Exception to Board Policy re: 120 Credits. UMaine Provost Jeff Hecker explained that the College of Engineering at the University of Maine is requesting an exception to Board of Trustees Policy 303.1, which states that “the maximum number of credit hours required to earn a degree at a university in the University of Maine System should be no more than 121.” UMaine has provided justification for the request, based upon accreditation needs as well as demonstrated student success in engineering programs requiring 126-132 credits.

It is not possible for the programs within the College of Engineering to reduce the credits required for graduation to 121, although some programs were able to achieve some reduction in credit hour requirements. The reasons for the greater credits needed for graduation are: ABET accreditation requirements, constraints imposed by the University's general education requirements, maintaining parity with similar degree programs in the Northeast, and expectations of the employers of our graduates.

One rationale for the policy was concern that the growing number of credit hours required to earn a degree were making it more difficult to complete a degree in four years. However, this is not the case for engineering as UMaine engineering graduates have a four-year graduation rate that is 4 percentage points higher than the averages for the other four academic colleges and a six-year graduation rate that is 11 percentage points higher even though the number of credits required to earn a bachelor's degree in engineering is greater than in the other colleges. Thus, for the UMaine College of Engineering time to graduation is not a compelling justification for reduction in the number of credits.

Trustee Johnson stated that this issue is an information item and does not require action.

Spring Enrollment Report. Ms. Rosa Redonnett, Chief Student Affairs Officer, provided a brief update on the status of enrollment at our campuses for Spring 2014. The Spring 2014 Enrollment Report is historically run after the UMS census date of February 15. Ms. Redonnett explained why the Spring semester total headcount, full-time equivalent (FTE) and credit hours are always lower than the Fall are due to the following issues:
- Seniors may finish the bulk of their coursework in the Fall
- Many seniors “graduate” in December
- Students may be away on study away and internships
- Entering class is very small in the Spring – natural flow of the admission year – few freshman added in the spring (279 for the Spring and 4200+ in the fall), largest incoming is transfers but even that is smaller than the Fall (generally, students think of moving on prior to the fall semester – 781 in Spring and 2171 in Fall).
- Some students are not successful and leave (or are suspended and asked to leave) the institution after the fall semester

Another factor that impacts lower Spring enrollment is the reports from the campuses indicate that the early and hard/expensive winter have played a role in the enrollment numbers this spring. Also the simple fact that because the Fall semester enrollment was down (approx. 2%), the natural/logical progression would to see a similar decline in the Spring. Some of the highlights from the Spring 2014 Enrollment Report are as follows:

- Spring headcount enrollment declined 2.9% over the previous year in the University System. Every campus except UM declined somewhat over last year’s Spring enrollments, with UMPI showing the largest single year loss at 11.7%.
- Spring full-time equivalent (FTE) in the University System declined around 2.5% from the previous year. The largest one-year decrease was 10.2% at UMPI and the leading increase was 2% at UM.
- Spring credit hour enrollments declined by 2.4% from last Spring and dropped 6.7% compared to 2010.
- While both Fall and Spring headcount enrollments have steadily decreased over time, the Spring semester headcount is decreasing at a faster pace, with the Spring 2014 ratio dropping to 92.3% of the Fall enrollment.
- The number of Associate degree seeking students, which accounts for 4.5% of Spring headcount enrollments, dropped 14.2% since Spring 2013 and decreased 30.3% compared with 2010. Baccalaureate level students made up 73.8% of the total.
- 86% of students have in-state tuition status in Spring 2013. Out-of-state enrollment increased 8.4% compared with last year, and improved 7.6% compared with 2010. Spring in-state enrollment lapsed 4.5% since 2013 and fell 8.9% from Spring 2010.
- The gender balance in the University System for Spring 2014 is 40.8% male and 59.2% female. Spring enrollment has declined in both gender categories, with a 3.1% decrease in males and a 2.7% reduction in females.
- 37.8% of transfer students in Spring 2013 came from institutions external to the UMS and MCCS. Internal transfers between UMS campuses made up 25.2% of the total. Transfers from MCCS comprised 28.3% of the total and declined 16.6% from 2013.
- Total credit hours in distance education gained 3.4% from 2013. The decline in traditional campus courses was 4%. Online credit hours increased 8.5% between Spring 2013 and 2014, accounting for 16.6% of all credit hours delivered.

**Executive Session.**
On a motion by Trustee Turner, which was seconded by Trustee Erwin, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee went into Executive Session under the following provision: 1 MRSA Section 405 6-A to discuss Tenure Nominations for 2014.
On a motion by Trustee Erwin, which was seconded by Trustee Newsom, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee concluded the Executive Session.

**Tenure Nominations for 2014.** The Academic & Student Affairs Committee reviewed the recommendations for tenure submitted by the universities of the University of Maine System in 2014.

On a motion by Trustee Turner, which was seconded by Trustee Erwin, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee agreed to forward the recommendations for tenure for 2014 submitted by the Universities of the University of Maine System to the Consent Agenda for the Board of Trustees meeting on March 23-24, 2014.

