

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting  
March 1, 2021

**Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting**

**Present: Committee Members:** Lisa Eames; Chair, James Erwin, Timothy Doak, Michael Michaud, Mark Gardner, David MacMahon, and Emily Cain. **Other Trustees/Non-Voting:** Trevor Hustus and Sven Bartholomew. **Chancellor:** Dannel Malloy. **Presidents:** Glenn Cummings, Deborah Hedeon, Ray Rice, Edward Serna, Rebecca Wyke, and Joan Ferrini-Mundy. **Faculty Representatives:** Lisa Leduc, Harlan Onsrud, Tim Surette, and Clyde Mitchell. **Student Representatives:** Ameya Karapurkar. **System Staff:** Robert Placido, Ellen Doughty, Rosa Redonnett, Carolyn Dorsey, James Thelen, Laura Cyr, David Demers, Jeff St. John, and Ryan Low. **Others Present:** Leigh Saufley, Eric Brown, Joseph Szakas, Laurel Hyle, Jeannine Uzzi, Mike Matis, B.J. Kitchin, John Volin, and Justin Hafford.

**Committee Members Absent:** Betsey Timm, and Pender Makin.

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

**Brightspace LMS Update**

Chief Information Officer David Demers Dr. David Demers, UMA Director of Instructional Services Robert (BJ) Kitchin, USM Learning Designer Michael Matis, and UMS Teaching & Learning Subject Matter Expert Justin Hafford provided an overview of the successes and benefits realized with the new Brightspace learning management system since its adoption and future plans to support the expanded use of the platform across the University. The Brightspace platform from Desire2Learn was selected to serve as the University of Maine System's new learning management system (LMS), replacing Blackboard Learn. Full implementation of the Brightspace platform was achieved to support instruction for the opening of the Fall 2020 term and is currently being used for Spring 2021 courses. Key benefits of the Brightspace are that it is flexible, mobile-friendly, a stable platform, provides easily added tools and applications, and provides learning analytics tools that instructors can use to track engagement with courses. The presenters outlined some of the Brightspace implementation challenges and success strategies. Additionally, they provided an overview of the data from the UMA student and USM faculty and student satisfaction surveys. Both UMA and USM provided Fall 2020 Launch Faculty Training and UMA also provided many hours of student training as well. All UMA and USM produced training resources were made available for use and adaption for all UMS campuses. Next steps include implementation of the Brightspace activity reporting datamart; full grading implementation with MaineStreet; and deployment of Brightspace Learning Outcomes Tool and Course Merchant. Dr. Demers thanked the many people who made up the Brightspace Core Implementation team for their hard work and dedication to making sure this initiative was a success.

**Unified Accreditation Update**

Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives Jeff St. John provided an update on UMS unified accreditation progress. Dr. St. John stated that there are 103 faculty, staff, and UMS stakeholders, representing all seven UMS campuses and the Maine Law School teaming up to draft sections of the self-study document that will need to be provided to the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) in the Fall of 2022. There are nine drafting teams, one for each of the NECHE accreditation standards. The drafting teams are on target to complete their drafts by their target date of

May 31<sup>st</sup> and over the Summer, UMS will stitch together the nine drafts into one initial complete draft document.

The Spring NECHE Confirming visit has been scheduled for May 11-12, 2021. This will be a virtual 2 day meeting with a 2 person team appointed by NECHE. The NECHE team members are President of Plymouth State University Donald Bix and Assistant Vice Chancellor of University of Georgia Myk Garn. The visit will focus on the System's unified accreditation process and will also include a check in with UMPI concerning their three new Competency Based Education (CBE) academic programs. The visit will include open meetings with UMS faculty, staff, and students with respect to unified accreditation. Additionally, the NECHE team will meet with the Chancellor and the System Leadership team, the UMS Presidents Council with the addition of campus Provosts, the campus Chief Business Officers, the campus NECHE accreditation officers, the System-wide Faculty Governance Council, and a meeting for faculty members who are involved in multi-campus academic programs. Dr. St. John is also working on setting up meetings with Board Chair Trustee Jim Erwin and Board Committee Chairs Trustee Lisa Eames and Trustee Jim Donnelly. Prior to the Confirming visit, UMS will send NECHE a 15 page report outlining the progress on unified accreditation and an information about the three UMPI CBE programs. Last Tuesday, UMS launched an updated unified accreditation website that includes far more detail about the current unified accreditation process. The website will feature monthly updates on all facets of the unified accreditation progress. The website will provide up to date communication and transparency throughout the entire unified accreditation process.

Work has begun on the unified program catalog. The overarching goal is to develop a catalog that will contain all course offerings across the entire UMS, which will be visible and accessible to all UMS students regardless of their home campus. The unified program catalog will make things like credit transfers, course registration, billing, and related administrative elements of the academic experience as obstacle free for the students as possible. It will also remove barriers for faculty who are or would like to be active in one of the UMS multi-campus collaborative academic programs.

