**Announcement of**

**The Provost’s Interdisciplinary Activities Advisory Committee**

Since the founding of our university, interdisciplinary activities have been central to UMBC’s mission, our spirit of innovation, and our pursuit of academic excellence. UMBC has proudly developed a broad array of interdisciplinary units, ranging from longstanding programs to emerging areas of curricular innovation and scholarly endeavor.

Campus support is critical to the continuing expansion and vitality of our interdisciplinary endeavors. To this end, in the Fall of 2013 I appointed a UMBC Task Force on Interdisciplinary Activities Chaired by Dr. Carole McCann (Chair, Department of Gender and Women’s Studies). At my direction, the Task Force gathered a great deal of information regarding interdisciplinary activities at UMBC.  They organized their investigations around three themes: Faculty Recognition and Reward; Curriculum and Pedagogy; and Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities.  Through in-depth conversations with campus leaders and faculty across campus as well as preliminary research into national best-practices, they gained substantive insight into barriers to the smooth function of interdisciplinary work, potential solutions to those challenges, and opportunities for greater faculty engagement in interdisciplinary activity. In February 2015 they submitted their Final Report and Recommendations, which I have reviewed and accepted.

To move forward with Task Force recommendations, I have taken the following three initial steps. First, I have appointed Dr. McCann as Special Assistant to the Provost for Interdisciplinary Activities to assist me throughout the implementation process. Second, attached to this email is the Task Force Final Report that includes a summary of their activities and their twenty-seven recommendations. Over the course of the Fall semester, Dr. McCann and I will meet with various leaders and shared governance groups across campus to gather their input on implementation.

Third, I am now happy to announce the members of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary Activities who will work with the Special Assistant on a sustained basis to guide the implementation process. Their appointment recognizes their contributions to UMBC and both the value of their broad perspective on our university and their specific expertise regarding interdisciplinary opportunities and challenges.

With campus-wide support and engagement, we can create tangible change to further our position as a national model for interdisciplinary teaching and research. Should you have questions, comments or activities to bring to our attention, please contact Dr. McCann or Rachel Carter.