

IDEA Initiative Program Proposal

Proposed Academic Program Title or Interdisciplinary Focus:

Program Type (major, certificate etc):

Primary Disciplines Involved:

Faculty Team Leads (Name and Department):

Faculty Team Members (Names and Departments):

1. Describe the academic program concept. Explain clearly what makes this program interdisciplinary.
2. Give a high-level overview of the structure of the proposed credit-bearing program. If a major, explain to the extent possible the required and elective course components. If a stackable certificate/credential, explain the sequence of courses and how they "stack" and relate to existing programs if they do.
3. Articulate and provide evidence for how the program addresses a critical workforce need or career-readiness within the State of Maryland.
4. Explain how this program will attract new students to UMBC or support retention of existing students (e.g., filling an unmet student need, attracting non-traditional students, flexible credentials, clear career pathways).
5. State whether there are similar academic offerings at UMBC and other USM institutions.
6. If this program is offered at UMBC, identify any critical resources (faculty, infrastructure, lab space) that may be required both to start the program and over the long term.
7. Confirm that the idea has been discussed with the Chair and Dean, has incorporated any feedback, and has their concurrence before submission to the Provost for final selection.

Instructions for Completing the IDEA Initiative Proposal

Use the following instructions to ensure your proposal effectively addresses the criteria for each section. Clarity and completeness are key, as the content you provide will be directly assessed by the evaluation team.

Proposal Prompt	How to Answer
1. Describe the academic program concept. Explain clearly what makes this program interdisciplinary.	State the type of program being proposed and provide a brief, compelling summary of the core concept. Go beyond simply listing departments. Describe how the knowledge, methodologies, or approaches from each discipline are blended to create a new, synergistic field of study that cannot be achieved within a single traditional discipline.
2. Give a high-level overview of the structure of the credit-bearing program. If a major, explain to the extent possible the required and elective course components. If a stackable certificate/credential, explain the sequence of courses and how they "stack."	Provide a high-level map of the curriculum. For majors, include the approximate number of required credits and potential new courses needed. For stackable certificates, explain the progression or sequence that allows students to build towards a larger credential or degree.
3. Articulate and provide evidence for how the program addresses a critical workforce need or career-readiness within the State of Maryland.	Include data that indicate that this program fills a genuine employer, industry or market need in Maryland. Connect the program's outcomes directly to published needs or growth sectors identified by the State of Maryland (e.g., specific industries, government reports, economic development goals). Resources can be found here.

4. Explain why you believe this program will attract new students to UMBC or support retention of existing students (e.g., filling a niche, attracting non-traditional students, flexible credentials, clear career pathways).	Does it address an unmet student need? Will the flexibility of the credential structure (e.g., stackable) appeal to working professionals? Will it provide a clear career ladder that prevents current students from transferring?
5. State whether there are similar academic offerings at UMBC and other USM institutions.	Explicitly address whether similar programs exist. If they do, clearly explain the significant ways your program is different and goes beyond those existing offerings. Discuss whether the apparent duplication, if any, may still be reasonable given MHEC criteria. Resource .
6. If this program is offered at UMBC, identify any critical resources (faculty, infrastructure, lab space) that may be required.	Identify the necessary resources (e.g., new tenure-track faculty lines, specialized software licenses, renovation of lab space) that are not currently available but would be necessary for the program's long-term success. This helps the Provost plan for future investment.
7. Acknowledge the requirement for obtaining Chair and Dean concurrence before submission to the Provost for final selection.	Simply state that you've secured departmental and college support if your proposal is selected for the final development stage. If you revised your initial ideas based on feedback from the Chair or the Dean, say so.