

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
Board of Trustees Meeting

Zoom Meeting
February 27, 2023

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Present: Committee Members: David MacMahon; Chair, Trish Riley, Kelly Martin, Barbara Alexander and Emily Cain. **Other Trustees:** Roger Katz. **Presidents:** Jacqueline Edmondson, Joe McDonnell, Joe Szakas, Deb Hedeem, Ray Rice, Leigh Saufley and Joan Ferrini-Mundy. **Faculty Representatives:** William Otto, Michael Scott, Matthew Bampton, Dmitry Bam, Patrick Cheek and Clyde Mitchell. **Student Representatives:** Katie Ashley, Aidan Mulrooney, Ben Doherty and Samantha Morton. **System Staff:** Jeffrey St. John, Ellen Doughty, Rosa Redonnett, Paul Chan, Carolyn Dorsey, Ryan Low and Jamie Ballinger. **Others Present:** Adam Tuchinsky, John Volin and Kathy Yardley.

Committee Members Absent: Beth Dobson, Pender Makin, Lisa Eames and Dhivya Singaram.

Trustee David MacMahon, 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 Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Riley, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic & Student Affairs Committee agreed to go into Executive Session under the provisions of:

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

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

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the following agenda items were discussed.

UMS 2023 Tenure Nominations

On a motion by Trustee Alexander, which was seconded by Trustee Riley, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee agreed to forward this item to the March 26-27, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution.

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves the recommendations for tenure submitted by the University of Maine System approvals will take effect September 1, 2023 for faculty with academic year appointments and July 1, 2023 for faculty with fiscal year appointments.

Tenure at time of hire, Professor in the Department of History, UM

On a motion by Trustee Alexander, 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 this item to the March 26-27, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following

resolution.

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs committee and approves tenure at time of hire, professor in the Department of History at UM with tenure to be effective February 3, 2023.

Tenure at time of hire, Professor in the Department of Kinesiology, Physical Education, and Athletic Training, UM

On a motion by Trustee Alexander, which was seconded by Trustee Martin, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee agreed to forward this item to the March 26-27, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following resolution.

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and approves tenure at time of hire professor in the Department of Kinesiology Physical Education, and Athletic Training with tenure to be effective February 3, 2023.

Unified Accreditation Update

Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs Jeffrey St. John provided an update on unified accreditation. One of the things that has been accomplished in response to the NECHE evaluation team report, received in December following the team's October visit to all of our universities and law school, is to embed goals within the first draft of the System-wide strategic plan. The first draft of the strategic plan will be released for review and consideration across our universities and law school tomorrow in a message from the Chancellor. Embedded in the plan is a series of to-do's resulting from the NECHE evaluation team report. In characteristic NECHE fashion, there is lots of guidance in a number of areas that is more general, but there are also some very specific things that the team recommended. In order to get out ahead of that work and to make it fully consonant with the broader aims and direction of the strategic plan, those action items are included in the plan itself.

The university accreditation officers and the university's financial aid directors have been working on one specific request that was in the evaluation team report. The team recommended that UMS reconcile two slightly different lists of what are called instructional locations that are used to report out to NECHE and to report out separately for federal financial aid purposes. Over time, each university had developed its own list, and over time some of those two lists were slightly different. There now is a fully reconciled list and a process in place where every summer there will be an annual review to ensure ongoing consistency and accuracy of that single aligned list.

Vice Chancellor Dorsey, Chancellor Malloy, and Vice Chancellor St. John will travel to Peabody, Massachusetts, Thursday to meet with the full NECHE Commission to review the self-study, the evaluation team report, our response to the report, and answer questions. The next step is for the Commission to produce a final letter to the Chancellor and to Chair Riley, which is called an action letter summarizing their assessment of the overall evaluation process and providing guidance and direction for our future under unified accreditation.

