Academic and Student Affairs Committees Meeting


Committee Members Absent: None.

Trustee Johnson, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Credit Transfer Steering Committee Update. President Wilson Hess, Chair of the Credit Transfer Steering Committee (CTSC), and Ms. Rosa Redonnett, Chief Student Affairs Officer, presented an update on the Credit Transfer Steering Committee. The Credit Transfer Project is aimed at improving the college credit transfer process to make it easier for students to move among Maine’s public universities and to transfer from the Maine Community College System (MCCS) to the University of Maine System (UMS) and vice versa. The recommendations relating to intra-system transfer were approved at the November 2012 Board of Trustees meeting.

The CTSC’s Plan Design recommends the establishment of reliable, robust credit transfer practices based upon the implementation of four (4) System-wide credit transfer best practices to make it easier for students to move among Maine’s public universities:

- Electronic communication tools
- Block Transfer /General Education Common Core
- Major (program-to-program) Articulation
- Adult & Transfer degree completion - including Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

The Implementation Plan outlines an Organizational and Governance Structure for the project (Role of Steering Committee, Executive leadership, Project leadership team, and subcommittees). It describes in modest detail components of the project to be implemented based upon the Plan Design. It also offers an assessment of financial risks, funding opportunities, and provides an overview of impact and outcomes of the project. Audit Milestones have been established to assess and measure the stages of plan implementation through project completion at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. The System-wide, web-based transfer portal/website will be operational by August 2013.

Adult Baccalaureate Completion/Distance Education (ABCDE) Committee. President Allyson Handley, Chair of the ABCDE Committee, and Trustee Bonnie Newsom, ABCDE Committee member, provided an update on the current status of the Adult Baccalaureate Completion/Distance Education (ABCDE) Committee. She reviewed the current status of the project and the best practices.

Best Practices
Public institutions today are confronted with an increasingly competitive environment and must be able to address the multiple issues of college access, affordability, and completion across a range of
student populations. By 2018, 59 percent of all jobs in Maine will require a post-secondary education. National goals, including those from President Obama, call for 60% of all adults to have achieved a degree by 2025. In Maine, the “traditional” student demographic will continue to decline over the next 7-10 years while the “new” traditional (or non-traditional) market will grow a bit and then stabilize.

A highly qualified workforce is central to any state’s workforce and economic development. Individuals with professional certificates and postsecondary education degrees at the associate’s, bachelor’s, and graduate levels are projected to experience higher levels of employment and wage growth than those without. Recognizing that 230,000 adults in Maine have some college but no degree, is imperative that a strategic plan with clear action steps and goals, formed collaboratively across key stakeholders within the University of Maine System and within Maine, be formulated and implemented.

Examples of best practice within adult degree completion exist in part at most of Maine’s public universities. As was the case with the credit transfer initiative, these practices exist in isolation from each other and have not been implemented to scale at all of our institutions or embedded within any policy structure, either within the UMS or more broadly, such that they can be implemented statewide.

It is clear from all available research that there are a variety of best practices being employed by states as they grapple with increasing college completion, specifically among those adults with some college. It is also clear that this is an area still in development and ongoing assessment will be required to determine which initiative will have the most impact. When considering best practices, it is important to recognize that the cultural context, educational climate, mission and social setting of an educational system will influence the success of adult degree completion programs and should be taken into consideration as any solution is implemented. Based on the research, the following themes emerge as best practice:

- **Student Service and Support**
  - **Institutional:**
    - Developing a single point of contact for returning adults – “Concierge” services
    - Providing mentoring support either as a component of the “concierge” service or through the academic major
    - Reviewing policies and procedures related to student services and support – identification of barriers and formulating solutions
    - Serving the multi-campus student – reviewing policies and procedures as they relate to students enrolled on more than one campus
  - **State level:**
    - Identifying appropriate grant programs at the state level that provide either financial assistance for adult students or provide funding for student support services

- **Marketing and Outreach**
  - **Institutional and State level:**
    - Identifying potential students, both first time and those with some college, at the institutional level and through appropriate state agencies that target adults
    - Tailored marketing and outreach to students regarding degree completion opportunities
    - Cultivating key stakeholder support, both institutional and state level, in promoting opportunities for adults to come to/return to college
• **Academic Programs**
  
  *Institutional:*
  - Identifying/offering programs available on campus for place-bound, time-limited learners that provide the flexibility to fulfill degree requirements
  - Identifying/offering programs available via Distance education/online
  - Expanding degree completion opportunities through the collaborative offering of degrees
  - Reviewing academic policies and procedures – identifying barriers and formulating solutions
  
