THESIS
Workshop Validation and Best Practices
Understanding Campaign

- Presented to UMS stakeholders from THESIS
- April 2005
UMS’ vision for Student Services delivery will challenge us to think and work in new ways

Our vision is 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.

To achieve this vision we will:

- Help students help themselves;
- Deliver consistently high quality -- timely, accurate and courteous -- service at all times;
- Remove campus and functional barriers to effectively meet student needs;
- Design cost effective processes that are more efficient for students, staff and faculty;
- Maximize the use of technology to deliver student services; and
- Continually evaluate and improve our services.
The current UMS student services organization forces staff to work in silos and does not provide the best possible service to students

- Operating across the functional and university silos is difficult and discouraged in the current organizational structure
- The University of Maine System is currently operating with “siloed” functional student services departments within seven “siloed” universities
- By pooling the collective expertise and resources that already exist within the UMS, we can dramatically improve the level of service to students, faculty and staff while containing human resource costs
- For UMS to remain competitive in the higher educational marketplace, the goals of THESIS will ensure that we avoid being “left behind” with archaic and obsolete student service delivery models
A financial imperative forces UMS to reframe our structure due to declining appropriations and a constrained ability to generate operating revenues

- The Legislature has clearly stated that there will not be a significant increase in funding for UMS
  - State funding continues to decrease as a percentage of UMS overall cost
- As costs continue to rise (health care, salaries, utilities), pressures increase to contain UMS administrative costs while preserving resources for academic programs and services
- We cannot continue to rely on tuition and fee increases to meet operational costs, or we will price ourselves out of the market, causing recruitment and retention to suffer
- The demographic decline in available students in the Northeast increases the competition for students in search of affordable, quality programs
Affirming Change as a Constant

- The UMS culture, as a subset of society, is resistant to change. Yet we can easily measure how change has positively affected the System over time
  - Distance Learning
- The rate of change in society is increasing. Adaptation to change is required for our survival as a System
- Ignorance of this truism is not bliss; it will only compound the problems with our current state

“The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.”

Charles F. Kettering
“Best Practices” tell us that we should shift to greater self-service:

Old Process

- University Functional Silos
- Generalist
- Self-Help/Web
- Auto Transaction

New Process

- Specialist
- One-Stops
- University
- UMS Processing Center
- Project Enterprise

DRAFT
Student Services “Best Practices”

- **Students take full advantage of web-based tools**
  - 70/20/10 – 70% self-service/Web, 20% in-person, 10% special needs
  - Efficient, cross-functional back-office staff maintain data
  - Zero or One - no more than one transaction to resolve any student concern

- **Processes are designed from the student’s perspective**
  - A variety of models for one-stop centers exist to inform our design.
  - A variety of Web portals designs exist – mission dependent

- **Value is added with every person-to-person transaction**
  - Cross-functional, highly trained and empowered front-line staff

- **Front and Back offices both have cross-functionally trained staff**
  - Front office = in-person, email and phone support
  - Back-office = processing, maintenance, repeated tasks
  - Equal focus on student and staff success
  - Evolving facilities – continuous improvement in deployment

- **Students have more choices – time, place, and service contact**
  - Student defines the preferred time/place to conduct university business

Source: Darlene Burnett, IBM Consultant, August 2001
A Review of the Timeline for Student Services Transformation Implementation

From now through May, 2005 the THESIS team will be responsible, through their Coordinating Chair and with input and oversight from the Executive Advisory Committee, for submitting recommendations to the Presidents and Chancellor for review. After THESIS recommendations have been revised/accepted by the UMS administration and the universities in June 2005, committees will be formed to work on the next phase of Implementation Planning, with completion of the initial implementation work slated for May, 2006

- **March 2005**: THESIS team submits interim report to the President’s Council and the Advisory Committee
  - ↓
- **May 2005**: THESIS team submits preliminary recommendations to the Chancellor, President's Council and Advisory Committee
  - ↓
- **June 2005**: Chancellor approves/revises recommendations of the THESIS Team
  - ↓
- **December 2005**: Committees submit revised recommendations to the Chancellor
  - ↓
- **May 2006**: Initial implementation
During the first phase of this project, “to-be” processes were validated during staff, faculty and student workshops

- Many faculty/staff members agreed that “A One-Stop Center is a great idea!”
- Staff are concerned that our historical competitiveness will make it difficult to work cooperatively with centralized processes
- The universities want to maintain personal, face-to-face contact with their students and provide efficient services that students demand
- Students faculty and staff stated the importance of good student services and hoped that any centralized process would retain if not improve the services delivered
- Students, faculty and staff suggested that technology is an important enabler for the implementation of the redesigned processes

### THESIS Validation Workshop Attendees

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* Represented by all 7 universities
During the next phase a new student services model will be developed and recommended to the University Presidents

- On March 28, the team presented their interim report to the UMS Presidents, who approved the proposed processes and encouraged the group to proceed to the next phase of the project: student services organizational design
  - The May 2005 report of the THESIS Committee will include one recommendation for a new student services model for UMS
- Centralized student services will focus on providing back office processing – processes and transactions which support the delivery of student services, but are transparent to the student
- Centralized Student Services will evolve over time, the first phase of implementation is targeted for completion in May 2006
  - By May 2006 there will be some centralized operation in place, but not the full operation as envisioned in the to-be processes
The core team develop a number of THESIS project Critical Success Factors which were presented to and agreed upon by the University Presidents

- Support from the “top” – Chancellor and Presidents must be active supporters and “believers”
- Meet the needs of students while honoring individual university missions
- Support and commitment from UMS executives, administrators, department chairs, faculty, staff, and students
- Cross-trained staff to perform in the center
- Cross-trained staff at the Universities will better serve students
- Commit to resolve workforce management issues in a timely manner
- Continue two-way communications with faculty, staff, students
  - Advertise, promote, and communicate changes
- Meet THESIS approval process timelines, and make decisions according to timeline requirements
- Develop key metrics to gauge the success of the redesigned processes from both the university and centralized points of view
- Provide financial support for critical improvements
- Implement and upgrade technology to support the processes
  - Imaging, PeopleSoft, Legacy systems, Telephony
THESIS’ work through May 20th

- Design the organization to support the redesigned processes “to-be” processes
  - Admissions; Advising (touch points with technology, only); Registration and Student Records; Financial Aid; Bursar; and Loan Processing and Receivable Management
- Identify technology requirements to support the redesigned processes
- Develop a business case
- Develop an implementation plan
  - Overall implementation plan identifying high level key milestones for each process, including organization, technology, communications and training elements

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