



Vice President for Administration and Finance

Leadership Profile

Winter 2024/2025



Executive Summary

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for its next Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF).

Founded in 1966 and committed to inclusive excellence in practice and values, UMBC is proud to be one of the nation's fastest-growing and most diverse public top-tier universities. The University's vibrant campus is regarded as a new model for American higher education – a place where talented students, faculty, and staff thrive in a culture that embraces and encourages innovative ideas and collaboration. As a federally designated minority-serving institution, UMBC offers 14,000 academically talented students a strong undergraduate liberal arts foundation that prepares them for graduate and professional study, entry into the workforce, and community service and leadership while offering graduate students a myriad of master's, doctoral, and graduate certificate programs in engineering, information technology, science, humanities, social sciences, public policy, and human services. The UMBC campus is largely residential and enjoys more than \$134 million in externally funded research annually. UMBC is a young university with a national and international reputation for innovation and student success, particularly in STEM.

As UMBC builds on its remarkable momentum of recent years, the Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) will help to further bolster the University's standing among the nation's leading institutions and advance the strategic goals of the institution. Reporting directly to [President Valerie Sheares Ashby](#), this position presents a compelling opportunity to play a critical role in developing and implementing effective fiscal management, administrative, and operational strategies in support of the next era in UMBC's dynamic trajectory. The VPAF is responsible for a campus-wide enterprise of \$700 million and facilitates financial strength and sustainability, operational effectiveness, and the delivery of optimized services for the functional units of budget and finance, physical plant operations, infrastructure and environment, capital improvements, campus police, and human resources and strategic talent management. As a member of the president's senior leadership team, the VPAF will be a vital strategic partner to the president, provost, and senior leadership team as they implement the University's new strategic plan; identify and leverage new revenue generation opportunities; continuously assess structures, policies, and practices for maximum effectiveness; and affirm and advance an inclusive workplace and culture, rooted in equity.

The VPAF should be a forward thinking, solution-oriented, collaborative, and savvy leader whose style builds trust within the campus community and across the wide swath of UMBC partners and constituent groups. The VPAF will be adept at change management, with the ability to advocate for and bolster a suite of university services, motivate and inspire colleagues, and manage complex and intersecting priorities, while maintaining forward momentum. The VPAF will have the ability to coalesce institutional priorities and achieve transformative results using appropriate technology and sophisticated data analysis to inform strategic decisions. Demonstrated progressively responsible experience, expertise, and successful outcomes leading financial strategy, budget, and business operations teams across a complex organizational structure and an earned bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, accounting, finance, or a closely related field are required. An advanced degree and experience working in higher education administration are highly preferred.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this document.

Role of the Vice President for Administration and Finance

The Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) serves as the University's chief fiscal and administrative officer, overseeing all aspects of the University's operations: budget and finance, physical plant operations, infrastructure and environment, capital improvements, campus police, and human resources and strategic talent management. Reporting to the President and serving as an integral member of the senior leadership team, the VPAF will be responsible for the development of the University's financial management strategy and contribute to the development of the organization's strategic goals. In addition to the strategic components, the VPAF will be charged with developing and implementing more sophisticated policies and procedures both in the finance and general operational realms that align with the mission and values of the University.

The VPAF provides leadership for a [team across an array of functional units](#), including the following:

- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Card and Mail Services](#)
- [Environmental Safety and Health](#)
- [Facilities Management](#)
- [Financial Services](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Management Advisory Services](#)
- [Parking Services](#)
- [Police](#)
- [Procurement](#)
- [Student Business Services](#)
- [Sustainability](#)

The VPAF leads a division of over 200 staff, five of which are direct reports:

- Senior Associate Vice President – Administrative Services
- Associate Vice President – Administration and Finance
- Assistant Vice President and Controller – Financial Services
- Chief Human Resources Officer and Associate Vice President – Human Resources
- Chief of Police

The VPAF is responsible for the following duties, which are not intended to be all-inclusive:

