



UMS Strategic Planning

Fall 2022 University Visit Stakeholder Engagement

Pre-Read Document



Fall University Engagement

Background

The Chancellor, UMS Board Strategic Planning Committee, Executive Steering Committee (UMS President's Council), and the UMS Strategic Plan Working Group charged with leading the development of a new System strategic plan, have asked their partners at Huron to return to each university and the Law School to continue the productive and candid dialogue that transpired during the spring visits.

During each meeting, Huron will engage and listen in order to identify concerns and opportunities in the context of the shared, complex realities facing the System. Engaging in these critical discussions will allow participants to evaluate priorities and transformative ideas of UMS by evaluating a set of proposed strategic priorities and conceptualizing transformative ideas.

The input gathered from each university visit be shared with the Board Strategic Plan Committee to inform and align on the strategic priorities for the System. Subsequently, a document will be drafted that will fundamentally address the current state, the vision for the future, a plan to achieve this vision, a process for monitoring success, and the resources needed to acquire and apply in the execution of the plan.

Your Role in the Planning Process

As key stakeholders in the planning process, your input is critical to help inform and shape the priorities and goals that will form the basis of the system strategic plan. Your participation will create a stronger, shared vision for the system as a whole.

What is system strategic planning?

As the needs for the State of Maine evolve, so should the University Maine System. As the largest provider of higher education in the state, it is critical that the system leverage their combined assets to respond to the changing needs of the state in order to support a thriving economy and higher education system. System Strategic Planning aims to:

- Establish a **vision and set of priorities** that respond to the **current and future economic and community development need and aspirations** of the state that account for the distinct contribution of each university and unites the system on broad objectives and outcomes
- Enable **collaborative, creative thinking across diverse stakeholder groups** (e.g., Board, presidents, faculty, staff, students, alumni) in the system that requires **imagination and a willingness to develop transformative ideas for a new era**
- Provide a lens through which **universities see themselves as channels to serve diverse learner audiences** in service of statewide needs supported by **optimizing system-wide assets** to deliver tailored academic programs
- Foster an opportunity for the system and its universities- both together and independently- to **reflect and consider how to deliver the highest quality postsecondary education** to support the personal and professional aspirations of learners
- Result in **cultural alignment, team unification, system-wide partnership**, and ultimately, **a commitment from all system stakeholders to achieve the vision collectively**

An important aspect of system strategic planning is defining and communicating the role of the System Office.

Questions for Consideration

Use the questions below as a framework through which to review the subsequent material which includes a draft of proposed strategic priorities and example goals by priority area.

Priorities and Goals

- What additional transformational goals or initiatives can be applied system-wide? What are the “big ideas” that will drive large-scale change across the system?
- Which transformative ideas in your institutional strategic plan might be elevated to the system level plan?
- Are the priorities and themes identified in the spring holding constant? What, if any, have changed or evolved?
- Are these the right preliminary Strategic Priorities and goals for the system’s next strategic plan?
- What can the system realistically accomplish? At an initial stage of prioritization, which focus areas are the most important?

Envisioning Our Future

- Reflect on where the system is today and the current realities it is facing. What specific goals or initiatives will UMS need to pursue to achieve the emerging vision and priorities below?
- Will the emerging priorities support the vision of the system?
- What will collaboration look like across the system?
- What changes to the structure of the system might you envision that achieve the emerging goals and priorities?
- What priorities or activities will you have stopped, started, or continued in support of the plan?

We thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in these important discussions. To submit anonymous feedback at any time, please visit the UMS Strategic Planning website at <https://www.maine.edu/strategic-plan/>.

