1. Do you have tenure-track POC faculty in the MFA program? Yes

2. Do you have tenure-track LGBTQIA faculty in the MFA program? Yes

3. What is the campus climate in regards to transgender students?

Inclusion and equity for all students on our campus are of the highest priority at UMB. The university’s official statement on non-discrimination states that:

*The University of Massachusetts is committed to providing an environment that advances equal opportunity and is free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, military status or genetic information in employment, admission, and participation in academic programs, activities, and services, and the selection of vendors who provide services or products to the university."

There are several resources on campus for trans students, among them the university’s sponsored LGBTQIA+ advocacy organization and the Queer Student Center. The QSC provides a safe space for LGBTQIA+ students on campus, and is a great resource for peer support, advocacy, and help navigating the UMass Boston campus community. It is located on the 3rd floor of the Campus Center (3005), and can be reached at QSC@umb.edu.

The Queer Student Center also works with various institutions within the campus community to support Trans students. These include: the Counseling Center (mental health services/support), Student Affairs (student-on student harassment / conduct issues), and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (Title IX compliance, campus accommodations).

The UMB Bathroom use policy is consistent with that of the City of Boston and states that:

*it shall be an unlawful and discriminatory practice to prevent or prohibit the use of restrooms, baths, showers, dressing rooms, or other private accommodations based on the gender identity publicly and exclusively*
expressed or asserted by the person seeking to use such restrooms, baths, showers, dressing rooms, or other private accommodations.

For more information on trans life on our campus, please visit UMB Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (https://www.umb.edu/odei/resources/trans_resource_guide).

4. What is the campus climate in regards to students of color?

UMass Boston is the most diverse campus in New England, one of only three universities in Massachusetts to receive a Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award. This award honors colleges and universities that focus on all aspects of diversity, including gender, race, ethnicity, and looks at populations such as veterans, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community. You can read the Chancellor's Statement on Diversity and Affirmative Action here: https://www.umb.edu/odei/chancellors_statement

5. Are workshops productive, safe spaces for POC students? Are faculty well-read in POC literature and able to work with students who are writing from different worldviews? Do MFA reading lists/syllabi and featured readings include POC and LGBTQIA+ writers?

Our program values diversity and inclusion in the identities of our students and in their work. Faculty and students choose UMass Boston for its diverse population and opportunities and we strive to make our workshops safe spaces where all voices are respected. We maintain an ongoing commitment to self-educate and to teach material that intentionally embraces a wide range and variety of worldviews, ethnicities, races, identities, and aesthetics. Our faculty also actively seek out new and diverse authors and consider them to be essential to any rigorous literary study.

Our Global Writers Reading Series has included, among other writers, Adrienne Rich, Tyehimba Jess, Gish Jen, ZZ Packer, Justin Torres, Ha Jin, Colm Toibin, Afaa Michael Weaver, E.C. Osondu, Yusef Komunyakaa, and many more.
The English department is currently developing a new track in multiethnic literature, which will soon add to our available offerings. Courses currently open to MFA students that focus on literature of POC are: African American Women Writers, Harlem Renaissance, Multiethnic US Literature, Native American Literature, Studies in Criticism: Black Empire, Literature of the Americas, West Asian Literature. Graduate courses open to MFA students that look at literature through a queer lens include Major American Novelists: Sex and the American Novel, Studies in Criticism: Queer Theory, Reading Sexuality: Queer Theory, Literature and Human Rights, Early American Women and the Business of Authorship.

6. Are workshops productive, safe spaces for students who are LBTQIA? Are faculty well-read in LGBTQIA literature and able to work with students who are working through queer lenses?

Yes! We have queer faculty excited to help all students write the work they want to write.

7. What kinds of accommodations do you offer for students who are differently abled, and how accepting are the program’s faculty and staff about implementing these accommodations? Do faculty receive annual ADA training?

The university is committed to the full inclusion differently abled individuals and is continually improving the accessibility of our campus, programs, and activities. The ADA Compliance Officer was created to guide the university’s efforts to move beyond compliance and towards seamless access.

To accomplish this the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is a referral point for disability related information, services and resources. It provides consultation on policy reviews and facilities planning; conducts workshops and trainings on disability related topics; handles complaints and develops disability related initiatives. While faculty at UMB are not obligated to received ADA training, the option for such training exists.

In addition to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, the Ross Center provides additional support for students requesting accommodations.
The Ross Center for Disability Services serves as a resource for the UMass Boston campus community in order to ensure academic access and inclusion for students, promoting a view of disability informed by social, cultural, and political forces. RCDS strives to create inclusive academic environments by advancing the construct of universal design throughout the university.

The Ross Center works with faculty and students to provide academic accommodations, resources and training in assistive technology, and information to increase the understanding of disability throughout the university community.

8. How does the college support unauthorized immigrants? How does the college support refugee populations?

As the most diverse campus in New England, UMB welcomes Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and undocumented students to apply for admission to the university. To encourage applications, UMB has established merit based scholarships exclusively for undocumented and DACA applicants. Through the Tam Tran and Cinthya Felix Immigrant Achievers Scholarship, the university has supported many such students. This scholarship was created as a collaboration between the Immigrant Task Force on campus; a collective of individual students, faculty, administrators, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and University Advancement. We realized that almost half of our students come from immigrant families. However, many students that have DACA, TPS, or are undocumented are not eligible for federal financial aid. This scholarship was created to financially support students that have limited opportunities for scholarships and other aid.

The city of Boston has a large population of refugees and our campus hosts many students who are themselves refugees or from families of refugees. Our campus is the site of several institutes and programs that offer courses and workshops for or focused on the problems and lived experiences of refugees from around the globe. These include the William Joiner Institute
for the Study of War and Social Consequences, the Center for Immigrant & Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment (CIRCLE), which works to design and implement leadership development programs with the state's refugee and immigrant communities, the School for Global Inclusion and Social Development (SGISD), which focuses on social justice and economic development from an international perspective, and many others.

9. Do you admit and support middle-aged and senior students? What kind of support systems do you and/or your university have in place for single parents and/or working parents?

Yes! See question 11 for further details about the way the program schedules courses to fit the busy lives of some of our students.

10. Is there attention to and support for addiction resistance/recovery efforts on campus? What’s the climate like...-frank discussion of problems or denial?

University Health Services provides a range of recovery support programs, available here https://www.umb.edu/healthservices/recovery. The climate is an open one, with students often sharing work about their recovery and receiving support from classmates and faculty.

11. Is the schedule flexible enough that individuals who work have class times to choose from that meet their needs?

Yes. Most of the courses our MFA students take are in the early and later evenings (from 4-6:45 and 7-9:45). All of our graduate courses meet once a week. Our MFA Workshops, however, take placed in the middle of the day. Our working students usually find that they can negotiate this once a week commitment with their workplace.