



March 2019

Office of the Chancellor
15 Estabrooke Drive
Orono, ME 04469

Tel: 207-973-3205
www.maine.edu

Pursuant to the Commission's letter of May 18, 2018, following is an update of the University of Maine System's One University initiative with emphases on updated Board of Trustee priorities, joint Commission/VMS efforts to explore System accreditation and, continuing previous exchanges with the Commission, updates on financial organization and management as well as issues surrounding multi-campus academic programs.

The University of Maine

University of Maine
at Augusta

I will not again rehearse the well-known challenges Maine faces other than to repeat the brute demographic facts. With a population of 1,350,000, Maine is the oldest state in the nation, we face a 15% drop in the working age population ages 25-64 in the next 15 years, and we have a post-secondary educational attainment level of about 43%. These facts speak eloquently to the critical role education and therefore the University of Maine System plays in Maine's economic and social future.

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

One University is a response to these challenges, providing a framework by which the University System organizes and acts so as to bring all its resources into focused support for all Maine families, businesses, and communities. This past December, the System's Board of Trustees published its Declaration of Strategic Priorities to Address Critical State Needs, included here as Attachment 1. In brief, the Declaration articulates a continuing commitment to the One University framework. It also sets out four focus points for the next stages of One University development that are also a natural extension of the Board's priority 2014, 2016 and 2018 outcomes. These focus points are: workforce development, educational attainment, research tied to statewide economic growth and opportunity, and fiscal sustainability. In particular, you may note that under Goal #4 I am to deliver a report to the Board in May 2019 with analysis and recommendations as to how best continue and indeed accelerate the administrative, programmatic, and cultural transition to One University. The items discussed in this communication are elements of that transition. While I am not here prepared to preview the main conclusions or recommendations of that report, I am certain that Maine would be poorly served by any regress to the older, pre-One University federation model which is no longer financially, administratively, or academically viable. Neither would I support the physical closings of any of our seven Maine campuses; the damage to the regions they serve would be unacceptable. I therefore believe the current path of increasing collaboration and integration is necessary.

Before turning to these items, however, I want to express how much I appreciate the opportunity to have met with the Commission last September to discuss Commission / Systems engagement. The Commission's decision to include System leads in campus communications is a good step forward. I very much hope these discussions will continue. I also want to notify the Commission that I will be retiring at the end of June this year and to express my great appreciation to Dr. Brittingham and the Commission for the engagement and constructive support that has been afforded me and the University of Maine System these past seven years. I am confident that my successor and the Board of Trustees will continue the engagement we have begun and I look forward to tracking the great progress our System will make going forward in partnership with the Commission for our students and state.

Sincerely,

Chancellor

UMS/NECHE accreditation discussions with USDOE

Following informal discussions between Commission and UMS staff on the question of whether UMS might itself be accredited and recognized as an Institution of Higher Education for all purposes under the Commission's Standards and the federal Higher Education Act, in May 2018 the Commission and UMS jointly retained Jay Urwitz as outside legal counsel to advise on the question. Specifically, the Commission and UMS asked Urwitz to opine on whether UMS, as legally constituted and chartered under Maine law, meets the requirements of Section 1001(a) of the Higher Education Act to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (Department) as an Institution of Higher Education.¹ If it does, the Commission and UMS asked Urwitz to advise on an appropriate process to follow should UMS itself seek to be accredited and recognized as the single multi-location institution of public higher education in Maine.

In September 2018, Urwitz provided a legal opinion concluding generally that the Department could properly recognize a single multi-location/multi-campus institution of higher education in Maine organized either by the System or a single lead university. Understanding that the Department would readily recognize a single multi-location institution with a lead campus but uncertain of whether it would do so with the heretofore unrecognized System itself as the accredited entity, Urwitz, Commission President Brittingham, and UMS Chief of Staff and General Counsel James Thelen met in Washington, D.C. in early October 2018 with Diane Jones, Principal Deputy Under Secretary at the Department, to explore informally the Department's views on the latter question. Under Secretary Jones suggested further informal conversations with Department staff to consider additional details of the matter. UMS and the Commission, along with Counsel Urwitz, have continued follow-up discussions with Department staff in Washington, D.C. and Boston to determine the Department's receptivity to System recognition.

