



# Prospective Parents Frequently Asked Questions

*This document is by parents for parents — to answer the most commonly asked questions.*

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program at University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) is at the forefront of efforts to increase diversity among future leaders in science, technology, engineering, and related fields. The program's pillars for student success include setting high expectations, building community among students, academic and internship mentoring, and participation in academic research. The Meyerhoff Scholars Program has been nationally recognized, enjoys great success, and serves as a model for other public and private universities.

---

## PROGRAM

### **What support do the students receive?**

Meyerhoff staff members provide full-time support for the students in everything from academics, mentor matching, internships and graduate school preparation/placement, to personal growth and development. Students are monitored and supported throughout each semester. They can receive academic assistance from peers, campus tutoring centers, professors, and teaching assistants.

### **What have Meyerhoff scholars accomplished?**

As undergraduates, our scholars have published in major scientific journals, presented their research at national and international conferences, participated in research-based internships at major laboratories (NASA, NIH, NSA, Cornell, UCSF, UMichigan, CalTech, Stanford, etc.), and earned higher degrees at premier graduate schools (Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Duke, NYU, MIT, UC Berkeley, etc.). Students have received local and national recognition, and graduates are contributing through research careers in academia, federal agencies, national laboratories, and private industry.

Since 1993, 1,750 scholars have graduated from the program. Meyerhoff Alumni have earned 465 Ph.D.s, 165 M.D. or D.O. degrees, and over 330 Masters Degrees. Over 240 Alumni are currently enrolled in graduate or professional degree programs.

### **Is pursuit of a Ph.D. mandatory?**

Students should intend to pursue a Ph.D. or combined MD/Ph.D. in a STEM field. This is an undergraduate program that prepares students to enter those programs. It is not for students whose sole interest is to attend medical school and earn an MD degree or other professional degree (Pharm D, DDS, etc.).

### **Can students change their major once in the program?**

Yes, as long as they major in one of the program-approved STEM disciplines. Meyerhoff Scholars also may combine STEM disciplines and/or non-STEM disciplines through double majors or minors.

## SELECTION PROCESS

### **Is Meyerhoff a program for underrepresented individuals?**

The program is open to high-achieving high school seniors of all backgrounds who plan to pursue doctoral study in the sciences, engineering or mathematics, and who are interested in the advancement of minorities in those fields.

### **How many apply? How many are selected?**

On average, 1,780 students apply each year. The top 200-250 applicants and their parents/guardians are invited to participate in a Selection Weekend. Approximately 90 or more students are extended an offer.

### **If not selected, can students apply again?**

Students not selected for the program can apply to become a "Friend of the Program." They will benefit from advising and other forms of program support, but do not receive a financial award nor attend Summer Bridge.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### **Are specific classes required?**

Mandatory courses taken during Summer Bridge, and in Freshman and Sophomore years provide students a foundation in STEM, as well as the study and research skills needed to succeed at this high-caliber university.

### **What is Summer Bridge?**

Summer Bridge is a mandatory 6-week program prior to Freshman year that acclimates students to the Meyerhoff culture, UMBC, and the rigors of university-level academics. It includes calculus, chemistry, physics, and humanities coursework; problem-solving and study skills; and team building. Students are housed together in a UMBC dorm.

### **Is community service mandatory?**

All Meyerhoff Scholars are required to perform community service. Program Staff can help identify opportunities, such as tutoring local high school students.

**Can a student receive credit for AP/IB courses?**

Establishing a strong foundation in math and science is critical to success. Students may opt out of non-science courses and use their AP/IB credits for non-STEM courses. Meyerhoff students are required to take all math, science, and engineering courses for their major, even if they earned AP/IB credit for the course.

**Can I get my student's grades?****Will I be notified if my student is having difficulties?**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, establishes requirements regarding the privacy of student records. Students can grant access to their information via [myUMBC Profile Sharing](#), including grades, class schedules, financial aid, etc. Parents/guardians are encouraged to maintain strong lines of communication with their students regarding their academic progress and success.

**What happens if my student loses the scholarship?****Are they still considered a Meyerhoff?**

Once a Meyerhoff Scholar, always a Meyerhoff Scholar. Even if a student does not qualify for continued funding, full academic support will be provided by Meyerhoff staff. Students may also petition to be financially reinstated after their cumulative and/or semester GPA is 3.0 or higher for more than one semester.

**What happens during the Summer and Winter breaks?**

During the Summer, students are required to participate in internships or take classes. During Winter break, students can do as they please.

**Can students take classes at other colleges?**

Meyerhoff Scholars may take outside classes during Summer and Winter breaks. Advance approval must be obtained from the Director of Meyerhoff, and the UMBC Education Abroad Office, if applicable. Meyerhoff Scholars have studied at Brown University, Brandeis University, etc. and abroad in England, Japan, Hungary, Brazil, etc.

**Are Meyerhoff students housed together?****Are there specific restrictions or curfews?**

Meyerhoff Scholars are required to live in campus housing. For Summer Bridge and during Freshman year, scholars are housed together. This contributes to camaraderie, a cohesive cohort, and an academic support network. After that, students can live in any campus housing. Students must abide by UMBC Residential Life policies and conduct standards. Meyerhoff curfews and restrictions are applied only during Summer Bridge.

**Can a Meyerhoff student get involved in other interests?**

Yes, scholars may explore other interests (arts, humanities, sports, clubs, hobbies, community service, etc.) as they pursue STEM degrees and academic goals. Many Meyerhoff Scholars are also members of UMBC's Honors College.

**Why are students encouraged to remain on campus during weekends?**

The students' academic support system is on-campus and they should expect to be studying seven days a week, due to the rigorous program and high academic standards. Away from campus, students may not focus on their studies, and are not available to participate in peer group activities.

**BUSINESS MATTERS****Is the Meyerhoff award a contract or a pure scholarship?**

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program is not solely a financial arrangement. Meyerhoff Scholars are part of a program which provides academic advising, assistance with internship and graduate school applications, and any other assistance needed to ensure success at UMBC. There is a contractual agreement that is signed. Scholars are required to attend mandatory program meetings, maintain a 3.0 GPA, remain in an approved major, apply for graduate school/internships, and meet other program requirements.

**What is the family's financial obligation?**

Students/parents are responsible for payment of application, enrollment, orientation and matriculation fees, housing deposits, books, supplies, transportation, other educational expenses, and billed charges beyond their scholarship/financial aid awards.

**Is a fifth year supported?**

Students can request a fifth year of funding, if needed; however, it is not guaranteed.

**PARENT / GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT****How can I help?**

The Meyerhoff Parents Association (MPA) supports and perpetuates the Meyerhoff Scholars Program by fostering unification among scholarship recipients (past and present), as well as among their families. The MPA hosts and supports a variety of student activities throughout the school year. Parents and guardians of all Meyerhoff Scholars are automatically members of the MPA. They are encouraged to serve as MPA Board Members and Cohort Representatives, and participate in activities. All MPA activities are funded by parent/guardian contributions. Your active participation is highly encouraged!

**Meyerhoff Parent's Association**

[umbcmpa@gmail.com](mailto:umbcmpa@gmail.com)

<http://meyerhoff.umbc.edu/parents/meyerhoff-parents-association/>

**Meyerhoff Program Office**

[meyerhoff@umbc.edu](mailto:meyerhoff@umbc.edu)

<http://meyerhoff.umbc.edu>