

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ARRIVAL GUIDE



CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Access the Arrival Guide
anywhere!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About ISSS

- 03 About the ISSS office
- 04 Contacting the ISSS Team

Admission & Arrival

- 05 Checklist
- 06 Maintaining F-1 Status
- 07 Housing
- 08 Packing Tips
- 09 Arriving in the US

Orientation

- 10 Orientation
- 11 Stay Informed

On-Campus Resources

- 12 Important Places on Campus
- 13 myUMBC & Tech Resources
- 14 Billing, Tuition, & Fees
- 15 Transportation
- 16 Safety
- 17 Health & Student Support
- 18 Get Involved!
- 19 Jobs & Internships

Access the Arrival Guide anywhere!



Scan the QR code to download the Arrival Guide and share it with friends.

Off-Campus Resources

- 20 Phone & Bank
- 21 Groceries
- 22 Local Stores
- 23 Discover Community at UMBC

Shady Grove Students

- 24 Shady Grove Student Info
- 25 Shady Grove Student Info
- 26 Shady Grove Student Info

Contacts & Information

- 27 Campus Contact Information
- 28 Campus Contact Information
- 29 Campus Contact Information

Guide Key

Look for the light bulb!

Find important tips & reminders here!



Learn what other students think! UMBC Global Ambassadors will share their top tips & advice for students!



Info for UMBC at Shady Grove

Pay attention to this icon if you are studying at UMBC at Shady Grove.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR SERVICES (ISSS)

The Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is dedicated to supporting UMBC's international student and scholar community. The office offers a variety of programming and services to assist students and scholars in pursuit of their academic, personal, and professional goals.

Immigration Advising

ISSS helps international students and scholars navigate the U.S. visa process and maintain valid immigration status by providing the guidance, knowledge, and necessary resources.

Community Building

ISSS offers programming designed to help students make important connections within the UMBC community. These opportunities for intercultural exchange and mutual understanding enhance the UMBC international student experience.

Work and Internships

ISSS in collaboration with the Career Center works with current students and alumni to help students access employment and internship opportunities. ISSS approves employment authorizations such as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT).

CONTACT ISSS

Location: UC207A

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am - 4:30pm

Have a question?

Check the website!

Find resources and step by step instructions for many common processes, such as how to request an I-20.

iss.umbc.edu



Need an I-20?

Submit Requests in the ISSS Portal.

Login and select the appropriate request type from the options available.

iss-portal.umbc.edu

Need Further Assistance?



Help Ticket

The ISSS office does not respond to emails. Instead, we use a Help Ticket system to send and receive messages.



Walk-In

Stop by our office during walk in hours for a brief meeting with an ISSS advisor. Please bring your campus ID with you!



Virtual Appointment

Schedule a 15-minute appointment to speak with an advisor online about your question.

For more information visit our contact page:
iss.umbc.edu/contact

CHECKLIST

1

Congrats! Accept your offer.

Create your myUMBC account.

Check out your customized checklist:

[Undergraduate](#)

[Graduate](#)

8

Register for courses.

F-1 international students must enroll full time every fall and spring semester.

Undergraduate students must enroll in a minimum of 12 credits. Graduate students must enroll in a minimum of 9 credits. **Only 1 online course** can count towards this requirement. Visit the ISSS website for more information.

9

Pay tuition and fees.

International students at UMBC are charged a fee to help pay for ISSS services. See page 14 for details. For questions about billing, reach out to [Student Business Services](#).

10

Attend orientation.

Check your emails regularly for orientation information and requirements from various departments.

11

Get your campus ID card.

Your campus ID card is used to access the on-campus gym, library, and UMBC transit system.

12

Submit Check-In documents.

International students must complete the New Student Arrival Documentation Check-In in the ISSS Portal. This is **required** to become an Active student at UMBC.

13

Join campus events!

Connect with other students, join a club, and talk to your professors! All events are posted on [myUMBC](#) events. Get involved!

2

Request a UMBC I-20.

Login to the ISSS Portal using your myUMBC login and submit a "New F-1 Student Request."

3

Pay the I-901 SEVIS fee.

Pay the I-901 SEVIS fee. The fee is valid for one year.

Transfer students must transfer their SEVIS record to UMBC. For more information, visit the [ISSS website](#).

4

Apply for a visa.

Complete the DS-160 form and book your visa appointment. Visit the ISSS website for more detailed information.

5

Secure housing.

Students are responsible for securing their own housing. See page 7 for more information.

6

Prepare travel arrangements.

Schedule flights and plan how to arrive on-campus. Students are required to enter the US by the program start date on their I-20.

7

Complete the Health/Immunization Form.

All new students are required to show proof of immunizations and complete the tuberculosis screening questionnaire through the myRetrieverCare Portal. Check [Retriever Integrated Health](#) for more information.

MAINTAINING F-1 STATUS

Check-In with ISSS

After you arrive in the US, submit the New Student Arrival Documentation Check-in via the ISSS Portal. This is **mandatory** for new students.

- 1 **Login** to the ISSS Portal. Click on "Search Forms"
 - Select New Student Arrival Documentation Check-in
- 2 Select your start term. **Upload** these documents:
 - Visa stamp page
 - I-94 record
- 3 **Update** your personal information on myUMBC:
 - U.S. address
 - Emergency contact
 - U.S. phone number

Full time Enrollment Requirement

F-1 students are required to enroll full time every fall and spring semesters:

- Graduate students are required to enroll in at least 9 credits.
- Undergraduate students are required to enroll in a minimum of 12 credits.

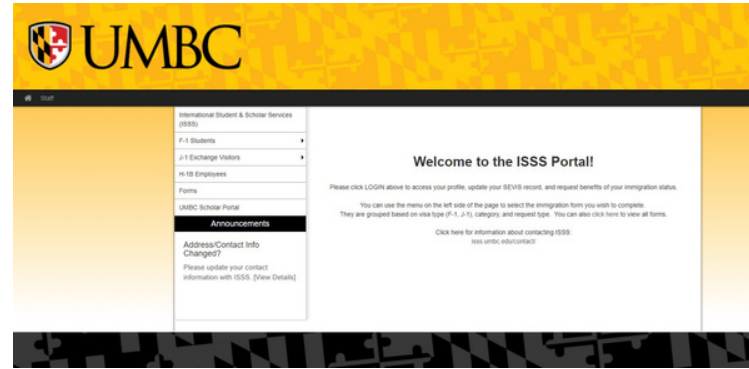
ONLY 1 ONLINE COURSE can count towards the full time enrollment requirement. For more information, please visit the ISSS website



Remember: your immigration status is your responsibility!

