April 22, 2020

Dear We Believe You Community,

Greetings from social distance!
We hope that this message reaches you and your loved-ones healthy and in good spirits during this difficult time. It is hard to believe it has been nearly a month since we were last together. By now, you are well into social distancing and online learning; however, we understand that the transition to online life and the journey to finding a “new norm” is proving to be a harder adjustment than initially anticipated. We, too, deeply lament and mourn the loss of our ability to connect with you on-campus, especially when we were able to create and share such a vibrant atmosphere of open discussion around topics of sexual violence and culture change at UMBC. We understand that there are still many unanswered questions and it is scary time for many, especially as we begin to travel through unfamiliar territory that generates many new and complex emotions. Rest assure, we are still committed to working with you during this challenging time and remain dedicated to the missions that we set out to address earlier this semester and academic year.

Meanwhile, everyone should continue to follow the critically important recommendations of social distancing and personal hygiene. University status is open, with employees working remotely. Facilities will remain closed. Maryland is currently under a Stay at Home Order and face-coverings are required when in retail establishments and public transportation. For the most updated information and more information on actions to reduce COVID-19 risks in our community, please visit covid19.umbc.edu.

Here is a list of important updates regarding We Believe You and other essential services and resources:
• **We Believe You Discussion Group:** The WBY Discussion Group is still offered weekly on Wednesdays at 4PM via Webex. If you are interested in joining We Believe You Discussion Group, please send an email to either Amelia (meman1@umbc.edu) or Scout (hertl1@umbc.edu) and let them know you would like to join!

Today’s (4/22/20) meeting topic will be on sitting with and processing emotions.

• **Continuing Support and Services:** As you probably already know, all in-person We Believe You and collaborative events are cancelled for the remaining duration of the spring 2020 semester. **General Body Meetings are currently not being conducted,** however; we are willing to meet with members of our community if you wish to schedule a one-on-one with a member of our executive board. Overall, we are willing to do whatever it takes to support you all as we make our way through these unsure times. To get connected with a member of the We Believe You team, please email us at: webelieveyou.umbc@gmail.com

**To report and seek services for incidents related to sexual violence, relationship violence, and all other sexual misconduct, complete the [online form](#) located on the [Office of Equity and Inclusion's website](#).**

**Off-Campus Resources:**

- MCASA is still open and supporting survivors.
- The National Sexual Assault Hotline is 24/7, confidential and free: 800-656-HOPE (4673 and through chat).
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline is 24/7, confidential and free: 1-800-799-7233 and through chat.
- Visit Retriever Courage for a more extensive list of off-campus resources and support
  - We Believe You’s Resources Guide
  - Sexual Assault (Local Resource) Flyer
  - GBMC Safe Exam Program

• **UMBC’s 2020 Virtual Sexual Assault Awareness Month:** There is still time to participate in April’s SAAM events. Join us as we come together to honor survivors and participate in UMBC Women Center’s Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) 2020 online.
“Each week during April, we will focus on a specific topic/theme as it relates to sexual violence awareness and prevention (see image below). Together, via our social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, we can watch videos, read articles, and engage in other content for learning and skill-building.”

Each week during April, the Women’s Center will be focusing on various topics and issues related to sexual violence awareness and prevention [see flyer below]. Follow UMBC Women’s Center on social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to watch videos, read articles, and engage in other content for learning and skill-building. Leave comments or ask questions. Stay tuned to the Women’s Center’s myUMBC for more details.

- **UMBC Women’s Center:** //We are sharing the following message from the UMBC Women’s Center//

The Women's Center will continue providing support and services remotely for the rest of the spring semester based on the 3/19 guidance from UMBC beginning March 23rd. The Women's Center space including the lounge and lactation room will not be open until further notice.

  - Individualized Support Meetings: The Women's Center professional staff are available for individual meetings and support which they can provide via phone or video chat; to schedule an appointment, email womenscenter@umbc.edu. If you are already working with a specific staff member and need to set up
additional meetings, feel free to reach out to the staff member you have been working with directly (via email or even g-chat!).

- The Women’s Center is offering Virtual “Free Hour” Hangout Sessions! “Join some of your favorite Women’s Center staff in our virtual lounge for some fun check-in questions, ice breakers, and general catching up all while maintaining appropriate social distancing and staying home!” Visit the Women’s Center myUMBC Event’s page for more information.

