

Board of Trustees  
**Human Resources / Labor Relations Committee**

June 24, 2024

1:00 PM

ZOOM – No Physical Location is Available

The public is invited to view the meeting on YouTube. The link to the Board of Trustees YouTube page can be found the Board website: <https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/>

**AGENDA**

**1:00-2:05**

**Executive Session**

The Human Resources & Labor Relations Committee will enter Executive Session under the provisions of: 1 MRSA Section 405 6-A & 6-D.

**2:05-2:40**

**Public Meeting Agenda**

- TAB 1 HR/LR Chair Announcements and Updates
- TAB 2 Introduction of New CHRO
- TAB 3 Labor Relations Update
- TAB 4 Strategic Plan Updates
- TAB 5 Employee Health Plan Task Force Update

Action items within the Committee purview are noted in green.

Items for Committee decisions and recommendations are noted in red.

*Note: Times are estimated based upon the anticipated length for presentation or discussion of a particular topic. An item may be brought up earlier or the order of items changed for effective deliberation of matters before the Committee.*

University of Maine System  
Board of Trustees

**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**NAME OF ITEM:** HR/LR Chair Announcements and Updates

**INITIATED BY:** Patrick Flood, Chair

**BOARD INFORMATION:** X

**BOARD ACTION:**

**BOARD POLICY:**

N/A

**UNIFIED ACCREDITATION CONNECTION:**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Human Resources and Labor Relations Committee Chair, Trustee Patrick Flood will start the public meeting with relevant announcements and updates.

4/25/24

University of Maine System  
Board of Trustees

**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**NAME OF ITEM:** Introduction of new Chief Human Resources Officer

**INITIATED BY:** Patrick Flood, Chair

**BOARD INFORMATION:** X

**BOARD ACTION:**

**BOARD POLICY:**

N/A

**UNIFIED ACCREDITATION CONNECTION:**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Carolyn Dorsey, will introduce the new Chief Human Resources Officer to the committee.

4/25/24

University of Maine System  
Board of Trustees

**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**NAME OF ITEM:** Labor Relations Update

**INITIATED BY:** Patrick Flood, Chair

**BOARD INFORMATION:** X

**BOARD ACTION:**

**BOARD POLICY:**  
407 Labor Relations

**UNIFIED ACCREDITATION CONNECTION:**  
N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Senior Director of Labor and Employee Relations, Ria DeMay, and Senior Labor Relations Manager, Susan Cameron, will provide a brief summary regarding the status of recent negotiations as well as a summary of collaborative labor/management working groups formed as a result of these negotiations.

University of Maine System  
Board of Trustees

**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**NAME OF ITEM:** Strategic Plan Updates

**INITIATED BY:** Patrick Flood, Chair

**BOARD INFORMATION:** X

**BOARD ACTION:**

**BOARD POLICY:**

N/A

**UNIFIED ACCREDITATION CONNECTION:**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Carolyn Dorsey, and other members of the Strategic Initiatives Office will provide an update on the status of Strategic Plan goals and milestones that directly report to the HR/LR Committee. Rosa Redonnett, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success and Credential Retainment, and Amie Parker, Human Resources, will provide an update on the University of Maine System DEI Steering Committee.

Attachments

[UMS DEI Steering Committee – PDF](#)

[UMS DEI Steering Committee - Powerpoint](#)

## UMS DEI Steering Committee

Update-June 2024

### Role of the Steering Committee

The role of the steering committee is to support the campus-based Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Councils through cross-campus information sharing. The intent is not to replace campus DEI councils but rather to build a framework for broad collaboration and communication and serve as a resource for System and University leadership. We seek to stay apprised of DEI news, research, and actions, introduce common tools and approaches, facilitate regular DEI reporting, and support relevant and accessible professional development for the UMS Community.

### Future Goals

Work that we plan to undertake in the coming year includes:

- Human Resources is engaged in redeploying our employee training in 2024 by launching a new learning management system, refreshing current training modules, and adding new modules with an expanded focus on DEIB professional development.
- The DEI Steering Committee is considering adding an Education, Training, and Programming subcommittee to help design future training, increase awareness of development opportunities across the System, and provide resources for further DEI-related education and training.
- Planning is underway for the 2025 climate survey. We are evaluating survey tools and building a project plan.
- Building more robust standard operating procedures and guidelines to create more equity in human resource-related decision-making (hiring, promotion, separation, etc.)
- Explore the next steps concerning work done with campus admissions offices during the summer of 2021. While some campuses acted based on this 2021 work, we envision revisiting that work to develop a more comprehensive view of what remains to be accomplished.
- Exploring best practices in bias response with a focus on how to effectively communicate with our community when bias incidents occur.
- Continued support of our LGBTQ+ community by expanding flexibility in our systems and building education and resources for employees and students to develop a more inclusive community.
- Updating the various academic and HR calendars to include sensitivity to a wider range of cultural and religious observances.
- Working with appropriate groups to address and support the action items contained within the Strategic Plan specific to DEI, specifically Commitment #4.

