

School spirit: a problem at UMBC?

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I understand that students are only now returning to campus for the semester, so this may not seem like that big of a deal, but I wanted to address a concern that I have been hearing about. Think of it as a pre-emptive measure, an attempt to rally support around what little enthusiasm may already exist for the athletic department at UMBC. I know that much of the student population did not attend many of the athletic events in the fall, considering the RAC cannot hold everyone. In fact, I know that a majority of students really couldn't be concerned with how well the basketball team plays.

It may be true that students do not have much to be spirited about (with the men's basketball team's win-loss ratio), but the way I see it, maybe there is a reason (maybe not). It would be nice to see more students at basketball games. Perhaps the basketball players would appreciate it. I would. As important as the basketball games are, however, that goes for all sporting events. Whether at a basketball,

lacrosse, or hockey game, just think: Spending some time with friends while taking a break from classes. Knowing that there is nothing to worry about. Being there as the crowd cheers and the band plays. Meanwhile UMBC wins. Sounds like fun. So, obviously, the fun aspect should not be stopping attendance at games.

What other reasons could be preventing students from going to games? I know that basketball may not be as exciting as football (especially with the Super Bowl coming up), but that is not really the best excuse for the low level of attendance at the games. Talk of wanting a football team at UMBC seems to prove my point. Honestly, I think that UMBC could not handle one because we would probably treat it the same way that we treat our other sports. By this, I mean with the same lack of school spirit. Are we so busy that we don't have time to be excited about UMBC? It's not as if we're busy with classes, at least not yet. They just started. Understandably, grades and academics are more important than athletics, but that cannot even be considered an excuse (yet) when most people haven't even received

their syllabi. Perhaps the cold, hard truth is simply that UMBC just does not have the dedication to sports that other schools do. UMBC men's basketball made the highlight reels because of the Penn State game, which I was excited to hear about, until I heard why. It turns out that UMBC got scored on too many times and really did not do much of anything but lose. Since the sports teams often represent their schools, it's not the best idea to have about UMBC: a school that loses. School spirit is a very real problem. Without it, we are all simply students going to a bunch of buildings with the name UMBC plastered on top of it. If, instead, we rally around the idea of UMBC and the spirit of what it stands for, then that can unify us to do great things. If instead, I am wrong, and if that's the case, then I can be content with saying that I go to a school known simply for research. I would just be sad to see UMBC turn into just another cookie-cutter school known only for academics.

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