UMS and the Commission have stressed to Department staff that no decision has yet been made by to seek single or System-level accreditation from NECHE and related recognition from the Department and, relatedly, that the purpose of ongoing discussions with the Department at this point is merely to ensure the Department would be receptive to System-level recognition should UMS and the Commission pursue it. An analysis of accreditation options together with recommendations will be part of Chancellor Page's previously referenced May 2019 report to the UMS Board of Trustees.

Comprehensive Financial Management

As the Commission is aware, in November 2014 the Board of Trustees revised its policy governing the development and management of operating and capital budgets to align more closely with existing Maine law and Board policy. At the same time, the Board and Chancellor instructed the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration to develop a comprehensive financial management structure reflecting unified finance and administrative services that are functionally aligned. In July 2016 the University of Maine System reorganized existing staff to create a Chief Financial Officer who was given the responsibility to develop a unified operating budget and financial oversight of the entire enterprise, including finance staff on each of the campuses. All finance staff continued to be located at campus locations – no campus staff were relocated as part of the reorganization. At the same time the Board called for each of the Chief Business Officers at our campuses to be jointly selected and evaluated by the Chief Financial Officer and campus president. A solid line reporting relationship was created to the CFO with a dotted line relationship back to their campus president.

In addition to the changes in relationship between UM and UMM, in July 2017 the Chancellor made the decision to combine the positions of Chief Financial Officer and the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration. Prior to the Chancellor's actions, the CFO reported directly to the Vice Chancellor. While the latter change did not impact

¹ Section 1001(a) of the Higher Education Act, 20 USC §1001(a), defines an "institution of higher education" as an educational institution in a State that (1) admits students; (2) is legally authorized by the State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) awards academic degrees; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association.

the job description or reporting relationships with the Chief Business Officers, it has improved the overall functionality of the group. As noted in our 2018 update, the Chief Business Officers meet as a group on a weekly basis via technology. In July we expanded our weekly meetings to include other key enterprise-wide leaders, including the Chief Human Resource Office, the Chief Information Office and the Chief Facilities Director. This new structure allows our campus finance leaders literally to be at the table for conversations that previously took place with little or no input with them. This process allows CBOs to meet with HR when we discuss health insurance or benefit changes, for CBOs to participate in discussions about shared service charges, and to engage fully with other enterprise-wide administrative leaders as key decisions are made.

Since those changes, UMS has had two organizational changes that have modestly changed the structure of our finance operations. Both became effective in July 2017. The first change was the Board's decision to make the University of Maine at Machias (UMM) a regional campus of the University of Maine (UM). As part of that reorganization, the Chief Business Officer at the University of Maine effectively became the Chief Business Officer for both campuses. A budget analyst was hired to support UMM's day-to-day operations with that individual reporting to the CBO for broader direction and mentoring. In addition to the changes in relationship between UM and UMM, the Chancellor made the decision to combine the positions of Chief Financial Officer and the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.

Now in place for nearly two years, the unified financial management structure has been an overwhelming success. Chief Business Officers meet on a regular basis via technology with System colleagues and regularly share best practices. The budget process is consistent and transparent across the University of Maine System, although individual steps in balancing budgets continue to be campus specific.

Although the reporting relationship had been a solid line to the Vice Chancellor prior to last fall, campuses have led the process when it comes to selecting a Chief Business Officer for their campus. All of the searches under this structure, including an active search currently underway at the University of Maine at Augusta, are chaired by campus staff with System participation limited to a single member of the search team. The final selection is made jointly by the campus president and Vice Chancellor.

In response to earlier Commission concerns about a campus CBO having at the time a dotted reporting line to the campus president, a 2017 Aims McGuinness memo commissioned by President Brittingham offered helpful thoughts. Over the last 18 months the System leadership team, including the presidents, has held numerous discussions about reporting lines. As we noted two years ago, our experience with the University of Maine System over the first few years of this new structure is that it is largely in alignment with the suggestions offered in that original memo. Last year the Chancellor and Presidents Council participated in a full day training titled "Working in a Matrix Environment." The objective of the training was to understand the benefits and risks inherent in a matrix structure and the skillsets it takes to maximize success in that structure. Following this training and discussion, the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration worked with Human Resources to amend job descriptions last fall. Chief Business Officers now report jointly to both the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and their campus president. Reporting relations were effectively changed on July 1, 2018 and formalized in writing in September. The graphic below shows the edited job description for USM's Chief Business Officer before and after the change.