**Chancellor Update.** The Chancellor explained that the online study is undertaken to determine the most efficient and effective way to use online and outreach resources to support the UMS educational mission, especially in light of the expanded core student profile approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2014 identifying adult and non-traditional populations as part of the UMS core student population.

The Committee will develop a comprehensive, System-wide needs assessment and business case for consolidating all online and outreach management and operational resources in a single office responsible for strategic planning to realize System goals, marketing and student engagement, coordinating appropriate program content, profit and loss activities for each modality, and other items to be determined in the course of the study.

**Deliverables**
The Committee will deliver a set of written recommendations and plans including:

a. a statement of online / outreach success metrics that takes into account student accessibility and affordability.
b. a review of the current UMS online and outreach activities.
c. a review of selected existing and proposed best practices (a review, for example, of established online programs in Massachusetts or Maryland).
d. a business case for a unified operational model, including
   i. a sample mission/vision statement
   ii. governance, management structures
   iii. operational model for content acquisition and delivery
   iv. financial model
e. an executive summary of recommended innovative programs, policies and strategies to strengthen success, and institutional and System barriers to success.

**Study Parameters**
1. There is an initial strong preference for this office standing independently of any campus.
2. This initiative would proceed to implementation only if it is shown that it would generate substantial revenue through increased student participation as well as significant operational efficiencies.
3. It is assumed that Online and Outreach would be separate cabinets within the unified model.
4. The study will make clear the relation of this initiative to the general Adult Baccalaureate Completion/Distance Education (ABCDE) initiative.

**Committee Members**
The Chair of the Committee will be Dr. Allyson Hughes Handley, President of UMA. Other members of the group will be Dr. Monique LaRocque, Executive Director of Professional & Continuing Education, USM; Bonnie Sparks, Director of University College; and Trustee Samuel Collins. Other individuals may be added as needed.

A final report will be due to the Chancellor by July 1, 2014. The Committee will meet with the Chancellor in May to provide an interim verbal update.

**Faculty & Student Representatives: Strengthening the Dialogue.** Trustee Johnson explained that the Board of Trustees adopted a Board Policy in 1971 to provide for Faculty and Student Representation to the Board. One faculty member, one undergraduate student from each of the seven universities, one graduate student from the University of Southern Maine, and one graduate student from the University of Maine are appointed by the Board as non-voting representatives to the Board of Trustees and participate as non-voting members on the Academic & Student Affairs Committee and Finance/Facilities/Technology Committee.

In recent years the Faculty and Student Representatives have had a regular time on the agenda at each Board meeting to meet with the full Board. They also participate in assigned committee meetings whether those meetings occur at a full Board meeting or off-cycle. In addition, at each Board meeting there has been a time for the Faculty and Student Representatives to meet as groups by themselves. The meeting time with the full Board has been used largely at the discretion of each representative group for them to provide information to the Board, request information or discuss an item of interest or concern.

The Board would like to deepen and strengthen the quality of discussion with the Faculty and Student Representatives. To that end, Trustee Collins, Chair of the Board, has asked that meetings of the Faculty and Student Representatives occur primarily in the Academic and Student Affairs Committee with topics funneling up to the full Board as appropriate.

The Academic & Student Affairs Committee discussed the following potential goals and preliminary ideas for achieving those goals.

1. Engage in dialogue about important issues in higher education, especially related to the future and challenges of the University of Maine System;
2. Engage the Faculty and Student Representatives in discussions of topics about which the Representatives have special knowledge and about which the Board will be making decisions, e.g. matters relating to decisions the Board's Goals and Actions;
3. Build stronger relationships between the members of the Board and members of the representative groups;
4. Provide a forum for two-way information sharing and exchange of views with sufficient preparation to enable fuller, richer participation;
5. As applicable to the topic being discussed, and working through the faculty and student representatives, engage additional faculty and students in the dialog. For example, pertinent to a specific topic, invite those with special knowledge or focus in a discipline or program area, access issue, or delivery model. In addition, Faculty and Student Representatives might be asked to take soundings of faculty and student opinion on important topics to inform Board decision making and to serve as a liaison back to faculty and students.
One idea to achieve these goals is as follows:
Schedule a major portion of some meetings of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee to be devoted to discussion with the Faculty and Student Representatives. This might be twice per year for faculty oriented issues and twice per year for student oriented issues with an hour devoted to the discussion. Some topics might be jointly led by Faculty and Student Representatives. The Faculty and Student Representatives would be involved in selecting the topics and would then be responsible for shaping and leading the discussion, with support as needed from Vice Chancellor Susan Hunter, Chief Student Affairs Officer Rosa Redonnett or Board Clerk Tracy Bigney. The group would be charged with developing an agenda item summary, identifying background information and resources such as brief readings or data, and formulating discussion questions. Following each discussion the Committee and the representatives group would determine appropriate follow up, which could be further information development, addressing the topic at a full Board meeting, or other appropriate action.

