning once in-person schooling was no longer an option. Supporting her son’s online learning as she worked from home allowed her to recognize that he was becoming disengaged. She watched a little boy who loved learning start to shrink and become disinterested in school. Keisha decided to take matters into her own hands by creating a

a program of study for him that centered his interests and built upon what they were already doing and talking about within their household. Both experiences last semester reinforced for her the value of student-centered learning, even at the higher-education level.

Similarly, Cheryl North viewed the pandemic as an opportunity to re-examine how she handles her workload. After conducting all advising virtually last semester, via WebEx, she plans to offer her advisees the option of in-person or online sessions once campus reopens. Dr. North has been revamping an evening course for online delivery, a model she had wanted to explore for a few years. However, her plan was to offer the course as a hybrid, but thanks to COVID-19, the course now may be totally online. She has attended numerous webinars and training sessions offered by DoIT to guide her course revision, but has had no break this summer as a result. She admits that this upcoming semester would be much easier if face-to-face meetings were possible since she finds going virtual to be somewhat harder and thinks the same holds true for our public school teachers. Cheryl considers herself to be privileged because she does not have young children or an elderly parent at home to care for, other than mowing her mother's lawn and bringing her some produce from the garden. Consequently, she has had the luxury of devoting more time to online course development but has a couple of articles that remain unwritten. Vacation has been deferred until later.

Reflective Practices

Reflective practitioners are lifelong learners who continually analyze their teaching practice and their impact on student learning in an effort to enhance learning outcomes. For example, Dr. Singer co-taught the EDUC 412/602 course this summer with his colleague, Dr. Christopher Rakes, and believes the opportunity to work together made both of them better instructors. They altered the course by having their students go through multiple cycles of lesson planning, enacting, reflecting, revising, and then teaching again. Jon describes that adaptation as fantastic and will be incorporating this approach in his science methods course this fall. Thinking outside the box resulted in Dr. Singer's course objectives remaining constant but his strategies and means for achieving them being adapted to his new circumstances, his new normal.

In preparing for online instruction this semester, Dr. North has been developing and recording modules. She intends to poll students at the end of each module to help her make the best class ever. Modules that are deemed more effective as face-to-face lessons will be retained for face-to-face class sessions in the future. She found talking to a screen to be really awkward and keeps trying to add a little humor.

Cheryl admits that a virtual meeting is not as natural as one that is face-to-face and has vowed not to have more than two hours of virtual meetings a day because they can be exhausting. Having said that, she asked to take a moment here to say that UMBC has been amazing and that our IT people have really been helpful. She is thankful that faculty haven't had to meet face-to-face, despite the challenges. "The stress of exposing ourselves and our family members to a potentially fatal virus would have been more difficult," she says.

Finally, Dr. Allen intends to focus her attention on making her assignments more practical and flexible to address the varied levels of students' capacity. Her expectation is that students acquire the core foundational knowledge, but she plans to offer students the choice of how deep they go and how they demonstrate their knowledge. She is committed to listening more and to being even more responsive to what her students need in order to be successful. She adopted some practices last semester that will better position her to implement student-centered learning in higher education even after face-to-face learning is viable again. In fact, Keisha has been able to turn her musings about what kind of teaching is needed in this moment—the COVID-19 era—into a state-funded project. She says, "It feels good to know that I can contribute to teachers' efficacy and students' engagement during these times."

Perhaps the experiences of and lessons learned by the UMBC colleagues featured in this column will spark continued professional conversations. Such conversations may afford us opportunities to learn from each other as we continue to grapple with life in the era of COVID-19 and our resulting new normals.

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Retriever Essentials

Food and housing insecurity among college students, already at 52% among students at 4-year institutions, is increasing due to the global impact by COVID-19 (Goldrick-Rab, S. et al, 2018). According to the 2020 #RealCollege During the Pandemic Survey, 42% of four-year college students lost at least one job due to the pandemic and 28% faced reduced hours and/or wages. The employment crisis alone is enough to place many students and their families into financial hardship, significantly affecting their ability to secure proper nutrition. In addition to this, however, many students have been left vulnerable to homelessness, unsafe home environments, hunger, and poor nutrition due to the loss of housing and food resources usually provided by their universities. At UMBC alone, 49% of students that took our survey last year stated that a lack of food has impacted their academic performance at least once, and 30% of students identified themselves as not having enough food to eat within the past year.

Retriever Essentials, UMBC's campus food pantry, was founded in 2016 to develop a comprehensive program of resources, which seeks to eliminate the burden of food insecurity for our campus members and connects them to ongoing support networks, in order to enhance their academic retention and career success. Retriever Essentials operates on campus as an official organization and receives guidance from a board of faculty, staff, and students. Retriever Essentials serves the community through its 3 key programs: the Campus Food Pantry, Food Zones, Save-a-Swipe Meal Donation. The Campus Food Pantry provides free nonperishable food items and personal care products to the food insecure members of the UMBC community. Currently, anyone with a UMBC ID can access nutritionally balanced food bags from the 24-hour Campus Police Station. Home delivery is available to clients on a case-by-case basis if they cannot access the Campus Police Station for any reason. The Save-a-Swipe program allows students to share a portion of their meal swipes to their food insecure peers. This provides students a discrete way to get a meal they otherwise may have skipped out of financial burden. This pool of meals that become available to UMBC students who have been identified by trained staff as experiencing food insecurity.

