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November 12, 2009

TO: Chair Lyndel Wishcamper
Vice Chair Norman Fournier
Members, University of Maine System Board of Trustees

FR: Chancellor Richard Pattenaude *Rich*

I am pleased to present to you *The Final Report and Implementation Plan of the New Challenges, New Directions Initiative- The University of Maine System and the Future of Maine* for your consideration and approval.

The University of Maine

University of Maine
at Augusta

University of Maine
at Farmington

University of Maine
at Fort Kent

University of Maine
at Machias

University of Maine
at Presque Isle

University of
Southern Maine

Since the Board's last meeting, held on September 14, members of the Board and Senior Staff have held eight public meetings for feedback on the draft plan. Those meetings took place at each of the seven universities and at the System Office. Hundreds of people attended and shared their opinions and suggestions regarding the initial draft of "NCND." In addition to those meetings, Trustees met with the Boards of Visitors and leadership of each university to hear their thoughts on the initial draft. This final version reflects the many comments and observations from those meetings as well as dozens of written responses to NCND submitted to the Board.

As now written, this plan aggressively addresses the three goals established by you for this work and sets the path for significant and positive change in the University of Maine System.

NCND Goals

1. Serve the changing and evolving knowledge, research, public service, and educational needs of the people, businesses, and organizations of the state.
2. Keep the cost of baccalaureate and graduate education affordable for our students by moderating tuition increases.
3. Implement efficiencies, organizational changes, and further economies of scale to bring spending in line with available resources.

Changes to NCND's Content, Language, and Nuance Reflection Public Feedback

I would like to summarize the changes to the plan resulting from this intensive period of university and public discussion. Many of these reflect the reality that economic conditions have continued to decline since the document was first written. Although this will call for more aggressive cost reductions and enhanced efforts at generating revenue, it does not alter the fundamental logic of the key actions proposed.

These changes include:

- seek additional means to reduce costs of the System office;
- update and revise financial projections as financial planning proceeds;
- phasing in of the Strategic Investment Fund, in light of current financial conditions;
- greater attention to the importance of graduate programs in addressing economic development;
- affirmation of the value of current programs, particularly in traditional disciplines, and the value of reinvestment in these programs if they are part of the university's strategic plans;
- providing clear principles and processes as implementation proceeds;
- actively promoting the importance of campus entrepreneurial energy and creativity within a framework of System collaboration;
- recognition of the urgency of moving quickly on certain actions, as noted below.

Careful monitoring of changing economic factors as well as savings and revenues will be particularly important in the next 12 months to ensure that targets are met.

Fast Track Initiatives

Based on discussions with Boards of Visitors, university leadership, and feedback from public comment sessions, several actions, some new, have been elevated as priorities to be rapidly pursued to accelerate needed changes. These steps provide greater access to programs and pursue important state goals. These include:

1. Provide students with a three-year option for completing a baccalaureate degree.

Universities would determine which degrees could be offered in this manner, saving students considerable time and cost. (An initial effort is underway at UMFK.) Courses would come from regular instructional schedules, an expanded summer session, online, and other institutions.

Review begins immediately for implementation in Fall 2010.

2. Double the number of students enrolled in online programs.

It is essential to increase the number of programs, not just courses, available online for time-bound and place-bound students as a means to ensure access to higher education. To bring student enrollments in online programs over 1,000, universities will identify programs that can be launched quickly. New programs will come online beginning Fall 2010; completion by Fall 2013.

3. Increase the number of graduates from allied health professions programs by 20%.

Maine's Department of Labor projections indicate that there is a growing need for allied healthcare professionals over the next decade as Maine's population ages and healthcare access increases. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will lead a work group that will provide a

plan by the end of March 2010; completion by Fall 2013. The 20% growth in new graduates will outpace the projected 17% growth in job creation, resulting in a narrowing employment gap.

4. Conduct a comprehensive study of markets, strategic pricing, and financial aid to improve access and affordability.

A committee comprised of university enrollment officers and chief financial officers has been formed; chaired by the System's Executive Director for Student Affairs. The committee will be working with an external consultant to examine all aspects of these complex and integrated issues (such as different tuition) and produce a final report containing recommendations by March 2010.

5. Increase statewide access to professional programs particularly at the graduate level.

The Presidents of USM and UMaine will co-chair a work group to assess statewide needs that are currently not being met and to determine how to collaboratively address them. The presidents will present a proposal to the Chancellor by March 1, 2010 for implementation Fall 2010.

6. Create a system-wide program on alternative energy educations and research.

The President of UMaine will lead a work group to support a broad based initiative advancing alternative energy education and research in Maine. This work would draw on the emerging programs and resources for all System universities. A plan will be submitted by May 2010 for implementation Fall 2010.

The above priorities will broaden access to higher education and, through outreach to prospective students, will increase enrollments at our seven universities. Each of the six actions calls for university-level initiatives that would address those needs. If universities need additional resources for these priorities, it will come from reallocation, new tuition revenues, private sources, grants, and the Strategic Investment Fund.

Management Practices

In the many discussions that have taken place over the past few months another set of issues has risen to our attention. These reflected the ideas noted in the Task Force report (Arena 2). Indicating it is important that the University more fully utilize a broad set of management tools.

Those tools include:

- realistic, focused strategic plans based on an understanding of opportunities, comparative advantages, and optimal use of resources;
- goals and objectives cascading through various levels of leadership;
- objective, quantifiable, and timely metrics for productivity, value-added, and effectiveness;
- productivity incentives;
- the collection of, and analysis of, student and internal customer feedback;

- benchmarking;
- root cause analysis and best practice review; and
- regular review of programs and ensure annual evaluation of employees.

Greater use of these tools will mark out work from this point forward.

Conclusion

During the weeks in which the Board sought public comment, Trustees and university leadership heard much sage advice, such as that offered by two faculty members. They advised the Board and university leaders not to be solely focused on the financial and technical aspects of solving the challenges we face. They told us that it is also imperative to preserve those programs, practices, and traditions that make our institutions *universities*. They cautioned that it is easy to fall prey to a “fetish for newness” and encouraged us to be sure to also “invest and reinvest in that which works and has great value if sustained.”

Those insights will keep us mindful of the wonderful work done to date, the great accomplishments we share, and the need to use a blend of old and new as we seek to move forward in our quest to serve the people of Maine efficiently and effectively.

I appreciate your consideration and approval of this plan.

cc: Presidents
UMS Senior Staff

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