Maine College of Engineering and Computing (MCEC) Naming and UMaine/USM Engineering Framework Approval

Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation and President of the University of Maine (UM) Joan Ferrini-Mundy, Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives Carolyn Dorsey, and University of Southern Maine (USM) President Jaqueline Edmondson discussed the revised MCEC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) framework highlighting modifications made from the initial version, provide an overview of the stakeholder approval process to date, and offer next steps in the planning process.

As part of the larger UMS TRANSFORMS \$240 million investment by the Harold Alfond Foundation, the Maine College of Engineering, Computing and Information Science initiative was awarded \$75 million over 12 years (2022-2033), \$50 million of which is intended to renovate existing engineering infrastructure and \$25 million of which is intended to support scholarships; new faculty, faculty development, and curricular innovation; planning, development, and administration of the new college; and assessment and marketing. UMS is required to match an additional \$75 million that advances the initiative through privately raised funds and corporate philanthropy, state support (bonding, debt service, or targeted appropriation), and federal grants and congressionally directed spending.

USM engineering faculty and administration requested in November 2021 that UMS commit in writing to an arrangement that allowed USM to continue granting engineering degrees in its own programs even as they partner with University of Maine engineering programs in MCEC. Further, USM requested to retain administrative control over the USM Department of Engineering and continue to be the “home” of USM engineering faculty.

A proposed MOU was reviewed and approved by the Academic & Student Affairs (ASA) Committee at its May 2022 meeting and was originally intended to go before the Board for consideration in June 2022. Given the arrival of a new president at USM, a new Dean of Engineering at UM, and the desire to review reports received from numerous System-wide consultative working groups convened to consider all areas of impact of MCEC, the proposed MOU was not moved forward to the Board. The proposed MCEC MOU that was presented at ASA Committee meeting today has been modified based on the feedback from all the stakeholder groups.

President Ferrini-Mundy explained that the faculty are now engaged in setting up the programmatic emphases, the innovations, and the recruitment that will be needed to double the number of engineering students and computing students across Maine. Additional details on how Computing is integrated System-wide for MCEC will be developed. One of UM’s major focal areas is the Green Engineering and Materials lab (GEM), which will be the next expansion of the Advanced Structures and Composites Center focusing on the cutting-edge AI technologies that are needed in 3D printing. This cutting-edge factory of the future will be designed as a research lab where students take part in these technological developments and have an opportunity to work on their own mini projects. This is a great potential asset and resource for MCEC. UM is looking to expand the graduate programs in engineering and computing to making them available in Portland through the Maine Graduate & Professional Center, and then expanded pathways from across the System, into MCEC, into USM and UMaine engineering programs, and beyond.

President Edmondson explained that USM has three undergraduate programs in engineering, and the new industrial engineering program starting in the fall. She explained the MOU now states the new preferred name of “Maine College of Engineering and Computing”. The USM

engineering programs have been changed to the USM Engineering Department. There is also an amended reference to USM as a division of engineering, which has now been changed to a cooperating department with MCEC.

One other change is how the Harold Alfond Foundation funds will be directed, which will now be based on enrollments and the percentage of enrollments. President Edmondson and the USM Foundation will work together to raise matching funds in accordance with the expectations of the Harold Alfond Foundation.

In response to a question from a committee member, President Edmondson explained that cooperating departments is part of the AFUM, or the full-time faculty union contract and they would prefer this term when structuring collaborations. It offers faculty security and knowing that they will have a home campus and evaluations will be done by the peers from their home campus. The intent is to offer this MOU System-wide and there is already a number of pathways programs in place that allow students who are at other campuses who could start their programs at their home campuses and then move into the offerings at UMaine and USM. The term cooperating departments clears a barrier as opposed to building one up. Cooperating departments only work when you have departments on both ends. Some of our institutions only have a faculty member who teaches in a specific area and does not have a department so there was no way to determine how to affiliate. The cooperating department language does state in a percentage how much of their programming that each university can participate in cooperating departments.

