

**University of Maine System
Board of Trustees
Academic and Student Affairs Committee**

June 22, 2026

Zoom Meeting

Present: Committee Members: David MacMahon, Chair; Barbara Alexander; Trish Riley; Kelly Martin; Roger Katz; Elise Baldacci & Emily Cain. **Non-Voting Members:** Blake Shepard **Chancellor:** Dannel Malloy. **Presidents:** Deborah Hedeem; Jenifer Cushman; Leigh Saufley; Ray Rice; Joseph McDonnell & Joan Ferrini-Mundy. **System Staff:** Jeffrey St. John; Carolyn Dorsey; Samantha Warren; Jamie Ballinger; Amon Purinton; Heather Ball; Elizabeth Stickler. **Student Representatives:** Laura Prince; Tacie Dugan; Genevieve Naranja. **Faculty Representatives:** Joseph Staples; William Otto; Clyde Mitchell. **Provosts:** Adam Tuchinsky; Katherine Yardley; Alana Margeson; Jeffrey Maine; Gabe Paquette; and Joseph Szakas.

Committee Chair David MacMahon called the ASA Committee meeting to order, welcomed Trustee Blake Shepard, and asked the Clerk to take the roll of Committee members present.

Executive Session

On a motion by Trustee Cain and seconded by Trustee Riley, and approved by a roll call vote of the Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee went into Executive Session under the following provision:

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

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

PUBLIC SESSION

Student Representatives Discussion

Vice Chancellor St. John reported that Laura Prince, the new student representative from Maine Law, had joined the meeting and that Tacy Dugan and Genevieve Naranja were also present. He noted that the student representatives had met in preparation for the meeting and that no student

concerns or issues had been raised for Committee discussion. Vice Chancellor St. John also reported that a significant number of new student representatives would be joining the Committee in the coming meetings, likely by September and potentially by July. Committee Chair MacMahon invited student representatives to raise any issues, and no hands were raised.

Faculty Representatives Discussion

Vice Chancellor St. John identified faculty representatives present for the meeting, including Professors Staples, Otto, and Mitchell. He reported that the faculty representatives had met in advance of the meeting and that no issues had been raised for Committee discussion. Committee Chair MacMahon invited faculty representatives to raise any issues, and none were raised.

New Program: M.S. in Athletic Administration, University of Maine at Fort Kent

President Hedeon presented the proposed Master of Science in Athletic Administration at the University of Maine at Fort Kent. She described the program as a fully online, practitioner-focused graduate program designed to prepare current and aspiring athletic leaders, including high school coaches, assistant athletic directors, educators, and athletic administrators, for administrative roles in interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics.

President Hedeon noted that Maine's high school athletic governance includes 153 high schools and that the Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association serves more than 140 athletic administrators. She stated that New England has more than 778 athletic director positions and that the curriculum is aligned with competencies identified by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association. She further explained that coursework would support professional certification, including the Registered Athletic Administrator credential and progress toward the Certified Athletic Administrator credential, and would incorporate best practices from national and state athletic associations and contemporary athletic governance models.

President Hedeon stated that UMFK had met with representatives of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association to evaluate potential affiliation for certification. She noted that USM offers a Master of Science in Athletic Training, UMaine offers an online nine-credit graduate certificate in athletic administration, and the proposed UMFK program would include ten courses with planned course-delivery partnerships with UMaine and UMPI.

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Katz, and approved by a roll-call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved forwarding this item to the July 13, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves the M.S. in Athletic Administration at the University of Maine at Fort Kent.

New Program: B.S. in THOR, University of Maine at Presque Isle

Provost Margeson presented the proposed Bachelor of Science in Tourism, Hospitality, and Outdoor Recreation at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. She described the degree as the first online THOR program to be offered nationally and stated that it would be delivered through UMPI's YourPace competency-based education program. She noted that the B.S. and the proposed A.S. in THOR were designed as stackable credentials and reflected the collaborative work led by the THOR Institute and Dr. Tracy Michaud.

Provost Margeson stated that the program includes three interdisciplinary modules: sustainable tourism, hospitality management, and outdoor recreation, as well as a six-credit capstone experience. She said the proposal had been developed through cross-campus collaboration and ongoing THOR Institute meetings since 2025. She also cited Bureau of Labor Statistics projections that, by 2033, one in eight U.S. jobs would be in leisure and hospitality, representing more than 800,000 new positions. She reported that while the written materials projected approximately \$415,000 in net revenue by year three, additional analysis supplied by President Rice suggested three-year cumulative average enrollment of approximately 250 to 360 students, with annual revenue projections ranging from \$2.3 million to \$3.9 million.

Trustee Riley stated that she was prepared to support the program with the understanding that a resolution would be attached to the approval referencing the ongoing development of a more systemwide approach. She noted that the YourPace program experience should be used in a planned way over the coming year for more in-person THOR-related programs throughout the System.