Requesting I-20s and Letters

All requests are submitted and processed in the ISSS Portal. Processing times are around 5-7 business days.



Loss of F-1 Status

F-1 students may lose their immigration status if they do not comply with regulations. Once F-1 status is lost, a student may regain status, if the offense for losing the status was not too severe.

Enter with a New SEVIS ID

A student who is out of status may be able to leave the US and enter with a new SEVIS ID. Students will need to apply for a new visa and pay a new SEVIS fee. This method is risky for certain kinds of offenses that do not allow return to the US. Please contact our office to discuss your options.

Reinstatement

A student may be eligible to apply for Reinstatement. This is an application submitted to USCIS and takes an average of 6-12 months. Please note that during the time the Reinstatement application is pending, F-1 students are NOT eligible for F-1 benefits, such as work on campus or off campus.

HOUSING

Important pre-arrival housing and accommodation planning info:

Do **NOT** fly to the US without having accommodation arranged (at least temporary) for when you arrive. It is very important you have somewhere to stay. Students are responsible for arranging their own accommodations!

On-Campus Housing - Undergraduate

Undergrads can choose to live on or off campus. Many new undergraduate students prefer to live on campus so that they are near UMBC events and activities. Admitted students will receive directions on applying for housing in their admissions package.

- Apply before the deadline. On-campus housing fills up quickly.
- Students are **not** required to live on campus.

Learn more about UMBC Residential Life at reslife.umbc.edu

On-Campus Housing - Graduate

Graduate students can choose to live on-campus in Walker Avenue Apartments. Apply directly at walkeravenueapts.com

- Students are **not** required to live on campus.

Off-campus housing options near USG

UMBC at Shady Grove does not offer on campus housing, refer to page 24-26 for more information on housing options in the Rockville area



Off-Campus Housing & Student Services

Many students live off-campus. **Plan early!** Finding housing takes time, make sure to start the process as early as possible.

OCSS offers services, programs and academic and social support to help students. Discover housing and public transport options, review leasing agreements, set up utilities, find roommates and more. ocss.umbc.edu

Renting off-campus

Rent for off-campus student housing is typically paid on a monthly basis. Confirm any additional costs you will incur in addition to rent (ex. utilities, garbage, amenities) before you sign your lease!



Utilities

Utility bills, such as electricity and gas, are typically the responsibility of the renter. You will need to establish an account with the utility companies and pay your bills on time (usually monthly). Typically you will see higher bills in the winter and summer due to increased usage. Be prepared!

Other Bills

Make sure when you budget that you consider other recurring expenses such as internet, phone, streaming services (optional), and groceries.

Roommates

If you decide to save costs by sharing space with a roommate or two, make sure you establish a clear plan for sharing costs and responsibilities before you move in.

PACKING TIPS

Carry-On Items

The items below should be brought with you in your carry-on (hand luggage). **Do NOT pack these items in your checked luggage.** We recommend placing all the documents you took to your visa appointment in a folder and in your backpack for easy access.

- ☐ Valid passport
- ☐ Valid F-1 visa
- ☐ I-20
- ☐ I-901 SEVIS fee receipt
- ☐ UMBC admissions letter
- ☐ Financial support documents
- ☐ Money for initial expenses
- ☐ Phone & charger
- ☐ Residential address (where you'll stay when you arrive) for port of entry form
- ☐ Immunization records
- ☐ Medicine & prescriptions

Food

Food items cannot be brought into the United States because they may carry animal and plant pests and diseases. Restricted items include meats, fruits, vegetables, plants, soil, and products made from animal or plant materials. However, most packaged non-perishable items and dried spices are allowed in to the U.S.



Don't pack any prohibited items! Check the list [cbp.gov/travel](https://www.cbp.gov/travel).

Prepare for the weather!

Maryland has four distinct seasons. Remember to pack clothing to stay comfortable during your first few months.

Summer:

- Avg. temp: 56.8°F (13.8°C) - 89.1°F (31.7°C)
- Very warm and humid. Some strong storms
- Clothing: cool, loose clothing

Fall:

- Avg. temp: 43°F (6.1°C) - 68.4°F (20.2°C)
- Weather gets cooler, especially at night
- Clothing: layers, sweaters & pants

Winter:

- Avg temp: 29.1°F (-1.6°C) - 42.4°F (5.8°C)
- Weather is cold with some snow
- Clothing: heavy coats, gloves, warm layers

Spring:

- Avg temp: 50°F (10°C) - 72.8°F (22.6°C)
- Weather starts getting warmer. Sun & rain
- Clothing: Jacket & light layers

Lost or Stolen Baggage

If you have lost your baggage, please contact your airline or the airport. They will assist you in tracking your luggage and provide any information about its status.

ARRIVING IN THE US

Airport Transportation

Below are a list of local airports near UMBC's main campus. Airports often have several different kinds of transportation options, such as transit, taxis, and ride shares (Uber/Lyft). Check each airport's website to see what kinds of transportation they offer and how much they cost.

Baltimore Washington International Airport (BWI)

Distance to UMBC: 7 miles

- Transportation options: Amtrak train, MARC train, Taxis, Uber/Lyft
- Accessible via UMBC transit

Washington Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA)

Distance to UMBC: 40 miles

- Transportation options: Amtrak train, MARC train, Metrorail, Uber/Lyft

Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD)

Distance to UMBC: 55 miles

- Transportation options: Metrorail, Uber/Lyft

Don't arrive in the US too early!

Students entering the US in F-1 status for the first time can only enter up to 30 days before the I-20 start date!



