

Revamping the UMBC Pond

Part 1: Overview

What comes to your mind when you think of the UMBC pond? Our group thought, murky, dirty, smelly (especially on hot days), disgusting, wouldn't want to fall into, slimy and a turnoff, just to name a few reactions. We would like to change this existing image of the pond because we believe that the pond can become an integral part of the university. Its location is key, directly in between academic row and the library; we could change it from the horrible interruption that it is into a lovely interlude between the two academic centers of our campus.

We intend to revamp the pond's sanitary and maintenance system, and change the look of the pond and its immediate surroundings. Adding carefully picked flowers and other foliage around the pond that would not only look good but also be easily maintained and otherwise cared for would be a start. We also would like to add natural artistic elements around the pond, such as rock sculptures. We also propose a deck area around the pond would give students a new and different place to sit, take a break, catch up with friends, and study or do some homework outdoors on a pleasant day while maybe enjoying a meal from the Commons. With a more pleasing appearance, smell and general ambience the Pond could become a more pleasant area for the UMBC community to enjoy.

Part 2: Benefit to UMBC

The pond could become a beautiful oasis, a social meeting place for faculty and students alike. With pleasant fragrances from the flowers, the soothing sound of the clear rippling water and the active wildlife, anyone could enjoy the area. Students might be more inclined to spend time in that general area (e.g. the library, and commons) and be less stressed before and after class if they had a soothing spot to relax in during their free time. Tour guides would not have to worry about their party smelling the stench of the pond on hot summer tours, but instead would show it off as a place they could genuinely take pride in. A beautiful pond would show the pride we take

in the academic area of our campus. The environment that students learn in is just as important as what and how they are being taught. College can also be a time of turmoil, stress and worries, especially around exams, and surely students could use a good pick me up, a sort of escape from their worries, right there, next to the library, where they will no doubt be studying.

Part 3: Implementation Plan

The Library Pond has been a part of the UMBC community for many years, but over time it has become neglected and forgotten. Our plan is to bring life back to the pond through a thorough and maintainable clean-up, and a more attractive and accessible landscaping design.

There are three main aspects of our plan: the first is to clean the pond and ensure that it is in a healthy state, the second is to create a more attractive landscape around the pond, and the third is to build a deck area off of the library and overlooking the pond. All three of these phases will also include a planning phase.

In order to develop a plan for cleaning the pond, we will work with Jim Donlan, who is in charge of the library pond, and Donna Anderson, who is the manager of the grounds (see attached correspondence with Jim Donlan). Our group has already decided on a few issues that we plan to address during the pond clean-up. The first, and probably most obvious goal, is to ensure that the pond is free of any trash and other debris. We also hope to address the issue of sediment buildup in the pond. An excess of sediment leads to weed and algae growth. Any weeds or algae currently in the pond will be cleaned out. We will plant native plants in the pond area in order to decrease the chance of erosion (see attached letter of support from Evan Roberts, Environmental Science Major). In addition to these goals, we may find other issues that need to be addressed with the pond as we consult with pond specialists.

The second part of our plan is the Student Design portion of the landscaping. This will involve students from the UMBC community both submitting landscaping designs for the pond area, and then voting on the designs through a website that our group will set up. Students submitting designs will be required to keep the cost of their designs under 30,000, encouraged to use plants native to our region, and incorporate any pre-existing resources into their designs. We have already discussed this plan with Students for Environmental Awareness Vice President, Danielle Lipinski, who has pledged her help with advertising the competition (see attached letter of support).

The voting website will include resources for students developing designs, as well as house all of the submitted designs. Ultimately we will choose one landscaping design based on voting results from the website. After choosing a landscaping design, landscape designers will submit competitive bids for the pond landscaping.

The last part of our plan is to create a deck area. This deck would come off of the area directly in front of the library. We have consulted with a construction firm to get a rough estimate of what the deck would cost (see budget) and to find out the approximately length of the construction project (see timeline). In addition to this cost, we would also furnish the deck with tables and benches. The early part of this portion of the pond revitalization will involve general contractors submitting competitive bids for the planning and construction of the deck.

Both the Cleaning Phase and the Construction Phase will occur after May 2009 in order to minimize disruption to students, faculty, and other people who use the campus during spring semester. The Construction Phase will depend upon which student design is selected during the Student Design Phase.

Part 4: Timeline

March 2008: Prove It! Winner announced.

March – August 2008: Student Design Phase planning takes place. Our team develops a website which will be online during the fall semester to house the landscaping submissions and the student voting. We will also work with the Procurement Department of UMBC to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) to be issued to landscape design firms, construction firms, and to pond cleaning firms.

September 2008: Student Design Phase begins. Advertising for the competition and the online voting begins. By this date our team will have issued the RFP to pond cleaning firms.

October 16 – November 14, 2008: The Landscape/Construction Design Phase commences. Our team uses the voting results to select the winner of the Student Pond Landscaping Design Contest and incorporate the winning design into the RFP. The Student Design Phase ends.

November 15, 2008: By this date our team will have issued the RFP to landscape design firms and construction firms.

December 15, 2008: Due date for proposals from pond cleaning firms.

December 16-April 15, 2008: Our team will select pond cleaning firms. Negotiations will take place about timelines and the specifics of the cleaning.

March 1, 2009: Due date for proposals from landscape design firms and construction firms.

March 2 – June 30, 2009: Our team will select landscape design firms and construction firms. Negotiations will take place about timelines and the specifics of the landscaping and the construction of the deck. Engineering Design Phase ends.

June 1, 2009: Pond Cleaning Phase begins.

June 30, 2009: Pond Cleaning Phase ends.

July 1, 2009: Landscaping/Construction Phase begins.

July 31, 2009: Landscaping/Construction Phase ends.

Part 5: Budget

Website Hosting	\$100.00
Contest Advertisements (i.e. banners)	\$250.00
Student Design Prize	\$1,000.00
Pond Cleaning	\$13,000.00
Landscaping	\$17,000.00
Construction of Deck	\$14,000.00
Deck Furnishings	\$3,000.00
<i>Total</i>	\$48,350.00

Part 6: Letters of Support

See attached e-mails and letters from:

Evan Roberts, Environmental Science Major

Dannielle Lipinski, Vice President of Students for Environmental Awareness

Correspondence with Jim Donlan, responsible for Library Pond