System Services:
Supporting Maine’s Public Universities

This is a “living” document which will be updated regularly in conjunction with the implementation of the Strategic Plan

May 2005
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Supporting Maine’s Public Universities

HIGHLIGHTS

- System’s purpose as outlined in the charter is to provide:
  - Leadership – both within the System and at the State level
  - Advocacy for higher education in Maine
  - Quality education – affordable & accessible
  - Coordination of academic offerings
  - Centralized oversight of services

- University of Maine System budget for FY05 is $575 million

- System Services represents $22 million or 4% of overall budget

- Services currently provided by System result in a net savings of $25 million annually when compared to a decentralized approach

- Increased effectiveness and efficiencies will be realized in the future by broadening and enhancing System Services
1. INTRODUCTION

Established in 1968, the University of Maine System (UMS) is the State’s largest educational institution, with more than 34,000 students enrolled. It features seven universities – some with multiple campuses – located across the State as well as 11 University College outreach centers and more than 75 distance education sites.

UMS System Services is engaged in a strategic partnership with the universities of the System to develop improved approaches to business processes and student and employee services. The goal of UMS System Services is to maximize the value of the System’s investment in technology to improve services, realize savings through sharing services, collaboration, and business process redesign while reducing the administrative burden on the universities allowing them to focus on teaching, research, and public service.

Given the System’s size and broad scope of responsibility, it is essential to continually explore its structure and governance to ensure that the System is meeting the needs of Maine’s citizens and the individual universities within the System. System Services, functioning as a strategic partner with the campuses, currently is responsible for the overall leadership, planning, and promotion of Maine’s largest post-secondary education system as well as providing critical administrative support services. In light of the Strategic Plan and the new Enterprise Resource Planning software implementation, the purpose of this document is to explore both the current and potentially expanded future role of the System’s Administrative Support Services to ensure that quality services are being provided by the most effective and efficient means available.

BUDGET

The FY2005 operating budget for the entire University of Maine System totals $574.4 million. Of this amount, $552.3 million or 96% represents the total operating budgets for the seven universities and $22.1 million or 4% represents the System Services’ budget as illustrated below.
System Services provides overall leadership and administrative support in four major areas thereby allowing the Universities to operate more coherently:

1.) Governance and Leadership - $3.0 million operating budget  
2.) Technology Services - $9.1 million operating budget  
3.) Distance Education Services - $4.7 million operating budget  
4.) System Administrative Support Services - $5.3 million operating budget consisting of Finance ($2.8 million), Human Resources ($1.6 million), and Facilities ($0.9 million).

The Governance and Leadership aspects of System Services include the Board of Trustees, Chancellor, Planning and Policy Analysis, Academic and Student Affairs, University Counsel, Governmental Relations, and External Affairs and is explained further in the following section of this report.

2. SYSTEM GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Institutions of higher education are faced with a myriad of pressing issues including affordability, access, escalating costs, deteriorating economic and fiscal environments, changing student demographics, and competitive external R&D funding. University structure and governance is crucial in addressing these issues and providing adequate levels of administrative support to individual campuses; thereby allowing the academia to focus on university missions.

Primary purposes of governance structures are to:

- Provide broad visions and planning for state’s education, economic, and policy needs  
- Address, recognize, and promote regional needs in a holistic manner  
- Empower universities within limits of their respective missions  
- Ensure quality  
- Advocate for resources and partnerships  
- Depoliticizes competition among universities  
- Provide oversight and accountability  
- Provide cost-effective coordination and management

In 1968, the State of Maine created the University of Maine System for these very purposes. The governing body of the University of Maine System, as outlined in the charter, is comprised of the Board of Trustees who appoints a Clerk, Treasurer, and Chancellor. Specifically, the Charter of the University of Maine System empowers the Chancellor and his staff members to:

