T4 Phase Two Report: Outreach and Preparation

Final Draft Submitted to the Chancellor’s Office
By The Teaching through Technology Task Force,

July 30, 2011
Executive Summary

This report marks the conclusion of Phase Two of the work of the Teaching through Technology Task Force. The work of the task force has been organized around seven objectives. This report is submitted in two ‘volumes’. This first volume includes a review of the work, progress made and challenges present with respect to each objective. Volume Two consists of ten appendices supporting Volume One. The Report offers recommendations supporting the aspirations of Phase Three of the initiative.

During Phase Two (November 2010 to July 2011) the task force met monthly and worked in four subgroups each being focused on one or two objectives. The general themes of the work were preparation and outreach. The Task Force reached out to campuses faculties, technical support professionals and to campus administrators. Outreach to students System wide was started but is anticipated to be scaled up in the fall ’11 semester. The Task Force successfully completed seven campus visits including preliminary discussions with campus faculties. It produced draft campus landscapes and maps that collectively provide a System overview of the state of eLearning at this point in time. T4 also submitted a (successful) proposal for continued funding as well as several Sloan-C Regional Conference proposals. The Phase Three T4 Proposal received the support of all campus presidents, the VCAA and CAOs. The task force is grateful for this support.

Preparing for the Phase Three surveys of all System faculty members and students is a large undertaking. T4 initiated consultations with CAOs and completed a draft faculty survey protocol (aka ‘Survey – F’) together with the Center for Research and Evaluation. T4, with the support of campus Presidents and CAOs, will implement Survey F in the fall ’11 semester and then the student survey (aka ‘Survey - S’) in spring or fall of 2012.

During Phase Two, T4 generated recommendations for collective bargaining and identified potential problems with respect to contractual obstacles to the transition to a fully integrated eLearning System. T4 continued studying eLearning literature and identified a working list of exemplar institutions and eLearning experts who might be helpful to UMS.

In terms of intangibles, T4 has learned a great deal about the nature of this transition and the challenges needing to be addressed. The Task Force will need continued support of System leaders, students, academic program faculty, Student Services professionals and IT, ID and Teaching Excellence Center personnel to complete the end user surveys and make use of the data generated. For Phase Three, three recommended indicators of success are; 1) completion of the surveys; 2) a System wide eLearning summit in the spring of 2012; and 3) evidence of the use of survey data in campus level strategic planning/investing. This transition of the System to becoming an integrated eLearning organization is far from complete but substantial progress has been made.
Table of Contents

Volume One
Introduction and Overview................................................................................... 3

Objectives Commentary
I. .......................................................................................................................... 5
II. ........................................................................................................................ 6
III. ...................................................................................................................... 7
IV. ...................................................................................................................... 7
V. ....................................................................................................................... 8
VI. ..................................................................................................................... 9
VII. ................................................................................................................... 10
Conclusions ....................................................................................................... 11

Volume Two (Appendices)
I. Appreciation and Acknowledgments
II. **Objective 1** – Study the impact on learning and teaching (survey development)
III. **Objective 2** – Develop a System wide vision of eLearning
IV. **Objective 3** – Map and document the state of eLearning on campuses
V. **Objective 4** – Recommend ways of achieving greater cohesion between working groups
VI. **Objective 5** – Identify Exemplary Practices, Institutions and Experts
VII. **Objective 6** – Recommend Improvements in Faculty and Student Support and Training
VIII. **Objective 7** – Recommend proposals for Collective Bargaining
IX. Glossary and Works Cited
X. T4 Membership: Phase Two
**Introduction:** This report marks the conclusion of Phase Two of the work of the Teaching through Technology Task Force. Phase One focused on two broad objectives; to study the impact of using technologies on faculty and students; and to develop a System wide vision of eLearning\(^1\). The principle benefits of Phase One were a) demonstrating that an internal System wide study of eLearning was feasible; and b) providing recommendations supporting the continued integration of digital technologies in academic units and shifting from a focus on adding technologies to a greater emphasis on effective learning and teaching. During Phase One it was agreed that a descriptive, baseline study of the state of eLearning was necessary step to achieving these goals.

T4 began its work in March of 2010. The Chancellor responded to the Phase One Report (October, 2010) with continued support for the initiative. He outlined four additional priorities for Phase Two. These were to; i) continue documenting the state of eLearning on campuses; ii) develop greater cohesion between existing UMS eLearning work groups; iii) identify external best practices and national experts; and iv) identify options for further development of support and training opportunities for faculty and students. In the course of Phase Two, T4 added another objective, to develop recommendations for collective bargaining related eTeaching.

