

University of Maine System
Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting
May 20, 2022

Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning Meeting

Present: **Committee Members:** James Erwin, Chair; Mark Gardner, Emily Cain, Lisa Eames and Roger Katz. **Other Trustees:** Sven Bartholomew. **Chancellor:** Dannel Malloy. **Staff:** Robert Placido, Ryan Low, Joan Ferrini-Mundy, James Thelen, Jeffrey St. John, David Demers and Ellen Doughty. **Guests:** Huron Consulting Team – Peter Stokes, Brenna Casey, Cathy Dove and Kate Gerbode-Grant.

Absent: James Donnelly and Trish Riley.

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

Peter Stokes from Huron thanked the Committee members for their input on the Data Book, which is now live on the Strategic Planning website. The Huron Team shared information from the emerging priorities and capabilities and assets. This information is preliminary data based on stakeholder feedback.

Strategic Planning Timeline

Brenna Casey from Huron explained that the information discussed with the Committee will also be presented at the May Board meeting. Brenna started by reviewed the Strategic Planning Timeline which is as follows:

- Winter 2022 – Initiate project & build shared knowledge base
- Spring-Summer 2022 – Blueprint the future state
- Summer-Fall 2022 – Walk the future back as we begin drafting the plan
- Fall 2022-Winter 2023 – Draft the Strategic Plan
- Spring-Fall 2023 – Socialize the Strategic Plan

Over the past five months, the focus has been on qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

Qualitative Analysis:

- 23 virtual stakeholder engagement (interview with each university president, focus groups with each university cabinet, and System office stakeholders)
- 28 in-person focus groups including staff, faculty, students at each university

Quantitative Data Analysis:

Creation of a Data Book including analyses on the following subjects:

- Enrollment and demographics
- Academics and student success
- Economic development and research
- Financial and personnel
- Higher education market trends and system benchmarking

Priority Concerns

Huron examined the emerging themes from stakeholder interviews and campus visits. They developed a heat map to compare themes and visualize similarities and differences for each campus and provided a summary of priority areas and corresponding data points. The heat map outlines areas of patterns of convergence and divergence. These patterns create opportunities for greater coordination and alignment across the System. Several of the strategic planning themes have a correlation with Unified Accreditation (UA). This information is summarized below.

Audience Related Concerns:

- *Improve retention, persistence and completion*
 - Stakeholder Theme: Student success is an important challenge to address for all UMS universities
 - Supporting Data: National six-year graduation rate for public four-year universities: 69%; UMS 59.2%
 - Alignment to UA: UM Transforms focuses on facilitating programs including Research Learning Experiences, Gateways to Success, and Pathways to Careers. Each focuses on a key aspect of a student's learning trajectory to support their progress to degree completion.
- *Elevate diversity, equity and inclusion*
 - Stakeholder Theme: DEI, and inclusion, should be prioritized in order to retain students
 - Supporting Data: The population of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino has increased by 22% and 36%, respectively over the last 5 years
 - Alignment to UA: A cultural renovation and advanced framework for DEI initiatives Systemwide are in progress led by UMS Transforms DEI Action Team and the UMS DEI Steering committee
- *Cultivate adult market*
 - Stakeholder Theme: Opportunity to engage more of the adult market by offering new types of credentials, tailored student services, and enhanced mechanisms for adults to capture prior learning credit
 - Supporting Data: UMS enrolled 9,270 adults by headcount in 2018; only 1.7% of the state's population who have same college or less in the state
 - Alignment to UA: UA offers the opportunity to leverage data and analyses that support access and success for adult learners into an assessment cycle of continuous improvement; such an assessment cycle allows for programs and services to be better aligned and expand this market

Operational/Institutions Concerns:

- *Innovate traditional academic model*
 - Stakeholder Theme: Experiment with different delivery models to meet the range of learner profiles UMS attracts and serves
 - Supporting Data: A point in time comparison between 2019 and 2021 reveals a 60.8% increase in students living off campus and taking their courses fully online
 - Alignment to UA: UMPI's CBE program demonstrates how to build and integrate a new model for academic delivery that meets student needs and market demands
- *Advance research initiatives & economic development*
 - Stakeholder Theme: The System should leverage the R1 designation to increase opportunities for economic and workforce development
 - Supporting Data: Between 2019 and 2021, research & development activity in the System has grown 11%, from \$137.5 million to \$153.9 million

- Alignment to UA: UM's R1 status will allow UMS to deepen the scope and impact of the research enterprise for the state. Creation of the multi-university Maine College of Engineering, Computing and Information Science (MCECIS) will provide the technical workforce and innovations to move Maine's economy forward
- *Continue commitment of universities as economic & cultural engines*
 - Stakeholder Theme: Universities and the communities in which they are located are highly interdependent
 - Supporting Data: Maine relies on the \$1.5 billion annual statewide economic impact of the University of Maine System
 - Alignment to UA: UA shows commitment to the continued presence of each university in the physical location that they exist. Approvals for infrastructure investments including housing and multi-use facilities demonstrate support for continued institutional operations in their locales

