This report first lists the recommendations from our work this fall. Second, there is a summary of our recommendations from the First Report. Priorities and costs are noted. Finally, there are suggestions for further work.

The committee met twice in the fall semester by PolyCom and once in person. Most topics still outstanding were discussed. A notable topic remaining to be covered is an update on alternative delivery systems for instruction, which is scheduled for Feb 16 at UM. The committee members, plus interested others from each campus, are invited to attend.

I. Tasks done this Fall

1. Refine Compensation Goals

The committee received an extensive briefing by Tracy Bigney on current compensation issues for faculty and staff. The following recommendations were made. In all cases, the committee notes that recommendations regarding compensation may be subject to the collective bargaining process.

Faculty and professional salaries.

The committee is in strong support of the basic Strategic Plan recommendation that faculty and professional salaries be benchmarked to some national standard. The question is, benchmarked to what? It is the view of committee members that when comparison groups for each UMS institution are recommended by the SD#6 committee, we examine whether or not benchmarking salaries to these same groups would yield acceptable results. The advantage would be to compare faculty salaries to those at similar institutions with like missions. Benchmarking to a single national standard may gloss over important institutional differences and make an admirable goal harder to attain. Achieving this goal would require new money; the magnitude is such that reallocation is impossible.

Salary compression.

A sample plan for dealing with salary compression, from UMF, was reviewed. The committee recommends that a System group be charged with creating principles and parameters for dealing with salary compression, and that each institution should then
craft a plan to meet its needs. Among the factors to be considered should be mission, market, local cost of living. We should strive to AVOID salary compression that radically devalues length of service or that creates egregious differences between disciplines.

The committee notes that implementing such plans will require significant funding, as new Assistant and Associate Professor salaries in some fields are approaching, and in some cases even surpassing, those of current Associate and Full Professors. Institutions cannot be expected to carry out these plans without new funds.

Staff wages.

The committee reviewed the current situation with Tracy Bigney. We recommend that wages and benefits for UMS employees be brought to parity with comparable State of Maine employees. This would be an increase from the current 91-94% range. New funding is required.

Cost/Priority
Salaries, wages and benefits are a high priority/high cost item.
At this time, the original Strategic Plan estimate of $10.8 million above inflationary increases for all items can remain. It is probably conservative.

2. Strengthen Criteria and Implementation for Faculty Review

The committee held a thorough discussion of this topic with Elsa Nunez. Our approach was to ask, how could we craft a System-wide plan that would help all new and continuing faculty members successfully develop their careers?

While there are good standards in place through the AFUM contract, the committee made the following observations and recommendations.

- Each faculty member would benefit from a career development plan, updated periodically.
- A culture of class visitation needs to be put in place. Visits can be formative and collegial as well as summative. Peer visitors need to know objectives and teaching goals for the class, and the visitee should have an opportunity to provide them in advance, as well as respond to written reports.
- Electronic portfolios for tenure and promotion review should be instituted, with a common format that could accommodate criteria that differ according to campus mission.
- Criteria for tenure and promotion should be clear and coherent across institutions.
- The committee also thought that increased contact of faculty across UMS institutions, per our earlier recommendations in Interim Report #1, could be helpful when the time comes for tenure and promotion candidates to collect "outside" letters of recommendation.
- We need to recognize that "service" as a category for faculty work has undergone extensive change over time. The emphasis on engagement and connection with the wider
interests of the state and nation, for economic development, career preparation, citizenship, and continuing education -- to name but some of the relevant topics -- means that this category has become more important for all UMS institutions. This should be reflected in the criteria for faculty evaluation.

Cost -- modest in terms of dollars. Larger in terms of amounts of time and leadership because it involves modifying institutional cultures. Priority -- Should be an ongoing medium-priority item; achieving the recommendations, if they are accepted, will take steady attention over the long term.