**Overview** Phase Two included a continued focus on the state of eLearning within UMS and focused on outreach and preparation. In the first three months the Task Force developed and successfully submitted a two year (SIF) funding proposal and several presentations and a Roundtable Discussion for the Sloan-C Regional Conference. Four T4 working groups laid the foundations for the survey work in FY12 and recommendations for contractual negotiations.

**Subgroup One** focused on campus studies (Objective 3). It gathered online curriculum development flow charts (maps). It worked with campus faculty leaders and drafted campus eLearning narrative landscapes. These together with an updated compendium of System wide eLearning support units, constitute a representation of the state of eLearning on campuses and the System’s network of organizational units supporting the integration of digital technologies within academic units. (Appendix IV). Developing campus landscapes is, by design, an iterative process. Even having standard guidelines, these documents reflect the diversity of cultures and their investments in eLearning. Six of the seven landscapes were submitted but this work is incomplete. T4 expects to have a complete and useful set of these landscapes by its August meeting when the Chancellor.

\(^1\) eLearning is defined as learning and teaching through the use of digital devices. For a more extensive discussion of this and related terms, a Glossary is provided in the Appendices.
Subgroup Two developed recommendations for faculty contract negotiations. Subgroup members participated in a national webinar surveying literature in this area. This activity provided information illustrating a variety of contractual approaches relating to distance education and online teaching. The group also reviewed the current UMS faculty contract and literature relating to core issues such as intellectual property, bargaining unit work and the like. It drafted a working list of recommendations for ongoing contractual negotiations (Appendix VIII). To date these recommendations have not been endorsed by the full Task Force but this outcome is expected at the August meeting.

Subgroup Three reached out to the seven faculties on each campus to 1) gather data about the campus state of eLearning; and 2) seek input for the construction of the Phase Three surveys. Members of T4 visited the seven campuses and completed preliminary discussions with faculty leaders. T4 extracted common themes from its documentation of these discussions and noted the distinctive approaches of each campus. Primarily full time campus faculty members participated in these discussions. Skeptical, they nevertheless provided valuable and encouraging information, insights and advice. Minutes of these discussions are posted at the T4 website. Appendix II contains summaries of common and distinctive themes.

During the visits T4 members also met with campus CAOs, IT (instructional technology) and ID (instructional design) professionals learning about the state of eLearning and gaining assistance in developing the campus landscapes and next year’s Faculty Survey (aka ‘Survey – F’). It was clear that the active support of campus leaders and a transparent approach to the use of survey data would be essential to achieving robust response rates and to better align disparate working groups (see below).

Subgroup Four focused on surveying literature and designing the faculty and student surveys. Members worked with consultants from U Maine’s Center for Research and Evaluation to this end. T4 opted to build the surveys in modules and to stagger the implementation of the faculty and student surveys. Survey – F (the faculty survey) will sample both full and part time faculty members. The Task Force intends to complete (collect data and analyze Module One of Survey F) by the end of the fall of 2011 semester. Survey – S (the student survey) will be completed by the end of the Fall 2012 semester. Subsequent modules of the surveys will be completed by respondents based upon their answers to Module One and their interests. Structured focus groups will also be conducted concurrent with the fall survey efforts to cross validate survey findings and probe more deeply into prioritized areas of concern.

As a result of the campus discussions and reviews of similar surveys completed elsewhere, it is clear that the number of questions needing to be studied greatly exceeds the capacity of an initial survey. Thus Module One of the Faculty Survey will be descriptive and non evaluative in nature. It will require between 15 and 30 minutes to complete. It will be conducted primarily online. It will be a voluntary but not an anonymous survey. To protect the well being of participants, data will not be reported at the individual respondent level. Data will not be used for evaluative purposes related to faculty performance or program quality. Subsequent faculty survey modules will be accessible online by the end of the calendar year and scheduled for completion during the spring of 2012. This will be concurrent with the implementation of
Survey – S (the study survey). T4 also recommends that campuses continue to survey their members and build upon this System wide survey effort.

Acknowledgments: The T4 initiative has made the progress it has due to the assistance of individuals and departments across the System. An incomplete list of these individuals is included in Appendix I. The Task Force is particularly grateful to IT and ID professionals who invested substantial amounts of time researching curriculum development networks and informing the landscape development efforts. In also goes without saying that T4 is grateful to the many faculty and students who have invested countless numbers of hours in developing their own digital literacy skills, course designs and time management approaches. We can but offer to these individuals our thanks and hope that they will continue to support the work that lies ahead.