- Lead the University budget, financial operating system, and short- and long-term financial strategies in order to ensure UMBC is able to effectively deliver its mission and produce results in alignment with the University's [forthcoming strategic plan](#).
- Oversee the planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance of the campus facilities, grounds and utilities which includes 70 buildings on over 500 acres with nearly 3.7 million square feet.
- Implement financial, accounting, and budget systems that ensure financial stability, in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and federal and state regulations and guidelines, in order to maximize the University's resources.
- Establish a budget development process that is built on effective, transparent, and responsive communications with University constituents, including colleagues in executive leadership, leaders in the

colleges and schools, administrative units, and shared governance to cultivate input, generate consensus on priorities, and deploy effective and equitable strategies to achieve them.

- Support the implementation of the University's new strategic plan by helping to identify and leverage opportunities to generate new revenue and make decisions about strategic, short- and long-term investments that will help to realize the University's fullest potential.
- Effectively monitor and transparently communicate information and decisions related to finances, physical plant, and human resources to the campus community and external partners.
- Develop and maintain critical relationships with the [University System of Maryland](#), sister institutions within the USM, and other state and governmental leaders.
- Enhance human resources, administrative operations, and support services to ensure compliance and drive efficiencies
- Advise the president, provost, and senior administrators on attainment of the University's strategic priorities by ensuring that they have the financial and administrative support needed to responsibly plan and execute current and proposed activities.
- Build upon the existing financial, operational acumen, and customer service culture across the division, instilling a shared commitment to administrative excellence based on contemporary best practices and leveraging efficient tools and systems to best support students, staff, faculty, and the broader UMBC community.
- Work actively with other areas of the university to ensure a spirit of university-wide collaboration, collegiality, civility, and teamwork.

Administration and Finance at UMBC

Overview



The state of Maryland is among the most generous in the nation for higher education, and UMBC's largest source of revenue is derived from state appropriation, closely followed by tuition and fees. Of the \$696.5 million annual operating budget for FY2025, 32.1% is derived from state appropriation, 23.4% from tuition and fees, 24.9% from contracts and grants, 12.4% from auxiliary services, and 5.68% from other sources. For the 2023-24 academic year, 74% of undergraduate students received financial aid.

As the University looks ahead to ensure its longevity and financial health, it must maintain affordability and accessibility, sustain positive enrollment trends, build its research infrastructure, attract new revenue and partnerships, and increase philanthropy to build the endowment. The Grit and Greatness campaign, launched in 2017 on the heels of the University's 50th anniversary and concluding in 2022, raised more than \$189 million. Much of the funds raised will

go toward scholarships and fellowships, program support, and research development; 37% of campaign commitments and gifts have been for the endowment. The endowment doubled to more than \$136 million.

The 21-member University System of Maryland Board of Regents is responsible for the governance and management of the USM and all constituent institutions, centers, and institutes. The UMBC Alumni Association is a growing and global network rooted in Maryland and provides strategic direction and programming for the University's 85,000 alumni. More than 70% of alumni live in Maryland, presenting a tremendous opportunity for engagement by an empowered Advancement team.

Additional information about the [FY2025 Operating Budget](#) can be found [here](#).

Mission

The Division of Administration and Finance is here to support the UMBC community; to serve the University's core mission of teaching, research, and service; and to sustain the resources of the University.

Vision

- We embrace our role as an expert resource
- We surpass our customers' expectations
- We leverage technology for service delivery



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The Vice President for Administration and Finance, in close partnership with President Sheares Ashby and the University's senior leadership team, will address the following critical leadership issues, among others:

- **Strategically partner with university leadership to advance the new strategic plan**

This is a pivotal moment for the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, with a new President and senior leadership team ushering in an exciting era for the institution. The university is in the midst of crafting a strategic plan with goals and priorities that will align with the [University System of Maryland's Vision 2030 plan](#) as well as the [Maryland Higher Education Commission goals](#). The VPAF will join the university community just as the new strategic plan is taking form and will have the opportunity to contribute to the priorities that will guide the university through today's challenging higher education environment to an even stronger future.

