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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 22-14
Retention Solution
University of Maine System
ADDENDUM #1

This addendum responds to questions submitted by vendors.

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

- Q1. To confirm, this is to supplement the Blackboard Learn LMS that you currently license, right? It is my understanding that last year the University of Maine System signed a 5 year contract with us for the Learn LMS platform and this is a request for a student retention system to support the LMS.
- A1. As indicated in the RFP, Blackboard is our primary LMS. We expect to exchange data between Blackboard and the chosen retention system.
- Q2. Has the University viewed demonstrations from any vendors in advance of the RFP?
- A2. Yes, several.
- Q3. Section 1.7, page 4 – Award of Proposal: Our solution allows for data integration with a number of student survey / predictive analytics systems. To best meet the needs of the RFP, which of the below options would the University prefer?
- 1) The vendor proposes *no* specific survey/predictive system, allowing the University to separately procure one.
 - 2) The vendor proposes a *suggested* survey/predicative system but allows the University to decline the option and choose their own.
 - 3) The vendor proposes a solution that *includes* a specific survey/predictive system.
- A3. The University would prefer either option 2 or 3.
- Q4. Section 3.3, page 11 – Tracking Student Success: Does the University currently have centralized, electronic Student Intake forms? Would such forms be a desirable capability?
- A4. The University does not have a centralized, electronic intake form. A customizable form would be desirable.

- Q5. Section 3.3.11, page 12 – Tracking Student Success: Is Academic Planning a desirable capability? Which degree audit systems are currently in use?
- A5. We use PeopleSoft for degree audit and planning. We are interested in better systems for planning, but it is not a key factor for the retention system.
- Q6. Section 3.6.14, page 14 – Reporting: Please provide the business needs behind this requirement: *Does the system have the ability to query student records?*
- A6. It would be a plus if the retention system could be set up to populate some of its own fields with data drawn from PeopleSoft through queries which could be specified by the institutions using the retention system.
- Q7. Section 3.13.1, page 17 – Security: Please clarify this requirement: *Do you perform external code reviews?*
- A7. Do you have a third party review your product source code on a regular basis? If so, explain.
- Q8. Section 3.4.2, page 12 – Scheduled Communications: Can you currently schedule student communications through another system? Which type of student communications do you wish to schedule?
- A8. Scheduled student communication may be conducted through our CRM system but we expect the ability to schedule emails, sms text, and canned phone messages through the retention system as well.
- Q9. Section 4.2.6, page 22 – Costs: Can you please specify the desired duration of appropriate pricing proposals, both per-campus and combined? For example, would the committee prefer to evaluate a one-year proposal, a three-year proposal, a five-year proposal, and all of the above?
- A9. Assume a three year term for the initial contract. You may include options for up to two one-year renewals if some incentive is offered for renewal.
- Q10. Section 4.2.7, page 22 – Costs: Can you confirm that the number of enrolled undergraduates at each campus (UM: 11,247, USM: 7,407, UMPI: 1,400) is the same as the “likely student users” of the Retention solution on each campus beginning in fall 2014?
- A10. This will vary by campus. Some campuses intend to use the system for the whole student body. At others the likely student users of the retention solution beginning in fall 2014 would probably be our incoming new student cohorts.
- Q11. All - Exceptions to Terms: If we wish to discuss, clarify, or request exceptions to terms, what is the proper mechanism for doing so?
- A11. Response: In your written proposal, identify the specific terms and conditions that concern you and provide proposed alternative language.
- Q12. How frequently do students take courses at multiple institutions concurrently?
- A12. In the fall of 2013 we had 559 students’ system-wide taking courses at more than one campus.
- Q13. Are there students who would be pursuing concurrent degrees at multiple institutions?
- A13. Rarely, if at all.

Q14. Is there a SSO protocol across the system? If so what is the protocol?

A14. The protocol is SAML2 via Shibboleth.

Q15. Do you have a formal articulation guide plan for students who might be enrolling at multiple institutions?

A15. No.

Q16. The RFP requirements indicate that reporting is needed for campus level, is there a need for this retention solution to generate system level reports as well?

A16. It would be a nice option, if possible.

Q17. What data will be needed for the Blackboard integration?

A17. We have not identified specific data needs yet. We hope to work with a vendor who can make best practice recommendations based on the data that is typically effective for retention, and is available to us in Blackboard.

Q18. Are retention initiatives driven at the institution / campus level or are they executed at the system level?

A18. Retention initiatives are driven at the campus or department level.

Q19. Can the contractor request modifications to the "Standards for Safeguarding Information" in their response?

A19. As stated in section 1.12 any exceptions or proposed changes to the Terms and Conditions should be noted in your response.

Q20. With regards to point 1.3 of Section 1 (General Information) we note that the three universities have the following student numbers, please could you also advise what the FTE (Full Time Equivalent) is for each university, and what the split is between undergraduate and graduate students?

The University of Maine: 11,247 students

The University of Southern Maine: Undergraduate: 7,407, Graduate: 1,693

The University of Maine at Presque Isle: Just under 1,400

A20. University of Maine

Undergraduate: Headcount = 9,182 / FTE = 8,184

Graduate: Headcount = 2,065 / FTE = 1,171

University of Southern Maine

Undergraduate: Headcount = 7,098 / FTE = 5,074

Graduate: Headcount = 1,825 / FTE = 1,385

University of Maine at Presque Isle

Undergraduate only: Headcount 1,263 / FTE = 842

- Q21. With regards to point 1.4 of Section 1 (General Information) the RFP states that “the University will entertain both self-hosted and vendor-hosted proposals”, please could you advise whether you have any preference for this?
- A21. The university is committed to identifying the best solution for this software, which could be either University or vendor hosted. If a vendor offers both it is their choice to propose one or the other, or both. If presenting both options just be sure to clearly define the pricing for each. We would also like to see technical specifications for any self-hosted solutions.
- Q22. With regards to point 2.8 of Section 2 (General Terms and Conditions), please could you advise whether there is any room for discussion around the remedy period of 72 hours?
- A22. As stated in section 1.12 any exceptions or proposed changes to the Terms and Conditions should be noted in your response.
- Q23. With regards to 2.17 Section 2 (General Terms and Conditions), we would like to understand whether the indemnity to principals clause which we have in our current insurance is sufficient enough to meet this requirement, as it provides broadly similar protection to the universities being named as joint insured?
- A23. As stated in section 1.12 any exceptions or proposed changes to the Terms and Conditions should be noted in your response.
- Q24. What current early alert systems are in place? Are you planning to keep any of them? If so, what current data points are you currently collecting from each of the early alert systems?
- A24. The University of Maine does not have a campus level early alert system in place. The University of Maine at Farmington (UMF) has an early alert system which generates academic reports from faculty to/about students. Fields from these reports are collected, as well as data on student use of support services, and final grades of those students. UMF will not keep this system if it purchases a retention system. UMPI and USM have antiquated early alert systems that are used by faculty inconsistently and do not allow us to run tracking reports. We would not maintain these systems after purchasing a new retention system.
- Q25. Are you currently subscribed to any 3rd party advisory services related to Student Success, Retention, Progression and Graduation?
- A25. No.
- Q26. Are there student success tools currently in use at any of the individual campuses?
- A26. USM uses electronic advising notes through PeopleSoft and we use a GPA calculator as an academic advising tool: <https://usm.maine.edu/success/gpa-calculator>. Some schools use the degree progress report in PeopleSoft. Farmington does have a graphical four year planning tool that works very well for them. Also, see answer to question 24.



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