- Provide leadership to the universities in the system in addressing the State's highest priority needs
• Establish a vision and planning for the system that:
  (1) Provides quality education that is affordable and accessible for the students of this State; and
  (2) Strengthens the State’s economy for its citizens
• Promote system planning, in collaboration with university presidents, for academic affairs, student affairs, outreach and community services programs, financial operations, capital plans and resource allocations
• Prepare all operating and capital budgets, appropriation requests, and bond issues
• Take an active role in the nomination, appointment, and evaluation of persons to head the universities and to serve in other major staff positions in the system
• Develop and implement an effective statewide public relations and legislative program
• Provide a centralized management oversight of services
• Coordinate University of Maine System academic offerings to avoid duplication with private and public institutions in this State
• Develop a method to transfer academic credits to all universities within the University of Maine System

In accordance with the Charter, the Chancellor and Board of Trustees are the governing and planning body to provide leadership, governance, and coordination of operations and reporting for the System as a whole. The current responsibilities of the functional areas responsible for advising and assisting the Chancellor and Board of Trustees with their duties are detailed in the remainder of this section.

ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS
• Conduct program review and new program approval
• Set Academic Program Planning parameters and initiate System-wide collaboration among Chief Academic Officers
• Provide oversight of student support services including coordination of student health services and risk management
• Coordinate Distance Education offerings and the associated technology
• Provide oversight for library services, administration, staff, and collections, and maintenance of the Digital Library
• Assist with the planning, development, and advocacy for Sponsored Research
• Conduct strategic planning and implementation planning related to Academic and Student Affairs
• Collect and analyze data related to student retention, remediation, and graduation rates
• Coordinate annual tenure and faculty promotion recommendations for review by the Board of Trustees and Chancellor
• Respond to public queries related to strategic planning and other matters regarding Academic and Student Affairs
• Provide oversight for Outreach Centers and Sites across the State
OFFICE OF PLANNING & POLICY ANALYSIS

- Provide Institutional Research capabilities including monitoring and analyzing areas such as trends in enrollment, student composition, finances, etc.
- Perform policy analysis to determine the impact of both internal and external events on the System
- Monitor the Maine economy in areas such as budget, demographics, emerging markets, research and development, labor productivity, etc.
- Monitor university trends and establish Snapshot Statistics
- Conduct research and produce reports on the University of Maine System to be used in better understanding the System and for policy and strategic decisions
- Provide recommendations on issues of higher education policy based on research and analysis

UNIVERSITY COUNSEL

- Provide direct preventative legal education, advice, and services (i.e., policy and contract review, leases, etc.)
- Manage all litigation and adversarial legal proceedings

GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

- Serve as Legislative Liaison and advisor to the Board of Trustees and Chancellor concerning legislative action at the state level
- Interface with the Executive and Legislative branches of government on issues that relate to the University of Maine System and its universities
- Coordinate and manage legislative activities including issues that are or may become subjects for legislative action generated by the University System or by outside legislative interests
- Inform the Trustees, Chancellor, Presidents and University constituencies about legislative affairs that are current or in the developmental stage
- Monitor legislative developments and efforts at each university
- Advise Chancellor and senior staff on legislative strategies
- Compile and analyze data and information to discover facts and impact of pending legislation

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

- Provides UMS-related planning and implementation regarding communications, marketing, and legislative program
- Assist with the planning and provide support for advocacy efforts involving state, federal, and public initiatives
- Assist university administrators in coordinating enrollment- and advancement-related initiatives that affect both UMS and individual universities
3. CURRENT SYSTEM ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES (including Information Technology and Distance Education)

System personnel provide support for the governance and leadership functions as well as overall administrative support for the individual universities in certain specialized administrative areas. These support services allow the System as a whole to achieve economies of scale and thereby reap significant financial savings. The various components of System Administrative Support Services and their associated duties are detailed in this section.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

While budget information for Information Technology and Distance Education are illustrated separately from System Administrative Support Services on the graph on Page 2, both these areas provide a wide range of support services across the entire System. Information Technology is responsible for providing system-wide networking capabilities, managing mainframe operations, and overseeing the development and management of all enterprise administrative applications and databases. Information Technology design and operation of a state-wide Wide Area Network is crucial to insuring access to university courses through Distance Education.