The evolving financial landscape in higher education presents exciting challenges and opportunities for UMBC. As such, the next VPAF will be a key strategic partner to President Sheares Ashby, with the experience, vision, political acumen, and inclusive style to honor UMBC's successes and advance the university's priorities. The VPAF will be adept at assessing and advising the President and senior leadership team on financial risk, financial opportunities, and strategic financial and real estate investments that will facilitate the achievement of university goals.

The VPAF will be a highly valued university leader and an active participant in senior leadership strategy discussions, decision-making, and direction-setting and have significant experience working with boards on organizational finance and business affairs activities. These collaborations will be enhanced by the VPAF's experience with highly effective financial modeling tools and techniques that assist university constituents in visualizing and tracking progress on strategic measurements and outcomes.

The most critical priority for the new VPAF is driving the ongoing infusion of investments required for the university to achieve its strategic goals while also leading the articulation of a vision for the University's long-term financial health and success. UMBC is fortunate to have a strong financial base to operate from as well as the ongoing support of the state legislature. The new VPAF will arrive at a moment when the university is ready to capitalize on the VPAF's experience to precisely align UMBC's current financial assets, tools, and opportunities to invest in strategic growth areas.

- **Review and revise a transparent budget model and process**

A critical and immediate priority for the next VPAF will be to bring clarity, transparency, and communication regarding budget processes to all stakeholders involved. Recognizing priorities across the academic and administrative areas of the institution and how they affect budgeting progression will be a key element in the process. To that end, the VPAF will study, analyze, and determine the best budgeting model and process for the institution that equitably evaluates priorities, includes annual and multi-year forecasting with defensible assumptions, and ultimately aligns with the strategic goals and mission of the university.

- **Devise and implement revenue and facility enhancement options**

UMBC's current financial context provides a unique opportunity for the VPAF to refine thinking on how to contain costs, ensure balanced budgets, equitably allocate funds, and to make thoughtful and data-informed strategic investments. Institutional leadership and the campus community are deeply interested in cultivating additional sources of revenue beyond tuition, state funding, and research dollars to more comprehensively meet the needs of both the university and its students. The VPAF will lead the next phase of campus development and expansion, partnering with developers and utilizing public-private partnerships. Additionally, the new VPAF will bring creative

thinking and negotiating skills to conversations around revenue and facility enhancement and will be able to advise and support the President and senior leadership team as they consider and advance these initiatives, which will be essential to UMBC's financial future.

- **Assess financial and operational structures, policies, and practices to ensure the highest levels of effectiveness**

The VPAF will act as an agent of transformational change by reviewing the current administrative and operational infrastructure from a fresh perspective and with the goal of ensuring that modernized best practices are in place in all areas. This includes evaluating organizational structures, financial systems, processes, and technologies to ensure they are aligned to support the University's vision and strategic planning efforts while properly serving the day-to-day needs of the university community with a service-centric orientation. The VPAF should have the experience and sophistication to prioritize the systems and organizational structures that can be updated versus those that require a full overhaul through strategic investment.

The VPAF will also develop a variety of prioritization systems to include the systematic review of the overhauled budget model to continue refining the model and associated budget processes, oversight of master planning processes, and continuity of operations planning. The implementation of such prioritization systems will support the broad goal of building a resilient campus. To ensure the highest levels of efficiency and service quality, the VPAF will continue to foster an organizational culture and infrastructure that supports UMBC's academic mission and commitment to student success that is deeply rooted in service to the community and the state of Maryland.

