

EMBARGOED UNTIL 4:00 P.M.  
MONDAY, JULY 13, 2009

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**COMMITTEES PRESENT WIDE-RANGING RECOMMENDATIONS  
TO UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM TRUSTEES**

**Reports are Presented as Part of the UMS 'New Challenges, New Directions' Initiative  
to Reduce Costs, Protect Quality and Affordability, and Advance a Common 'Public Agenda'**

BANGOR—The University of Maine System's long-term financial sustainability initiative known as "New Challenges, New Directions" (NCND) moved another step closer to completion Monday when the chairs of three major work groups presented their recommendations to the UMS Board of Trustees.

The presentations included dozens of proposed modifications intended to reduce costs and increase revenues while enhancing the university system's academic quality and affordability. A common point was a stronger emphasis on "tailoring" UMS's programs and resources to advance a "coordinated public agenda" that supports Maine's educational, economic, social, and cultural needs and opportunities.

Proposed by UMS Chancellor Richard L. Pattenau and authorized by the UMS Board in January, NCND was undertaken in light of a projected \$42.8 million budget shortfall over the next four years. The shortfall is based on demographic and economic conditions affecting Maine's public universities and the State.

NCND's objectives are:

1. To serve the changing and evolving knowledge, research, public service, and educational needs of the people, businesses, and organizations of the State;
2. To keep the cost of baccalaureate and graduate education affordable for our students by moderating tuition increases; and
3. To implement efficiencies, organizational changes, and further economies of scale to bring spending in line with available resources.

Meeting Monday in Bangor, trustees heard from the chairs of the NCND initiative's three interrelated "arenas" of focus:

- Rebecca M. Wyke, vice chancellor for finance and administration, the chair of Arena 1, which examined the university system's administrative, student, and financial services;
- James H. Breece, vice chancellor for academic affairs, the chair of Arena 2, which examined the academic programs and services of Maine's public universities; and
- David T. Flanagan, a former UMS Board Chair, who led the Arena 3 task force, which examined UMS's structure and governance.

"The reports being presented today are candid, bold, and creative," Pattenau told trustees. "It's safe to say that we got exactly what we hoped for. The reports challenge us to think in new and different ways about how our University System is organized and performs to serve the people and organizations of Maine. Together, they

form an excellent basis for the next work ahead of us: preparing the draft comprehensive plan that we will present to the Board in September.

“The presentations today represent the halfway point in the ‘New Challenges, New Directions’ process,” Pattenauade continued. “We will continue to receive public comment on these reports through August 1. These advisory reports will be used by the presidents and me to prepare a draft comprehensive plan that will be shared with trustees and the public in September.”

Pattenauade explained that a final public comment period will be held from September 14 to October 15, with possible revisions to follow. The final comprehensive plan will be presented to trustees on November 16 for approval.

Flanagan, who chaired the examination of the University System’s structure and governance, said that the structure and governance is appropriate, but that UMS needs a fresh “vision” to compete with growing competition for Maine students and to fulfill the UMS mission with the resources available to it.

“Having a seven-campus university system is appropriate,” Flanagan said.” But we also agreed that we are not realizing the full potential of these campuses, and indeed, for some it is imperative that they get ‘right-sized’ with appropriate missions, quickly, if they are to survive long term.

“The university system needs a new business model, one that is worthy of the significant State and student investment in it,” Flanagan continued. He said the new model should be based on a more coordinated, complementary, and integrated approach to programs, services, and operations; and more creative uses of student financial aid to promote student recruitment and retention.

Lyndel J. Wishcamper of Freeport, chair of the UMS Board of Trustees, said the thousands of hours that committee participants put into preparing their recommendations would be of great benefit to the Board as it moves forward.

“I promise you that we will take your recommendations very seriously and we do intend to address these issues,” Wishcamper said. “We appreciate your help and will need your help.”

In a related item, University of Maine at Augusta President Allyson Hughes Handley reported on the work of the UMS Task Force on Distance Education. The task force, which Handley chaired, recently submitted a set of proposals on ways to improve and expand access to Maine’s public universities through online and technology enhanced teaching and learning. Handley’s report is viewed as integral and complementary to the NCND initiative.

Pattenauade praised the work done performed by the NCND committees and task forces. “They have spent thousands of hours on their respective assignments,” Pattenauade said. “They heard from hundreds of people, received dozens of written comments, worked with a wide range of national experts, and explored multiple options.”

“This transparent, inclusive, and dynamic process is designed to give voice to those concerned about the future of public higher education,” Pattenauade said. “Following today’s meeting, the public will have additional opportunities to participate in the process as we meld and refine the reports into a final plan and implementation process.”

The full reports of the three arena committees, along with the distance learning report, may be found at [www.maine.edu/UMSNCND](http://www.maine.edu/UMSNCND).

In other trustee action Monday:

- The Board authorized the establishment of the University of Maine Aquaculture Research Institute, which will conduct research targeted at improving the efficiency, profitability, and sustainability of Maine aquaculture industry. The research center will be fully funded through the Maine economic Improvement Fund along with private, federal, and state grants and contracts.
- Trustees approved a reorganization plan for the University of Maine at Farmington. The plan is designed to produce cost savings and improve academic collaboration and student support services.
- Board members gave the University of Maine permission to lease, at no cost, 40,000 square feet of the former Georgia pacific paper mill in Old Town. The space will be used to establish a Forest and Agricultural Bioproducts Research, Development, and Commercialization Technology Center. Operation of the facility will be funded through research grants and contracts, including \$4.8 million from the Maine Technology Institute (MTI). The MTI grant will also fund the construction of related operational space at Jenness Hall on the UMaine campus in Orono.
- Trustees also approved the following senior level appoints: Krista Manning Smith Meinersmann as director of the University of Southern Maine’s School of Nursing; John M. Rebar as the executive director of Cooperative Extension at the University of Maine; and Rosa S. Redonnett as executive director of Student Affairs for the University of Maine System.

Established in 1968, the University of Maine System is the state’s largest educational enterprise. It features seven universities – some with multiple campuses – located across the state, as well as 10 University College outreach centers, a law school, and an additional 75 interactive distance learning sites. With an annual enrollment of nearly 45,000 students, it educates 68 percent of all students enrolled in Maine’s public universities, community colleges and Maine Maritime Academy. Its student population represents 48 percent of all students enrolled in Maine’s public and private postsecondary institutions combined. For more information, visit [www.maine.edu](http://www.maine.edu).