Student Affairs Meeting


Absent: Angela Faherty, William Johnson, Kevin McCarthy, Victoria Murphy, and Wayne Newell.

Trustee Medd called the meeting to order.

Ms. Rosa Redonnett, Executive Director of Student Affairs, explained that Noel-Levitz, a nationally recognized specialist in enrollment management, was selected to complete a study of markets, strategic pricing and financial aid. The first phase of this study has been completed. The first phase included individual audits of enrollment management practices at the seven university campuses of the System; a research study of price sensitivity among Maine’s college-bound high school seniors, their parents, and adults who are planning to enroll in college; and the development of long-term enrollment projections for new freshmen, new transfer students and part-time undergraduates. Each portion of the research was also accompanied by specific recommendations based upon the findings. For example, the campus audits produced more than 150 recommendations across the seven campuses, many of which are already being acted upon.

Ms. Redonnett introduced Mr. Kevin Crockett, the President/CEO of Noel-Levitz, along with Mr. Scott Bodfish, Vice President of market Research at Noel-Levitz, who presented the major findings and recommendations from the first phase of the project.

The Phase one element of the project was to conduct a comprehensive study of markets, strategic pricing and financial aid to improve access and affordability. This included enrollment management assessments, enrollment projection model and price sensitivity research. Highlights of the report are as follows:

- Business as usual will likely result in new student enrollment declines of 6 to 15% over the next decade. The UMS new student intake will likely decline 6%, 10% or 15% over the next decade.
- The UMS’s market share among college-bound high school graduates in Maine has been remarkably consistent.
- In 2008, 1,657 students transferred from the Maine Community College System to a UMS campus.
- In order to keep new student enrollment at the same level it would require the Maine high school graduate market share to increase from 33% to 37.5% or the participation rate would need to increase from 57% to 65%. In addition, the Maine Community College transfers
would have to increase from 12% to 14% and the total part-time market share would need to increase 2.5%.

- In order for enrollments to increase by 3% it would require the Maine high school graduate market share to increase from 33% to 38.5%, the Maine Community College transfers to increase from 12% to 15% and the total part-time student market share to increase by 5.5%.
- UMA, UMPI, UMFK and UMM suffer from relatively low levels of awareness among both students and parents and the quality perception of these universities is also relatively weak.
- At prevailing tuition and fee levels, the higher priced campuses (UM, USM and UMF) can increase tuition up to 7% without significantly reducing the effectiveness of current financial aid awards. The lower priced campuses should limit increases to 5% or less.
- At prevailing tuition and fee levels, financial aid awards are very effective in stimulating interest. The campus-based financial aid analyses should help to identify concrete changes that will have a positive impact on student behavior.
- Individual campuses that intend to target adult undergraduates for enrollment growth will likely have to reduce per-credit-hour tuition from the prevailing rates of $201 to $235 per credit hour to approximately $150 per credit hour in order to overcome price resistance.
- Adults show a clear preference for the Maine Community College System on most attributes of value that were tested.
- High school seniors surveyed place the greatest importance on quality academic programs, quality teaching, and career preparation. Parents share these views. As a result UMS campuses need to speak to educational outcomes and aggressively differentiate their academic programs within the State in order to offset the impact of the Community Colleges.
- The Trustees role in this kind of project includes development of an enrollment management strategy and goals in collaboration with senior management, approving the multi-year enrollment management plan, establish high-level metrics for monitoring progress towards goals, developing appropriate accountability and incentive structures, and serving as advocates to help activate the System’s strategy.
- Adopt a collaborative enrollment management model in the System.
  - Enrollment management is defined as a systematic, holistic, and integrated approach to achieving enrollment goals by exerting more control over those institutional factors that shape the size and characteristics of the student body. It involves examining the institutional mission, program and service offerings, organizational structure and resource allocation.
- Re-visit the UMS multi-year goals in collaboration with the campuses.
- Form a System Enrollment Management Council to devise strategies to connect enrollment practices on the campuses with System goals and strategies.
- Implement a consistent approach to both annual and strategic enrollment planning across the campuses. Annual recruitment and retention plans should contain measurable goals and key enrollment strategies.
- Strengthen the relationship with the Maine Community College System in support of increasing the transfer rate from the current 12% level.
- Consider establishing coordinated admissions criteria that provide destination institutions for various types of students.
- Develop a coordinated effort to re-recruit the not in college group and students enrolled on Community College campuses.
- Implement a System-level awareness campaign designed to leverage the brands of the larger schools in support of the smaller schools with the ultimate goal of the campaign to convince the target audience that the quality of education across the UMS in comparable from campus to campus.
- Identify the System break-even point of a potential price reduction targeted towards the audit market.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion on various components of the report. Mr. Crockett and Mr. Bodfish provided additional information and clarification on the findings.

Adjournment.

Ellen Doughty for
J. Kelley Wiltbank, Clerk