Commentaries

The following are commentaries about each of the seven current T4 objectives. Indicators of progress, T4 shortcomings, challenges and recommendations are included.

Objective 1 – Study the Impact of eLearning on Faculty and Students

Progress: Phase Two (P2) preliminary campus faculty discussions were open to all interested faculty members. These discussions were attended by from 10 to 30, mostly full time faculty members. These small respondent numbers were most constraining on larger and multi-campus institutions. Representative sampling will be a high priority in the survey and focus group work scheduled for Phase Three (P3). In these discussions, common themes were identified. The discussions were two hours long and many perspectives were present. A comprehensive list of major themes is found in Appendix II. In a major national faculty survey about online teaching, Seaman, J. et al. (2009) described a “paradox of faculty voices” that included themes similar to those captured within UMS faculty campus groups. Examples of these include:

1) Frustration with the use of jargon and an absence coherent eLearning planning;
2) A nearly universal recognition that eTeaching requires substantially more time, training and effort than traditional, classroom based instruction.
3) The view that eLearning is ‘here to stay’ and brings both greater connectivity and greater isolation;
4) A need for better designed professional development and technical support resources;
5) The perception that faculty and students are being ‘driven, or ‘pushed’ into online and ‘self service’ teaching and learning.
6) Many faculty members believe issues related to pedagogy and teaching effectiveness have been set aside.
7) Many view eTeaching as accelerating;
8) Participants took pride in their innovative teaching. Many invested large amounts of time using digital and (paradoxically) view this work making more difficult supporting students face to face and keeping updated on content knowledge in their disciplines;
9) Uncertainties about the sustainability of academic programs are exacerbated by the transition to fully integrated eLearning.
10) The increase in the use of technologies as a challenge to maintaining a sense of community;
11) The conundrum of being unable to meet universal design access and support standards.

**T4 Shortcomings and Challenges:** The preliminary discussions were enlightening but produced only anecdotal findings. The completion of faculty and student surveys and formal focus groups will yield data to confirm or challenge these impressions. Within the design of the surveys themselves key challenges include restrictions on the number of items and adequate sampling of full and part time faculty and students. See also Appendix II. At this writing, the IRB approval from all of the campuses has yet to be received. And, a firm timetable for conducting the survey and focus groups on each campus had not been completed. It is expected that these shortcomings will be remediated by the August meeting with the Chancellor.

**Objective 2 – Foster a shared vision of integrated eLearning within UMS**

Three caveats. First, external to UMS, there has been an historic increase in investments in digital media and online activity. These provide a dynamic context for establishing a UMS eLearning vision. University planners must take into account ‘at home’ investments and needs. Second, in the past two years, there has developed a broad agreement that ‘adding on’ technology is an insufficient vision. In Maine it has become apparent that a vision of a System driven by end user (learners and faculty) needs and evidence of effective learning is essential. The third caveat that is essential is to take note that eLearning is not the same as distance education. Distance education is defined as education taking place when teachers and learners are geographically distant. By contrast, eLearning has become ubiquitous and is present in virtually all courses including traditional face to face classes. This caveat implies that learning is achieved through a range of blended learning courses and programs. These in turn are supported by identifiable collective ‘digital habitats’ defensible at the program and campus levels. And, learning is achieved through ‘personal learning environments (PLE)’ that are constructed using digital ‘tools’ (devices and electronic resources) as well as essential end user supports and technology training (professional development) resources.

**Progress:** In the past year, movement towards a contemporary and useful System level eLearning vision has been evidenced externally and within UMS. Externally pubic media have affirmed that online learning is a core aspect of higher education (e.g. “Virtual Education Goes Mainstream” a special supplement in The Chronicle of Higher Education, November 5, 2010) rather than ‘an add on’.

Internal to the System, three (paradoxical) indicators of progress are evident. First, widespread frustration with Blackboard has been proportionate to increased investments in eLearning and a greater dependence on learning management systems (LMS) and support
resources. Second, the pressing need to update academic governance models and to articulate at the course and program levels, models of student and faculty support for eLearning indicates the emergence of this vision. Within course and program models, relationships between centralized learning support services (e.g. ITS and UC) and campuses are critical. Finally, the third indicator of an emerging vision is the increased focus on digital literacy of both students and faculty. Digital Literacy and Information Fluency have replaced ‘computer literacy’.