## Overview of Work to Date

### ***Name Usage and Gender Identity/Pronoun***

With UMS DEI Steering Committee review and support, two, ad hoc committees finished important work as follows:

- Updating our *Name Usage Policy* to include “chosen” name and to provide additional resources for students and employees, and
- Formulating and implementing *Gender Identity and Pronoun Usage* guidance in 2023. This group then further updated the guidance in 2024 to include valuable educational components and resources in support of our LGBTQ+ community. This additional guidance is scheduled to be shared with the UMS community in the summer and Fall of 2024.

### ***Steering Committee Work<sup>1</sup>***

As a Steering Committee, we have developed a strategy for the discussion, review, and recommendation process for cross-campus DEI policies and procedures and have used the Committee structure to provide best practices and guidance to the campus-based DEI Councils on topics ranging from bias response to accessibility on campus. There are three subcommittees, and their work is described below.

#### *A note regarding the status and Membership of the Committee*

We have had several steering committee members move on from their steering committee roles in the last year. This was primarily a function of employee turnover and/or individual capacity or priorities. Campuses report the same issues with membership and have spent some time over the past year or so “reforming” as Councils.

### ***Campus Climate Subcommittee***

Our primary focus has been conducting the HEDS Campus Climate Survey and digesting the results from 2022. We saw this as a key piece to inform future work. The information gleaned thus far provides some “signals” into areas that campuses and the System will want to focus on.

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<sup>1</sup> The Steering Committee meets at least twice per semester in retreat format (3-5 hours). Beginning in Spring 2024, the Committee met more frequently (three times per semester for shorter, more work-oriented sessions). The Committee is comprised of representatives from every campus and the Law School, representatives from Shared Services (IT, Procurement, etc.), and Institutional Research. The committee is co-chaired by a representative each from Strategic Initiatives and HR.

Performing climate surveys helps provide insights and our experience in 2022 has helped us to assess what we would like to see for the next survey, planned for 2025. As a result of the 2022 data, each campus developed key themes that emerged from the survey and used this information to construct questions asked at “*interview sessions*” (aka, focus groups) held on each campus. UM, USM, UMPI, and Law conducted their interview sessions in October and November of 2023, and UMA and UMF conducted theirs in March and April of 2024. UMFK and UMM have not done this work at this time, due to finite capacity given that this work is very labor intensive.

Common themes identified include:

- Observing more traditions and holding events on campus would be welcome
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) should be incorporated into classes, particularly those offered in the first year
- Physical accessibility of our campus requires attention
- Funding for DEIB activities and initiatives is a challenge
- Faculty and staff should receive DEIB training (and it should be mandatory)
- Students’ abilities and talents should be utilized more effectively
- Gathering regular feedback from students and employees is affirming for those participating and informative for the development of more inclusive campuses

### ***Data & Analysis Subcommittee***

The Data and Analysis subcommittee has been gathering DEI data from across the System, discussing the kind of data dashboard we wish to develop, and adding DEI elements into several ongoing System reports (ex our ADC reports, Early College reports, etc.). We also have been researching how other institutions utilize this kind of data (helped by some recent presentations at NEAIR). Our goal is to emerge with a standard dashboard of key indicators that can be tracked and analyzed over time. The dashboard with DEI elements is currently limited to IPEDS data (HR and student) and is found on the UMS dashboard.

### ***Communication Subcommittee***

This subcommittee has been concentrating on building a central location on the web to point community members to System and campus activities, groups and development opportunities that support inclusion and belonging. A DEI training module was added to our annual required training for all faculty, staff, and student employees.



# UMS DEI Steering Committee

## *Update on Initiatives*

Presented by the DEI Steering Committee Co-Chairs:  
Amie Parker, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Rosa Redonnett, Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives

## Future Initiatives

- Redeploying our employee training in 2024 with an expanded focus on DEIB professional development.
- Adding an Education, Training, and Programming Subcommittee
- Planning is underway for the 2025 climate survey
- Building more robust standard operating procedures and guidelines
- Explore the next steps involving work done with campus admissions
- Exploring best practices in bias response
- Continued support of our LGBTQ+ community
- Updating the various academic and HR calendars
- Working with appropriate groups to address and support the action items contained within the Strategic Plan

## UMS DEI Steering Committee: Work to Date

- 2022 Campus Climate Survey (2023/2024 Interview Sessions with students and faculty/staff)
- Name Usage and Gender Identity Pronoun policies and processes
- Expanding DEI data within the UMS dashboard
- Continuing Development of a DEI website
- Best practice discussions, resources and recommendations around topics such as:
  - Bias response
  - Accessibility
  - Forcefully displaced populations in Maine
  - Engaging youth who are asylum seekers in programs and how to support them

## UMS DEI Steering Committee

### *Themes from Campus Climate Surveys/Interview Sessions*

- Observing more traditions and holding events on campus would be welcome
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) should be incorporated into classes, particularly those offered in the first year
- Physical accessibility of our campus requires attention
- Funding for DEIB activities and initiatives is a challenge
- Faculty and staff should receive DEIB training (and it should be mandatory)
- Students' abilities and talents should be utilized more effectively
- Gathering regular feedback from students and employees is affirming for those participating and informative for the development of more inclusive campuses

Questions?

