Muskie School of Public Service

External Review Report

University of Maine Board of Trustees
November 18, 2013
Statement of the problem

As a result of a changing external environment and USM’s financial crisis, its graduate programs and funded research cannot be sustained in the present model.

Yet Muskie’s potential is great, and its programs are critical to the future well-being of the Maine.

Events:
- Health Policy Colloquium: The Future of Medicaid
- Maine Food Strategy
- Politics Then and Now, In Maine and the Nation
The Muskie School of Public Service

- Largest research portfolio in the U Maine system (~$22M annually)

- Expertise in public health, child welfare, economic development, sustainability, aging and disability, workforce development, public policy and nonprofit management

- 3 graduate professional programs unique to the system:
  Community Planning & Development
  Public Health
  Public Policy & Management

Eggs & Issues:
Professor Andrew Coburn speaking on health reform
Responding to the problem

The chair of the Muskie BOV and the dean of the college brought together a group of external constituents, and charged them with defining the compelling public need for the Muskie School, the singular role it can and should serve to help build a stronger city, state, and region, and how to best serve this role in a financially sustainable way.

After extensive data collection, interviews and hours in conversation, their final report recommended a strategy to increase student enrollment and funded research, and to achieve greater efficiencies and innovation within the college.
External Review Committee Membership:

David Flanagan, Muskie Board of Visitors, Chair
Richard Barringer, Emeritus Professor, Muskie School
Michael Brennan, Mayor of Portland, Maine
Deborah Deatrick, VP for Community Health, MaineHealth
Kenneth Fredette, Minority Leader, Maine House of Representatives
Chris Hall, CEO, Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce
Meredith Jones, President, Maine Community Foundation
Adam Lee, Chairman, Lee Auto Malls
Michael McGovern, Town Manager, Cape Elizabeth, Maine
Peter Mills, Executive Director, Maine Turnpike Authority
Donald Nicoll, former Administrative Assistant to Senator Muskie
Lisa Pohlmann, Executive Director, Natural Resources Council of Maine
Susannah Swihart, retired Vice Chairman, BankBoston Corporation
Wendy Wolf, President, Maine Health Access Foundation
Changing conditions require new solutions

☆ Interdisciplinary skills
☆ Competitive academic options
  ☆ Entrepreneurial thinking
  ☆ Innovative curriculum
☆ Flexible programs
  ☆ Engagement with the community
Pilot to implement the Muskie Report

We seek the BOT approval of a pilot program to implement the recommendations of this report within Muskie and its college.

- The graduate programs themselves are ideally situated to implement pilot initiatives.
- The other college graduate programs provide support for effective collaboration and innovation.
Growth Strategy to Increase Enrollment

1. Attract out-of-state students:
   Offer a pilot program to discount graduate tuition for a limited number of graduate professional programs to attract students to programs where the marginal cost of adding students would be negligible.

Specific BOT request: Pilot tuition discount pricing plan
Muskie Report: Key Recommendations

Growth Strategy to Increase Enrollment

2. Employ state-of-the-art technology to reach a wider audience:

Create a pilot on-line program for at least two of the Muskie graduate programs. These programs are not available elsewhere in the UM system. This will require a modest investment in equipment, marketing and the dedication of an on-line learning expert to help faculty to translate their course content into the new format.

USM request: Implement this pilot for fall’14
Growth Strategy to Increase Enrollment

3. Offer combined undergraduate/graduate programs:
Pilot a combined undergraduate/graduate program between the Community Planning and Development masters and undergraduate programs in Environmental Science and Geography and Anthropology.

Specific USM request:
- Support approval of pilot for spring’14 and timetable to extend the program in one year.
- Support combined degrees in general as a way to encourage undergraduates to pursue graduate degrees
Muskie Report: Key Recommendations

Growth Strategy to Increase Funded Research

4. Indirect Cost recovery:
As recommended in the Huron Report, contract research programs would receive 15% of the indirect as cost recovery for reinvesting in research capacity. In addition, the dean should be given the authority to negotiate the amount of indirect charges to be competitive.

Specific USM request: Implementation of the Huron Report and support granting authority to the dean to negotiate indirect charges.
5. Increase faculty research:

Greater faculty funded research is a necessary part of this growth model. We need to create a new set of expectations for faculty that moves faculty in this direction.

**Specific USM action:** Support a new set of expectations and rewards for faculty to achieve this result.
6. Cross-college courses:
A cross-college committee is identifying areas where one course can meet the needs of several graduate programs, which will increase productivity. Curricular change will require leadership from the faculty, the dean, the USM administration and the BOT.

Specific action: USM and BOT support for this initiative
Muskie Report: Key Recommendations

Strategy to Increase Efficiencies & Curricular Innovation

7. Increase interdisciplinary programs:
Academic programs operate in disciplinary silos but businesses, governments, and not-for-profit organizations operate across silos. To educate professionals for the 21st century, programs must modify their curricula to reduce required courses, so students have greater flexibility in shaping their graduate education. This represents a cultural change with built-in barriers to success.

Specific action: This will require support from the USM administration and the BOT.
Muskie Report: Key Recommendations

Strategy to Increase Efficiencies & Curricular Innovation

8. Reshape the faculty:
Even with increased student numbers, our tenured faculty is unevenly distributed. The only way to be financially sustainable is through a reduction in tenured faculty, and a move to more research and practice faculty.

Specific BOT request: Provide retirement incentives or other plans for reduction of faculty beyond simple attrition
9. Consolidate sponsored research within the college under one administrative unit:

Muskie’s Cutler Institute is currently conducting a review of grants and contract administration to identify areas for administrative efficiencies and improved customer service within the college. Implementation will begin spring ’14 and be completed by the end of June.

Further savings could be achieved by consolidating all funded research within the university into the college, which does 84% of the funded research in the university.
10. Make the dean responsible for revenue and expense:

Adopt a pilot program within the college that would include revenue and expense. It is only through such a model that the culture in the university will change.

Specific BOT request: Support implementation of such a pilot program.
Summary of actions requested

Support implementing recommendations in the Muskie Report, including:

• pilot tuition discount pricing plan;
• pilot combined degree program with aim of increasing them throughout USM and the system;
• provide retirement incentives or other plan for reduction of faculty beyond simple attrition;
• support Huron implementation, including local autonomy for determining indirect rates;
• support an entrepreneurial approach to growth by giving more authority and responsibility to the dean for revenue and expense.