Both recent proposals to increase centralized eLearning support resources and the recently completed report on alternative LMS options illustrate the emergence of this vision is in the works. As well, the continued pilot cross campus online program collaborations and the development of Online Maine contribute also to this emerging vision. Finally, T4 has identified exemplar institutions, potential mentors and has reviewed literature on digital literacy and technology integration. (Appendix VI). Collectively all of these indicators suggest progress towards more adequate visions of eLearning and eTeaching at the end user, campus and System levels.

**T4 Shortcomings and Challenges** As of this writing, T4 has been unsuccessful in identifying formal eLearning vision statements or plans within campus or System level planning documents. The System has prioritized increases in productivity in the area of online learning. But at the level of campus or program strategic planning, the visions needed to achieve this priority have been implicit in the campus landscapes developed in Phase Two.

The need for campus level eLearning plans\(^2\) to serve as a foundation for a System vision is apparent. One of the challenges needing to be addressed is the education required so that campuses can clearly distinguish eLearning and distance education. Distance education plans and technology development plans are present on some campuses. These are not the same as university eLearning plans.

Similarly, concepts such as campus or program digital habitats (aka cyber infrastructures), personal learning environments have not yet become part of the working vocabulary of teachers, learners and administrators within UMS. A measure of continued education will be necessary to support a well articulated vision of eLearning within UMS.

---

1 \*the term ‘digital habitat’ was coined by E. Wenger (2009) and others who study the intersection of digital literacy and communities of practice within learning organizations.\*

2 \*In the literature (Bates, A. 2010| Waterhouse, S. 2006 etc.) much is published about eLearning strategic plans. To date T4 has identified but two campuses that are developing eLearning plans. See the campus landscapes for a sampling of distance education and online learning program initiatives.\*
In Phase Three, T4 will continue to study campus level approaches to strategic planning for blended and online learning. It recommends that eLearning sub plans be developed with a strong focus on pedagogy and program effectiveness. T4, at the suggestion of the VCAA will recommend that the System host an eLearning summit in the spring of 2012 to facilitate the further development of a System wide vision.

**Objective 3 – Further study of eLearning on campuses**

**Progress**  In Phase Two, T4 drafted landscape documents reflecting the state of eLearning from campus perspectives. It completed a mapping of procedures and personnel across the System responsible for developing blended or online programs and courses (Appendix IV).

Based upon direct report from campus faculty further information on the state of eLearning was gathered. This study has been formative by design as a necessary step towards having a well informed baseline for planning and to achieve Objective 4 (greater coherence). The completion of the faculty and student surveys will complete this initial study.

Securing the necessary funding to complete these surveys was a critical accomplishment in Phase Two. The support shown by campus faculties and the support for this initiative from the Chancellor, seven campus Presidents, the VCAA, Chief Academic Officers and the Center for Research and Evaluation has been encouraging.

**T4 Shortcomings and Challenges**  Surveys of the literature reporting similar faculty and student surveys are ongoing but incomplete. We also have not yet developed a shared understanding with the CAOs about the specific kinds of data that would be most useful to campus level strategic planners. In the literature, model surveys have been identified as exemplars. Generating a comprehensive set of inquiry domains led to the decision to survey these groups using the modular, sequenced design. Survey F, the Module One faculty survey, is scheduled for 'launch' during the fall semester assuming that the IRB processes are completed. The student survey is to be implemented in the fall of 2012. See Appendix II for additional information about the development of these surveys.

**Objective 4 – Develop greater cohesion between System working groups**

**Progress**  Cohesion is a matter of degree. It can be increased through improved alignment of working groups and possibly restructuring these. To date, T4 has updated its compendium of technology integration working groups (Appendix V). It has not completed its study of work within campus Information Technology (IT) Departments. Sharing the listing in Appendix V will facilitate better alignment of these groups.

Indications of improved alignment of working groups include recent developments of System wide support services (OnlineMaine, ITS and UC). Paradoxically, this work has made more visible the need to strike a balance between the distribution of eLearning support resources
between the campus and the System. System wide committees including the Blackboard Core Group, the LMS Committee, the revived Distance Learning Council and T4 have contributed although the status of these last two entities is unknown. Continued effort to articulate relationships between 1) centralized support services; 2) campus support services; and 3) academic programs, is still needed. Equally critical is the need for assessment data to guide further development of these relationships.