"Always hold a small amount of cash in your wallet for important emergency purposes. You never know when you might need it." -Ayomide



Primary and Secondary Inspection

Primary Inspection

Present your immigration documents to a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer, who will review your documents and ask about your plans for your stay in the US. You will also have your fingerprints and a photo taken. This process usually lasts no more than 2-3 minutes.

Secondary Inspection

The CBP Officer may require you to go through a secondary inspection if they are not satisfied with your documents. Do not be alarmed if you are asked to go through Secondary Inspection. Remain calm, present your documents, and answer their questions.

Emergency Contact

If at any point during your travels you need to contact the ISSS office, please call +1 410-455-5555 and ask to speak with an International Student Advisor.

I-515 Temporary Entry

If you are missing documents, the CBP Officer may deny you entry or give you a I-515 document allowing you temporary stay in the US. The I-515 form will indicate what information you need to provide, the deadline, and how to respond. Please contact the ISSS office if you receive an I-515.

ORIENTATION

New Student Orientations

As a new student, you need to make sure you attend all mandatory orientations that you are assigned.

Note: You may be assigned orientations based on your degree level, program, or other positions you hold on campus.

Undergraduate students:

- International Student Orientation - **Attendance is mandatory** [More information here](#)
- Freshman and Transfer Orientation - Learn more and register at orientation.umbc.edu

Graduate students:

- International Student Orientation - **Attendance is mandatory** [More information here](#)
- Graduate School Orientation: Orientation is assigned through Blackboard. Learn more at gradschool.umbc.edu/students/orientation
- Program Orientation - check with your program and UMBC email for details on orientation

Class Registration

Instructions for how to register for classes can be found on the registrars website:

registrar.umbc.edu

Consult your advisor before registering for classes to ensure that you are fulfilling all of your degree requirements.



International students may only take one of their required full time courses online. All other courses MUST be in person or hybrid!

Technology Requirements

To help ensure students are equipped for academic success, UMBC requires all students to be technologically self-sufficient.

Minimally this requires students to have a reliable laptop computer and internet access. For more information or assistance visit doit.umbc.edu/students.

"Your UMBC email account will be the primary mode of communication with the university. Make sure to check it regularly." - Jervon



Welcome Events

Many organizations, schools, departments, and student support teams will host welcome events at the beginning of the semester. Look for these events in your email or on my.umbc.edu.

Student Code of Conduct

To view the UMBC Student Code of Conduct or find more information about appointments, policies, or news, please visit Student Conduct and Community Standards website at conduct.umbc.edu

STAY INFORMED

■ Social media

UMBC, State and National departments and organizations have social media accounts which share information. Always make sure your news is from a verified and reliable source.

"Just exploring UMBC websites helped me learn more about the school, the campus life and the general dynamic. Following UMBC accounts on social media made me quickly familiar the university and campus." -Ian



■ UMBC alerts

UMBC occasionally sends important alerts to the community via UMBC email and via text message. Alerts may pertain to inclement weather, campus outages or safety. This service will only be used for alerts deemed as critical to the UMBC community. [Info and sign-up here](#)

■ UMBC email

Check your UMBC email. Important course and university updates and info are often shared via email. ISSS will email students directly with any important information, including any changes to current immigration or employment regulations.

■ myUMBC

See what's happening around campus through [myUMBC](#). Explore various campus groups, attend events, and get involved!

■ Local television stations

Most major US cities have local television networks covering area and national news and weather. Local stations are affiliates of national networks. Baltimore area stations below:

- WBAL - Channel 11
- WMAR - Channel 2
- WBFF - Channel 45
- WJZ - Channel 13

■ Public news radio

Public radio is an easy and convenient way to access both local and national news. Tune into Baltimore's local National Public Radio (NPR) station **WYPR 88.1 FM**.

IMPORTANT PLACES ON CAMPUS

The Commons

The Commons is the hub of student life. Situated in the middle of campus, it is the place to go before, between and after classes. Eat, study and relax here.

"The commons is my favorite spot on campus, you get to sit with friends, work on projects, watch sports games in the sport zone, eat and so much more." -Praise



UMBC Dining

UMBC has many delicious places to eat on campus. Pick up a favorite or try something new!

- Starbucks
- Chick-fil-A
- Sorrentos
- Halal Shack

The Gameroom

A favorite spot to socialize for many UMBC students! Take a break and have some fun. There's billiards, tvs, ping pong, board games and more! It's a great way to meet people!

The Gameroom is the best place to go on Fridays after class. Students are usually there to destress for the week and you might make a friend or two in process!" -Ayomide



Commonvision

Commonvision is UMBC's printing and design service. Look [here](#) for their free zines and games! Visit Commonvision for a full list of [services](#).

Retriever Activities Center (RAC)

The RAC is UMBC's fitness and recreation facility. Activities include: workout spaces (cardiovascular and weights), club and intramural sports, group fitness, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, indoor track, basketball courts, tennis courts, and more! Check it out [here](#)!

"I like to go work out in the RAC. It helps me stay fit, social, and focused" -Sourab



AOK Library

The Albin O. Kuhn library hosts not only UMBC's vast library collection, but much more including:

- Study space
- Copying and printing services
- Digital Media Lab
- Equipment rental

"At the library, if I have a group discussion I book a group study room. If I want to study alone, an individual study room, or if I just want to study and chill then there is RLC, which is open (24/7)" -Sirisha



Retriever Essentials

Retriever Essentials is dedicated to ensuring all students have access to sufficient food & essential goods. Their mission is to eliminate food insecurity in the UMBC community. Retriever Essentials operates a food pantry located on campus as well as a designated collection point for pre-packaged food bags. More about Retriever Essentials [here](#).

MYUMBC & TECH RESOURCES

myUMBC

MyUMBC is your gateway to UMBC services, information, and connections to the campus community. You can:

- Access Blackboard, the ISSS portal, email, grades, and billing information.
- Update your contact information and manage your campus card.
- Discover campus events and student organizations.

Set up your account at: my.umbc.edu/account

Do not share your myUMBC password with anyone! This information is private to you.



