

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting
January 4, 2021

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Present: Committee Members: James Erwin; Chair Pro tem, Timothy Doak, Michael Michaud, Mark Gardner, David MacMahon, and Emily Cain. **Other Trustees/Non-Voting:** Trevor Hustus. **Chancellor:** Dannel Malloy. **Presidents:** Glenn Cummings, Deborah Hedeem, Ray Rice, Rebecca Wyke, and Joan Ferrini-Mundy. **Faculty Representatives:** Lisa Leduc, Harlan Onsrud, Tim Surette, Kennedy Rubert-Nason, and William Otto. **Student Representatives:** Salvatore Cardinale, Rajay Maragh, Eli Rubin, and Paige Eggleston. **System Staff:** Robert Placido, Ellen Doughty, Rosa Redonnett, Carolyn Dorsey, James Thelen, Laura Cyr, Dan Demeritt, Kim Jenkins, and Ryan Low. **Others Present:** Leigh Saufley, Erin Doyle, Eric Brown, Joseph Szakas, George Miller, Sheri Fraser, Kimberly Stewart, Jeff St. John, John Volin, and Jeannine Uzzi.

Committee Members Absent: Lisa Eames, Betsey Timm, and Pender Makin.

Trustee Erwin, Chair Pro tem, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The Clerk performed a roll call of the Committee members present.

EAB Update

Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success and Credential Attainment Rosa Redonnett and Strategic Leader for Student Success at EAB Erin Doyle Lastowka provided an update to the Committee about current progress of EAB (formally known as the Education Advisory Board) at the UMS universities and plans for future success. The software, support and best practice guidance provided by EAB is only one part of a multi-part student success strategy for UMS campuses. EAB provides technology and techniques designed to maximize student success and completion. UMS's collaboration with EAB enables campus teams to identify patterns of student success and failure, plan strategic interventions, coordinate student support, and measure impact of strategic interventions. It also enables advisors to nudge students at critical points in the semester, provides more intentional success coaching to students, and enables mobile access to scheduling and success messaging. This work is possible through the use of tools such as the Foundation tool, which is used at all seven UMS campuses and the Navigate suite, which is currently implemented at UM, UMA, UMM, UMPI. These tools provide predictive analytics associated with student success and risk within key course and major milestones. Ms. Doyle provided a high level overview of the EAB implementation, major wins, and upcoming initiatives for each of the UMS campuses.

UMA President Rebecca Wyke and UMA Dean of Students Sheri Fraser added comments of support for the EAB program. USM Student Representative Eli Rubin asked questions concerning the possibility of students interfacing more directly with the EAB platform. Ms. Doyle stated that the students are able to interact with the program through the mobile application. Mr. Rubin also asked if there were measures put in place to make sure that all students are receiving equitable education and support. Ms. Doyle stated that the Navigate platform provides rich data surrounding the student population and helps the faculty to use historical data to find ways to improve academic success in marginalized student populations. This can be achieved by adding additional touch points and communication to students who may have increased barriers to success. Trustee Erwin asked about EAB's ability to report data on aggregate basis across all universities in the System. He also asked

how a student who belongs to one campus, but takes another class remotely at one of the other System universities is able to still benefit from EAB's Navigate tool. Ms. Doyle explained that when students are taking courses at multiple System universities, they are able to access the mobile platform for all campuses they are taking courses at and similarly faculty are able to view all courses a student is enrolled in regardless of which university is hosting the course. Ms. Doyle also explained that while each campus has its own Navigate platform, it is possible for select System staff to export data from the platforms and combine it into aggregated data. Associate Vice Chancellor Redonnett stated that her team could certainly look into reporting on that type of aggregate data in the future. Trustee Erwin stated that he believes this type of aggregate data is needed and should be added to the UMS Key Performance Indicator (KPI) metrics, so that the Trustees and System leadership can track and monitor how EAB is benefiting the System in areas such as retention and student success on a System-wide basis.

Faculty Governance Council Update

Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Carolyn Dorsey provided a brief progress update on the UMS Faculty Governance Council. Chancellor Malloy convened the university faculty senate and assembly leaders to meet with him and members of his senior staff in January 2020, to facilitate and formalize the establishment of a unifying System-wide mechanism for shared governance. During that meeting, it was decided to form a Faculty Governance Council to address issues of multi-university academic and curricular policy and programming. The Council is comprised of the faculty senate and assembly presidents from each of the seven UMS campuses, along with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in an ex-officio role. The Council met over the months from January to June 2020 and developed a plan to incorporate a System level shared faculty governance, which was submitted as part of the substantive change application sent to the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). The shared system of governance structure should be viewed as a faculty-to-faculty process that includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of program development consistent with the missions of the participating institutions. The Council reconvened in October and has continued to meet on a monthly basis to continue to refine the governance structure in relation to composition, charge, and process. System leadership continues to work with the Council to help them prepare for the NECHE visit in the Spring.