**Systems and Applications Support**
- Develop, manage, and/or maintain all enterprise administrative applications and enterprise databases
- Provide user training and consulting services
- IT Policy and Planning Committee prioritizes projects for approval, investigates future technologies, and discusses policies and planning

**Network Operations**
- Design, build, and operate a state-wide Wide Area Network backbone using the latest technologies serving the university system and other educational and non-profit institutions
- Manage network security
- Design, build, and operate network infrastructure and technical support for more than half the universities
- Video conferencing is primarily centralized
- Provide Help Desk Services to provide collaborative assistance with Campus Help Desks
Computer Operations
• Operate mainframe systems for enterprise applications
• House and maintain servers owned by others (UM, SWS, Facilities, and others)
• Operate, maintain, and support systems for university and public libraries, enterprise e-mail, authentication, course delivery, web, and data warehousing services
• Perform backups of all mission critical data and archive off-site
• Assign necessary ID’s for faculty, staff, and students and maintain usage information

Academic Computing
• Maintain and support interactive television (ITV) transmission infrastructure to campuses, centers, and sites including microwave and satellite uplink/downlink
• Maintain and support ITV broadcast and compressed video rooms on all campuses and networks and computers at distance learning locations
• Provide Help Desk Support.

DISTANCE EDUCATION
Distance Education is comprised of 11 Outreach Centers where students can attend classes, pursue degrees, and receive the support they need to earn a degree close to home and on schedules that fit into their family and work lives. In communities statewide, students can take courses leading to 37 degree and certificate programs. Courses offered at a distance are the same quality courses available on campuses, so students can receive financial aid and transfer credits with confidence. Courses are taught by faculty on-site, online, via ITV, or through videoconference. ITV and online classes are also available at over 75 sites around the state.

Off-Campus Library Services
• Provides toll-free and online reference support to students, faculty, and staff
• Video and print copyright clearance services for faculty
• Online ordering of books and articles, mailings to students via centers/sites
• Deliver library instruction units for students in centers, both onsite and ITV courses

Logistics/Teleservice
• Provides toll-free help line for faculty
• Mails more than 100,000 handouts, exams, papers, and evaluations annually
• Maintains contracts with course receive sites
• Coordinates with campus contacts to schedule courses on all delivery systems
• Provides toll-free Teleservice line to students for information and registration
• Coordinate with center staff to provide a full array of services at centers and sites
Instructional Development and Faculty Support

- Helps faculty plan and develop new courses and degree programs for delivery
- Aids faculty in developing instructional materials
- Trains and supports faculty in ITV, Web, and compressed video systems
- Supports faculty who use technology in their traditional classroom
- Facilitates the system-wide Faculty Institute, an annual best-practices conference for teaching via technology that attracts 100+ faculty and staff each year
- Co-manage Blackboard courseware and provide Blackboard consultation and training for campus IT administrators in collaboration with UNET

Communications and Marketing

- Develops marketing strategies and plans for distance education
- Designs/publishes statewide distance education course guides, flyers, and other semester advertisements and promotions
- Designs and maintains one-stop distance education website
- Designs and writes print and radio advertising for statewide distance education
- Publishes distance education newsletter for influencers/policymakers
- Oversees public relations activities for distance education
- Supports marketing efforts at Outreach Centers with press releases, ads, and customized publications

Production Services

- Provides teleconference and production services for the UMS
- Designs, plans and produces multi-media programming for asynchronous courses, training packages, and marketing purposes
- Manages and trains teams of staff involved in the design, layout, and implementation of projects which use state-of-the-art and emerging instructional technologies (CD-ROM, DVD, streaming video)
- Works with university faculty to develop video-based courses

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

Although each university has an accounting staff to process daily transactions, conduct banking activities, and coordinate financial planning at the university level, the role of System Finance and Accounting encompasses overall treasury operations, internal audit functions, policy development, budgeting, and consolidated internal and external financial reporting.