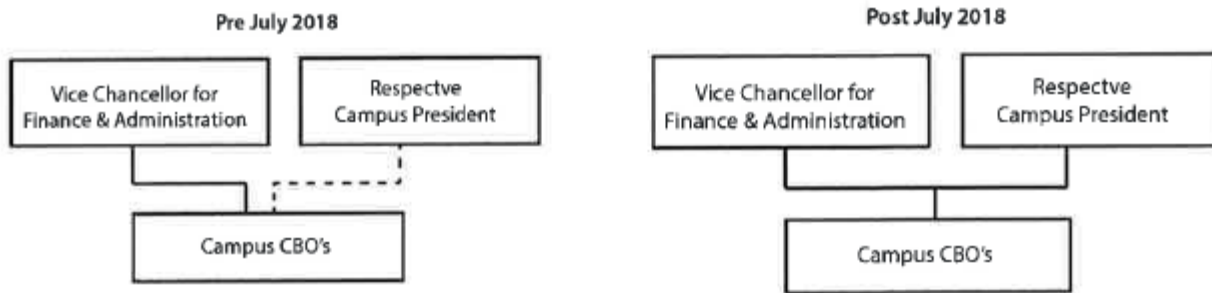


Job Title: Chief Business Officer – UMS

Date of issue:	Revised 9-14-18 (reporting)	CBU:	Mgmt
Position No:	00012060	Job Family:	5030
Department:	SOOT	OT Eligible:	Exempt
Campus:	University Services	Wage Grade:	V

V. Reporting Relationship

The CBO has a dual direct reporting relationship to the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and to their respective campus president. Campus CBO's are jointly selected and evaluated by the CFO and respective campus president.



In assessing the impact of the change in reporting lines, each of the UMS Presidents have strongly endorsed the new dual reporting relationships. Several Presidents noted that their CBO continues to be very engaged at the campus level, but the larger system-wide view has been critical in their development. As we've noted previously, UMS Trustees were willing to make the shift without undue delay because in practice the change represented how things had been occurring on the ground for nearly two years. That has certainly been our experience 20 months into our unified structure.

Multi-campus programs and related issues

In its recent Declaration of Strategic Priorities to Address Critical State Needs, the UMS Board of Trustees prioritized a number of initiatives that impact academics across the system, including: development of micro-credentials, expanded workforce engagement, enhanced adult attainment, growth of Early College, and expedited program development and review processes. Some of these will necessitate a collaborative response; indeed, the document expects that the "UMS will develop innovative and highly collaborative academic programming models,

pedagogical strategies, faculty development initiatives, and pilot projects to transform its academic programming to become and remain competitive with the changing post-secondary education market and achieve student success outcomes that meet critical State needs."

The kinds of goals envisioned by the Board are attainable only through considered collective action that will require ongoing monitoring and assessment within the One University concept. All of these and related academic programmatic efforts are being undertaken in consultation with the appropriate governance and reporting entities, including faculty representatives, the VCAA's office, the Presidents, and the Chief Academic Officers, with regular outreach to CIHE via the VCAA. Furthermore, once developed, each multi-campus program will be reviewed annually through the now established Programs for Examination (PFE) process, and will comport with all review and program accreditation processes as necessary and expected. Finally, the PFE process may yield additional opportunities for developing multi-campus collaborations that would serve students across the state, engage faculty in larger One University conversations, and sustain programmatic diversity.

Course Cross-Listing

The cross-listing briefing contained in the spring 2018 report to the Commission included an explanation for why the UMS was developing a cross-listing process as well as a proposed methodology and exploration of impacts. That discussion still pertains, and cross-listing remains a potentially powerful mechanism for expanded curricular and programmatic accessibility for UMS students. While still in development, the guidelines described last spring were applied to a pilot project last fall designed to test the cross-listing initiative envisioned in that report.

The pilot consisted of a single course, MTR 10I: Introduction to Meteorology, provided by the University of Maine at Machias (UMM, the Host campus) and delivered to students at the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA, the Home Campus) in fall 2018. The results of that pilot were promising and included listing of the course in each campus catalog with clear identification of the course as being from UMM (which is how it will appear on each student's transcript), seamless enrollments for students, and full instructor access to a consolidated class roster, student grading, and other information via the Blackboard learning management system.