- **Build a strong and stable Administration and Finance Division, ensuring a culture of collegiality and service**

The VPAF will lead a large team of dedicated and experienced unit leaders and staff across a broad range of functional areas, all of whom are committed to an inclusive culture of transparency, diversity, integrity, service, and accountability. The new VPAF will inspire, motivate, and shape these units to continue their strong partnerships with one another, across campus, and UMBC's strategic, external partners, ensuring the division operates as an integrated, high performing group. The VPAF will set the tone, champion this culture, and provide the unit leaders with the needed guidance, thoughtful change management support, and strategic direction to independently support their teams in a way that ensures their continued growth, development, and ability to perform at their highest level of contribution. The VPAF will ensure a culture of collegiality, mutual respect, and service in support of each other and the division's many constituents.

- **Catalyze and advance collaboration**

The new VPAF must be a quintessential partner and collaborator who thrives in a highly collaborative and collegial environment to develop strong and transparent partnerships with university senior leadership as well as the academic deans, other administrators, faculty, staff, students, and campus partners. The VPAF must have a visible and active campus presence, which will enable them to get to know the depth and breadth of UMBC's academic and student success offerings, as well as community impact. With this knowledge, the VPAF will be well positioned to identify opportunities to work across units, colleges, schools, and externally to build new partnerships and realize synergies. Against the backdrop of the City of Baltimore and the state of Maryland, UMBC is extraordinarily well positioned to collaborate widely to advance the University's strategic goals and priorities. UMBC is well known for its highly participatory environment, so the new VPAF will need to leverage this culture to bridge relationships and grow partnerships internally and externally for the institution.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The following qualifications represent the broad set of skills and personal attributes deemed important for success as the next Vice President for Administration and Finance. While no candidate will embody every quality, the successful hire will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal assets:

- A bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, accounting, finance, or a closely related field, or equivalent combination of education and experience is required. Preference will be given to those with an advanced degree in business administration, public administration, accounting, or related field, or equivalent combination of education and relevant experience.
- Demonstrated progressively responsible experience, expertise, and successful outcomes leading financial strategy, budget, and administration and business operations teams across a complex organizational structure, preferably in a higher education institution, public governmental institution, or other large complex organization.
- Proven record of ability to compose, illustrate, and deliver complex financial reports and projections.
- Knowledge and experience in the implementation of sophisticated financial and performance management tools, enterprise resource planning, and data management systems to ensure robust mission and data driven planning and decision-making.
- Proven success with acquiring and allocating resources to develop and support institutional and organizational priorities and initiatives.
- Evidence of creating, building, and supporting a workplace culture committed to partnerships, teamwork, collaboration, and transparency with internal and external communities.
- Ability to advocate and partner with individuals at the University System of Maryland.
- Proven track record of success facilitating progressive organizational change and development within an organization.
- Excellent judgment and creative problem-solving skills including negotiation and conflict resolution skills.
- Superior management skills including the ability to influence and engage direct and indirect reports and peers and strong hiring, training, mentoring, supervision, and coaching experience to support a team with diverse levels of expertise.



- Knowledge and experience in leading facilities planning and development, including working with developers and public-private partnerships.
- Demonstrated appreciation and commitment to diversity and talent management.
- Evidence of being a result oriented and self-reliant leader who can positively and productively engage as a strategic as well as an effective tactical thinker.
- Evidence of commitment to continuous quality improvement, an entrepreneurial spirit, agile decision-making, and effective management and stewardship of organizational assets.
- Ability to manage, inspire, and establish business policies that support a strong customer service culture that is adaptable in adjusting to a changing academic environment.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including concise report preparation.
- Evidence of strong analytic and organizational skills, including developing key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Evidence of strong interpersonal skills and an ability to establish effective working relationships with faculty, staff, students, and other internal and external constituencies.
- Proven ability to act with discretion and maintain confidentiality.
- Integrity, enthusiasm, flexibility, humility, initiative, and a passion for the mission and values of the University.



About University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Overview

Founded in 1966, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, is a mid-sized public research university in the Baltimore-Washington corridor. It was the first public university in Maryland to include students of all races, and it is federally designated as a minority-serving institution. UMBC was established upon the land of the Piscataway and Susquehannock peoples, and, over time, citizens of many more Indigenous nations came to reside in the region. UMBC humbly offers its respects to all past, present, and future Indigenous people connected to this place.