State Assets:

- *Better leverage of State of Maine assets*
 - Stakeholder Theme: Maine includes distinct geographic opportunities for teaching, research and scholarship
 - Supporting Data: Maine's regional industries offer myriad experiential and economic development opportunities
 - Alignment to UA: Expanded research opportunities through the R1 designation open new pathways to innovate on the distinct assets of the state. The removal of barriers will enable students and faculty to take advantage of academic and experiential learning opportunities at any university, increasing ability to leverage different state resources

Enablers:

- *Evaluate scale, scope, infrastructure*
 - Stakeholder Theme: There is striking variation in size, type, physical assets, and location/distance of universities within the System
 - Supporting Data: at 54%, UMS has twice the percentage of space and aged 50 years or more compared to peers at 27%
- *Brand value and perception*
 - Stakeholder Theme: The UMS brand lacks clarity with both internal and external stakeholders
 - Supporting Data: Conversations are planned with VisionPoint to review and incorporate outcomes related to branding assessment
- *Enable collaboration & partnerships infrastructure*
 - Stakeholder Theme: Collaborative efforts exist within and across the System and many may be scaled Systemwide by leveraging the benefits of Unified Accreditation
 - Supporting Data: Collaborative initiatives at the System and university level are widespread and include academic programs, shared administrative services, and/or facilities
- *Define System governance*
 - Stakeholder Theme: A clear structure for the System including a defined role for the System Office will support progress and implementation of future strategic priorities
 - Supporting Data: A System benchmarking exercise is in progress and will inform future discussion and planning about the role of the System Office

The Huron Team asked the Committee for thoughts on the prioritization of the emerging priorities. The Committee raised concern about prioritizing the data when it is an incomplete list. The Huron Team agreed that the list is not comprehensive and suggested that Committee members look at the list and think about where there are tools that can be leveraged to achieve System-wide goals.

The Committee suggested that the emerging priorities be viewed through the lens of what can the System do to strengthen the campuses. All of the emerging priorities are key for all of the campuses but at varying levels. The following fundamental issues were raised. Does the System have an operating model that is fiscally sustainable? In the aggregate, does the System have academic programs, delivery models and access that make the System competitive?

The Committee raised the concern that in the data presented there was no recognition by the campuses about the financial challenges for the System in our current operating model. The fiscal challenges that UMS faces need to be included as one of the top three priorities. The Huron Team explained that the fiscal challenges did come up in the discussions relating to retention, persistence and completion by recognizing the need to enhance or stabilize the financial position. The priority concerns and strategic enablers are more action orientated versus results orientated. Continued conversations and discussions need to be grounded in the fiscal responsibilities. There is a perception that the fiscal challenges are someone else's problem to figure out. The budget allocation model was raised as a concern during several of the stakeholder meetings and there is a sense that the smaller campuses do not have enough funding. It was clarified that the System changed the budget allocation model a few years ago and it does not matter how the budget model is changed, some individuals feel there is never enough funding, so that tension is always present. Another tension area is the term "affordability". The System continues to keep tuition flat and the campuses continue to increase financial aid despite the declining demographics and enrollment.

Another significant issue of concern for the Committee is the infrastructure needs which is related to recruitment and retention. The Huron Team explained that this issue was raised and is included in the scale, scope and infrastructure category and decoupling infrastructure is beneficial feedback.

Questions that were raised include: Is it enough to make the current budget model efficient or is the current model insufficient to position the System for success in the future? How is strategic differentiation created in this market? What is UMS teaching, how do we know if it is the appropriate areas and what does UMS need to teach in the future? An effective strategic planning process should answer these types of questions.

The Huron Team explained another issue that was raised in the stakeholder discussions is for the System to play a larger role in external stakeholder engagement. The external customer relations at the campus level is often single focused and the System can play a greater role in visibility into those relations, identifying key contact points in the business communities and facilitate the nurturing of those external relationships over time. This can create win-win opportunities, career pathways, research collaboration, and better designed curricula.

The next step in the strategic planning process is engagement with external stakeholder for feedback on successes and what are the gaps and opportunities coming forward.

Following the public session, the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning went into Executive Session.

Executive Session

On a motion by Trustee Eames, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by a roll call vote of all

Trustees present, the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning agreed to go into Executive Session under the provisions of:

- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-C to discuss the condition, acquisition or disposition of real property or economic development if premature disclosure of the information would prejudice the competitive or bargaining position of the UMS.

On a motion by Trustee Eames, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning concluded the Executive Session.

Additional information about the meeting can be found on the Board of Trustees website:

<https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/meeting-agendas-materials/ad-hoc-committee-on-strategic-planning/>

Adjournment

Ellen N. Doughty, Clerk