The Wisdom Institute is no stranger to our talented, intelligent, and forward-thinking community that pushes the limits of innovation. Our programs increase the UMBC community's food security so that their mental and physical health does not become an unnecessary barrier in their ability to achieve great things. Our community has been impacted greatly by the pandemic, economic, and political instability. Your support, at this time more than ever, empowers food insecure members of the UMBC community in gaining access to the healthy foods and basic toiletries they need to thrive. Please consider making a donation either to our Campus food pantry via our Amazon wish lists or to our Gritstarter account. Your generous contributions are not only appreciated immensely, but are necessary to our community's continued well-being.

Thanks you,
The Retriever Essentials Team
<https://retrieveressentials.umbc.edu/>

Come Join the Fun to Stay Connected!

The Wisdom Institute needs your ideas, your participation, and your input for programs, events, and service opportunities (and yes, your contact information)!. We would love to have you help as a volunteer, join our Executive Board, or attend an event. If there are ways to make your attendance easier or ideas to make these opportunities more relevant to you, let us know at wisdom@umbc.edu.

- Are you receiving our emails? During COVID 19 times, email and our website are our only means of keeping you informed of events, updates, and announcements.
- Do you have friends who have retired from UMBC, and are not receiving our emails? Please share this information on joining our email list.
- Have you moved or changed your email address? Update your information via our website and click the "contact us" tab. Do you want to know more about the Wisdom Institute? Check out our website.



Don't Forget to VOTE!

In the midst of all of the stressful events surrounding us, a national election is happening soon. As with every election, it is important to make your vote count! The pandemic has caused anxiety for some on the voting process.

Dr. Phil Sokolove, retired UMBC Biological Sciences faculty member, has reminded us of the options available for mail-in and in-person voting. It is important to not wait until the last minute to consider, and decide on, your options for casting your vote. Also, additional election judges and poll workers are needed. If you can't assist, perhaps you can encourage others to participate. Here is some additional information for your information. Whether voting in-person or via mail/dropbox, remember to get your vote counted!!



**For specific Maryland voting information, check out the MD State Board of Elections website:
Maryland State Board of Elections**

**Not a Maryland resident? For additional information see:
How to vote in your state in the 2020 election**

**Useful information can be found at the League of Women Voters site:
Voter Guides | League of Women Voters**

CAN YOU UNSCRAMBLE THESE LETTERS TO FORM WORDS?

Now is the time to exercise your brain, unscramble these terms, compete with your friends!

miowds

tunisteti

minycad

gngegnai

tmocycinum

For answers see on page 14.

UMBC TRIVIA

Test your knowledge of UMBC !

1. What was the first day of classes at UMBC?
 - A. Sept. 12, 1965
 - B. Sept. 19, 1966
 - C. Sept. 9, 1967
2. How many students were enrolled in the opening class of UMBC?
 - A. 750
 - B. 820
 - C. 900
3. Who was the first Chancellor of UMBC?
 - A. Calvin E. Lee
 - B. Louis Kaplan
 - C. Albin O. Kuhn
4. What was the name of the first live Chesapeake Bay Retriever mascot for UMBC in 1967?
 - A. Hank
 - B. Sam
 - C. Skipper
5. What department founded UMBC's first overseas study program?
 - A. Ancient Studies
 - B. English
 - C. History
6. What year were the first Earth Day activities at UMBC?
 - A. 1967
 - B. 1970
 - C. 1972
7. What was the 1973 campus "Guys and Dolls"?
 - A. A tutoring program
 - B. A theatre production
 - C. A campus dating service
8. What year was Quadmania and Homecoming established?
 - A. 1980
 - B. 1984
 - C. 1988
9. How many students were enrolled in 1980?
 - A. 4,200
 - B. 5,800
 - C. 6,200
10. In 1981, the media reported that MHEC was going to propose that UMBC be closed. What was their proposal for repurposing the campus?
 - A. A senior living community
 - B. A shopping complex
 - C. An industrial park

For answers see:

For more fun facts about UMBC check out this website:

<https://lib.guides.umbc.edu/umbchistory/umbctimeline#s-lg-box-wrapper-497156>



BOOKSTORE

Bookstore.umbc.edu

@umbcbookstore

Now carrying face masks!



2-layer Mask

Item: 2009889

\$5.99



2-layer Mask

Item: 2009890

\$5.99



3-layer Mask

Item: 2009913

\$7.99



Adult Size

(18.9" x 9.45")

Gaiter

Coming Soon!

\$6.99

Youth Size

(11.8" x 7.87")

Gaiter

Coming Soon!

\$5.99