UMBC is a member of the University System of Maryland (USM). Under the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, UMBC is termed a doctoral university with higher research activity (R1). The University delivers a distinctive undergraduate educational experience characterized by a strong liberal arts and sciences core, and offers graduate programs emphasizing select areas of engineering, information technology, science, humanities, social sciences, public policy, and human services. UMBC's Graduate School offers 41 master's degree programs, 24 doctoral degree programs, and 24 graduate certificate programs. The Division of Professional Studies offers an array of professionally-focused master's degrees, graduate certificates, individual courses, and non-degree training programs.

Thirty-five new academic programs have been added since 2006, including three new departments: gender, women's, and sexuality studies; media and communication studies; and marine biotechnology. Most of the University's academic programs are offered on its 500-acre main campus near Baltimore, with some programs offered at the [Universities at Shady Grove campus](#) – a distinctive partnership of nine USM institutions – in Rockville, Maryland, and select research and teaching facilities in downtown Baltimore.

The campus is largely residential, the University enrolls almost 14,000 students, and it enjoys more than \$134 million in externally funded research annually. UMBC has increased its international student population, more than doubled the proportion of students from low-income households, and more than doubled its number of annual graduates – from 1,700 to nearly 3,500 over the past 20 years.

UMBC is a young university with a national and international reputation for innovation and student success, particularly in STEM. U.S. News and World Report ranks UMBC in the top 15 for innovation and undergraduate teaching in the nation. Times Higher Education has five times recognized UMBC as one of the world's top 100 young universities for strong research, innovation, and an international outlook. The Princeton Review, Kiplinger's Personal Finance, and Fiske Guide to Colleges have repeatedly named UMBC a "best value" university. For over a decade, The Chronicle of Higher Education has recognized UMBC as a "great college to work for."

UMBC also ranks among the country's top 100 public universities in federal research support and #10 in NASA funding. In 2020, UMBC was honored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching with its distinguished Carnegie Community Engagement classification. Significantly, UMBC is the nation's #1 producer of Black undergraduates who go on to complete a Ph.D. in the natural sciences or engineering, and #1 for Black undergraduates who complete an M.D./Ph.D.

Mission

UMBC is a dynamic public research university integrating teaching, research and service to benefit the citizens of Maryland. The campus offers academically talented students a strong undergraduate liberal arts foundation that prepares them for graduate and professional study, entry into the workforce, and community service and leadership.

UMBC emphasizes science, engineering, information technology, human services and public policy at the graduate level. UMBC contributes to the economic development of the State and the region through entrepreneurial initiatives, workforce training, K-16 partnerships, and technology commercialization in collaboration with public agencies and the corporate community. UMBC is dedicated to cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility and lifelong learning.

Vision

Our UMBC community redefines excellence in higher education through an inclusive culture that connects innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement. We will advance knowledge, economic prosperity, and social justice by welcoming and inspiring inquisitive minds from all backgrounds.

Academics

The liberal arts mission is core to UMBC's identity and is infused throughout its three colleges. The University offers 51 majors in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS), 10 majors in the College of Engineering and Information Technology (COEIT), and 11 majors in the College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences (CNMS). About 43% of bachelor's degrees awarded in 2022 were in CAHSS, followed by 32% in COEIT and 20% in CNMS. The University also offers an innovative social work program, an individualized study program, and 13 pre-professional programs designed to launch students in allied health and other professional fields, along with innovative coursework in aging services through the Erickson School.

Leadership

Valerie Sheares Ashby, President



Valerie Sheares Ashby began as the sixth president of UMBC on August 1, 2022. The first woman to serve in this role, she also holds a faculty appointment in UMBC's Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

Sheares Ashby joined UMBC from Duke University, where she had served since 2015 as dean of the Trinity College of Arts & Sciences. As dean, she led the development and implementation of strategic plans that resulted in significant new investments in faculty recruitment and development, philanthropy, and student engagement, and a realignment of operations that enhanced services and created operational efficiencies. Throughout, she consistently advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion as imperative to excellence in both teaching and research.