- Women’s Center Program/Events Cancellations: All Women’s Center programming and events for the rest of the spring semester are cancelled in place for a virtual format. Please continue to closely monitor this myUMBC page and your email accounts as virtual options are made to accommodate our community members. The Women’s Center will post which events are going virtual on their specific events post via myUMBC.

- Follow UMBC Women’s Center on social media for more resources and further updates: Blog | Facebook | Twitter | Instagram

- **Student Disability Services:** Students registered with SDS as a way of keeping in touch during the COVID-19 pandemic, SDS is wanting to ensure that you are able to utilize your approved accommodations when needed now that UMBC is conducting courses and campus operations completely online. SDS staff is working remotely Monday through Friday during regular business hours, so please reach out to SDS if you have any questions or concerns.
  - For general questions, you can call the main number at 410-455-2459 or you can email disAbility@umbc.edu
  - If you want to speak with an individual staff member about any specific challenges you are facing, you can either email that staff person directly or schedule a virtual appointment in the Accommodate online portal.
  - For Notetaking questions, email: SDSnotetaking@umbc.edu
  - For Deaf and hard-of-hearing services, assistive technology questions, or testing concerns, email Michael Canale at canale@umbc.edu or schedule a General Appointment in Accommodate.
  - For academic support and advising resources, and for Shady Grove campus students, email Cassie Kilroy Thompson at mthomps2@umbc.edu or schedule a General Appointment in Accommodate.
  - To request additional (or a change in) accommodations, make sure you have submitted your supporting medical documentation and then email disAbility@umbc.edu. SDS will send you instructions for scheduling an Update Accommodations appointment.
• **Haven at UMBC**: The Haven at College, a UMBC partner providing outpatient treatment and recovery housing, is now admitting students to its confidential virtual outpatient program tailored to the specific needs of college students. All online outpatient services are covered by student health insurance (telehealth services in-network with Carefirst) and students can connect with like-minded peers who, along with Haven clinicians, provide community, accountability, and relief from isolation during this challenging time. Treatment services include group, individual and family therapy; case management; life skills and educational sessions. Community support includes recovery coaching, family support, online recovery meetings and online peer support. UMBC’s Haven Recovery Residence has suspended services at this time. The Haven Residence at College Park is open to UMBC students.

Additional information is provided in the attached flyers. For more information, please call 888-224-2836.

• **University Health Services**: During the remote instruction period, University Health Services will be providing services remotely using phone and audio/video services weekdays from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Please call 410-455-2542 and leave a message and a provider will contact you. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you have never been seen at UHS before, we cannot currently see “new patients” via telehealth visits. Please call your Primary Care Provider, if you have one, or a local office/clinic, urgent care, or emergency room.

• **UMBC Counseling Center**: The Counseling Center staff will be providing services remotely until further notice. If you would like to speak with a Counseling Center clinician, you may call 410-455-2472 and leave a message including your name, email address, phone number, and UMBC ID#. Voicemail is checked regularly between the hours of 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday. A representative will respond to your call as quickly as possible during business hours. If you are experiencing a life-threatening mental health emergency and cannot wait for our return call during business hours, please call UMBC Police at 410-455-5555 or off campus call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.
  - Counseling Center’s Statement on Coronavirus and Xenophobia
  - Covid-19 Resources
  - NAMI HelpLine Coronavirus Information and Resources Guide: The resources were organized based on 12 questions that focus on vulnerable populations.
  - Grief and COVID-19: Morning our bygone lives
  - Speaking of Psychology: Managing Your Mental Health During COVID-19

In addition to individual counseling, UMBC is still offering remote, virtual **Group Counseling** services and webinars. Please visit the Counseling Center’s myUMBC page for more details and information on how to sign-up for the series:
o LET’s MEDITATE @UMBC: A free drop-series of 30-minute guided meditations.
  o Women of Color Coping Circle: Virtual Drop-In Webinar Series
  o Trans Drop-In Group: Occurs weekly on Fridays at 2pm
  o Grad Students Drop-In
  o Skills 4 Success Session

Monday, April 27 (10am-11am), UMBC Counseling Center is offering an online interactive 1-hour webinar, Coping with COVID, which will “discuss the unique stressors of living through a pandemic and coping strategies as outlined by Dr. Russ Harris”.