The Phase Two mapping exercise (Appendix IV) provides a useful benchmark for these ongoing efforts. T4 has continued developing a website to serve as an information clearinghouse and discussion forum System wide. The usefulness of this site depends on support from campus faculty and administrative leaders. T4 hopes that these investments in campus landscapes, distance education curriculum development maps, possibly the System wide eLearning summit will gradually strengthen the cohesion and reduce divides currently in the System.

**T4 Shortcomings and Challenges** Central to the role of faculty groups across the System is responsibility for curriculum development, delivery and assessment. The alignment of academic programs and curriculum governance committees with eLearning support units needs further development. Further, leaving program faculty units aside, faculty working committees charged with addressing eLearning issues are not yet established on all campuses. Better communication is needed to align the UMS OnlineMaine, ITS with campus groups. And, across the System shared definitions of ‘eTeaching’, ‘courses’, ‘eLearning’, instructional supports require further development. Achieving these milestones will result in greater cohesion between curriculum development and curriculum support services.

Beyond gains made in improving alignments, greater coherence speaks to the need to continue to review at the System level opportunities for greater cross campus program collaborations made possible by eLearning. T4 requests that the System review with T4 efforts supporting this type of transformation in the early stages of Phase Three. Finally, efforts to create an eLearning development website linked to the UMS web page has been endorsed by the administration in principle. Steps need to be taken to establish this needed asset.

**Objective 5 – Identify Exemplary Institutions, Practices and Experts**

**Progress** In the context of T4, ‘good practices’ pertains to domains including: i) institutional development of eLearning capacity; ii) standards of access and universal design; iii) good pedagogy and program design; iv) effective assessment methods including end user surveys; and v) standards of digital literacy. During P2, T4 has been developing a collection of documentation in each of these areas at its website.

Geography, types of institutions and students, differences between disciplines and the dramatic pace of technological and institutional reform, all lead one to understand that de-contextualized best practice models or standards are of little value. Best practice standards
need to be developed within organizational units especially academic programs themselves. In print and online literature, examples of exemplary institutions and benchmarks for developing academic programs and courses are numerous. Lead organization websites including the International Society for Technology in Education, the US Distance Learning Association, Educause and the Sloan C are sources for these. T4 is reviewing this literature and developing a bibliography at the T4 website. A review of the literature report on faculty and student survey methods will be completed this year. If wanted, a report on useful suggestions for institutional benchmarking can also be provided in the first year of Phase Three.

North American institutions that could serve as useful exemplars for the U. Maine System include the University of Washington, the University of Central Florida, the University of British Columbia, the University of South Carolina and the University of Pennsylvania. Examples of useful guidelines for crafting digital habitats and eLearning development plans are found the works of Bates and Sanger (2011), Waterhouse, S (2007) and E. Wenger et al (2009). Additional international exemplars and resources on best practices are also available.

T4 Shortcomings and Challenges At this point in the development of eLearning, the term ‘best practices’ is perhaps premature and ‘good practices’ might be a better term to use. T4 has also still to address the matter of delineating unacceptable eLearning practices. This is an important objective still needing to be addressed.

Within the U Maine System, best practice models are being studied and used. However, the System has perhaps under invested in sending campus leaders to professional conferences where information about best practices is shared. It is clear that so long as UMS invests in Blackboard, there is a need for a minimal representation from the System both the attend Blackboard World meetings and to actively participate in the online Bb network. Similarly, membership in organizations such as Educause, ELI and Sloan Consortium are not standard practice on some campuses. This too evidences perhaps too little investment in basic professional development and networking activities.

Faculty ‘buy in’ is an often cited phrase referring to the need for active faculty leadership in developing eLearning practices. Most faculty members identify primarily with their programs or disciplines. To leverage this source of motivation, there needs to be a greater emphasis upon the search for best practices WITHIN disciplines. To date T4 has not yet identified discipline or program specific models within UMS programs or disciplines. It recommends that the System increase its support for research in the scholarship of eTeaching within disciplines. Increased support for participation in events such as the Sloan-C Regional Conference and the Maine Blackboard User Group conferences may become showcases for such applications.

Beyond the matter of best practices specific to disciplines, some general issues of good practice remain to be adequately addressed. Examples include incorporating standards of universal course design. Similarly the question of templates describing good practice has not yet been
thoroughly studied at the campus level by T4. Quality Matters users at UMFK, UMPI and UC have also invested in this approach to assuring course design best practices. There may be other examples as yet unknown to T4.