Campus Card

Your campus card is your student ID. Use it for:

- UMBC transit
- Meal plans
- Library
- On campus payments
- Swipe Access Rooms
- The RAC
- Discounts!

"Get your campus card as soon as possible to start getting student discounts!" -Kirthana



Webex

Your online lectures and virtual meetings will typically be hosted on Webex. Each registered student will have a personal room Webex room to host meetings and can also join meetings via links provided.

- Get started with Webex at emservices.umbc.edu/webex

Blackboard

Blackboard is UMBC's course management system. You can view all of your courses, submit assignments, view presentations and recorded lectures, and check your grades.

- Access Blackboard at blackboardblackboard.umbc.edu



"Since all assignments and updates are made through the blackboard, it is important to constantly access blackboard to check for updates"
- Jiwon

UMBC Email

UMBC email is hosted by Gmail. **It is strongly recommended that students check their UMBC email account on a daily basis.**

View the UMBC email FAQ page [here](#)

Software

UMBC offers students a selection of software and services available for download.

- A full list of software available to students and how to download is found [here](#).

What if I have questions about UMBC's technology resources?

UMBC's Department of Information Technology has an extensive FAQ page in case you ever need help troubleshooting something yourself. Find it [here](#).

Still need help? Request a help ticket through the Request Tracker found on doit.umbc.edu

BILLING, TUITION, & FEES

Tuition

Tuition is the cost of your classes at UMBC. Your tuition costs are based on your level of study at UMBC and the number of credits you are enrolled in. Tuition is charged every semester and is mandatory.

- A breakdown of tuition (and fees) is updated on the Student Business Services (SBS) website [here](#)

Fees

Fees are charges for services you access as a student at UMBC. **All fees are mandatory.** Some fees are charged only once, others are charged each semester. Find an explanation of fees [here](#).

- A breakdown of fees (and tuition) is updated on the Student Business Services (SBS) website [here](#)
- Fees may appear on your bill at different times. For example, the International Student Fee is charged after the add/drop date

Health Insurance

International students at UMBC are automatically enrolled in UMBC's student insurance plan (students with Graduate Assistantships will be enrolled through their departments).

The fees for your insurance usually appear on your bill about a month after the semester begins, but the coverage is effective at the beginning of the semester.

Please contact Retriever Integrated Health (RIH) if you have questions about health insurance.

How do I get my bill or know what amount I owe?

UMBC issues all bills electronically. Info about accessing bills and your account is found on the SBS website at sbs.umbc.edu

- **To access your e-bill:** Login to myUMBC, select Billing & Personal Finances under Guide and click on Payments & Billing
- **For account inquiry:** Use the instructions on sbs.umbc.edu/billing/account-inquiry to view real time updates to your account

When is my bill due?

When you receive your e-bill and its due date depend on when you register.

- Please reference the [SBS E-Billing Schedule](#) for more information
- Payment Plans are available. More information can be found at sbs.umbc.edu/payment-plan-faq

Students have the option to purchase meal plans that are applied directly to their campus card. More information about meal plans can be found at campuscard.umbc.edu.



Who do I contact about my tuition, fees, and billing?

You should contact Student Business Services (SBS) regarding any charges to your account for tuition and fees and any billing questions.

- SBS Website: <https://sbs.umbc.edu/>
- Contact SBS by submitting an inquiry [here](#)

TRANSPORTATION

UMBC Transit

The Campus shuttle is free for students!

UMBC Transit is a robust, free campus shuttle available members of the UMBC community. The shuttle provides service to many surrounding areas. **You must show a student ID to board.** Check out UMBC transit routes and maps at transit.umbc.edu

"Always rely in the schedule of the transit busses and look out for your closest UMBC bus stop. Also make sure to arrive 5 mins early to your UMBC bus stop."

-Sourab



Public Transportation

MTA (Maryland Transport Authority)

Use MTA public transport options to travel throughout Baltimore and surrounding areas. Options include bus, metro, and light rail. Fare: \$2.00 per trip, All Access College Transit Pass: \$57.00 per month. Routes and more info at mta.maryland.gov.

Cham City Circulator

The Charm City Circulator is a **free** shuttle that travels to popular locations and stops in Baltimore city center. Learn more [here](#).

Driving in the US

If you plan to drive in the US you are **required** to obtain a **valid** US driver's license. More information can be found on the [ISSS website](#) and on the [MVA website](#)

- If you plan to park on campus, you will also need to register for a free [parking permit](#)

Shady Grove Parking & Transport

Refer to pages 24-26 for info about USG parking and area transportation options



Ride-Share

Popular ride-share options available:

- Uber
- Lyft

Don't forget to tip your driver in the app!

Car Rentals

If you're age 18 or older with a valid driver's license check out ZipCar! ZipCar allows you to prepay to rent a car by the hour.

Trains & Buses

Want to travel further outside the city? Look into these bus, train, and plane options.

Bus:

- There are a number of affordable long-haul bus companies. Some options are: Greyhound, BoltBus, Megabus, Peterpan
- These buses have service to all major cities and states.

Train:

- MARC - Maryland train system, travels from Baltimore to DC, and surrounding areas. The closest MARC station to UMBC is the Halethorpe station.
- Amtrak - US-wide train network

Plane:

- The closest airports to UMBC are:
 - BWI- 7 miles away (Accessible by UMBC transit)
 - DCA- 40 miles away
 - IAD- 55 miles away

SAFETY

UMBC Police

Students on campus can call UMBC Police in case of emergencies. Contact them by dialing 410-455-5555.



Blue Light call stations are located on campus for emergencies. Simply press the button to talk directly with UMBC Police.

E2 Alerts

UMBC uses the E2Campus emergency text-messaging system to send alerts about campus emergencies or weather-related campus closures.

To sign up for E2Campus alerts, see wiki.umbc.edu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=5242958.

UMBC at Shady Grove alerts

UMBC-Shady Grove follows USG's campus alerts. Sign up for USG campus alerts [here](#)



Driving and the Law

A valid driver's license is required to drive in the US. If you receive a ticket for speeding or running a red light, you may need to pay a fine. Review the different types of traffic violations at peoples-law.org/traffic-citations.