- Provide cash management, banking services, and operational support for all transaction processing, fixed asset accounting, and administering of sponsored programs
- Establish and negotiate federal benefit and Facilities & Administrative rates
- Coordinate the preparation, administration, and control of the annual operating budget
- Issue University revenue bonds; analyze financing alternatives
• Prepare multi-year financial planning, biennial and annual appropriation request, and state bonding requests
• Coordinate gift management, reporting, and administer planned giving programs
• Manage endowment investment, retirement funds, and operating funds
• Gather, compile, maintain, and analyze information relevant to the administration of the University’s resources
• Compile and maintain a comprehensive student financial aid database utilized for financial aid analysis and reporting
• Facilitate Board of Trustees approvals and reporting
• Prepare internal and external financial reporting, including coordination of the annual audited financial statements
• Administrative policy development
• Perform internal audit services including compliance, operational and financial audits; safety and security audits; investigations of fraudulent activities; NCAA financial and compliance audits and associated reporting; and portions of the OMB Circular A-133 audit on behalf of the external auditors

FACILITIES & RISK MANAGEMENT
Facilities is responsible for providing overall guidance and expertise to the universities in all stages of capital construction projects. Another key role of the Facilities Office is to disseminate safety requirements and environmental hazards information. Risk Management provides centralized processing of insurance claims and provides guidance to the universities on risk management issues.

• Assist in developing campus capital and master plans and project management
• Educate and assist campuses in safety and environmental hazards and associated compliance issues
• Maintain and manage a central repository for facilities and building plans; manage University real estate documents
• Capital budgeting and financing alternatives
• Manage all property and casualty insurance programs and claims administration
• Provide preventative consultation, advice and information on risk management issues

PURCHASING
Purchasing is responsible for the oversight of substantial purchases to insure that quality products are acquired at the lowest price. Purchasing is also responsible for acquiring bulk goods and services for all universities in order to fully maximize the System’s economies of scale.

• Administer all purchases greater than $25,000 for all campuses and system
• Create System-wide contracts for commodity products (e.g., office supplies, scientific materials, furniture, motor vehicles)
HUMAN RESOURCES
Human Resources provides support for all employment-related policies, programs, and functions. These services fall into the broad headings of labor relations, compensation and benefits, equal opportunity, payroll, employment law, human resource information, and employee development. Specific services provided by the System Office include:

- Maintain highly specialized knowledge of the human resources arena and provide general oversight and consultation capabilities
- Negotiate labor contracts and provide guidance, training, and consultation on labor contract administration and interpretation
- Develop equal opportunity policies, provide consultation and technical assistance, and investigate formal complaints
- Design and administer employee benefit strategies and plans and assist in resolving employee problems
- Responsible for overall set up and operation of PeopleSoft Human Resources modules including payroll
- Develop and maintain compensation programs

4. ESTIMATED CURRENT SAVINGS FROM SYSTEM ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Through the centralized acquisition of certain goods and services, the System is able to realize substantial savings that would not be possible at the individual campus level. The System can also attract higher-quality talent at the System Administrative Support Services level as opposed to each individual campus hiring an “expert” in each given field. Were these functions decentralized, current staffing levels at the individual campuses would be inadequate to complete the functions currently provided by System Administrative Support Services. The total costs incurred by each campus would be greater than the current System Administrative Support Services’ costs due primarily to an overall increase in personnel and the loss of the collective bargaining power of the System.

To determine the impact of the diseconomies of scale in a decentralized administrative services environment, the following factors were examined at each campus in relation to the administrative support services being provided:

- Current staffing levels and expertise
- Enrollment
- Residential life capacity
- Distance education participation
- Research and development
- Public service
- Number of campus locations
- Capital assets
- Special needs
The following table shows that the functions currently performed by System Services result in an estimated savings of $24.7 million when compared with the costs of performing these same functions in a decentralized model. Estimated cost savings of the University System are measured by comparing current costs with the costs of a decentralized system.

### ESTIMATED CURRENT SAVINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM SERVICES</th>
<th>Current System Budget FY2005</th>
<th>System with Decentralized Services</th>
<th>Estimated Savings &amp; Revenue Enhancement from Current System</th>
<th>% of Savings from Current System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>$9.1</td>
<td>$18.2</td>
<td>$9.1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>$3.2</td>
<td>119%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>$0.3</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Insurance Premium</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>$2.3</td>
<td>144%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>$4.8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL COSTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$64.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>$85.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>32%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revenue Enhancement - actively & professionally managed pooled investments 4.0

**TOTAL IMPACT**  

$24.7

### SELECTED EXAMPLES

Based on the methodology previously described, following are selected examples illustrating current savings resulting from centralization.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