Trustee Katz asked whether the minimum age for the YourPace program would be 22 and whether the program would be marketed primarily out of state, while remaining available to in-state learners. He also asked how Davis Foundation grant funds could be used across the YourPace program, other online offerings, and potential in-person or partially in-person baccalaureate program development at another university. Provost Margeson stated that the standard YourPace minimum age is 20 but confirmed that, for this particular program, the minimum age would be 22. Vice Chancellor St. John and Trustee Riley stated that they would provide a fuller answer about the Davis Foundation grant, and Trustee Riley noted that the grant was connected to multi-university collaboration and was less about a specific modality than about helping faculty work together across the System.

Vice Chancellor St. John stated that the updated resolution for the item had been provided to Committee Chair MacMahon and the Clerk. Trustee Katz asked whether the resolution needed to specify that the program would be offered through YourPace; Vice Chancellor St. John responded that the YourPace modality was included throughout the proposal being voted upon.

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Katz, and approved by a roll-call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved forwarding this item to the July 13, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, and approves the B.S. in THOR at the University of Maine at Presque Isle as part of an ongoing coordinated plan to create and submit for approval a principally in-person systemwide program with hybrid/online elements during fiscal year 2026-2027.

New Program: A.S. in THOR, University of Maine at Presque Isle

Provost Margeson presented the proposed Associate of Science in Tourism, Hospitality, and Outdoor Recreation at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. She stated that the program would serve underserved workforce populations and, like the proposed B.S. in THOR, would provide maximum flexibility through self-paced, asynchronous online delivery in the YourPace competency-based education program. She stated that the degree would build on the collaborative work of the THOR Institute faculty network across the System and that no THOR associate degree currently exists within the University of Maine System or nationally.

Provost Margeson explained that the program targets working adults, seasonal workers, and national and international learners, and she noted that there is less than one percent application overlap between YourPace and traditional programs. She stated that the proposed A.S. would create a stackable two-year pathway into the four-year THOR degree.

Trustee Katz requested written confirmation that the program, along with the B.S. in THOR, would be marketed to and enroll individuals age 22 and above. President Rice thanked the Committee for considering the program and stated that there are limited comparable programs in Maine, noting that one associate degree exists at Southern Maine Community College and that it is not online, while York County Community College has individual courses but not comprehensive programs. Trustee Riley asked for clarification that the program would not enroll anyone under age 22, rather than only being marketed to that population. President Rice confirmed that the program had been asked to be marketed as part of the national marketing campaign and confirmed the age criterion.

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION

On a motion by Trustee Martin, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by a roll-call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved forwarding this item to the July 13, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves the A.S. in THOR at the University of Maine at Presque Isle as part of an ongoing coordinated plan to create and submit for approval principally in-person systemwide program elements during fiscal year 2026-2027.

New Program: B.S. in Art Education, University of Maine at Farmington

Provost Yardley presented the proposed Bachelor of Science in Art Education at the University of Maine at Farmington. She described it as a teacher-preparation program addressing an identified state shortage area and workforce need and said UMF is prepared and resourced to offer and sustain the program within its education portfolio.

Provost Yardley stated that no new resources would be needed. Students would enroll in courses, practica, and student teaching already offered at UMF, with the exception of art methods courses, where students would have opportunities to collaborate with offerings through UMPI and USM. She noted that UMPI offers online courses and that USM faculty had indicated they could offer courses by Zoom for UMF students. She also described faculty interest in a larger collaborative network where art education students at UMF, USM, UMaine, or UMPI could network and form a cohort.

Provost Yardley stated that the anticipated audience includes current UMF students who have long asked for an art education option. She noted that some students choose UMF while studying elementary or secondary education and later return for additional coursework, and that some art and design students decide as sophomores or juniors that they would like to become art teachers but lack access to a cohesive program. She also described graduates already teaching in rural schools without the preparation teachers should have, who then need to return for additional education. She characterized the program as budget neutral because it maximizes existing UMF and sister-campus resources and said that, if approved, the program would be listed in the 2026-2027 catalog.

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Martin, and approved by a roll-call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved forwarding this item to the July 13, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves the B.S. in Art Education at the University of Maine at Farmington.

New Program: A.A. in Agricultural Science and Agribusiness, University of Maine at Presque Isle

Provost Margeson presented the proposed Associate of Arts in Agricultural Science and Agribusiness at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. She stated that the two-year degree would fill a gap in Maine's credential landscape because the University of Maine System does not currently offer a two-year agriculture degree, while the Maine Community College System offers only an applied horticulture degree through Southern Maine Community College.