Unified Accreditation Update

UMS Chief of Staff (COS) and General Counsel, Mr. James Thelen, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) Robert Placido and Director of Organizational Effectiveness (OE) Kim Jenkins provided an update on UMS unified accreditation progress. COS Thelen stated that UMS has been continually engaged with the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), to figure out how to ensure that financial aid administration between UMS and USDOE in unified accreditation continues to allow UMS universities to manage their own federal financial aid programs as they did when they were separately accredited. USDOE's Deputy Undersecretary has continued to commit to formalizing this practice and arrangement for UMS with unified accreditation. The primary change that UMS will see is a transition from its current identification structure. Currently each university in the System has an individual Office of Postsecondary Education Identification (OPE ID) number, which they manage their financial aid and report data to the National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data under. The change being that the System will have a 6 digit OPE ID number and each System university will have a different OPE ID number that starts with the System's 6 digit number and ends in a unique 2 digit identifying suffix. Having this identifying suffix allows each System University to continue to report their individual IPEDS data;

however, having the common 6 digit number allows the System to report IPEDS data on an aggregate basis as well. This new identification structure will also allow each university to continue to manage their own financial aid. The change to the identification structure should have no effect on UMS students. The next step is to have a two person NECHE team conduct a Spring visit with UMS to confirm that they are indeed operating under the newly approved unified accreditation model as outlined in the substantive change application. Key points for this meeting include an update on the Faculty Governance Council and preparation details for the NECHE 2 year Self-study visit scheduled for the Fall of 2022.

VCAA Placido added that the Chancellor, System staff and university leadership have been busy working at adopting the unified philosophy in all aspects. He explained that campus and System level strategic plans are being reviewed to find areas to incorporate unified accreditation. Additionally, VCAA Placido has been working with campus provosts to take a fresh look at academic affairs practices and procedures to find areas that need to incorporate unified accreditation. They started with the New Program Approval Administrative Practice Letter (APL) to add language that would allow cross campus collaboration.

Dr. Jenkins provided information on the Davis Educational Foundation Grant that the UMS was recently awarded to support collaboration work between System universities. The grant is for nearly \$300 thousand and will take place over 2 years. UMS applied for the funding to provide increased support, facilitation, and coordination for academic teams who are working together in the context of collaboration and unified accreditation. Progress made includes engaging with a strategic consultant, who has been working with campus and System leadership to identify goals and metrics for unified accreditation. The OE office is offering additional training for individuals on UMS campuses who would like to become facilitators and continuous improvement specialists. OE will be working closely with several groups including the Chief Academic Officers, Chief Business Officers, and the Faculty Governance Council, to ensure that UMS effectively identifies and supports collaborative programs and opportunities as appropriate.

Academic Partnerships Update

Associate Vice Chancellor Dorsey provided a brief progress update on the collaboration with Academic Partnerships (AP) for online course delivery. Online accelerated programing includes benefits such as multiple start dates and shorter sessions. She explained that this type of program enrollment grew through the pandemic as it offers a more flexible schedule for learners. USM, UMFK, and UMPI are working with Academic Partnerships (AP) on various accelerated online course programs. Part of the reason of working with a company such as AP is to capitalize on their broad reach marketing capabilities. When UMS first started working with AP initial enrollment totals were less than expected; however, the total enrollments have jumped from 60 in October 2019 to 490 as of October 2020. Even with this increase, numbers are still lower than expected but UMS is hopeful that new program offerings and increased communication with AP will continue to grow enrollment. UMS is working with AP to develop increased enrollment and marketing initiatives and to take advantage of more of the services that AP offers.

Enrollment & Marketing Update

VCAA Placido provided a brief update on enrollment and application status. He stated that the undergraduate enrollments for Spring are down 6.8 % when compared to the same day last year. There is lots of the behind the scenes action happening to try to bring UMS enrollments back up to meet or exceed last year's figures, including work surrounding student debt and outreach. Undergraduate

applications for Fall 2021 are down 10.2 % when compared to last Fall at this time. One possible explanation for the decline is the idea that high school advisors were delayed in meeting with students due to the pandemic; therefore, delaying submission of college applications. The applications that have been submitted to UMS are being processed faster than in past years and because of that, admissions are only down 2 % when compared to last year. Something UMS has been focusing on is getting students to commit to attending college at UMS. This initiative is paying off because UMS undergraduate matriculations are up 71.6 % from last year.

