Meeting with Student Representatives


Absent: Kurt Adams, Stephen Bowen, and Bonnie Newsom.

Trustee Collins called the meeting to order and welcomed the Student Representatives.

To start the dialog, the students were asked:

1. How they define academic quality?
2. If the student support resources are adequate and important?
3. How can the System make technology more effective?

Anastasia Alexis, USM
- She feels there is a disconnect between higher education and Maine businesses.
- She commented that one effective use of technology would be a “Portal” type mechanism to post job opportunities to connect UMS graduates with Maine employers.

Brianna Hughes, Graduate Student at UM
- She feels it is important to promote to Maine employers that a graduate from UMS is a benefit to for them.

Trustee Grieshaber asked the Student Representatives if they were ready for college?

Jeffrey Rhoads, UMPI
- He responded to Trustee Grieshaber’s question by stating that he was prepared and ready for college primarily because of his experience through the Upward Bound program.

Zole Hawthorn, UMA
- He stated that developing relationships with Maine businesses through a job bank specifically targeted for UMS graduates is not only a excellent use of technology but also a benefit for the State.
- He asked “What if Maine businesses selected UMS graduates as their 1st choice?” He believed this could be beneficial for enrollment, retention, and marketing.

Trustee Hood asked the Student Representatives if the students knew what types jobs were available through Maine businesses before they enrolled in higher education would that information change the student’s degree program selection or career decision and would that
information be valuable? She suggested the Student Representatives research this issue and report back to the Board on their findings. She pointed out that there are resources available through the Department of Labor that incoming freshman students could utilize.

Kim-Ann Perkins, Faculty Representative from UMPI, stated that she works with undeclared students, which is the largest group of incoming freshman. Information on job availability could be very beneficial for this group of students because they are not sure of their career paths.

Trustee Collins asked the Student Representatives if there are adequate internship opportunities in the State? Anastasia Alexis stated it is difficult to find information on available internship opportunities and suggested that type of information could be part of a “portal” type system. Brianne Hughes stated this is a topic the Student Representatives have discussed. Some departments have very organized internship programs and others do not. She feels that students cannot put enough value on the type of experience they gain through internships and often students that have had internship experience get preference in the hiring process.

Trustee Murphy suggested partnering with the State, Bangor and Portland Chambers of Commerce for input into a portal or job bank.

Trustee Wishcamper commented that the System doesn’t advertise our success at placing students with Maine businesses and asked if this is due to not tracking graduates after graduation in addition to their career direction. He feels that if the System tracked this type of information it could be available to students on what employment sectors have the most graduates and which have the least amount of the graduates. This information would also be beneficial as the System decides on the direction of some of its programs.

Trustee Goodman commented that the System should keep in mind the needs of the State and strategies for keeping UMS graduates in State for employment. He asked if the System could do a better job of informing students of jobs where their skills are related and transferable.

Anastasia Alexis stated that job availability may not change a student’s mind about their degree program; however, it could open up other job possibilities and it could be the difference between getting a job after graduation in a similar field versus a job in their actual field.

Trustee Grieshaber shared the concept of a “visual” resume versus a traditional resume. The “visual” resume outlines the individual’s personality and inherent skills and talents. She feels the System should not focus on changing the student’s mind about the course of study the student selects. What matters is what the student does with that knowledge after they graduate. Based upon her experience it is the really broad, basic skills that make the difference.

Adjournment.

Ellen Doughty for  
J. Kelley Wiltbank, Clerk