Drinking and driving, or Driving Under the Influence (DUI), is illegal and may result in deportation.

Safety and the Law

Alcohol and Tobacco

The minimum age to drink alcohol or purchase tobacco products is 21. It is illegal to consume or purchase these before 21. For international students and scholars, legal trouble can affect your visa status and result in deportation.

UMBC is a smoke free campus.

Drugs

Cannabis (marijuana) is legal to purchase in Maryland for adults 21 and over. However, cannabis is still illegal under federal law. Immigration laws are at the federal level, and as such international students and scholars can be deported or barred from entry for marijuana use or other recreational drugs.

HEALTH & STUDENT SUPPORT

Retriever Integrated Health - Health Services

UMBC's RIH provides outpatient primary care clinical services, health programming, and outreach. Services include:

- Diagnosis of acute illnesses
- Immunizations
- Routine physicals and more

It is located in the Center for Well-Being.

More information at health.umbc.edu

UMBC hosts annual vaccine clinics on campus for flu shots and Covid19 vaccines (when available). Watch for dates to be announced in the fall!



Retriever Integrated Health - Counseling Services

The Counseling Center offers free and confidential counseling services and workshops to all registered UMBC students.

More information at health.umbc.edu

Office of Equity & Civil Rights

ECR is responsible for promoting and coordinating the University's core values of inclusive excellence and equity. The primary responsibility is managing UMBC's efforts related to Title IX as well as other civil rights issues, including discrimination, harassment, hate and bias. More about ECR is available at ecr.umbc.edu.

Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center provides support to UMBC undergrad students. A complete list of services can be found at academicsuccess.umbc.edu.

Initiatives for Identity, Inclusion & Belonging (i3b)

i3b creates opportunities for students to build their awareness and knowledge of diverse people, cultures and belief systems. i3b offers facilitated discussions, informal gatherings, educational engagements, classes, presentations and campus-wide events. They also host physical spaces for students to engage with their activities, study or hang out.

Spaces include:

- The Gathering Space for Spiritual Well-Being (Religious spaces)
- The Pride Center (LGBTQ+ spaces)
- The Mosaic: Center for Culture and Diversity

Women's Center

The Women's Center advances gender equity from an intersectional feminist perspective through co-curricular programming, support services, and advocacy for marginalized individuals and communities.

Grad Student and Postdoctoral Development

The office of Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Development ([GSPD](#)) is the hub of professional development for all graduate students and postdocs at UMBC. Look for "GSPD" on myUMBC for all of their updates and events.

GET INVOLVED!

Welcome Week

A UMBC tradition! At the start of the semester, UMBC departments and offices come together to welcome new and returning students back to campus. There is something for everyone so check out welcomeweek.umbc.edu for list of events and join in the fun!

"Welcome Week is the first event of the year to participate in. It's a great chance to have fun, get free food and win UMBC merchandise" -Hrishi



Student Organizations & Involvement Fest

Discover UMBC's clubs and organizations! Join with students who share your interests or try something new. If there's not a club for it, start your own! Click the links to discover [organizations](#) and [Involvement Fest](#). There's opportunities for everyone to get involved!

"Pick a thing that you like, message the club, they'll be happy to guide you and welcome you to their practice/meetings/events." -Sourab



Sports & Events

Come cheer on the [UMBC Retrievers](#) at one of their home games! Many games are free or low cost for students and are held on campus. In addition, many on campus gallery exhibits, music, dance, and theatre performances are free or low cost to students.

Find events to attend at tickets.umbc.edu or on [myUMBC](#).

Student Government Association

The UMBC SGA organizes undergraduate students to create community, support co-curricular and academic experiences, and gives a voice to students. Get involved [here](#).

Graduate Student Association

[GSA](#) represents the interests and concerns of UMBC graduate students, by providing a forum for discussions and recommendations on matters involving graduate students & welfare.

Student Events Board (seb)

[\(seb\)](#) plans undergraduate campus events, including live music, movie nights, trips, and more, Give yourself a break and enjoy time with friends. (seb) provides the UMBC community with opportunities to create and shape campus life into an active and enriching environment.

Graduate Experience, Achievements & Research Symposium (GEARS)

[GEARS](#) showcases students' creative achievements, research accomplishments, and shares experiences with peers. It's a friendly atmosphere to promote collaboration, improve communication skills, and celebrate the hard work of graduate students.

Education Abroad

Go abroad as a UMBC student! It's a great way to acquire global and intercultural skills. Take advantage of the opportunity to earn credits towards your major, minor, and GEP requirements while also engaging in what many students call the most meaningful experience of their education.

<https://studyabroad.umbc.edu/>

JOBS & INTERNSHIPS

F-1 Work Authorization

F-1 students have several work options available within the regulations. Visit the [ISSS website](#) for more details.

On-campus work

F-1 students are eligible to work on-campus without prior approval from the ISSS office. Students can only work part time (up to 20 hours/week) during the fall and spring semesters. Students can work full time (more than 20 hours) during the summer and winter breaks.

Off-campus work

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

F-1 students become eligible for CPT after completing two full academic semesters (fall and spring) in the US. Positions must be related to the student's program major. Students must receive approval from ISSS before working.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

F-1 students who completed their program requirements are eligible to work for 1 year during OPT. Prior approval is required.

After OPT approval, students can work for multiple employers or change employers. Positions can be paid or unpaid. However, the job must be related to the student's program major. Students must also work a combined total of at least 20 hours/week during OPT.

F-1 students may also have the opportunity to extend their OPT an additional two years if they completed a STEM-eligible degree. Talk to ISSS if you have more questions.

Check the Career Center's website for upcoming webinars, workshops, and career fairs! careers.umbc.edu



Career Center

The Career Center works with students at every academic level to provide students with skills and resources for work opportunities.

Services include:

- Career advising
- Applied learning opportunities (internships, co-ops, and research)
- Networking events
- Career & professional skills education
- Recruiting
- Interviewing

"I highly recommend booking an appointment with the Career Center and get your resume reviewed to start applying for available on-campus jobs." -Kirthana



Taxes

International students are required to report their taxes every year in April. The ISSS office will send out a newsletter in February about how to file tax returns and who to contact for questions. For more information, visit the ISSS "Helpful Resources for Taxes" web page.