3. Set targets for endowed professorships and endowed chairs.

The committee reviewed the UMS policies on endowed professorships and endowed chairs, as well as a comprehensive list of those currently existing at each institution.

We were surprised at how few there are. Even UM, which has a good number of endowed professorships, which usually provide an additional stipend and/or research support, has relatively few endowed chairs, which can (and should) support an entire salary.

We recommend that, together with the committee for Strategic Direction #9, we reaffirm the importance of seeking endowed chairs and professorships as part of each institution's development plan. We recommend that each institution decide (in conjunction with their academic plans) upon areas where endowed chairs and professorships could be sought. We note that targets in this area may be problematic, as the achievement of sizable gifts of this nature depends very much upon the wishes of potential donors.

Cost -- modest. Benefit -- potentially large. Consideration -- has to be done in conjunction with an institutional development plan, and/or comprehensive campaign, and/or cultivation of individual donors, and cannot be achieved on a short timeline. But -- definitely needs to be part of each institution's development plans.

4. Provide appropriate staff to support faculty to enable them to increase their productivity.

The committee identified several areas where increased staff support would be helpful:
- Support and training for sponsored research grant applications.
- Instructional technology.
- Support and training for preparation of manuscripts and articles.
- Help for adjunct or part-time faculty to improve their credentials to be eligible for full-time appointments.

The first three areas could be addressed System-wide, by adding relatively modest staff to already-existing operations at one of the larger campuses. The last one, though of lower priority, could also be addressed in a coordinated fashion, if desired.
This is a medium priority/medium cost item.

5. Outstanding Topic

The Committee will attend a demonstration of UM's instructional technology program on Feb 16, 2006.

II. Items from First Report, Summarized and Prioritized.

Faculty Interactions Across the System

-make offerings from faculty development centers at UM, USM and other campuses open to all faculty. May increase costs slightly if additional capacity has to be added. High priority/Low cost.

-use PolyCom and other media for conferences, collaboration, workshops, information-sharing. Costs here would involve staff time to publicize and coordinate. Medium/Low cost.

-create searchable Web-based directory of UMS faculty and their scholarly/pedagogical interests. Costs here involve staff time. High priority/medium cost.

-System support of academic conferences to encourage cross-campus collaboration. Medium/medium

-support established faculty staff groups to meet. Medium priority/low cost

-target introductory courses for development activities. High/medium. (Can work with community colleges, college readiness projects, etc.)

-bus tour of state for all new faculty. Low priority/High cost. Fun, bonding and knowledge of the state for newbies. It is unclear what long-term results would be, so the priority is stated as low, but many leadership programs use this technique.

-when faculty go on sabbatical or participate in projects like Project Maine-France, fill in with courses from other campuses via other modalities, if department lacks replacement coverage. Medium priority/low cost.

-showcase Trustee Professors by arranging visits to other campuses, use visiting Libra Professors to go to more than one campus. Medium priority/ Low Cost: would take modest staff time to coordinate but otherwise low cost.
III. Implementation Timelines

The recommendations of this committee about faculty collaboration and interaction across campuses, criteria for faculty review, faculty/staff development, and increased staff support for faculty, should be taken as priorities for further work. A committee of faculty and CAOs, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, ought to be empowered to take the next steps. Staff support from UMS and a budget for activities should be provided. Within these resources, a multi-year, sustainable program of suggested activities could be carried out, evaluated, and refined. Elements of the faculty development program would need to be coordinated with the recommendations of SD #7. Timeline: begin as soon as implementation plans are accepted by BoT.

Recommendations about compensation: Set up a faculty committee, supported by staff as needed and with CFO representation, to recommend general principles to deal with salary compression. The presidents and CFOs should review recommendations for institutional comparison groups, as soon as implementation plans are accepted by BoT. Gaining new funds for compensation goals needs to be a UMS priority. Recommendations about endowed Professorships/Chairs can be coordinated with the report of SD #9 and implemented according to individual campus development plans.