Executive Director of Public Relations Dan Demeritt provided highlights of the promotional outreach directed toward new and existing students. The pandemic has taken a toll on college search activities and engagement such as college fairs, campus tours, and engagement with high school counselors. Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications are down 14% and first-year, in-state applications are down 13%. In October 2020, UMS increased engagement with campus admission offices and enrollment managers. The Chancellor formed a working group to help UMS with expediting financial aid package offers and approvals. The System worked with the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) to offer financial aid guidance one month early on December 1st. This allowed UMS to make early financial aid offers to students and that contributed to an increase of 80% in first-year, in-state matriculations from last year. UMS is launching the On Track for College 2021 initiative in the Spring. This initiative will provide numerous instant, individualized, and all-inclusive virtual campus events. The campus events will include appearances from campus leadership and student ambassadors. Several marketing pushes for this initiative are in the works, where UMS will be encouraging prospective students to “Think Ahead” and prepare for their future college and career success.

Associate Vice Chancellor Redonnett provided an update on marketing efforts directed at adult student populations. Adult learners have different motivations, barriers, challenges, and mindset than traditional students, which means UMS has to tailor their reach out to adult students to address those needs. Some of the UMS initiatives in place to support adult learners include implementation of the Adult Learner Success Center, hiring success coaches, expanding adult scholarships, small debt forgiveness, and increased outreach efforts. Additionally, UMS offers expanded academic programs such as Competency Based Education (CBE), completion and certificate programs, and micro-credentialing. Associate Vice Chancellor Redonnett also provided information on the four phase UMS communication strategy for adult learners.

Law School Update

Dean of the Maine School of Law Leigh Saufley provide an update on Maine School of Law cross-campus collaborations, application status, and current information concerning non-Juris Doctor (JD) degree courses. The University of Maine School of Law is in the midst of a governance transition from being part of USM, where it has been recognized as such for U. S. Department of Education Title IV purposes, to being directly governed by UMS in a similar manner to how each of the System universities are governed. This transition will be effective as of July 1, 2021. Subsequently, the Maine School of Law is working to ensure alignment of service to the State of Maine through the enhanced UMS collaboration and resource sharing that is expected with unified accreditation. Dean Saufley thanked VCAA Placido for working with her so intently in order to make sure she understands how the different collaboration and resource systems work in academia. She stated that applications to law school are up nationally and Maine Law applications are up approximately 25%.

Dean Saufley explained that, prior to the market crash of 2008; Maine Law was, in great part, able to support itself through tuition revenues. Following the economic crash of 2008, law schools nationally turned to tuition discounting to attract good students to apply to Law School, forcing Maine Law to do the same in order to stay competitive. She has been working with Chancellor Malloy to find a way to adjust tuition to remain competitive, but also allow for growth of the school. Maine Law growth is limited due to building capacity and faculty availability. Dean Saufley explained that the Law School is in need of two faculty positions and she is working on finding the budget to fund these positions. She anticipates having JD classes of 90 students per year for the next five years. Two initiatives to make sure the Law School continues to thrive is to improve the credentialing of incoming students as to ensure student success and to massively improve Law School marketing and outreach. Additionally, the Law School is working on augmenting success through the offering of non-JD courses and certificates, which many law schools currently do to increase revenue and increase capacities for cross-disciplinary work.

Faculty Representatives Discussion

UMA Faculty Representative Tim Surette explained that he was impressed with the On Track for College presentation that was presented earlier. He stated that he was happy that the System is working on engaging the K-12 students at a much higher level. UMPI Faculty Representative Lisa Leduc stated that she uses the EAB as an example of one the benefits that UMS has to offer when she is recruiting students to UMPI. She explained that EAB offers the faculty to engage in a high touch teaching capacity, by allowing them to monitor a student throughout the course and mobilize help if the student is falling behind.

Student Representatives Discussion

Law School Student Representative Paige Eggleston stated that she was impressed with the efforts made by the Law School Dean and faculty to transition to an online modality quickly and effectively at the start of the pandemic. She explained that she would very much like to return to in person classes as soon as that is possible but that she is thankful to the System, Chancellor, and Law School for continuing to provide classes through the pandemic so that she can continue her degree progress.

Additional information about the meeting can be found on the Board of Trustees website:

<https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/meeting-agendas-materials/academic-and-student-affairs-committee/>

Adjournment,

Heather A. Massey for
Ellen N. Doughty, Clerk