Of the 43 students enrolled, 17 were from UMA who, from their perspective, registered for a course from their home campus without complications. A review of the administrative processes and a financial audit were undertaken following the fall pilot, which indicated the process worked effectively, and revenue flowed to the appropriate campuses. The cross-listing pilot for the same course is continuing this spring with 9 of 38 students from UMA. Additional information specific to cross-listing -- including process, definition of terms, resources, revenue sharing, and administration -- can be found in the Summary of UMS Cross-Listing Practices in Attachment 2.

The UMS is also developing a Memorandum of Understanding among all seven UMS campuses for the cross-listing of geospatial courses identified with the Maine Geospatial Institute (MGI) introduced in last year's report to the Commission. Appropriate program faculty and instructors with subject matter expertise from across the system consulted with the VCAA's office in developing the MOU, which is based on a distributed model of governance. The group has been asked to develop an MOU that identifies a lead campus as well. The goal is to expand access to educational opportunities in geospatial technology and related fields through cross-listing of selected courses. The approval process for cross-listed courses will align with the multi-campus program approval process currently being developed by a Task Force sponsored by the VPAA and consisting of three provosts as well as faculty leaders from each campus (see below). Please see the Cross-Listing MGI MOU in Attachment 3.

Finally, the UMS Board of Trustees, with assistance from the Chancellor's office, reviewed and, in November 2018, adopted revisions to Board Policy 311, Intra-system Student Exchange, to provide governance-level support for UMS's cross-listing efforts. The revised policy can be viewed at <http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section311/> and included here as Attachment 4.

Multi-Campus Programs and Policies

Goals for the development of multi-campus programs remain unchanged from the 2018 report:

- maximize program access for Maine citizens for whom relocation for educational purposes is not an option;
- maximize efficient use of financial and human resources;
- maximize faculty expertise across multiple campuses;
- maximize the affordability of public higher education in Maine;
- maximize shared branding and marketing opportunities within the UMS;
- maximize overall academic quality across the VMS.

Likewise, our awareness of maintaining and ensuring accountability, academic governance, autonomy, and quality remains clear. These values and practices are woven throughout the development of a multi-campus program approval process for the VMS.

The system-wide Multi-Campus Program Task Force that began last year is working this spring to complete the development of the process to make it clear, efficient, coherent, manageable, and consistent with CIHE protocols and standards, including the requirement that 25% of undergraduate coursework including substantial advance work in the major or concentration be taken at the student's home campus. The group has developed a definition of what constitutes a multi-campus program: multi-campus programs involve two or more institutions collaborating on developing, delivering, and maintaining a single program (degree, certificate, or other credential). It is important to note that this definition does not preclude campuses from developing specializations within a collaborative program following the appropriate approval process for multi-campus programs. A set of revised Administrative Practice Letters for the UMS will be developed to regularize the process.

One of the outcomes of the work with the MGI group is a better understanding of the many considerations and responsibilities regarding the development of multi-campus collaborations. A result of the previous merging of the student and financial Administrative Program Integration teams, these considerations necessarily expand beyond the cross-listing process into multiple other categories, including: governance and academic policies; tuition, resources, and revenue-sharing; and academic student policies and procedures. Understandably, these touch on multiple concerns of the Commission, and the UMS is committed to maintaining high standards throughout the development process, and to embedding mechanisms to ensure the Commission's own standards are consistently met through the final guidelines. The Guideline Tables for Multi-Campus Programs are in Attachment 5.

Evolving multi-campus examples

In addition to the examples previously mentioned, various academic program collaborations continue to be discussed across the UMS (e.g. the MGI effort). Last year, we reported on a major effort regarding shared, online master's degree programs. At that time, we indicated that the following areas had been identified jointly by UMS Presidents and Provosts: Nursing, Cybersecurity, Criminal Justice, Education, Emergency Management, and Athletic Training.

Of these possibilities, collaboration on a shared master's in cybersecurity between The University of Southern Maine (USM) and the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) has demonstrated the most progress. The information science faculty from each campus have been working with their deans and have developed a curriculum, identified which campus will offer which course, and will be moving forward with a program proposal this spring. USM will be the degree-granting institution. UMA submitted a substantive change request to CIHE to offer five cybersecurity graduate courses in support of the shared program with USM which has been approved. Throughout all planning steps, the potential program and curriculum are being built to ensure that institutional oversight, shared governance, and academic integrity are constant considerations as is consistency with CIHE standards.