### **Faculty Governance Council Update**

Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Carolyn Dorsey provided a brief progress update on the UMS Faculty Governance Council. The Council has been meeting regularly to move forward the work to create a shared faculty governance framework. The Council has been making great progress and have been working on refining the charter that was initially presented and refining the group composition to ensure equal representation from each campus across the System. They are on track to have their section of the report that is due for the NECHE Confirming visit in May completed. An important addition to the process of the Council has been to include communication and feedback between Council representatives and their respective campus faculty members. The Council has also been working with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Office on several academic initiatives.

### **Harold Alfond Foundation Grant**

Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives & Chief Legal Officer Mr. James Thelen and Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation/UM President Joan Ferrini-Mundy provided an update on the current Harold Alfond Foundation grant initiatives. In October 2020, the Harold Alfond Foundation (HAF) announced more than \$500 million dollars of new grant investments in Maine institutions to help grow the State's workforce and economy and support quality healthcare. UMS was notified that it would be the recipient of \$240 million, which was the 8th largest gift ever made to a U.S. institution of public higher education. The money received from the HAF grant is dedicated to four initiatives across the System. Black Bear athletics will receive \$90 million in HAF grant funds, with a \$20 million match

from UMS needed. Student Success & Retention will receive \$20 million in HAF grant funds, with a \$25 million match from UMS needed. Maine College of Engineering, Computing, & Information Science will receive \$75 million in HAF grant funds, with a \$75 million match from UMS needed. Maine Graduate & Professional Center will receive \$55 million in HAF grant funds, with a \$50 million match from UMS needed. An Executive Leadership Group has been developed to oversee grant funds and fundraising for match funds. Members of the group include Chancellor Malloy, Vice Chancellor Thelen, Vice Chancellor/President Ferrini-Mundy, UM Vice President & Chief of Staff Kimberly Whitehead, and Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration and Treasurer Ryan Low. The Executive Leadership Group is working with two larger groups of key individuals across the System, with one team focused on project initiatives and the other on project operations.

The presenters provided an overview of the key activities to date that have occurred. Some highlights include submission of CY2021 benchmarks to HAF in December 2020, establishment of UMS Transforms principles, announcement of UM Athletics facilities plans, match planning with UMaine Foundation and consultants, development of InfoReady grant tracking tool, VOX Global engagement on communication and regional/national messaging strategy, and many other meetings and workshops. Next steps include consideration of the HAF resolution at the March 2021 Board of Trustees meeting; confirming CY2021 initiative work plans; assessing budgetary and staffing support needs; continuing development of matching fund plans; launching the Registry tool to track external grant matching prospects; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion HAF forum; and System-wide engagement with faculty concerning the UMS Transforms initiative.

Trustee Erwin asked that the Academic & Student Affairs (ASA) Committee be provided regular progress updates on the HAF grant initiatives. He also stated that the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee and full Board should be updated as appropriate. The other Trustee Committee members agreed that these progress updates were needed. Additionally, ASA Committee Chair requested that the information that was presented at the ASA Committee meeting today, be provided to the full Board at their March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Vice Chancellor/President Ferrini-Mundy and Vice Chancellor Thelen agreed to the proposed progress updates and the presentation at the March Board of Trustees meeting.

### **Faculty Representatives Discussion**

UM Faculty Representative Harlan Onsrud raised concerns about gaining clarity in the processes for moving forward on multi-campus degree programs and or academic unit mergers before the UMS faculty commits to actually moving forward. He asked for UMS to provide a similar process map for multi-campus academic programs, to the one that is used at the campus level for starting up, altering, merging and or eliminating programs. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) Robert Placido stated that this is something that the VCAA Office and the Faculty Governance Council are currently working on and that the feedback from Dr. Onsrud and other System faculty is very beneficial in developing a successful process.

### **Student Representatives Discussion**

The Student Representatives to the Board of Trustees that were present had no items to discuss.

### **Executive Session**

On a motion by Trustee Erwin, which was seconded by Trustee Doak, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee went into Executive Session under the following provision:

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- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-A to discuss the evaluation of personnel and the consideration and discussion of appointments, employment and duties.

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Gardner, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Committee concluded the Executive Session.

Following the Executive Session, the Committee reconvened the public meeting to discuss the following items:

**UMS 2021 Tenure Nominations**

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Doak, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved this item to be forwarded to the March 22, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendations for tenure submitted by the Universities of the University of Maine System. Approvals will take effect September 1, 2021 for faculty with academic year appointments and on July 1, 2021 for faculty with fiscal year appointments.

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