

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting  
January 3, 2022

**Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting**

**Present: Committee Members:** Lisa Eames; Chair, Timothy Doak, Roger Katz, Beth Dobson, Michael Michaud, Emily Cain, Jim Donnelly, Trish Riley, Mark Gardner, and David MacMahon. **Presidents & Law School Dean:** Glenn Cummings, Deborah Hedeon, Joe Szakas, Ray Rice, Leigh Saufley, and Joan Ferrini-Mundy. **Faculty Representatives:** William Otto, Michael Scott, Lisa Leduc, Patrick Cheek and Kennedy Rubert-Nason. **Student Representatives:** Ben Doherty. **System Staff:** Robert Placido, Ellen Doughty, Rosa Redonnett, Carolyn Dorsey, James Thelen, Pat Peard, Ryan Low, and Jeff St. John. **Others Present:** Jeannine Uzzi, Eric Brown, Erin Soucey, Donna Seppy, Hannah Carter, Kim Jones, Eleanor Udeh, Scott Cook, Tessa Winship, and John Volin.

**Committee Members Absent:** Pender Makin.

Trustee Eames, Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The Clerk performed a roll call of the Committee members present.

**Executive Session**

On a motion by Trustee Dobson, which was seconded by Trustee Riley, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee went into Executive Session under the following provisions:

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

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

Following the Executive Session, the Committee reconvened the public meeting to discuss the following items:

**Tenure Request, Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, UM**

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Robert Placido provided an overview of the UM Department of Mathematics and Statistics tenure request. UM has requested that Dr. Joan Ferrini-Mundy be awarded tenure at the rank of Professor in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics, effective upon Board approval, and she would have the option to assume the full-time faculty position upon the conclusion of her service as University of Maine President. This request would serve as an exception to Board of Trustees Policy 310 which states that “a chief academic officer or other university employee in a position at the level of vice president may be considered for tenure to be effective upon assuming a full-time faculty appointment after completion of service in the administrative position.” Vice Chancellor Placido fully supports this request and provided some additional details about Dr. Ferrini-Mundy’s extensive and impressive background. Dr. Ferrini-Mundy’s credentials have been reviewed by the peer committee in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and has received their full support.

On a motion by Trustee Donnelly, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee agreed to forward the following resolution for Board of Trustee approval at the January 24, 2022 Board Meeting:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic & Student Affairs Committee and approves tenure at the rank of Professor in the UM Department of Mathematics and Statistics with tenure to be effective January 24, 2022.

### **Professional and Workforce Development in the UMS**

Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success and Credential Attainment Rosa Redonnett, UM Dean of the Cooperative Extension Hannah Carter, UMPI Director of Employer U and Professor of Business Administration Kimberly Jones, and USM Director of professional Development Programs Eleanor Udeh provided an overview of the program features, people served, and future plans for three of the professional and workforce development programs across the UMS. Workforce development is a critical imperative for Maine and with the pandemic it will gain even more importance as the economy recovers and the State addresses critical workforce needs. The universities of the UMS offer a broad range of credit-bearing academic programs. UMS offers a diverse range of non-credit professional and workforce development courses, training, workshops, seminars, conferences and professional meetings across the State and in partnership with employers, non-profit organizations and State agencies. With the increased interest nationally and locally in short term programs and credentials, these are growing programs which have great potential in expanding the UMS delivery of an even broader range of workforce development programming. All of this training and employer partnering are integral parts of the UMS micro-credential initiative. These programs offer the ability to develop stackability into other programs and certificate and degree programs. The UMS professional and workforce development programs have over 72,000 participants statewide, with thousands of businesses served.

After the presentation the Trustees and presenters had some discussion surrounding marketing strategies and System level data for this initiative as well as the possibility of training being offered to help employees and employers develop their skills to navigate the work environment now that remote work and meetings are more prevalent than ever.

### **Academic Calendars: 2025-2026 and 2026-2027**

Associate Vice Chancellor Redonnett explained that in the past, the Academic Year (AY) Calendar was typically updated every three years; however, to enable campus Academic and Service departments to plan more effectively, the Registrars/Student Records Directors proposed to the Chief Academic Officer Council (CAOC) that beginning with the Academic Year 2021-2022 calendar forward, two years would be presented on an annual basis. The AY 2025-2026 and AY 2026-2027 calendars were provided to the Committee in the meeting materials. Associate Vice Chancellor Redonnett stated that for awareness, a statement will be added to the bottom of the Academic Calendars to highlight holidays that occur during Summer break that are recognized by the UMS.