Strategic Planning Timeline Update and Next Steps



Summer 2022 Activities:

- Presented initial findings at May Board of Trustees meeting
- Facilitated an in-person Strategic Planning Working group meeting
- Engaged external stakeholders (6 interviews, 4 focus groups with 26 individuals completed)
- Synthesized all stakeholder input to date (e.g., interviews, focus groups, spring university visits, anonymous feedback)
- Acquainted Board Strategic Planning Committee and new presidents with progress to date

Important Next Steps

- Return to each university community to continue the dialogue and engage more deeply following the spring university visits
- Affirm a shared understanding of context and implications leveraging the Data Book which is being updated with the latest available figures
- Identify and discuss a set of opportunities related to academic innovation, operational efficiencies, people, and culture

Inputs Driving Principal Components of Strategic Plan

Institutional and market data (e.g., Data Book)

**External Scan of future higher education
market and economic trends**

**Internal and external stakeholder
engagement**

**Feedback from UMS Board of Trustees,
Presidents, and Strategic Planning Working Group**

Strategic Priorities and Potential Goals for UMS

In this document, we have synthesized our key takeaways from data analysis, internal/external stakeholder engagement, and market research to develop a perspective on opportunities for the UMS. We have framed these opportunities using eight overarching Strategic Priorities, with several emerging goals nested under these eight areas.

In July 2022, the Board Strategic Planning Committee was revised from an ad-hoc committee to a standing committee to support the long-term implementation commitment of the system strategic planning efforts. The Board Strategic Planning Committee has been charged with reviewing all inputs and determining strategic priorities for the System.

Emerging Strategic Priorities

Based on feedback from our spring university engagement and discussions with external stakeholders, preliminary set of draft strategic priorities was developed.



Priority I:
Access, Affordability, &
Learner Success



Priority II:
Academic Innovation &
Collaboration



Priority III:
Workforce & Economic
Development



Priority IV:
Interdisciplinary
Research



Priority V:
Diversity, Equity, &
Inclusion



Priority VI:
Environmental
Sustainability



Priority VII:
Operational Excellence &
Infrastructure



Priority VIII:
Financial
Sustainability

Emerging Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives (1/3)

Priority	Emerging Goal	Illustrative Initiatives
Access, Affordability, & Learner Success	Build a pipeline with multiple points of entry to education in Maine that extends from birth to retirement years to improve the lives of all Mainers	Develop a Genius Bar like service for the public that connects them to diverse lifelong learning opportunities available across the system to advance their professional and personal aims
	Offer Maine learners access to a high-quality university education regardless of their financial situation	Phase in a common financial aid model to allow students to select their best match university that will reduce competition
	Close gaps to improve student outcomes e.g., retention, persistence, completion rates, that will provide learners with the tools to thrive in the 21st-century workforce	Develop wrap around student services that support the distinct needs of adult learners
		Invest in the current statewide broadband expansion efforts to support universal access for learners to educational opportunities
		Measure post-college outcomes as it relates to completion, compositional diversity and workforce development
Develop wrap around student services that support the distinct needs of adult learners		
Academic Innovation & Collaboration	Boldly innovate undergraduate, graduate and lifelong education for a dynamic, digital and global future	Streamline all online activity to a new entity to distribute new or existing programs to new regional, national, or international geographies (e.g., "MaineOnline")
	Build on the UMS culture of collaboration by investing in infrastructure that propels innovation through joint endeavors	Create incentives and infrastructure to increase faculty collaboration
	Make the state of Maine an attractive place to live, learn and work by leveraging the state of Maine assets through distinguished academic, research and experiential learning opportunities	Establish a uniform, online general education curriculum, potentially in partnership with an ed tech company
		Engage in a strategic alliance with an institution outside of UMS to extend UMS's reach and/or market share
	Rural lawyer project to meet needs of rural communities in Maine and establish UMS as a national leader in rural legal practice	

Emerging Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives (2/3)