At all campuses, computer software is required to support business needs. The current support services approach to provide the necessary technology is to analyze the requirements of all campuses, purchase business software from a single vendor (vendors), acquire a single maintenance agreement for all campuses, and provide system-wide training and technical support resulting in consistency across campuses and price and enhancement leveraging with vendors. In a decentralized organization, each campus
would be responsible for analyzing its needs and purchasing its own software, resulting in excessive purchase costs and promoting redundancy in the areas of training, maintenance, and resources required for technical and functional support. Furthermore, implementation costs, which are the most substantial in a major implementation, are greatly reduced in a support services environment.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING

- **Accounting** - The System employs accountants who specialize in fields such as capital assets (proper accounting for the acquisition, depreciation, and disposal of assets for all campuses) and sponsored programs (proper allocation of cost and indirect cost recovery within the guidelines of the numerous federal, state, and private grants). The Director of Accounting, a Certified Public Accountant, is responsible for being knowledgeable in all aspects of the General Accounting Standards Board pronouncements resulting in the ability to interpret regulations, analyze all financial transactions for compliance, and produce financial statements for each campus and the System as a whole. Due to the technical and specialized nature of these functions, campuses would have to significantly increase accounting personnel resulting in increased costs and duplication of efforts among the campuses were these services decentralized.

- **Auditing** - A single firm is retained for the entire System through the competitive bid process. Internal Audit and System Accounting personnel prepare work papers and complete the financial aid portion of the audit which greatly reduces the external audit cost. Enterprise wide computing resources make the auditing of systems and processes a one-time effort and permit the consolidation of information into one statement, eliminating any duplication of effort. Internal Audit services also provide campuses with a resource without having to incur audit costs. It is estimated that the cost to complete the required audits would double if each campus were to employ the necessary staff to complete internal audit functions or retain external audit firms to complete all the required work.

- **Investment Management** – To maximize investment returns, the System has developed an active management strategy utilizing internal resources and external investment consultants. Currently by managing the entire System portfolio, the System receives the benefits and value of the Investment Committee’s oversight, investment consultant expertise, minimal consultant fees, and diversity through asset allocation. Since investment consultant fees start at a substantial minimum base per client, most campuses would have to adopt a more passive management strategy if investment management was decentralized – resulting in considerably lower returns and possibly jeopardizing the levels of operating cash and funding available from endowed scholarships.
FACILITIES & RISK MANAGEMENT

- **Insurance Management** – Currently, System Administrative Support Services employs a Risk Manager who is dedicated to managing the insurance costs and claims for the entire System. Since campuses do not currently employ individuals with the expertise to adequately manage the business of insurance, it is estimated that the campuses would incur significant costs to retain qualified individuals in this area.

- **Business Insurance Premium** – Centralization results in cost savings for all property and casualty insurance programs by gaining access to insurance markets not available to smaller entities, reducing expenditures by self-insuring certain exposures, and by assuming higher deductibles resulting in lower rates and broader coverage. With the loss of access to insurance markets not available to smaller entities in a decentralized setting, campus premiums would increase by at least 50% and smaller campuses would experience difficulty obtaining crucial coverage.

PURCHASING

Through centralized procurement, System Administrative Support Services is able to maximize its purchasing economies of scale by coordinating the system-wide acquisition of goods and services. By procuring goods centrally, System Administrative Support Services is able to negotiate cost savings with preferred vendors through the bulk buying of a wide variety of goods utilized by all campuses. System-wide contracts for services are also negotiated to maximize the System’s entire purchasing power. Were this function decentralized, the costs of goods and services acquired by the individual campuses would increase substantially.

While the centralization of the Procurement function under System Services is new, it is possible to see potential savings over time. The University has long had a systemwide contract for office supplies. The current annual spending on this contract is close to $1.5 million. The products purchased are discounted 61% to 87% from retail. While the smaller institutions could obtain 60-75% off a short list of items, the “balance of catalog” pricing would be around 35%. Clearly purchasing as a system has saved substantial dollars.

