



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM TRUSTEES TO MEET MARCH 19-20 IN PRESQUE ISLE

BANGOR – A final decision on the future of the University of Maine at Augusta's (UMA) structure and academic focus will be among the topics that the University of Maine System's Board of Trustees will address when it meets March 19-20 at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

Trustees will vote on a recommendation by its strategic planning subcommittee to amend the Board's 2004 strategic plan by abandoning plans to merge UMA with the University of Southern Maine. The original plan was intended to expand the Augusta campus's baccalaureate-degree offerings, phase out its associate-degree programs, and reduce administrative costs. Under the revised proposal, the shift in academic focus will proceed but the proposed UMA-USM merger will not.

In a related matter, the Board will vote on a recommendation to maintain the existing relationship between UMA and its Bangor campus, called University College of Bangor (UCB). Under the original strategic plan, UCB would have been reassigned administratively to the University of Maine in Orono.

Additional items on the Board's March agenda include:

- a proposal to establish the Center for Research on Sustainable Forests at the University of Maine (UMaine)
- a number of personnel matters, including the annual review of the System's chancellor as well as promotion and tenure recommendations
- approval of a new collective bargaining agreement with public safety employees, one of six employee bargaining units within the University System
- a status report on the System's marketing and advocacy initiatives, which are designed to improve student recruitment and public awareness of Maine's public universities
- an update on cost-reduction and efficiency measures undertaken within the university system as part of its strategic planning initiative
- reports on spring enrollment, student financial aid, and grants and contracts
- proposed revisions to the procedures for recruiting and selecting university presidents
- a presentation on the University System's integrated health strategy
- action on honorary degree nominations

Established in 1968, the University of Maine System is the state's largest educational entity. It features seven universities -- some with multiple campuses -- located across the state, as well as 11 University College outreach centers and more than 100 interactive distance education sites. For more information, log onto www.maine.edu.

All Board meetings are open to the public. Persons with disabilities who need accommodations to attend should call David Wilson, director of the University System Facilities Office, at 973-3335 (voice) or 973-3262 (TDD/TDY) or by e-mail at dwilson@maine.edu.