### **UMS Adult Degree Completion Update**

Associate Vice Chancellor Redonnett and UMS Director of Student Success Initiatives Donna Seppy provided an overview of the UMS Adult Degree Completion (ADC) initiative implementation and progress. Engaging adult learners is a well-established UMS priority. The UMS is one of six core team members of MaineSpark, Maine's statewide initiative to meet Maine's attainment challenges; connecting to the work of MaineSpark, and its strategic focus on adults via Maine Adult Promise, will be an important factor in the "next generation" of the UMS' approach to responding to the adult credential and degree attainment challenge. The Maine Economic Development Strategy 2020-2029: A

Focus on Talent and Innovation and the Maine Economic Recovery Plan clearly illustrate how critical talent development within Maine will be for both workforce and economic development, and reinforces many of the priorities UMS has identified within the System adult credential and degree completion work. The presenters provided an overview of the UMS Adult Credential and Degree Completion progress since funding in late 2019. Highlights include the creation of the Student Success Center, the addition of new scholarships, the launch of the small debt forgiveness program, the expansion of flexible academic programs on several campuses (including micro-credentials), the development of partnerships across the state to better serve adult learners, and UMS' year long and continuing marketing program. All of these initiatives combine to provide the wrap around service to promote UMS to adult learners and to set the stage for the further attraction and retention of this critical market. UMS has hired two Adult Degree Completion Student Success Coaches; Mr. Scott Cook and Ms. Tessa Winship, to further improve the relationship with adult learners. From Fall 2014 to Fall 2021 the ADC Scholarship has benefited 716 individual students, with 216 verified graduates and approximately \$3.48 million awarded in scholarship funds. Additionally, the Opening Doors Scholarship awarded 53 students, totaling \$8,750 for Spring and Fall of 2021.

### **2021-22 Demographics, Enrollment and Trends Update**

Vice Chancellor Placido and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Carolyn Dorsey provided a brief update on demographic challenges facing the State and the impact those challenges have had on UMS enrollments. Since 2014, Maine has had an average decline of 166 Births and 249 High School Graduates per year. This decline creates real demographic challenges for UMS future enrollment. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) projects that the decline in High School graduates across New England will continue at a rate of 2-3% through the next decade. Vice Chancellor Placido provided market share data about college-bound Maine high school students. From 2016 – 2020, on average 30% of college-bound Maine high school students attended a Maine public 4-year or above higher education institution. 2020 data shows that with the addition of Maine Maritime Academy and other Maine public and private higher education institutions, 71.2% of Maine college-bound high school students selected to continue their education in Maine, while 16.2% selected other New England higher education institutions and 12.6% chose to attend post-secondary education in other states. Vice Chancellor Placido provided data on UMS enrollment over the past five years. Since Fall 2017 undergraduate credit hours have declined from 268,083 to 251,022; however, graduate credit hours have increased from 17,953 to 23,952. When combined this is a slight decline in total credit hours over the past five years. Spring 2022 enrollment is currently slightly ahead of last year at this time, which is encouraging with all of the pandemic related issues UMS is facing right now. Undergraduate applications have increased from 17,866 to 18,478, admitted undergraduates have decreased from 11,482 to 10,433, and matriculated undergraduates have decreased from 804 to 557, when compared to this time last year.

Associate Vice Chancellor Dorsey provided some additional information surrounding challenging national and State trends such as changing student demographics, cultivating a more holistic view of the student experience; creating a culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); and competing in the new higher education marketplace. She highlighted some important response strategies to mitigate declining enrollment such as increasing retention efforts; increasing student outreach; building meaningful relationships with students, adjusting academic programming to meet learners where they are; offering accelerated programming; and creating transparent pathways to a variety of offerings and career placements. Additionally, to address the overall student experience response strategies include increasing focus on student behavioral health and mental well-being; creating alignment between student needs and services offered; and considering new measures of student success and progression.

Trustee Katz asked for clarification on the data provided by WICHE and how it relates specifically to UMS. Vice Chancellor Placido explained that the overall takeaway for UMS is that we are seeing an enrollment decline of approximately 3% year over year. Trustee Gardner thanked the presenters for the information they provided today. He asked if they could provide additional information about the specific initiatives UMS has been taking to mitigate these declining demographic trends and how effective these initiatives have been thus far. Vice Chancellor Placido explained that some of the initiatives to help UMS mitigate these challenges were discussed earlier in the meeting during the workforce development and adult learner discussions, but that he is happy to provide even more information at a future meeting. Trustee Eames stated that while trending demographics certainly are impacting UMS enrollment, the infrastructure challenges at UMS are a major factor in declining enrollment as well.