• **UMBC Retriever Essentials**: At the present time, under the COVID-19 guidelines issued by the UMBC campus, the Retriever Essentials Food Pantry is closed for visitors. However, if you need food and toiletry items, the UMBC Campus Police Department has pre-packed bags of nutritionally balanced nonperishable food and travel size toiletry items. Contact the Campus Police at (410) 455-5555. Address: UMBC Police Department 1000 Hilltop Circle Baltimore, MD 21250. The UMBC Police Department is located across the parking lot from the Performing Arts and Humanities Building (PAHB).
  o The Stay Black and Gold Emergency Fund acknowledges that sometimes we are faced with circumstances we could not have predicted ... circumstances which require us to seek help from others. Please support us in doing all we can to help students continue their education in the face of challenges they could not have anticipated. In the midst of challenging times, the UMBC community always finds ways to support each other. Please consider making a donation to the Stay Black and Gold Emergency Fund.
  o If you wish to make a donation directly to Retriever Essentials, please visit the following link and select the drop down menu that indicates “Retriever Essentials”.

• **Food and Housing**: While Retriever Essentials items will be available at the Campus Police Station and True Grits for immediate relief, please refer to the following resources in case you or anyone you know needs further assistance relating to food and housing access.
  o Search your nearest food pantry here: https://211md.org/211provider-md-food
  o Food pantries around UMBC: Catonsville Emergency Assistance Southwest Emergency Services Elkridge Food Pantry
  o Shelters and Emergency Services:
211 Maryland
Baltimore County Westside Men's Shelter (open 24 hours within a mile’s distance)*
My Sister’s Place
Women’s shelter

- **UMBC Office of Equity and Inclusion:** The University’s Office of Equity & Inclusion remains open and functioning through remote access at this time. OEI has launched a new [online reporting form](#) for matters which include sexual misconduct and/or discrimination. The form permits anonymous reporting by students, faculty, and staff. Interviews, investigations and resolution meetings will be conducted remotely, and matters will proceed. We will ensure that all parties are able to continue to participate in the process, utilizing remote communication options. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact OEI at [oei@umbc.edu](mailto:oei@umbc.edu)

Additional information about the University’s [Policies and Resources](#) can be found here.

**General Updates**
The Office of Equity and Inclusion is open and fully operational. OEI is working remotely during this time. For general updates about OEI through the remainder of the semester and beyond, [please visit the OEI website](#). Information about applicable policies and procedures can also be found at the former [human relations website](#).

**Communication**
The team is responding by email, phone, and Webex to both new and ongoing matters. Contact [OEI@umbc.edu](mailto:OEI@umbc.edu) with any further questions or concerns.

**Support Services**
The [Counseling Center](#), UHS, and the Women's Center are all providing services remotely at this time. Employees can also seek support through the University's [Employee Assistance Program (EAP)](#). To report a complaint of sexual misconduct or discrimination, please [submit this online form](#).

Lastly, we cannot thank you enough for your unwavering support and participation in We Believe You. We wish to support members of our community any way possible and hope to continue fostering our growing community throughout the social distance and beyond.

For more resources and ways to connect with We Believe You, visit [We Believe You’s Resources Guide](#)

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at [webelieveyou.umbc@gmail.com](mailto:webelieveyou.umbc@gmail.com)
Although we are physically separated, our community is strong. No matter what, always remember that we will get through this together.

We see you. We believe you. You matter. Always.

Take Care and Be Well,

- We Believe You Team

Links with additional important information:

- For up-to-date details on how to access these resources during this time of distance learning visit UMBC’s COVID-19 resources page: [https://covid19.umbc.edu/](https://covid19.umbc.edu/)


- Student Academic Success Center Resources: [https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/student-academic-success/](https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/student-academic-success/)

- Academic and Enrollment Policies, including new grading and withdrawal options for Spring 2020: [https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/student-academic-success/academic-and-enrollment-policies/](https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/student-academic-success/academic-and-enrollment-policies/)

- Undergraduate Student - Academic and Enrollment Policies FAQ: [https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/student-academic-success/enrollmentpolicies/](https://academicsuccess.umbc.edu/student-academic-success/enrollmentpolicies/)

- To report and seek services for incidents related to sexual violence, relationship violence, and all other sexual misconduct, complete the online form located on the Office of Equity and Inclusion’s website. TurnAround’s 24/7 helpline is 443-279-0379. For a full list of off-campus resources, visit Retriever Courage.

- For information about Academic Success Center's services and support (tutoring, Writing Center, SI Pass, academic advocates, etc.) visit their website.

- For access to health and human services information, visit 2-1-1 Maryland or dial 2-1-1.