  *State Level:*
  - Involve key business and community stakeholders in the identification and development of certificates and degrees needed for the workforce

• **Financial Aid/Tuition Support**

  *Institutional:*
  - Identifying any financial aid policies that may be a barrier and formulation of solutions
  - Ensuring that there are multiple payment options for students

  *State Level:*
  - Funding for adults returning to school is identified as one of the key barriers. Work with key stakeholders in state government and within business and industry to develop scholarships/grants to support adult degree completion and to develop partnerships to enhance employer tuition support programs

• **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and Transfer**

  *Institutional:*
  - Transportability of PLA credit between campuses
  - Consistency across campuses in the awarding of PLA
  - Offering the full menu of PLA

  *State level:*
  - Develop partnerships with the business community in ways that support the PLA process, e.g. portfolio development, assessment, academic expectations, etc.

• **Partnerships (cross-campus, with businesses, with other state organizations)**

  *State level:*
  - Working collaboratively with Adult Education; statewide organizations working with employers in degree completion (in Maine, Maine Employers Initiative); foundations and others (Maine Community Foundation, MELMAC, Lumina, etc.); Legislature (for any statewide legislated policies)

• **Assessment, Evaluation and Research**

  - Data, both statewide and institution-based, on adult degree completion
  - Assessment of initiatives

The Committee had a discussion about the federal funding cuts for veterans and how that will impact this project.

**Project > Login Update.** Ms. Redonnett provided a brief update on the Project > Login (Computer Science-Information Technology Initiative). This Project represents a major public-private partnership between higher education and business/industry that has developed to respond to Maine’s workforce needs in these fields. The roll out of the project took place on February 7, 2013 at USM. The Project > Login website is: http://projectlogin.com/goals.
**Spring 2013 Enrollment Report.** Ms. Redonnett provided an overview of the Spring 2013 Enrollment Report. The Report highlights are as follows:

- Spring headcount enrollment declined 2.7% over the previous year in the University System and 5.5% since 2009. Every campus declined somewhat over last year’s Spring enrollments, with UMF showing the largest single year loss at 5.3%.
- Spring FTE in the University System declined 1.4% compared with the previous year and 3.7% compared with 2009.
- Spring credit hour enrollments declined by 1.4% from 2012 to 2013 and dropped 3.9% compared to 2009.
- The number of Associate degree seeking students dropped 13.2% since Spring 2012 and decreased 13.5% compared with 2009 enrollments. Baccalaureate degree seekers made up 72.5% of students. Non-degree undergraduate student enrollment fell 12.2% and non-degree graduate enrollment declined 10.1% over the previous year as part of a continuing trend in the non-degree categories.
- Spring full-time enrollment (FTE) in Associate degree programs declined 10.5% since 2012 and decreased 8% compared with 2009.
- 87.4% of students have in-state tuition status in Spring 2013. Out-of-state enrollment increased 1.4% over last year, although it has declined 6.9% compared with 2009. Spring in-state enrollment lapsed 3.3% since 2012 and fell 5.2% from four-years ago.
- The gender balance in the University System is 40.9% male and 59.1% female. Spring enrollment has declined in both gender categories, with a 1.4% decrease in males and a 7% decrease in females.
- Part-time enrollment dropped 5.9% over 2012, with a loss of 9% compared with 2009, which is a continuing trend.
- 79.6% of students self-identify as white. Minority enrollment remains steady at 5.7%. 10.5% of students do not specify their race/ethnicity.
- 18 to 24 year old students make up 58.9% of the student population, while students 25 and older consist of roughly 39.7% of the student population.
- Cumberland and Penobscot County residents make up about 35% of all students attending the University System. 61% of out-of-state students come from the New England region, with 28.3% of total out-of-state students coming from Massachusetts. The vast majority of international students come from Canada (34%), China (16%), and Saudi Arabia (7%).
- 46.9% of transfer students in Spring 2013 came from institutions external to the UMS and MCCS. Internal transfers between UMS campuses made up 24% of the total. Transfers from MCCS comprised 29.1% of the total and improved 13% from 2012.
- Total credit hours in distance education gained 5% from 2012. The decline in traditional campus courses was 2.9%. Online credit hours increased 11.2% between Spring 2012 and 2013, accounting for 14.8% of all credit hours delivered.

Adjournment.

Ellen Doughty for
J. Kelley Wiltbank, Clerk