The ISSS team are not tax professionals and therefore cannot provide tax advice. Please speak with a tax expert if you have specific concerns.

PHONE & BANK

Cellphone Plans

There are a number of options to obtain service and a local phone number. Most students start out with a sim card for the first few months. Then they set up a service with a contract (prepaid option).

Many students use wi-fi to access communication apps such as WhatsApp and WeChat when they arrive.



■ CampusSIMS Mint Mobile:

US phone number and service immediately upon arrival. You pay ahead for a designated amount of credit. Order a SIM [here](#).

■ Contract/Prepaid plan:

Most service operates on contract plans. Contracts are usually 2 years in length for the cheapest option. With a contract, you pay a prepaid amount on a monthly basis.

■ Pay-as-you-go (PAYG):

Similar to CampusSims. You purchase credit as needed with a local carrier.

Local Carriers

Compare plan options across carriers to determine the best plan for you. For directions to local carriers, click [here](#).

Local carriers with offices near UMBC:

- T-Mobile Catonsville
- T-Mobile Landsdowne
- Verizon
- AT&T

Opening a US Bank Account

Having a US bank account may be necessary to make it easier to process transactions. Fees and interest rates will depend on the financial institution. To open an account, you will need documents to prove your identity and your residency. Call ahead or check the bank's website to confirm what documents to provide.

Required documents usually include:

- Passport
- I-20
- Proof of address
- Initial deposit

Ask your bank at home if they have branches or affiliates in the US to make the process easier.



Local Banks

Click [here](#) for more information & directions.

- PNC Banks (location on campus)
- Bank of America
- Maryland State Employees Credit Union (ATM on Campus)
- Wells Fargo

Exchanging Money

Check with your financial institutions about any fees or interest rates when exchanging money between your bank at home and your US bank.

ATMs are available on campus to withdraw cash.

GROCERIES

Grocery Stores Near UMBC

Many of these stores are very close to off-campus housing and accessible via UMBC transit.

- Giant
- Safeway
- Shoppers
- Weis
- Aldi
- Lidl

"The Commons has microwaves to warm up for food if you are bringing it from home." -Nastaran



International Groceries Near UMBC

There is a large selection of the international grocers in the area:

- H-Mart (Korean)
- Orchard Market & Café (Persian)
- SuperFresh Halal Meats & Grocery
- Patel Brothers (Indian)
- Great Wall Asian Supermarket (Chinese)
- Lotte Plaza (Asian) (Halal meat)
- Heritage International Foods (African)



Check out UMBC's Transit Tracker to begin your journey.

Online Food Ordering and Delivery:

Want to order your groceries online or have a meal delivered? Use one of the websites/apps below. Make sure to tip the driver for delivery services.

- Instacart
- Uber Eats
- Door Dash
- Seamless
- Grubhub

Grocery & Food Delivery Services

Many online grocery & food services offer discounts on first orders & contactless delivery.



Local Farmers Markets

Want farm fresh produce from local vendors? Visit one of the area's farmers markets. Some markets have limited hours or open certain months. Check websites for hours.

- Catonsville Sunday Farmer's Market
- Baltimore Lexington Market
- Baltimore Farmer's Market & Bazaar
- Cross Street Market in Baltimore's Federal Hill

Food, banks, and local services at USG

UMBC at Shady Grove Students refer to page 24 - 26 for more information on shopping and service in the Rockville area



LOCAL STORES

Everyday Goods

There are a numerous large retail stores where you can purchase household necessities, furniture and supplies. For larger and longer distance trips, a car is recommended.

Everyday goods and some furniture:

- Target, Walmart, Big Lots, Dollar Tree

Furniture & decor:

- IKEA, HomeGoods, Bed Bath & Beyond

Hardware:

- Ace Hardware, Home Depot, Lowes

Electronics:

- BestBuy, Target, Walmart

Pharmacies

Visit a pharmacy for health, medicine and wellness products. Pharmacies near UMBC campus include:

- CVS Pharmacy
- Rite-Aid Pharmacy
- Walgreens Pharmacy

OCA Mocha

OCA Mocha is a multi-purpose community engagement space located in downtown Arbutus (access via UMBC transit!). Stop by for a coffee, stay for the meeting rooms and events.

"Take some time to explore the local area and identify nearby grocery stores, pharmacies, convenience stores, and other essential shops." - Jervon



Explore beyond campus and discover local favorites!

Clothing Stores

Outlet malls are a large group of stores selling items made by particular companies at a lower price. Outlet malls will have stores from major brands, such as Nike, Levi's, and The North Face. Nearby outlets: Arundel Mills

Discount stores are stores selling items at a reduced price. Nearby stores: TJMaxx, Marshalls, Ross

Thrift stores are stores selling second-hand items, meaning they have been used before. Thrift stores have a great variety of clothes and many of them in great to almost new condition. Neary stores: Goodwill, Finders Keepers

Saving Tips

Make sure you check for specials, including student discounts, when making purchases, online or in-person.

- Grocery stores usually update their store specials on a weekly basis
- You can also look at online coupon websites or the Sunday newspaper for coupons to save extra
- Check out local student discounts at sga.umbc.edu/initiatives/student-discounts/

DISCOVER COMMUNITY AT UMBC

UMBC students are from over 100 countries! Connect with other UMBC International students before and after your arrival!



Chat with current UMBC Global Ambassadors on Unibuddy!
globalstudent.umbc.edu/ask-a-student



Connect with other new students on Unibuddy Community!
A link for your semester's group will be sent to you via email.





SHADY GROVE STUDENT INFO

What is UMBC - Shady Grove?

UMBC at the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) is located in Rockville, Maryland. With select undergrad and grad programs available, USG offers the reputation of UMBC in a convenient location near Washington, D.C. USG has easy access to government agencies, contractors and major healthcare organizations. One of nine institutions at the Universities at Shady Grove, UMBC is part of a consortium of schools within the University System of Maryland (USM), which allows students to explore opportunities as they complete their UMBC degree.