With $160 million of goods and services expenditures, the System stands to gain far more in the future by centralizing. In addition to savings by aggregating our procurement needs, the System is better positioned to take advantage of new technologies in procurement. Technology is allowing the System to utilize savings through Reverse Auctions where the System electronically posts the quantity and specifications of the desired items and vendors bid for the order during a specified period of time. It is much more cost effective for the System to enter into an agreement for Reverse Auction services than any campus alone. Reverse auctions have proven to save 16% on AV equipment, 32% on dorm furniture, 18% on paper, and 39% on Janitorial supplies at other institutions of higher education.
HUMAN RESOURCES

- **Collective Bargaining** - Collective bargaining contracts are negotiated centrally for each of the six bargaining units. Two full-time labor relations professionals serve as chief negotiators, and management representatives from throughout the System serve as team members. In addition to the chief negotiator, an average team has five or more management members. Negotiating takes the time of the bargaining team members away from normal responsibilities; currently there is one System-wide team for each bargaining unit. Were each university responsible for negotiating their own contract, the number of negotiations would increase from 6 to 42. Each university would need staff with expertise to serve as chief negotiator or would need to contract with an outside negotiator, usually an attorney, and would need to fully staff the teams for all bargaining units. Further, there are no economies of scale associated with labor negotiations; bargaining with a small unit may require just as much time and effort as bargaining for a large unit.

- **Benefits** – Currently System Administrative Support Services is responsible for the purchasing and vendor management for all employee benefit programs. Critical mass allows System Administrative Support Services to be significantly more aggressive in contract negotiations and the negotiation process is done just once rather than seven times if handled by each university. Average premium costs savings are estimated to be 10%. In addition, the complexity of managing government regulations, compliance, plan design, and interpretation are greatly enhanced by having a group of highly trained benefit professionals to administer the daily operation of these plans. Several benefit programs such as flexible spending accounts and retiree maintenance and billing are done centrally today; these functions would have to be duplicated at each university if decentralized. If the benefits program functions were not centralized, each university would need additional staff with benefits expertise to negotiate contracts, remit premiums, and oversee legal compliance.

5. POTENTIAL FUTURE SERVICES AND SAVINGS

*Currently the overall University of Maine System realizes approximately $25 million annually in cost savings and revenue enhancement due to its current level of administrative support services.* As outlined in the UMS Strategic Plan – Strategic Direction #7 and #9, the System is committed to increasing cost savings through the strategic leveraging of resources and increased effectiveness of service through expanded administrative support services, where appropriate. As far back as 1996, the System began exploring the acquisition of a new student information system due to the inadequacy of the current legacy systems and the ongoing, stand-alone, fragmented efforts to address these issues. In 2001 the Board of Trustees approved the acquisition of an Enterprise Resource Planning System to provide a software solution integrating information and business processes to enable sharing throughout the organization of information entered once in a database.
Strategies being considered to accomplish increased effectiveness and efficiencies are described below and include areas such as coordinating information technology operations, consolidating the systems for support services, create a more coordinated approach to human resources, directly coordinate some of the back-office student services systems (enrollment services, financial aid, loan collections, bursar, etc.), and support and enhance the Enterprise Resource Planning technology infrastructures that will allow for greater centralization.

ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS
- Create one State-wide Digital Library that will have a Library Director who is funded by the State Library and the System
- Develop a System-wide library consortium founded on one strong, well-funded research library at the University of Maine
- Strengthen sponsored research and coordinate process for requesting increased funding by forging one voice for advocacy and planning
- Provide a State-wide distribution of courses and programs delivered through technology that is managed centrally
- Provide through UNET an updated technological infrastructure for the System
- Coordinate health services for all students
- Provide policy direction and guidance as it relates to risk management

OFFICE OF PLANNING & POLICY ANALYSIS
- Provide Institutional Research capabilities for the campuses and the System in a centralized fashion