Prior to her tenure at Duke, Sheares Ashby chaired the chemistry department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) from 2012 to 2015. As a faculty member at UNC since 2003, she held numerous leadership positions and had experience at all levels of academic administration. She served on UNC's Arts & Sciences Foundation Board of Directors and Research Advisory Council and chaired the university's Institutional Conflict of Interest Committee and the College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Diversity Task Force. She engaged in all aspects of the undergraduate educational experience as director of undergraduate studies in the chemistry department, and she directed the UNC National Science Foundation Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate. Sheares Ashby was instrumental in UNC's collaboration with UMBC to launch the Chancellor's Science Scholars Program, which was among the earliest replication pilots by a research university of the Meyerhoff Scholars Program.

She began her academic career in 1996 as an assistant professor at Iowa State University and was promoted to associate professor in 2002. At Iowa State, Sheares Ashby served as a mentor for the Iowa State University

Program for Women in Science & Engineering, a summer research program for undergraduate and high school students.

As a researcher, Sheares Ashby has focused on synthetic polymer chemistry, with an emphasis on designing and synthesizing materials for biomedical applications such as X-ray contrast agents and drug delivery materials. She is the recipient of the National Science Foundation Career Development Award, DuPont Young Faculty Award, and 3M Young Faculty Award, as well as numerous teaching and service awards, including the UNC Chapel Hill General Alumni Association Faculty Service Award and the Bowman and Gordon Gray Distinguished Term Professorship for excellence in undergraduate teaching and research. In 2022, *Women of Color Magazine* named Sheares Ashby its Technologist of the Year.

She received her B.A. and Ph.D. degrees in chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and completed postdoctoral research at Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz in Germany as a National Science

Baltimore



UMBC is minutes away from everything you need — 15 minutes from [Baltimore's Inner Harbor](#), 45 minutes from [Washington, D.C.](#), and four miles from [BWI Airport](#).

It's the perfect location for job and internship opportunities, research collaborations, artistic and cultural exploration, and just plain fun. The nearby towns of Catonsville, Arbutus, Ellicott City, and Columbia also offer plenty of [dining and entertainment options](#).

UMBC offers daily shuttle services for students from campus to the BWI Rail Station, downtown Baltimore, Catonsville, and Arbutus. On the weekends, students can pick up the Collegetown Shuttle downtown for free service to six other college campuses, Penn Station, and Towson.

The shops of Baltimore's [Harborplace](#), as well as Camden Yards (home of the [Orioles](#)), and M&T Bank Stadium (home of the [Ravens](#)), are also convenient to UMBC.

For more information about attractions in and around Baltimore, visit the [Baltimore Collegetown Network](#).

Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by March 12, 2025.

Nominations, inquiries, and application materials can be directed to:

Jen Meyers Pickard, Ph.D., and Randi Miller

UMBC-VPAF@wittkieffer.com

Salary Range: \$350,000-\$425,000, depending on qualifications and experience. The salary of the finalist(s) selected for this role will be set based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to, internal equity, budget, prior experience, skills, knowledge, abilities, education, licensure and certifications, and other business considerations. The above salary range represents the University's good faith and reasonable estimate of the range of possible compensation at the time of posting. UMBC offers a rich [benefits package](#) including generous leave, tuition remission, retirement plans and much more.

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County, values safety, cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility, lifelong learning, equity, and civic engagement. Consistent with these principles, the UMBC does not discriminate in offering equal access to its educational programs and activities or with respect to employment terms and conditions on the basis of a UMBC community member's race, creed, color, religion, sex, gender, pregnancy, ancestry, age, gender identity or expression, national origin, veterans status, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or genetic information.