Examples of issues for these major discussions might include:

- How is the work of faculty changing in response to technology and demographics? What are the implications of these changes for faculty careers and employment? Is being a faculty member a totally different career than it was twenty years ago? If so, how?
- How can UMS best provide access and meet the needs of students who have some college and are seeking degree completion while working and raising families? How are the pedagogical and program needs of these students different?
- What do students want and expect in the delivery of higher education in light of changes in technology and their needs as citizens and employees?
- How can UMS improve the quality of academic programs and provide greater programmatic access to students through inter-campus collaboration?
- What is the impact of the financial structural gap on students and faculty? How can the structural gap be reduced?

In addition to these major discussion opportunities, the Faculty and Student Representatives could request the inclusion of a specific item on the committee agenda at any meeting for a brief discussion or update. These items might be one way of identifying topics for future major discussions or might deal with more routine or ad hoc issues.

Trustee Johnson asked for input and feedback from the Committee members and the Faculty and Student Representatives who were in attendance at the meeting. The following individuals commented:

- Professor Rice said that the faculty welcome the opportunity to engage more with the Academic & Student Affairs Committee but asked that there also continue to be interaction with the full Board at each meeting, at least for a year while the new forum for dialogue is being assessed.
- President Wilson noted that the Chairs of the faculty assemblies/senates have been coordinating and conducting surveys and the Committee is likely to hear about information compiled.
- Ms. Bigney and Ms. Redonnett will look into scheduling issues to facilitate attendance of Faculty and Student Representatives at the Committee meetings.
- President Kalikow stated that the Faculty and Student Representatives and Committee should find issues to work on, identify best practices, explore different viewpoints, engage in joint problem solving and develop expected outcomes.
Vice Chancellor Hunter suggested defining a plan of work, identifying key issues and people to work on the issues with deadlines and outputs.

Ms. Jacobson noted the need to look at scheduling issues so that student representatives are able to participate because class schedules prevented some students from attending the meeting.

Trustee Johnson asked the Faculty and Student Representatives to send input on the draft paper to Ms. Tracy Bigney, Clerk of the Board and Ms. Rosa Redonnett, Chief Student Affairs Officer. After the comments are received, the information will be distributed. Trustee Johnson also asked the Faculty & Student Representatives to prepare a draft work plan for the 2014-2015 academic year to be discussed at the next Committee meeting (prior to the May Board meeting).

Credit Transfer Steering Committee: Update. President Wilson Hess, Chair of the Credit Transfer Steering Committee (CTSC), provided an update on progress being made toward implementation of the intra-system (within the UMS) component of this important work and the beginning stages of the inter-system work with the Maine Community College System (MCCS). As has been discussed at recent Board meetings, the Credit Transfer Project is aimed at improving the college credit transfer process to make it easier for students to move among Maine’s public universities and to transfer from the MCCS to the UMS and vice versa.

A transmittal letter was submitted to the Legislature regarding LD 90 from the MCCS and UMS. This letter outlined details about articulation agreements, block credit, and feasibility of a common course numbering system. A System-wide committee has been developed regarding the development of a pathway for the block transfer of general education requirements across the seven UMS campuses.

Working groups have been established across the UMS to standardize transfer between priority workforce development majors for STEM, nursing, business and information technology. The approval processes for portability of Prior Learning Assessment Credit are completed on three campuses and are under final review on four other campuses of the UMS.

ABCDE Update. President Allyson Handley, Chair of the Adult Baccalaureate Completion/Distance Education (ABCDE) Committee, presented a short update on the Committee’s activities.

As identified within the Board of Trustees Goals and Actions and also within the UMS Strategic Enrollment Plan, the development of a comprehensive approach across our institutions to serving the non-traditional, adult students in Maine is a critical next step in our ongoing efforts to meet the needs of Maine’s workforce, enhance economic development within the state, and, most importantly, provide the best opportunity for all of Maine’s citizens to attain baccalaureate degrees. With estimates of Maine citizens with some college but no degree ranging from 190,000 – 230,000 and growing interest within Maine to address this, it is evident that there is significant demand and need for this initiative.

The ABCDE Committee developed a comprehensive, System-wide plan to enhance baccalaureate degree attainment and completion by Maine’s adult and non-campus based citizens; implementation of the recommendations is underway. The Committee has been working on the concierge services, finalizing the budget, and scholarship programs. The Adult Student Priorities Surveys for each campus have been completed and the campuses are working with the data.
**Discussion of Nursing Education.** President Allyson Hughes Handley and President Wilson Hess led a discussion on developing a more collaborative approach to nursing education. This will be one plus three based program and a strong clinical aspect. There are accreditation issues that are being addressed by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The nursing profession is moving towards a minimum requirement of a bachelors’ degree. It is anticipated that within three months a Memorandum of Understanding will be developed.

Adjournment

Ellen Doughty for
Tracy B. Bigney, Clerk of the Board