It was suggested that the resolution include a reference to the shared governance document from March 2007, which is part of Board Policy 205 – *Faculty and Student Representatives to Board of Trustees*. It was also recommended that the shared governance document be reviewed and updated based on unified accreditation.

On a motion by Trustee Riley, 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 this item to the March 26-27, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting for approval of the following revised resolution.

That the Board of Trustees:

- Approves the renaming of the University of Maine College of Engineering to be the Maine College of Engineering and Computing (MCEC), to be effective April 1, 2023;
- Approves, under Board Policy 309 – *Organization and Establishment of Major Units*, the conceptual framework for collaboration and participation by USM engineering programs as a cooperating department with MCEC as described in the February 2023 MCEC MOU; and
- Encourages and confirms the faculty's shared governance (March 2007 document attached to Board Policy # 205 – *Faculty and Student Representatives to Board of Trustees*) responsibility for curriculum and academic policy development, program and university collaboration, and a focus and strong emphasis on DEI within MCEC and UMS TRANSFORMS.

Faculty Initiated Discussion on Shared Governance

Vice Chancellor St. John stated that one of the recommendations from the NECHE evaluation

team's final report is an understanding that faculty shared governance has to be understood. There is an existing Board of Trustees statement on shared governance attached to Board of Trustee Policy 205 – *Faculty and Student Representatives to the Board of Trustees*. That document is 16 years of age, predates the advent of unified accreditation and predates the development of the NECHE team's review and subsequent report. Both the Faculty Governance Council and the Faculty Representatives to the Board have had substantive discussions about understanding how shared governance might work under unified accreditation.

The first public draft of the strategic plan will include short statement simply saying NECHE says faculty, student, and staff input needs to be understood under unified accreditation and that includes a review of shared governance. For UMS to address this issue from our accreditor, a discussion on shared governance followed. The Faculty Representatives to the Board of Trustees lead the discussion – Mike Scott from UM, Matthew Bampton from USM, Clyde Mitchell from UMF, William Otto from UMM and Patrick Cheek from UMA.

Shared governance is at many levels – the System level, campus level, the department level and the faculty level for curriculum. They agreed that the current shared governance document should be updated based on unified accreditation, the strategic plan and the roles of the Faculty Representatives to the Board and the Faculty Governance Council. Appreciation was expressed to the Board for their support, the two-way communication process and the respect and trust that has been established.

One gap in the shared governance process is communicating when a decision is made and conveying that information or rationale for why the decision was made to close the loop for accountability. The Board appreciated the open dialog and asked about next steps. Vice Chancellor St. John offered to support this effort on behalf of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and will work with the stakeholders to conduct a thoughtful consideration of the issues raised and get the process started.

Student Representative Discussion

Aiden Mulrooney, Student Representative to the Board from UMF, introduced the discussion about concerns that impact the entire student body from all campuses. A common theme is a breakdown in communication, the student body either not receiving or not understanding information from the various campus administrations. An example was a lack of timely communication regarding the UMF retrenchments and the impact for students enrolled in classes with the retrenched faculty members. Another example was the communication of sports being cancelled at UMM. The students were informed through media coverage. Also, UM held a conference for game wardens that involved firing guns without advanced notification to the campus community. In the middle of class, students were shocked to hear gunshots. There was also a challenge with the graduate and international students' health insurance. Additionally, UM students felt left out of the decision to change Maine Day.

The Student Representatives shared some of the steps taken to remediate these situations. The Board expressed appreciation to the Student Representatives for sharing this information and asked them to think about what is the best way for administration to communicate information to the students. A Committee member suggested there be a clear path for students to raise concerns, a process to evaluate those concerns and documented actions taken in response. A suggestion was made to pursue the state-based health insurance exchange as a better option for graduate and international students. Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success and

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Credential Attainment Rosa Redonnett indicated she will have further conversation with the students and come back with some other suggestions. Ms. Redonnett indicated she has already had some conversations with the chief student officers around communication lines.

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,
Ellen N. Doughty, Clerk