Provost Margeson stated that the program would create a two-year to four-year pathway and could open opportunities for future articulation agreements with community college partners. She noted that Dr. Wallhead worked collaboratively with Dr. Peterson at the University of Maine to review the curriculum and identify courses that can be shared and offered at UMaine for the degree. She said the program would serve Aroostook County's agricultural economy and the broader state and national agricultural workforce, citing O*NET and Bureau of Labor Statistics projections of 64 percent national growth in agriculture and forestry jobs over the next ten years and a 27 percent growth trend in Maine.

Provost Margeson stated that the semester-based program would use hybrid delivery with on-campus and online courses, leverage existing UMPI resources, use courses already offered for UMPI's four-year program, and make use of the Zillman Family Greenhouse and related equipment. She noted that no new faculty hires would be required at launch and that the proposal was shaped by UMPI's agricultural program advisory board, which supported a two-year degree option and appreciated the flexibility of online course offerings.

President Rice thanked the Committee for considering the program and stated that, aside from one horticultural program in the community college system, comparable associate degree programs are difficult to find in Maine and often require looking to larger out-of-state institutions. He said the program would address an important niche within the System and the state.

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Martin, and approved by a roll-call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved forwarding this item to the July 13, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves the A.A. in Agricultural Science and Agribusiness at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

New Program: A.A. in Business, University of Maine at Presque Isle

Provost Margeson presented the proposed Associate of Arts in Business at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. She stated that the degree would leverage 100 percent of UMPI's existing Business Administration curriculum and would not require new courses or faculty hires. She said the program would create a clear, stackable pathway into UMPI's four-year Bachelor of Business Administration program and would support student retention and degree progression.

Provost Margeson explained that the proposal includes two modalities: UMPI's current HyFlex modality, combining in-person courses and synchronous Zoom access in classrooms, and the YourPace competency-based education modality. She stated that this would maximize flexibility for adult learners, early college students, and working professionals, and would support future articulation agreements with community college partners and high schools in the region. She noted that UMPI's semester-based business program currently enrolls approximately 85 students, while the YourPace program enrolls approximately 2,000 students. She stated that the proposal projected conservative first-year enrollment of 50 students and net revenue of \$27,000.

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Martin, and approved by a roll-call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved forwarding this item to the July 13, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves the A.A. in Business at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

Work Plan Updates

Vice Chancellor St. John previewed two elements of the 2026-2027 ASA work plan in advance of the August ASA meeting. First, he asked whether Trustees would prefer an update on 90-credit programs at the December ASA meeting, after one semester of delivery, or in June 2027, after a full year of enrollment, revenue, and program data. He noted that UMA, UMFk, and UMPI have approved 90-credit programs launching in September 2026. After discussion, Committee Chair MacMahon asked whether the Committee could receive both updates. Vice Chancellor St. John agreed and stated that the Committee would receive both a December update and a June update for the first year, then move to annual reporting.

Second, Vice Chancellor St. John discussed academic technology reporting. He noted that much academic technology work is developed and delivered in partnership with IT and is already included in CIO Robert Placido's updates to the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee and the full Board. After discussions with Ryan Low and Robert Placido, Vice Chancellor St. John said ASA's academic technology reporting would be moved into CIO Placido's update structure for FFT and full Board meetings, with the understanding that ASA could add an

academic technology item to its agenda if Trustees, faculty representatives, or student representatives wanted a specific topic addressed there. Committee Chair MacMahon suggested that the information could also be shared with the ASA Committee as an informational item, and Vice Chancellor St. John agreed.

Informational Item: Name Change of B.A. in English to B.A. in English and Media Studies

Vice Chancellor St. John presented an informational item concerning the University of Maine at Presque Isle's name change from B.A. in English to B.A. in English and Media Studies. He thanked Provost Margeson for bringing the item forward multiple times for discussion with the CAOC and the provosts' group during the semester. He stated that the change reflects broader shifts in the structure, content, and delivery focus of English programs as fields modernize and adapt to technological and cultural change. He said the new name better reflects the professional preparation offered by the program and provides clearer recognition for prospective and current students.

Academic Program Proposal Preview

Vice Chancellor St. John previewed two programs expected to come forward for Committee action at the August ASA meeting: the Master of Science in Healthcare Administration from the University of Maine at Presque Isle and the Master of Science in Digital Forensics and Cyber Investigation from the University of Maine at Augusta. He noted that Provost Margeson and Provost Vega were present to answer questions, and that full documentation was included in the Board materials. No questions were raised. Vice Chancellor St. John also noted that the remaining material in the tab consisted of intent-to-plan documents and offered to obtain answers to any questions Trustees might have.

Vice Chancellor St. John then publicly thanked and congratulated Provost Yardley, who was nearing retirement after a 39-year career at the University of Maine at Farmington. He described her as having served in multiple faculty and administrative roles and as a distinguished anchor of education delivery at Farmington. President McDonnell also thanked Provost Yardley, noting her service as dean of the College of Education, as co-provost, and in chair duties, and said she would be missed.

Adjournment

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/>

Kayla Flewelling for

Elizabeth Stickler, Clerk