**Academic Program Proposal: Graduate Nursing Education, UMFK**

Vice Chancellor Placido and UMFK President/Provost Deb Hedeem provided information on the UMFK request to offer graduate level nursing practitioner programs with pathways leading to a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) with the following specialty tracks; adult gerontology nurse practitioner (ANP), acute psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (Acute PMHNP), primary psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner (Primary PMHNP), and a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP). The graduate programs are being developed in an online, accelerated format with multiple start dates designed to appeal to working professionals and undergraduate students seeking additional educational credentials to meet the state of Maine nursing shortage. While not structured as a collaborative program, UMFK has worked with all of the nursing programs in the UMS to ensure programming is not duplicative and that required clinical placements will be able to support the increase in enrollments.

Trustee Katz asked if there was any indication that there might be issues with recruiting instructors for these online Nursing programs. President Hedeem stated that there is always some chance of difficulties but that Erin Soucy, UMFK Dean of Nursing has had great success in leveraging her professional connections for the undergraduate nursing program and that she plans to continue leveraging those connections for the graduate nursing programs that are being proposed today.

Trustee Riley expressed concern that the proposed Nursing programs were not structured to be collaborative across the System. She stated that the UMFK graduate nursing program is a perfect example of the need UMS has for unified accreditation to allow for strong multi-campus collaboration. She asked for clarification about the part of the program proposal that states that UMS cannot recruit out-of-state students or faculty without Board of Nursing approval. Vice Chancellor Placido explained that each state has specific requirements from their Board of Nursing, meaning that UMS will have to make sure to meet those requirements in order to teach nursing in that state. He stated that Academic Partnerships (AP) will help the System to navigate these requirements and develop the relationships with out-of-state Nursing Boards. Trustee Riley inquired about how clinical requirements are met in the online nursing program and how UMS is ensuring the quality of the nurses that are produced from the online program. President Hedeem explained that UMS has specific coordinators that are hired for the clinical placements, both in-state and out-of-state, that are responsible for supervision of the clinical placements. She explained that many of these clinical coordinators are already working in the hospital where the students are placed and are hired as adjunct faculty for UMS.

Trustee Riley expressed concerns about moving forward with the DNP program proposal. She asked if it would be possible to consider phasing the programs by moving forward with the MSN program today, but holding off on the DNP program until the success of the MSN program could be measured. President Hedeem and Vice Chancellor Placido both stated that the MSN program would not be

affected if the DNP program was removed from the approval at today's meeting. Trustee Cain asked if delaying the DNP program approval and therefore approval by the Nursing Accreditation team would affect the proposed program start in 2024. Associate Vice Chancellor Dorsey stated that the Nursing Accreditation team had hoped to review the programs as a package; however, there should be an opportunity for a separate accreditation review of the DNP program before 2024, if approval of the program did not move forward at this meeting.

After discussion, Trustee Riley proposed that the Trustees amend the resolution to remove the DNP program from the resolution language and to move forward with the only the MSN program approval as proposed. The DNP program will be brought forward separately at the January Board meeting to allow the presentation of additional information.

On a motion by Trustee Gardner, which was seconded by Trustee Donnelly, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee agreed to amend the resolution to remove the DNP program from the resolution for this meeting.

On a motion by Trustee Riley, which was seconded by Trustee Michaud, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee agreed to forward the following amended resolution to the Consent Agenda for Board of Trustee approval at the January 24, 2022 Board Meeting:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic & Student Affairs Committee and approves the creation of a Master of Science in Nursing with specialty tracks in adult gerontology and psychiatric mental health for the University of Maine at Fort Kent.

### **Faculty Representative Discussion**

UMPI Faculty Representative Lisa Leduc asked the Board to consider a different approach to the Citizen Comment process during virtual Board of Trustees meetings. Currently, people who request to speak during Citizen Comment are provided a call-in number to provide their comment. Trustee Gardner stated that he has received requests from some of the campus faculty senates concerning the same matter and that the Board has been working with the System Office to provide a different process for the January 2022 Board meeting.

### **Student Representative Discussion**

The Student Representatives that were present did not have any items to bring before the Board for discussion.

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/>

Adjournment,

Heather A. Massey for  
Ellen N. Doughty, Clerk