In Phase 3 of the T4 initiative a study of NEASC guidelines and recommendations related to eLearning will continue. At this point in time, this accrediting body appears to focus primarily on distance learning programming standards.

**Objective 6 Identify faculty and student support and training opportunities.**

**Progress** The needs for support and training are arguably greater in the context of eLearning than teaching and learning without technologies. The risk however is in terms of neglecting the needs for support in the area of developing course content and expertise within a discipline.

One example of this greater need is the matter of mobile teaching and learning. The needs for student and faculty support are not limited to classroom focused supports. In order to study eLearning supports comprehensively, at least five components need be considered; a) types of support; b) pedagogical assumptions; c) expectations or standards of digital literacy; d) a baseline of resources; and e) input from faculty and students. These are delineated further in Appendix VII. A range of models of providing technical instructional and student support for eTeaching and eLearning are described in the literature (Arabaz, P. and Baker, M. 2003).

**T4 Shortcomings and Challenges** T4 is encouraged by the System’s efforts to increase eLearning support and instructional design assistance through developments within ITS and UC. However gaps in collaboration with campus faculties as well as ambiguities in the emerging relationships between academic units and instructional design and support services need to be attended to. These are causing significant concern among faculty and contribute to lesser amounts of cohesion. One of the most critical T4 shortcomings within Phase Two has been addressing the need to make a careful inventory of these supports as they are configured at the campus level.

T4 need to address this shortcoming. As well, greater communications from central services (UC and ITS) and a commitment to collaboratively developing minimal System wide support standards and appropriate role boundaries is needed to encourage academic units as they continue their transforming their programs into well integrated eLearning programs. Program investments in distance education or 50%+ online programming is a necessary but insufficient subset of this development. A primary objective for Phase Three student and faculty surveys will be to gather more useful information about perceived needs, challenges and the kinds of support most valued by faculty and students.

**Objective 7 –Recommendations for faculty collective bargaining**

T4 came about as the Chancellor responded to concerns raised by AFUM related to working conditions and the impact of teaching through technology. Previously a joint UMS/AFUM
study group had for many years been working on proposed contact language related to
distance education and teaching primarily using interactive television. The creation of a task
force became necessary when it was clear that the impact of teaching through technology
included more issues than were appropriate for inclusion in the faculty contract.

**Faculty Consultations:** During Phase Two, T4 consulted with faculty groups on all seven
campuses. From those preliminary discussions common themes emerged having serious
conceptual, behavioral and emotional components. Collectively they suggest that the faculty
involved in these preliminary discussions have experienced notable success with the use of
digital technologies in their teaching and also experienced role strain at the individual and
collective levels. Although these individuals remain engaged and motivated to continue with
this innovative work, these concerns do impact campus cultures across the System. Together
with the faculty wide survey, addressing these concerns should be a high priority among Phase
Three Objectives as they are developed.

A preliminary draft of these concerns or themes was shared with the Chief Academic Officers
and the VCAA. It was understood that these might not be representative of the faculty as a
whole. The themes reflected concerns about i) workload management; ii) the neglect of
fundamental pedagogical assumptions being altered by the use of technology; iii) possible lack
of compliance with contractual obligations and academic governance practices; iv) the need to
address faculty support\(^1\) and compensation; and v) the transformation of the role of the faculty
itself. Further documentation of these themes can be found in Volume Two of this Report.

**Contractual Study** Concurrent with the campus preliminary faculty discussions, during
Phase Two, a T4 subgroup studied the current contract with an eye towards developing
recommendations for ongoing contract negotiations. During this Phase, the System provided
access to a webinar focused on findings from national studies of contract language. The
Subgroup generated a report including recommendations for contract negotiations. These
recommendations are under review by the full T4 membership and offer constructive
suggestions to the current negotiating process. See Appendix VIII for this draft report.

**Conclusions** Similar to the challenge of adapting higher education to the realities of a digital
world, the charge (seven objectives) to T4 is both daunting and of great interest. Overriding
this intellectual interest, the pressing needs of teachers and learners are compelling. The T4
initiative is more than a year in the making. Even so, the desire of T4 members to complete the
work and some increased support of the administration bodes well for completing the work
required over the next two years.

Over the first two phases of T4, the measurable changes in (teaching, learning and support)
practices gives reason for encouragement. The success of this initiative will paradoxically lead
to greater challenges that require resource investments as well as patience and persistence.
We are hopeful that P3, the third phase of this initiative, will result in improved institutional
support for the work of students and faculty and greater vision and coherence for the
University of Maine System.