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
- Develop and coordinate marketing strategies that promote enrollment and support for Maine’s public universities and which complement the marketing strategies of the individual universities
- Commission and coordinate market and opinion research to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the universities’ student recruitment and relationship-building activities
- Develop print, electronic, and digital resources and software tools for universities to customize for their purposes to communicate with key constituencies and audiences
- Undertake branding initiative that creates greater institutional identity and clarity
- Coordinate corporate and foundation fund raising
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Systems and Applications Support
- Provide end-user reporting tools for self-service so that the majority of non-technical personnel can produce necessary information without the need for departmental technical personnel
- Routinely extract and supply central data to campuses for further reporting refinement
- Provide additional consulting services, risk assessment, and cost analysis to collaboratively acquire system-wide standard software packages for ancillary and other services in order to obtain the best price and product
- Provide common e-commerce services such as receivable and payable solutions
- Empower new Chief Information Officer and IT Policy and Planning Committee to establish computing standards and policies (including risk management and security), project prioritization, strategic planning, personnel development, and future technologies. (Purchasing would be responsible for computer hardware and software acquisitions based on IT Policy and Planning Committee standards.)
- Electronic exchange of on-line applications such as transcripts, financial aid, etc. to increase and enhance access, facilitate processing, and reduce processing costs
- Consolidation of multiple help desks
- Coordinate fully integrated campus card initiative for all campuses which will include reduction of data entry redundancy, ability to share information between systems, and convenience for users to have one card for many services
- Selection of a single Document Management System that will integrate with PeopleSoft and store documents for numerous functional areas such as Admissions, Financial, Student Records, etc.

Network Operations
- Integrate the Maine Community College System Wide Area Network into the existing University/Education/Research Network
- Design, build, and operate local area network infrastructure (including wireless) and technical support for all university locations in order to leverage the network for voice, video, and data technology
- Implement a single, common inter-campus telephony architecture systemwide for maximum long-term cost savings
- Develop and support enterprise-wide applications for electronic communication and authentication systems (integrated messaging system)

Computer Operations
- Consolidate the housing of critical enterprise servers (currently located within departments) in a number of available controlled environments to ensure centralized, secured, and controlled operations including standard back-up procedures
Academic Computing
• Investigate and evaluate consolidating current multi-platform course management systems to a single platform for increased efficiencies in areas such as licensing and support and increased ease of student usage

FINANCE & ACCOUNTING
• Implement and maintain new PeopleSoft General Ledger system
• Fill the position of Controller to enhance overall accountability and controls
• Enhance cash management (including incentives for campuses) and fraud prevention
• Explore e-commerce opportunities including items such as common credit card processor/process
• Streamline administration for sponsored programs
• Back-office gift processing and reporting

FACILITIES & RISK MANAGEMENT
• Provide shared energy management services to assist in fuel procurement decisions, energy conservation, co-generation, HVAC decisions, and energy audits
• Expand project management and oversight
• Utilize common facilities software tools to apply:
  - Space planning capabilities to increase utilization economies in existing buildings and to determine future needs
  - Facilities condition survey results to prioritize renewal project components and achieve economies of scale
  - Reporting capabilities to consolidate information and streamline report generation

PURCHASING
Current Strategic Procurement Department has been formed and is evolving to:
• Implement, maintain and provide training for new PeopleSoft Purchasing & Accounts Payable system, including e-procurement applications
• Maximize purchasing economies of scale, mandate common commodity purchases, require computer purchases to be centralized and procured according to standards, when appropriate, established by IT Policy and Planning Committee
• Coordinate computer sales and services including assisting in planning, acquisition, and licensing of technology products and services
• Provide synergy with other support services (information technology, facilities, energy and environment, electronic banking, travel management and reimbursement, collaborative ancillary software purchases)
• Continually investigate and implement state-of-the-art purchasing practices, technology, and lease/purchase options
• Provide oversight of the procurement card system including training compliance, self-audit, rebate management
• Collaborate with other higher-education institutions and with the State
• Establish and monitor purchasing policies and procedures; overall increased empowerment for purchasing as a centralized function
• Coordinate a system-wide RFP for out-sourced food services