Priority	Potential Goal	Illustrative Initiatives
Workforce & Economic Development	Drive economic development through the alignment of educational opportunities with state and global workforce needs	Create a common focus on rural health in the System leveraging nursing, biology and education departments
	Make UMS a top destination to learn, work, research and thrive by strengthening and strategically positioning our brand	Establish public promotion campaigns focused on high-growth economic sectors such as green economy, health and infrastructure (engineering, construction, etc.) that aligns with federal and state stimulus efforts
		Expand non-credit professional development programs with local businesses and organizations to better meet sector specific workforce needs in Maine
	Create a clear and supported pathway to a credential of value for every Maine citizen	Offer UMS credit for prior work by elevating and communicating Prior Learning Assessments
		Increase investment in legislative advocacy to support statewide issues focus on workforce needs, state economic / labor priorities and industry partnerships
Interdisciplinary Research	Evolve a collaborative and interdisciplinary research culture that advances innovative practices in learning, research, discovery and knowledge transfer	Expand R&D activity through growth and diversification of research opportunities to increase reputation
		Leverage relationships with districts and federal agencies to advance in higher education federal funding rankings and scale tech transfer
	Maximize research investment to attract new industries and talent to Maine	Align R&D activity and graduate program growth with the state economic and workforce priorities
		Invest in liberal arts research
		Build public/private partnerships in environmental sustainability initiatives leveraging UMS research
Operational Excellence and Infrastructure	Optimize delivery of programs and services through the systemwide implementation of best practices that maximize resources	Create system teams of like functions that can serve as professional development and training for employees.
		Improve system asset distribution through audience segmentation and determining the needs of various learner profiles across the State
		Create incentives to increase collaboration and decrease internal competition

Emerging Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives (3/3)

Priority	Potential Goal	Illustrative Initiatives
Operational Excellence & Infrastructure (cont.)	Maximize our physical assets to expand access to educational opportunities to all Maine citizens	Leverage universities in rural communities as gateways to higher education
		Design facilities and educational opportunities that draw people to rural Maine
	Establish compelling vision and identity that establishes an unmistakable brand for UMS as a unified system composed of distinct universities	Define the role and identity of each university and the Law school within the System
Financial Stability	Ensure the financial strength of the System through sustainable and leading-edge financial models supported by effective financial management practices	Evolve budget model to maximize resource allocation and timeliness to resource distribution
		Grow targeted student populations, including international and out-of-state students
		Develop public/private partnerships to modernize capital assets across the System
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	Attract, develop, and retain diverse, highly productive, talented and motivated professionals and students who embody our core values and commit to a culture of equity and inclusion	Improve employee retention with competitive compensation, more clear professional development and career progression pathways
	Optimize the use of existing physical and technological infrastructure to provide an inclusive and accessible place to live, learn, and work	Deliver professional development for an inclusive culture
Environmental Sustainability	Become a national leader in sustainability standards across research, teaching and scholarship	Allow sustainability courses to fulfill a science requirement at the undergraduate level
		Build reputation as a leader in sustainability by investing in research and practices in climate resiliency, green energy, and aquaculture
	Prepare graduates to make tangible, positive contributions to addressing the world's environmental challenges	Design and build environmentally sustainable physical spaces when replacing or investing in new capital assets
		Build public/private partnerships in environmental sustainability initiatives leveraging UMS research

Appendix: Strategic Planning Taxonomy and Example



Strategic Planning Taxonomy

Strategic plans are commonly structured around the following elements, and the content of a plan can be populated by addressing the key questions associated with each element.

Mission, Vision, Values

- *What is the enduring mission or purpose of UMS?*
- *Towards what end(s) should effort and resources be directed?*
- *What are the values that inform UMS's mission and vision?*

Emerging Priorities

What key areas of activity will help UMS realize our vision?

Opportunity Statement "the why"

Taking both the UMS's current strengths and the future market environment into consideration, why should UMS focus on this area?

Proposed Goals "the what"

What outcome are we trying to achieve?

Initiatives "the how"

What are the specific actions that will help us accomplish our goals?

Measures and Enablers of Success

- *How will UMS know it has succeeded?*
- *What role can the UMS office play in enabling system-wide strategic priorities?*

Example strategic priority, goals, and measures

