

Digital Media Lab 2022 Report

The Digital Media Lab (DML) at the Kuhn Library began in 2013 as a pilot venture to establish an audiovisual creation space for the UMBC community. Housed in a repurposed office suite on the 2nd floor, it now handles the Equipment Loan Program that had been run from the Media desk until 2016.

Website: <https://library.umbc.edu/media/dml>
Office Email: mediastaff-group@umbc.edu
Office Phone: 410-455-1587

Covers June 2020 – June 2022

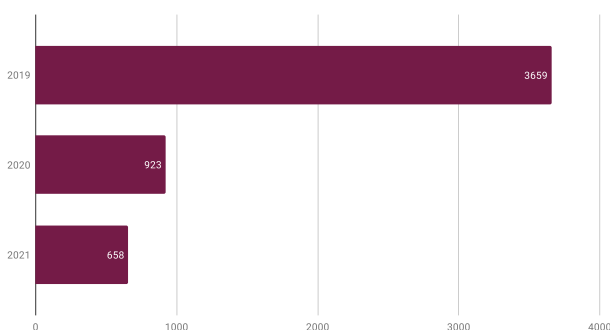
PANDEMIC SERVICES

The library abruptly closed on March 13, 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many patrons had equipment on their account that could not be returned until we started curbside service in August 2020. Much of our initial telework involved contacting these patrons about how to return the equipment, and then developing an online reservation form for contactless pickup.

The curbside form garnered 108 responses between August 2020 and June 2021. Staff handled the check out process in Aleph and patrons retrieved their items at the pickup tent in the Walker Ave parking lot. During this time, we extended loans to five days instead of three.

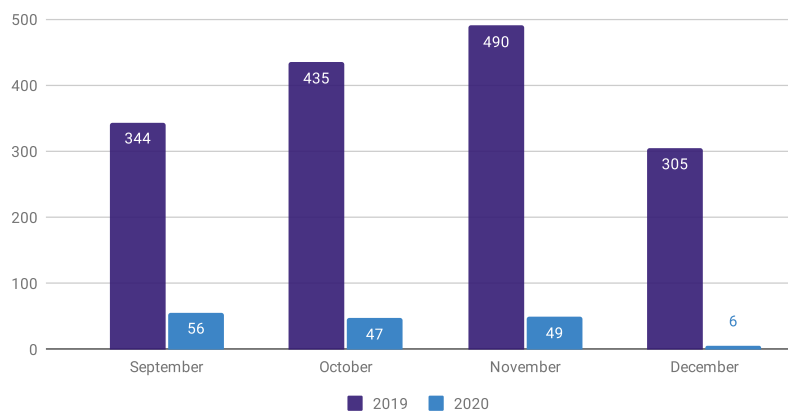
Overall loan statistics dropped precipitously during the shutdown and are slowly returning to normal.

Annual Loan Statistics



Comparative Loan Statistics

Fall Semesters in 2019 and 2020



PLANNING FOR THE PUBLIC

The library reopened to the public on August 16, 2021. The DML resumed limited open hours and began an on-call service model on Sundays.

The lab was reconfigured to increase social distancing and some of the computer workstations were made unavailable for use. The Whisper Room remained closed until early 2022 while the A/V Room was limited to two people at a time so that patrons could safely distance while recording.

OPEN HOUSE

The inaugural open house was on March 7, 2022. In order to introduce patrons to our space, we staffed a table in the atrium with snacks, buttons, and raffle tickets. Visitors had to turn in the ticket to the lab, where we had some equipment on display.

Fifty-eight individuals stopped by the table in the atrium and around 50% of them visited the lab to enter the raffle. Many students and faculty lingered to ask specific questions about our services.

As part of the event, we finalized a brand identity and purchased buttons from Commonvision. These will be used in future open houses.



Above: Social media advertisement posted to Twitter and Instagram
Below: DML button designs



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The 22–25 strategic plan includes efforts to improve our spaces and equipment, increase our campus outreach, and optimize our staffing.

As of this report, three new iMacs are awaiting final installation in the lab. Replacement models for the old DVD drives as well as more recording room assets are on order. One such asset is an additional Whisper Room booth; if purchased, it will necessitate a remodel of the main lab space.

Future open houses will be held each semester to maintain a presence among library visitors. In addition, we will introduce standard language about the DML into messaging from subject librarians to faculty and post more stories to the library's myUMBC page about our services.

As part of a wider reorganization in the Public Services Division, Dakota Boodhoo is slated to join the DML department in summer 2022. Further efforts to reclassify Nett Smith to a supervisor are underway. Both employees have moved to a new suite of offices closer to the lab space.

The DML is well integrated into the library and its strategic efforts only occur because of intentional collaboration with other departments such as Library IT Services, Circulation, Acquisitions, and Accounting & Receiving. We appreciate working with our colleagues and the Library Executive Committee on these and future goals.