With respect to the other disciplines identified for potential master's degrees, progress has been made but generally to a lesser extent relative to cybersecurity. Several institutions are collaborating on development of a professional

Master's certificate in Trauma and Emergency Response and Recovery (University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK), University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI), University of Maine at Farmington (UMF), UMA, and UMM). The certificate will include courses from each of these institutions to be taught on a rotating basis with UMA offering the credential and having responsibility for its academic quality. UMA will be requesting a Substantive Change for participating in this initiative, and other institutions will apply as required. Selected faculty with subject matter expertise and provosts from each participating campus have been involved throughout. UMA's Provost will work with these partners to ensure academic quality. Additionally, USM, the University of Maine, and UMPI faculty are engaged in conversations about a shared degree in athletic training.

With respect to the remaining disciplines for shared masters, USM and UMFK have had discussions about a RN to MSN pathway involving faculty from each school. USM and UMPI have been working on a curriculum in the area of public safety, criminology and/or criminal justice. Unfortunately, discussions regarding a shared master's degree in education have not been productive to date.

Undergraduate collaborations

Although not exclusively limited to undergraduate programs, the UMS Program Innovation Fund process has yielded outcomes that may lead to greater multi-campus collaboration. Examples include:

- Maine Engineering Pathways Program (MEPP) - a collaboration launched in September, 2018 with an initial cohort of 13 students to provide a pathway into the University of Maine's (UM) Engineering Program from the smaller UMS campuses. Four campuses are participating in the program: UMPI, UMM, UMF, and UMA. As this is a 1+3 program, all advanced coursework will be taken through UME's engineering department.

With respect to MEPP coursework, UM developed MEP 100 - Introduction to Engineering, which was delivered to 13 students for the first time in Fall 2018 via a synchronous online modality available to eleven sites. Additionally, the four participating campuses are offering most of the foundational mathematics and science courses needed for the UM program. Some further course development is needed on the participating campuses. Because this is a I+3 UM program, UM is responsible for governance and assurance of academic quality, including ABET accreditation.

- Comprehensive Data Science - a potential collaboration between UMF and UMA to develop a shared digital sciences program. Thus far, the two universities have submitted an "Intent to Plan" for a bachelor's program, but no proposal has yet been submitted for consideration. As a side bar, USM is planning to develop a Master's degree in data science for which this program would act as a feeder.
- Although it is not expected that shared programming would necessarily follow, English faculty across the UMS have been funded to embed uniform learning outcomes into first-year composition courses. Last year, the faculty identified and aligned learning outcomes and this year began to pilot those outcomes in selected courses. The most probable collaborative outcome might be cross-listing of introductory composition courses across campuses as needed.
- Environmental Sustainability - although not a full collaborative program, UMF and UM are collaborating on the development of a four-course sequence for integration of critical perspectives about the environment that could be embedded into any major on the two campuses. Course pilots are planned for Spring 2019. Coupled to this effort, the UMS office has asked UMF and UM to consider ways in which to make these courses more widely available, particularly since the disciplines of environmental science and studies are under-enrolled on other UMS campuses.
- Education and Nursing Programs - as CIHE is already aware, UMFK and UMPI are collaborating on cross-campus programming in these two disciplines. UMFK is delivering the BSN to the UMPI campus and UMPI is delivering a bachelor's in education to UMFK. UMFK's delivery of nursing to UMPI was

supported with a generous Program Innovation Fund award from the UMS. In addition, other discussions between UMFK and UMPI are underway (e.g., business programs and English); however, such deliberations are in their earliest stages. Expectations are that each campus responsible for program delivery will also be responsible for program review and attention to disciplinary accreditation.

Perhaps as an outgrowth of the various Program Innovation Fund efforts, the faculty, provosts and campus cultures have become more receptive to the notion of shared programming if CIHE standards can be met. Thus we are beginning to see ideas for collaboration being offered more spontaneously by faculty and provosts. As an example with real potential, initial discussions have begun between UMA and UMPI for the creation of a BS in Cybersecurity with a CBE modality. This would require UMA to apply for a substantive change but would allow UMA to address market need while maximizing student accessibility, and it would introduce selected faculty to CBE concept and practice. These discussions began with the two provosts and now include interested faculty from both campuses.