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

• Develop an integrated human resource program for the University of Maine System with highly skilled generalists to provide direct service at the university level and with specialized knowledge and functions shared across the System and coordinated at the System level to improve services to employees and managers and to reduce duplication of functions
• Increase level of involvement in labor relations training and problem solving
• Increased, direct responsibility for more compliance and reporting issues.
• Develop consistent required procedures for searches and oversee the monitoring of searches for compliance with the procedures, collective bargaining agreements, and state and federal regulations
• Responsible for planning and programming for wellness and integrated with benefits programs
• Explore HR data, payroll service, and benefits service center model(s) through a process redesign project
• Develop and maintain compensation programs and market analysis for all campuses
• Classification staff assigned with System-wide or regional responsibility
• Develop standard training and staff development programs and workplace conflict resolution method for System-wide delivery
• Integrate student employment issues more closely with HR

**STUDENT ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

The University of Maine System is engaged in the Transforming Higher Education Student Integrated Services Redesign (THESIS) to:

“Deliver high quality, innovative, and integrated student services throughout the University of Maine System that enhance the student’s total educational experience and lifelong relationship with the University.”

The following pages outline selected examples from the THESIS Interim Report where a centralized approach may reduce processing time and improve efficiency while also enhancing the quality of service to all students and universities. For a complete listing, see the THESIS Interim Report dated March 28, 2005.
Registration/Student Records
- Provide improved self-service tools
- Build the authorized course file
- Publish electronic course schedules
- Coordinate printing
- Coordinate common publishing date for course offerings
- Produce and distribute RANS
- Process academic actions and update student data file
- Process Dean’s List, President’s List, and notification letters
- Distribute transcripts
- Verify enrollment
- Student file maintenance (address, phone number, change of academic status)
- Prepare and distribute graduate certification material
- Process and print diplomas
- Maintain equivalency matrix
- Evaluate and post external transcript information
- Generate standard reports for all campuses (National Student Clearinghouse, UMS Enrollment Report, common data set, surveys, etc.)

Financial Aid
- Validate software installations/upgrades, perform WebDSIS maintenance, and perform required IVR and OPTIX system maintenance
- Research indirect costs for each geographic location to determine budgets
- Load ISIRs on university file
- Request, receive, and process documents from applicants
- Develop tools for software to simulate, establish, and monitor award parameters
- Produce award letter (paper or email)
- Input information from award letter and other sources
- Maintain consistent, standardized Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy across universities and generate report with SAP results
- Distribute listings of withdrawn students
- Perform scheduled and automated disbursements
- Complete surveys and other information and reporting requests
- Identify, verify, and code select student populations
- Produce and distribute informational publications
- Manage federal and state fund draw downs
Loan Processing and Receivable Management
• Produce Master Promissory Notes (including updating computer programs necessary to produce MPN and disclosure statements)
• Review completed MPN’s and disclosure statements and update Financial Aid as necessary to disburse funds.
• Create loan record with Loan Servicer
• Provide Exit Interviews
• Perform required “Due Diligence and Processing”
• Manage collection of delinquent accounts
• Coordinate with State of Maine Revenue Services (Tax Setoff Program)
• Complete account reconciliations including cash-on-hand projections
• Collect delinquent student and non-student receivables

Enrollment Services
• Purchase search lists
• Execute university specific campaigns – mailings, emails, telecounseling
• Build applicant file
• Generate appropriate letters (acceptance, denial, acknowledgement, etc.) and enclosures
• Request and process final documents for matriculation
• Image documents
• Generate applicant pool specific reports
• Develop systemwide marketing strategies to complement and expand current marketing efforts and the campus level

Student Billing
• Produce consolidated, easy-to-understand bill
• Serve as primary point of contact for student payment and billing questions
• Offer and support direct deposit and direct payment options for all universities
• Process late payment fee
• Place/remove financial holds
• Produce 3rd party invoices
• EFT loan notifications
• Review and correct 1098 T report prior to production of forms
• Perform accounting and banking processes
• Perform residency appeals
6. CONCLUSION

By implementing the centralization strategies outlined in this document, in the THESIS Interim Report, and in the University of Maine System Strategic Plan, the System anticipates additional administrative savings that can be reallocated to fund strategic investment priorities. As outlined in the Strategic Plan, each entity of the University of Maine System, including System Services, must set goals, objectives, and performance measures to assure prudent stewardship and enhanced public accountability. As part of the accountability process, System Services’ goals and associated performance measures will be continuously reviewed to ensure that services are not being compromised and that savings are being realized through its centralized operations.