The Universities at Shady Grove (USG) Student Services

USG's Student and Academic Services (SAS) centers support students from all of USG's nine partner universities. Service centers include the following:

Center for Career Development:

- Services: resumes, cover letter, mock interviews, job search, career coaching. [More info here](#)

Center for Counseling and Well-being:

- Services: personal & career counseling, individual, couples, & group counseling, and workshops. [More info here](#)

Macklin Center for Leadership & Communication:

- Services: academic coaching, disability support, student organizations, and leadership development and support. [More info here](#)

Center for Scholarships

- USG scholarships and financial support, financial wellness, emergency financial assistance, and food access. [More info here](#)

USG ID Card

A USG ID Card is required for all USG students to access USG campus services. Policy requires all students obtain and carry a USG ID card anytime they are on campus. **Request your USG ID card [here](#).**

USG Log-On

Your USG Logon ID is the username used to access computers and other computer services at The Universities at Shady Grove. Please see more information regarding how to claim your USG Logon ID [here](#).

- If you need help accessing USG self-service portal or technical support, contact USG OIT (in Building III) contact info [here](#).

Food and Grocery

USG offers a variety of "grab 'n go" food options at the Green Grove Cafe (Building III) and the Grover Cafe (Building IV).

There are several grocery store options near the USG campus including:

- Giant (walking distance): directions [here](#)
- Trader Joe's: directions [here](#)
- H Mart: directions [here](#)
- Lotte Plaza: directions [here](#)



SHADY GROVE STUDENT INFO

USG Local Housing Resources

While USG does not offer on-campus, residential housing for students, there are rental options and opportunities available in the surrounding local community.

- USG Housing Guide: [Link here](#)
- Nearby suburbs: Gaithersburg, Rockville, Germantown, North Potomac, Derwood

Parking at USG

To park on the USG campus, students must purchase a parking permit, pay by the hour, or pay the daily visitor rate. Purchase permits and learn more [here](#).

- Student parking is located in the Shady Grove Garage and Parking Lot 1 during day hours.
- Students may park on level 4-6 of the Traville Gateway Garage only between 4 pm - 6 am and all day on the weekends.
- Disabled parking is available in Lots 4 and 5.

Course Sharing

Full-time UMBC students at USG are eligible to take part in course sharing through the other institutions at USG. [Click here](#) to learn more.

- If you find a "course shared" course that you want to register for, you must contact your Advisor for approval and complete the necessary paperwork (IIR form).
- The credits and grade earned will count as resident credit appear on the student transcript and count toward GPA calculations.

USG Priddy Library

UMBC students use their library code at Shady Grove for library reservations and to access UMBC's Library online to print articles. You can find this number on your USG Campus ID Card. Please [visit USG's Library website](#) to learn more.

- UMBC-Shady Grove students can access services offered through UMBC's Albin O. Kuhn Library [here](#).

Don't forget: USG Campus ID required for UMBC-Shady Grove students

A USG ID Card is required for all USG students to access USG campus services. Request your card [here](#).



Transportation

Students can access public transportation in the area including Montgomery County's Ride-On Bus System and Metrorail and Metrobus systems. Transit info and directions using the RideGuide found [here](#). More info regarding transportation options and services found [here](#).

Bank Locations Near USG

Local banks include:

- PNC Bank ATM (located inside Giant) 3 minute walk from campus
- Citibank ATM: 6 minute walk from campus (located near Trader Joe's grocery)



SHADY GROVE STUDENT INFO

Office of Information Technology

For IT-related needs and services at USG, please visit OIT [here](#).

USG Student Accommodations

UMBC-Shady Grove works very closely with UMBC's Student Disability Services (SDS) Office on the Catonsville campus to provide services for registered students with disabilities. Students with physical or learning disabilities who request accommodation services must register with SDS. [Applications and info here](#).

Weather & Emergency Alerts

UMBC-Shady Grove follows USG's campus closings, not UMBC-Main Campus. You can check on the status of closings by calling USG Student Services at 301-738-6000 or [sign up for campus alerts through E2Campus here](#).

Food Access

USG recognizes food insecurity can have a negative impact on physical, mental, and emotional health. USG offers on-site resource to increase food access and promote wellness. More info [here](#).

Student Life & Engagement

Students have many opportunities to be involved in student organizations and engage in activities on the USG campus. More info [here](#).

Campus Recreation Center (CRC)

The CRC provides students at the Universities at Shady Grove everything needed to maintain a healthy and fun lifestyle at an affordable price. The fitness center has a variety of resistance equipment along with an assortment of aerobic/cardio classes. Students can access strength training, free weights, cardiovascular & selected fitness equipment. Personal trainers are also available. [Learn more about CRC here](#)



Need more help? See below for important USG contacts

UMBC at The Universities at Shady Grove

- shadygrove.umbc.edu
- 301-738-6081
- Email: shadygrove@umbc.edu

Universities at Shady Grove

- shadygrove.umd.edu

CAMPUS CONTACT INFORMATION

Campus Contacts & Services

Find who to contact with your questions

Academic Advising (Graduate) Contacting your Department

Dept. Contact Info click here. Select program name then scroll to bottom

- Grad student advising, credits & course loads, degree requirements

Academic Advising (Undergraduate)

Academic & Pre-Professional Advising (410-455-2729)
advising@umbc.edu advising.umbc.edu

- UG student advising, credit & course load info, degree requirements

Academic Advising (Undergrad) Pre-Medical, Pre-Dental

Academic & Pre-Professional Advising (410-455-2729)
<https://alliedhealth.umbc.edu>

- UG student advising for students in pre-professional programs

Adding or Dropping Courses

Registrar's Office (410-455-2500), Sherman Hall B-Wing 221.

