The Retriever Learning Center Project Synopsis

**Background:** Student advocacy for improved learning spaces dates from the 1980’s or earlier. Several proposals were brought forward for expanding 24/7 study space and access to computers over the years. Library planning for the current project began in 2006. A concept study for a $1.6M to $2M project was prepared by an outside architectural firm in 2009. In 2010, UMBC’s Provost endorsed reconceptualizing the project with one third of the concept study’s budget. We have identified cost-saving revisions of the plan which will preserve the core values of the concept study and yield a very impressive space, with much of the functionality maintained within a reduced square footage.

**Campus Goals Served:**

- **Provide distinctive undergraduate experience:**
  The Retriever Learning Center is designed as convivial social learning space in proximity to co-located library services, tutoring, information resources and information technology.

- **Improve Student Retention and Graduation Rates:**
  The RLC environment facilitates student success and retention through peer to peer learning, encouragement of group learning, tutoring integrated with other learning activities, facilitation of informal student/faculty interactions, and positive reinforcement of a sustained study regime.

- **Environmental Sustainability:**
  The RLC consolidates in one location activities which are now distributed, inefficiently and ad hoc, throughout the campus, in spaces not designed for optimum performance. Consolidation enables savings in heating and lighting in the currently distributed spaces,

- **Campus Safety and Security:**
  The RLC plan provides for card access, video monitoring, and other features conducive to improved safety and security for late night study.

**Location and Scope:**

First floor, East Wing, the Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery, across front of building. Approximately 8,000 square feet. Minimal architectural revisions to current space. Excellent electrical, telecommunications and other Information Technology equipment. Enhanced security systems. Open 24/7: accessible to the rest of the Library by day, operating independently by night.

**Environment and Ambience:**

- Food and drink allowed.
- Highly functional, reconfigurable and comfortable furnishings.
- Design and ambience which induce comfort while learning.
- Flexible collaborative spaces mixed with spaces for individuals.
- Structured as a socially connected learning environment.