

## Shared Services Center (SSC) Questions & Answers

### 1. What is a Shared Services Center (SSC)?

A Shared Services Center consolidates expert resources that are currently distributed throughout the University into a centralized unit. A SSC focuses on administrative and financial activities to increase service quality while allowing for projected growth. An integral step in the implementation of SSCs will be the review and revision of UMBC's business processes to establish, document, and foster the implementation of more efficient and effective business processes.

### 2. Why is UMBC implementing SSCs?

Shared Services Centers will provide strong groups that take responsibility for designated administrative and financial services previously performed by generalist staff located in individual departments. Through streamlining, consolidation and automation, SSCs will provide:

- The infrastructure required to support the future growth of UMBC.
- Relief to chairs and department heads from business oriented tasks (e.g. P-card approval) freeing them up to concentrate on academics/academic tasks and research.
- Strengthening of all aspects of compliance with external and internal policies and procedures.
- Improved audit results

### 3. What are the benefits of SSCs?

- Improved transactional flow and accuracy.
- Reduced duplication of effort and fewer errors.
- Higher level of specialization allowing for more proactive issue resolution.
- Broader knowledge of administrative and financial policies, processes and procedures, providing stronger support and backup for all campus departments.
- Greater ability to use technology to improve communications and to report to senior leadership, chairs, directors, faculty and staff.
- Standardization leading to automation – so that any employee can do a process within a certain timeframe regardless of where they are.
- Improved opportunities for our people– improves “person to job fit” and provides opportunities for future growth.

### 4. What business processes will SSCs support?

SSC's will support accounts payable, procurement, payroll and hiring to begin with. It is intended that they will also support contracts & grants and financial management and analysis in the future.

### 5. How are improved Business Processes linked to the implementation of SSCs?

Based on input from the UMBC community, the need to develop consistent efficient and effective business processes was identified. Four SSC/Business Process Improvement (BPI) Workgroups have been established to assist with creation of SSCs, their related business processes, and the flow of communication to the campus community – Procurement/Accounts Payable, Hiring/Payroll, Communication, and Training/Documentation.

6. What are the SSC/BPI workgroups currently working on?

The Procurement/Accounts Payable and Hiring/Payroll workgroups are working diligently on addressing the highest priority items ("Quick Hits") that were established from the surveys that were conducted. The Training/Documentation workgroup has split and joined the above groups to assist as much of the improvements revolve around documentation and training. The Communication workgroup keeps the myUMBC group up to date and assists with other ways of informing campus of progress and opportunities for input (Town Halls, for example).

7. Are there other committees assisting with the implementation of SSCs?

Yes. An Advisory Committee with representation from all segments of the UMBC community is overseeing the project and providing valuable input. A list of "Guiding Principles" developed by the committee is providing guidance as we move forward.

8. What is the timeline for implementation of SSCs?

Two initial "Phase I" Shared Services Center will be established to support the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences (CNMS) and Academic Affairs Other Units (AAOU). It is anticipated that leader positions for each will be hired by the summer of 2014. Staffing of the SSCs will follow shortly thereafter.

Additional SSCs will be implemented throughout the second half of 2014 and into 2015. Lessons learned from the Phase I SSCs will be used to improve the implementation of subsequent SSCs.

9. How will SSCs be staffed?

Once the initial leadership positions are hired, the leader will then work with unit leadership to draft position descriptions for SSC staff. It is the preference of the University to staff these positions with current, qualified staff from within the unit being served.

10. Will individual employees be required to transfer to the SSC or can they choose to remain in the department?

Our preference is to hire employees voluntarily into the SSC positions. However, if an employee is selected to work in the center and the position duties are similar to those in their current position, the University can require the transfer.

11. What is the impact on the number of employees at UMBC?

The intent of the SSCs at UMBC is to improve business and administrative services, not to decrease the support staff. As presented in a joint memo from the President, Provost, and VP for Administration & Finance on December 20, 2014:

"It is important to point out that the task force's goal is not to reduce current staffing levels, but rather to consider ways in which we can assist and support more effectively our faculty, staff, and students. As we continue to grow, shared services potentially could enhance the

effectiveness of support we provide for educational and research activities, while recognizing our currently thin staffing levels. We have made a commitment to the Board of Regents to strengthen both our administrative infrastructure and the support we give to existing staff in order to ensure that we are prepared to address future challenges, and prevent past problems from recurring. “

12. How will the success of the Phase I SSCs be measured?

The success of the Phase I SSC's will be measured by the ability of the SSCs to meet or exceed the goals set out in mutually developed Service Level Agreements.

13. How can I learn more about UMBC's SSCs?

A Shared Services Centers at UMBC Group has been established to provide a site for the entire campus community to learn more about SSCs. <http://my.umbc.edu/groups/ssc>

- We are also working with the Office of Institutional Advancement and Division of Information Technology on establishment of an SSC Website (**TAP – Toolkit for Administrative Professionals**).

Website content will include:

- Procedures required for administrative tasks at UMBC
- Easily accessible FAQs and Training Videos
- Work requests for Shared Services Centers