Additional Considerations

- A question raised by CIHE is related to the ability of students to complete 25% of their upper coursework on their home campus. The UMS intends to require that this standard be achieved. In the few examples that multi-campus programs that we have, here are the ways the requirement is being met: MEPP - as a I+3 program, 100% of upper-level coursework will be completed at UM; M.S. in Cybersecurity - USM is delivering 50% of the coursework; UMFK-UMPI nursing program - UMFK offers all nursing courses and confers the degree to students; and UMPI-UMFK education program - UMP! offers all upper-level coursework and confers the degree.
- CIHE also inquired about the use of external perspectives in program review. UMS Board of Trustees Policy 305.3 (section 3b) requires that each university will include "a report by external reviewers based on a review of the self-study, additional materials as required, and a site visit." This UMS policy is applicable to all UMS programs, including multi-campus programs.

Academic Governance

The greatest challenge for multi-campus programming is academic governance, both in terms of meeting CIHE standards and coping with campus politics. Given that UMS oversight is not possible under the current accreditation configuration, only general, academic governance models remain possible: (a) lead campus model, (b) a model of distributed oversight among participating campuses, and (c) the possibility of developing a separately-accredited academic entity under System oversight. Of these, only the lead campus model is currently in use, with UMFK overseeing the nursing program at UMP!, UMP! overseeing the nursing program at UMFK, UMM having authority over the single cross-listed course with UMA and the emerging master's in cybersecurity will be overseen in the early stages by USM as the degree granting authority. In each of these situations, the intent is for the lead campus to be responsible for all questions relating to program oversight and quality, including responsibility for program review (see above), while certainly involving the cooperating campus/faculty in program discussions. Of course, the question of management of student issues in a program, particularly when a student is not matriculated at the lead campus, is being addressed by the system-wide Multi-campus Program Task Force, which is also considering ways to meet the needs and issues regarding students in multi-campus programs (Attachment 5). Additionally, the campuses within UMS, with facilitation by the UMS General Counsel's office and the VCAA office, have just completed a final recommendation for a single academic integrity policy to be used across the UMS, the draft of which was discussed by the Chief Academic Affairs Officers at their February 21 meeting and was sent forward for campus review (Attachment 6).

Although a lead campus model seems the most straightforward, it has not been embraced by most faculty. In the few examples that are being explored, such as the MG! collaboration, the faculty have made it clear that the collaboration will fail if pressed into a lead campus model. Similarly, even with the emerging master's degree in

cybersecurity, UMA is not happy with USM being the lead campus. Faculty prefer a distributed model of oversight, but no recommendation is currently under consideration. The MG! faculty team have been asked to develop two MOU's, one detailing how they would envision a distributed model of oversight working, and one MOU with a lead campus approach. The MGI group has reluctantly agreed to develop these MOU's, but only with ample assistance from the VCAA's office in crafting a MOU with a lead campus. One option proposed for consideration by the VCAA 's office has been the possibility of "rotating" lead campuses over some number of years -this option does not resonate with faculty and, frankly, does not seem like a viable long-term solution to the VCAA. If a distributed oversight model is developed, it will undoubtedly consist of a committee-approach to dealing with all matters of oversight, including inter-campus differences of opinion. To date, however, we have no collaboration involving distributed oversight.

The idea of a separate, stand-alone academic entity, accredited at the System-level, has been discussed by the UMS President's Council (first on February 25, 2019). The idea has been a unit that would serve as an innovation center for new initiatives, including programmatic, multi-campus collaborations, shared micro-credentialing pathways, and innovative pedagogical experiments. Although this discussion is in its earliest stages, it has fostered significant curiosity. This discussion is continuing as an offshoot of both the question of "system-level" accreditation and ability of the System to act nimbly in developing academic programs, particularly multi-campus programs.

Attachments

1. Declaration of Strategic Priorities to Address Critical State Needs
2. Summary of UMS Cross-Listing Practices
3. Cross-Listing MG! MOU
4. UMS Policy 31 1
5. Guideline Tables for Multi-Campus Programs
6. UMS Academic Integrity Policy