registrar@umbc.edu registrar.umbc.edu

- Adding & dropping courses, enrollment, & pre-requisite policies

Billing, Tuition & Fees

Student Business Services (410-455-2288),
Administration Building
3rd Floor

sbs@umbc.edu sbs.umbc.edu

- Paying tuition & fees, payment plans & resolving financial holds

Campus Life, Clubs & Organizations

Campus Life (410-455-3462)
campuslife@umbc.edu campuslife.umbc.edu

Community Engagement & Service

Shriver Center (410-455-2493)

shrivervcenter.umbc.edu

- Service learning, leadership, community & civic engagement opportunities

Disability Services

Student Disability Services (410-455-2459)

sds.umbc.edu

- General info/accommodated testing: disAbility@umbc.edu Note-taking inquiry: sdsnotetaking@umbc.edu
- Test/exam accommodations, note-taking assistance, interpreting/transcribing services, alternate format for printed or inaccessible text, assistive technology, accessible housing

Diversity, Inclusion & Equality Resources

Office of Equity and Civil Rights

ecr.umbc.edu

i3b: Initiatives for Identity, Inclusion & Belonging

i3b@umbc.edu i3b.umbc.edu

- Culture & diversity resources, LGBTQ+ support, religion & spirituality resources

Doctor & Medical Care

Retriever Integrated Health - Health Services

Location: The Center for Well-Being

(410-455-2542) rih@umbc.edu uhs.umbc.edu

- On-campus health clinic, medical services
- My Retriever Care: myretrievercare.umbc.edu/

Emergencies

UMBC Police (410-455-5555) or 911

police@umbc.edu police.umbc.edu

English Language Support

English Language Institute, contact: eli@umbc.edu
eli.umbc.edu

CAMPUS CONTACT INFORMATION

Campus Contacts & Services

Find who to contact with your questions

Fitness, Sport & Recreation

RAC (Retriever Activities Center)
(410-455-8888) recreation.umbc.edu

- Gym, sports clubs, intramurals, group fitness

Food Insecurity

Retriever Essentials retrieveressentials@umbc.edu
retrieveressentials.umbc.edu

- Food pantry, access to essential food & goods

Gender Equity Support & Resources

Women's Center (410-455-2714)
womenscenter@umbc.edu womenscenter.umbc.edu

- Programming, support, & advocacy for marginalized communities

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Graduate Student Association (410-455-2773)
gsa@umbc.edu gsa.umbc.edu

- Grad student orgs, research, writing support, GEARS

Health Insurance Requirements

Retriever Integrated Health - Health Services
(410-455-2542) rih@umbc.edu health.umbc.edu

- Information on health insurance requirements, coverage & payment

International Student Support

International Student & Scholar Service (ISSS)
issss.umbc.edu Contact: issss.umbc.edu/contact/

- Support, programming & services for UMBC's international community

Jobs, Internships & Career Planning

Career Center (410-455-2216)
careers@umbc.edu careers.umbc.edu

- Resources, workshops & career planning services

Library

Albin O. Kuhn (AOK) Library 410-455-2232
aok@umbc.edu library.umbc.edu

- Access books, databases & materials, study space, technology rental

Living Off-Campus

Off Campus Student Services (410-455-2770)
ocss@umbc.edu ocss.umbc.edu

- Finding off campus housing; leasing info, housing policies, transfer student support

Living On-Campus

Residential Life (410-455-2591)
reslife@umbc.edu reslife.umbc.edu

- Campus housing, residence halls & apartments

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Retriever Integrated Health - Counseling Center
410-455-2472 counseling@umbc.edu
counseling.umbc.edu

- Free, confidential counseling services, mental health & wellbeing support for students

Parking

Parking Services [Request Help](http://requesthelp.umbc.edu)
(410-455-2551) parking.umbc.edu

- Parking permits, parking rules, regulations

Postal Services

Campus Card Center (443-612-2273)
campuscard.umbc.edu

- Postage & shipping services

Printing & Design Services

Commonvision (410-455-1884)
commonvision@umbc.edu
commonvision.umbc.edu

CAMPUS CONTACT INFORMATION

Campus Contacts & Services

Find who to contact with your questions

Public Transportation (not UMBC transit)

Off Campus Student Services (410-455-2770)

ocss@umbc.edu ocss.umbc.edu

- Local transport options: buses, trains, car sharing

Registration & Enrollment

Registrar's Office (410-455-2500)

registrar@umbc.edu registrar.umbc.edu

- Enrollment, registering for classes & pre-requisite requirements, graduation progression

Scholarships

Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships

(410-455-2387) financialaid.umbc.edu

- Administration & information about UMBC scholarships

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, & Bias Resources & Policies

Office of Equity and Civil Rights (410-455-1717)

ecr.umbc.edu

- Comprehensive and confidential support, education & training on Title XI & civil rights matters

UMBC at Shady Grove Information

UMBC at The Universities at Shady Grove:

(301-738-6081) shadygrove@umbc.edu

shadygrove.umbc.edu

- Support for UMBC students attending the Universities at Shady Grove campus

Student Identification Cards

Campus Card Center (443-612-2273)

campuscard.umbc.edu

- Getting a student ID card, lost or damaged campus card, meal plan info

Study Abroad as a UMBC student

Education Abroad (410-455-8175)

educationabroad@umbc.edu

studyabroad.umbc.edu

- Education abroad opportunities for current UMBC students

Technology Support

Technology Support Center [Submit a help ticket](#)

(410-455-3838) doit.umbc.edu

- Assistance with email accounts, software, campus network, lab use, Blackboard

Transcripts

Registrar's Office registrar@umbc.edu

(410-455-2500) registrar.umbc.edu

- Requesting transcripts & transcript evaluation

Tutoring & Academic Support (UG)

Academic Success Center (410-455-2444)

academicsuccess@umbc.edu

academicsuccess.umbc.edu

- Peer tutoring services for 100-300 level courses, academic policy information & placement testing

UMBC Transportation

UMBC Transit (410-455-3974) transit@umbc.edu

umbc.edu/transit

- Campus and surrounding shuttle service

24 Hour Study Spaces (including printer & computer access)

Retriever Learning Center (410-455-2232)

aok@umbc.edu library.umbc.edu

- Computers, printing services, study rooms, tutoring centers, whiteboards

Source: [Undergraduate New Student Orientation & Advising Guide](#)