4.2

University of Maine System  
Board of Trustees

**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**NAME OF ITEM:** Employee Health Plan Task Force Update

**INITIATED BY:** Patrick Flood, Chair

**BOARD INFORMATION:** X

**BOARD ACTION:**

**BOARD POLICY:**

N/A

**UNIFIED ACCREDITATION CONNECTION:**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Carolyn Dorsey, Jason Talbert and Amie Parker from Human Resources, will provide an update on the Employee Health Plan Task Force and answer any questions regarding this update the committee may have.

Attachments

[UMS EHPTF Update Presentation](#)



# Board of Trustees HR/LR Committee June Update

University of Maine System

Jason Talbert, Senior Director of HR Operations



5.1

06/24/2024

# Employee Input Options Re: Benefits

5.1

UMS employees, retirees, and covered dependents have a variety of avenues to provide feedback and engage with those who make decisions regarding plan design.

These resources include:

- The Employee Health Plan Task Force (EHPTF),
- The Retiree Health Benefits Advisory Committee (RHBAC), and
- The Employee Benefits Center (EBC).

06/24/2024



# Employee Health Plan Task Force (EHPTF)

5.1

The Employee Health Plan Task Force (EHPTF) is an inclusive, multi-stakeholder forum which provides guidance to UMS regarding health care benefits.

It provides leadership to UMS and input into the collective bargaining process by:

- Recommending actions that allow for continuation of competitive benefit offerings.
- Reducing cost trends that improve UMS' overall financial sustainability.
- Continuing a culture of health in which employee well-being is a strategic value.
- Providing input unto the collective bargaining process.
- The Retiree Health Benefits Advisory Committee (RHBAC)
- The Employee Benefits Center (EBC)

06/24/2024

# Employee Health Plan Task Force (EHPTF)

5.1

Employees are welcome and encouraged to contact EHPTF members for assistance, or to suggest changes to their benefits offerings. In addition, vendors also participate to address plan design and potential changes, performance challenges, and to receive employee-based feedback.

EHPTF generally meets monthly and is currently comprised of:

- Representatives from all unions with collectively bargained insurance provisions as well as non-represented employees,
- UMS Benefits departmental leadership,
- UMS Finance senior leadership,
- UMS Human Resources senior leadership, and
- Representatives from WillisTowersWatson (WTW).

06/24/2024

# Employee Health Plan Task Force (EHPTF)

5.1

EHPTF members have been instrumental in partnering with the Employee Benefits Center to:

- Encourage members to participate in a UMS-wide employee benefits survey conducted in early 2024,
- Serve as a primary point of contact and advocates for their membership,
- Partner with the EBC to identify trends and opportunities for improvement,
- Serve on Request for Proposal (RFP) committees that directly impact benefits vendor selection, and
- Collaborate with the EBC to resolve employee and dependent questions and concerns - including network and provider access and customer care challenges.

06/24/2024

## Retiree Health Benefits Advisory Committee (RHBAC)

5.1

The Retiree Health Benefits Advisory Committee was formed in July 2022 to bring together key stakeholders of UMS' retiree community to provide strategic input regarding retiree health benefits.

The RHBAC meets monthly and plays a significant role in supporting outreach and communication to retirees, not to mention fostering ongoing dialogue and supportive relationships between UMS administration and retirees.

RHBAC is currently comprised of:

- Representatives from all unions with retiree-eligible health benefits, including a trained State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselor specializing in Medicare-related benefits,
- UMS Benefits departmental leadership,
- UMS Finance senior leadership, and
- UMS Human Resources senior leadership.

06/24/2024

## Retiree Health Benefits Advisory Committee (RHBAC)

5.1

Feedback from the RHBAC and other retiree associations has been instrumental in the implementation of several enhancements to both plan offerings and UMS-retiree relationships, including:

- Plan-specific (Alight and Aetna) benefits surveys conducted in winter 2023,
- Improved and enhanced Open Enrollment materials for 2023 and beyond,
- A designated liaison within the Employee Benefits Center who serves as primary intake for any retiree-related benefits questions and concerns,
- Enhanced UMS visibility at functions such as the University of Maine Retiree Homecoming,
- A state-wide in-person retiree engagement and education opportunity scheduled for August 2024.

06/24/2024

# Employee Benefits Center (EBC)

5.1

The Employee Benefits Center (EBC) is comprised of six professional employees responsible for all facets of UMS employee and retiree benefits administration.

In addition to traditional insurance offerings such as health, dental, and vision insurance, this team administers:

- Leaves of absence, including coordination of applicable STD/LTD benefits,
- Administrative aspects of the UMS wellness plans and incentives,
- Mandatory and voluntary UMS retirement savings plans,
- Benefits-related New Employee Orientations,
- Qualified status changes for active employees and their dependents, and
- Serves as the primary point of contact for all benefits-eligible employees, retirees, and dependents.

06/24/2024