

Student Creative Center

Part 1: Overview

Our proposal is to create a Student Creative Center at UMBC, in order to connect UMBC students from all academic disciplines in being creative, expressive, well rounded students. Have you ever noticed how so many students at UMBC are interested in areas outside of their major? Why else would there be so many active student organizations and such a great involvement in student life? Research has shown that we grow more as students (and people!) from interaction with our peers than we ever do in the classroom.

Our vision is for a space where students can go and have access to the tools they need to make their creative ideas blossom. The fine arts building and engineering buildings may contain some of these tools, but access is generally restricted to students using the tools for a class. Nancy Young pointed out to us that many engineering projects are prohibited within residence halls. Where can a UMBC student go and learn how to fix and maintain their bicycle? Build a kinetic sculpture? Make bio-diesel? Become engaged in creative projects, not because they are required to, but because they have the vision and passion to? A Student Creative Center would allow students to have access to the resources they need to pursue these endeavors and it would connect students from different campus areas and allow them to learn and grow from one another.

Part 2: Benefit to UMBC

- 1.) It supports student life by providing individuals and organizations with tools and space to work on projects that is currently unavailable. It is similar to how organizations began to use the space in the Commons in a whole new way when the SGA renovated it several years ago. Useful space is extremely needed for the development of many organizations and our space would allow them to help connect students to the campus community.
- 2.) It will provide a 24-hour space on campus that students can gather. Besides the library atrium and the ECS computer labs, there are few places that all UMBC students can gather at anytime.
- 3.) It incorporates part of the Open Arts Access aspect of ArtsXchange, hoping to get non-art majors engaged in art.
- 4.) Jim Milani is creating a proposal for a space geared more toward engineering and on a much grander scale, but is having difficulty securing the necessary funding while the fine arts building is under construction. Looking at the queue for buildings at UMBC according to the masterplan, his building might be a long time coming, and our space would bridge the gap, as a resource designed to last 40+ years.
- 5.) The library is purchasing new computers to put on the second floor solely for digital audio and video work. Having a place where students could borrow audio/visual tools for use in the field will compliment this resource.
- 6.) It will provide a place for UMBC students to explore their own creative interests and discover what they are passionate about. For example, included in our proposal is equipment to create bio-diesel, which not only saves UMBC money, but also makes the world a better place.

Part 3: Implementation Plan

The creation of the Student Creative Center (SCC) will require several steps in order to facilitate its construction and its use as a creative space in art and engineering.

In order for the space to work as we have envisioned it, there must be access to as many creative tools as possible for realizing almost any sort of idea. This will require the selection and purchase of these tools as well as the management of their use, including safety measures and security. The proposed creative tools span the gamut, ranging from video cameras to hammers and handsaws, from paints, brushes, and easels, to wrenches and drills. There will be musical equipment and tools for the maintenance and repair of bicycles. In order to stimulate creativity, a library of donated how-to books and artistic portfolios, will be collected. Since safety is one of our main priorities, no expense will be spared on goggles, gloves and other safety equipment. Groups will hopefully donate their own equipment as well, lending to the community aspect of the project. A detailed list can be found in our budget and in the attachments at the end of our proposal. Our hope is to be able to walk into the center and see an engineer painting a picture, an artist building a catapult, an economist whittling a chess set, and a biologist composing a song, advising each other and exchanging ideas and experiences.

We spoke to university counsel Chris Tkacik about liability issues with regards to injuries from tools. He suggested it would be possible to make potentially dangerous tools available, recommending that we attach manuals to the equipment describing its use and make manuals available online and suggesting students read the manual before coming to the center. He also suggested limiting access to those with personal health insurance if possible. We plan to continue this conversation with him and not include extremely dangerous equipment such as table saws or welders in our proposal.

Much thought has been put into theft prevention and management of tracking the use of the space and the equipment that would be taken from it (video cameras, sound recorders, etc). We intend for access to the space to be controlled via swipecard, as suggested by Mr. Tkacik. This will open access to any UMBC student at any time of day, and allow us to monitor who has used the center. Expensive equipment that by nature would be used outside of the SCC (such as the video camera) will be placed inside a locked cabinet requiring a second swipe card activation to monitor who has the equipment. There will also be sign in/sign out system, including a calendar and limits placed on the equipment to allow everyone to have fair access. This combined with security cameras should give us adequate security. The exact cost of this security system still needs to be determined, but an estimate was made by looking at the cardswipe system in the SGA office and knowing that the final location of the center will factor in the final cost. Another possibility that was considered is to require a key rented from the commons' front desk, which would also allow for the additional possibility of signing waivers.

As for the physical construction of the center we have contacted several contractors and gotten estimates on a large garage type structures. Currently, we are considering a 24'x40' structure from Penn Dutch Structures, with vinyl siding (40 year). If in communication with the Physical Plant, we discover that we would need to put out a request for proposals (RPF), we have incorporated this into our timeline and allowed for different types of structures (steel, etc) in our budget. It will need to be equipped with swipecard access, security cameras, as well as space heaters and fans for climate control when needed, making electricity our largest utility need, although it would be nice to have running water for cleaning as well. We have begun talking to

facilities management about where to place the SCC and how to provide utilities; but we still need to talk with Joe Rexing and haven't been able to reach him yet. There are many possible placements for the structure that are flat enough, are unused currently and are not incorporated in the UMBC Facilities Master Plan, including the space inside of Chesapeake Hall, which would be close to the center of campus, and by the alumni house, if the administration is not excited about a garage type structure inside the loop. We plan for the construction to occur during the summer to minimize inconvenience to students, staff, and faculty.

Part 4: Timeline

March 2008: Prove It! Winner announced.

March – May 2008: Work with Joe Rexing and the Procurement Department to write up an RFP to build the structure. Select a contractor, an acceptable building design, and an acceptable location for the structure. Communicate with artistic community to design a mural for the interior of the space.

June 2008: Order structure and choose and purchase equipment and supplies. Begin to create Student Creative Center Website.

July – August 2008: Install structure and hookup utilities. Set up security systems. Continue to order and gather equipment and tools.

September 2008: Build or arrange shelves, cabinets, tables, and other storage and equipment. Test utilities and equipment. Place website online and scan and upload equipment manuals.

September 19th, 2008: Opening Day Celebration! Invite campus to contribute to painting the interior mural.

October 2008: Finalize painting and install the remaining equipment.

Part 5: Budget

Building: \$16,000

Security: \$6,400

Utilities: \$15,000

Furniture/Storage: \$4,000

Art Equipment: \$1,000

Tools: \$1,200

Electronic Equipment: \$1,300

Cleanup/Safety Supplies: \$600

Opening Celebration: \$1000

Bio-diesel: \$1000

TOTAL COST: \$47,500

NOTE: This cost is approximated since we are hoping to receive tool and supply donations, and have not been able to sit down with the Physical Plant as of yet. As you can see, it does have a

nice sized margin in case something goes wrong, and any extra funds can be used to purchase more equipment.

Part 6: Letters of Support

Bradley Arnold, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry
Nancy Young, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs
Chris Tkacik, Office of the General Council

Part 7: Additional Materials

See attached spreadsheet for detailed budget
Biodiesel information appendix