

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT AUGUSTA

Transforming Lives: Educating Our Students to be Global Citizens

Strategic Plan 2011-2016

The University of Maine at Augusta, a regional state university, provides baccalaureate and select associate degrees to meet the educational, economic and cultural needs of Central Maine. Based on a common liberal arts core for all degree programs, UMA delivers professional programs to non-traditional, traditional and place-bound students.

Vision Statement

As the third largest campus in the University of Maine System, the University of Maine at Augusta will offer undergraduate degrees and professional certificates to prepare graduates for the 21st century. Located in Augusta, the state's capital city, and in Bangor, the University will leverage its relationships with state government and communities in central Maine to increase opportunities for students in all programs to be civically engaged, both on campus and in the worldwide "community." UMA will explore public and private options for providing access to affordable, quality student housing to satisfy the campus' perceived and anticipated unmet needs. As the institution with the most experience in distance education, UMA will continue to be a leader using contemporary technology to provide innovative and quality learning environments for faculty and students.

History

In 1965 the 102nd Maine Legislature established the University of Maine at Augusta as a community-based institution offering associate degrees under the auspices of the University of Maine at Orono. In 1971, soon after moving to its present location in Augusta, UMA became the seventh autonomous campus of the University of Maine System. UMA, in that same year, assumed responsibility for providing degree programs and services in the Lewiston-Auburn area.

In 1975, UMA offered its first baccalaureate degree program. UMA was designated the "Community College of Maine" in 1986 with responsibility for leading the University of Maine System in the provision of associate degree programs and related services throughout the state. As a result, UMA developed and coordinated a statewide interactive television system, which included a network of over 100 off-campus centers and regional sites. UMA continues to collaborate with University College in the delivery and development of statewide distance programs.

In 1995, the University of Maine System Board of Trustees added University College of Bangor (UCB) to UMA, reaffirming UMA's role as a provider of selected baccalaureate programs in the Central Maine and Mid-coast region.

Redirection of UMA's educational mission has occurred during the past decade, illustrated through the offering of 3 baccalaureate degree programs prior to 1998 to a current total of 18. The following data demonstrate how the addition of these degrees and programs has affected UMA enrollments and continue to shape its mission:

- In 2006, UMA awarded 314 associate and 285 baccalaureate **degrees**. In 2010, in addition to 18 certificates (an increase from 9 in 2006), 209 associate and 304 baccalaureate degrees were awarded.
- In fall 2006 there were 1,910 associate degree students and 2,357 baccalaureate **students**. Fall 2010 showed an increase to 2,780 of baccalaureate students and a decrease to 1,686 associate degree students.
- In fall 2006 AA/AS students generated 16,172 **credit hours** and BA/BS students enrolled for 19,821 credit hours. In fall 2010, 14,779 credit hours accounted for associate degree students and 24,693 for baccalaureate.
- The **Post Baccalaureate degree** student enrollment has remained relatively steady: 20 in 2006 and 21 in 2010.

- Although **enrollment** has dropped from 5,256 in fall 2006 to 5,074 in fall 2010, the number of our non-degree students has decreased from 1026 in fall 2006 to 608 in fall 2010.
- All majors have increased from 4,210 to 4,423, further illustrating our continuing increase in the **retention and persistence** of our students.

This increase in baccalaureate credit hours and degrees confirms UMA's current designation as a Carnegie Classification Associate/Baccalaureate institution.

UMA's Strategic Planning Process

In November 2009, the strategic planning process was presented to the entire UMA community. The statement of value and purpose was the following: “The top priority for UMA, for the next five years and beyond, is to develop a strong public identity that reflects who we really are: the third-largest campus in the system. We must anchor our investments and growth to this identity, incorporating expansion of academic programs, improved student engagement, and greater engagement with our local, national, and global communities.”

There were several phases to the process. Using a Scenario to Strategy Process (S2S), faculty and staff were encouraged to serve on one of four committees that would examine our approach to the future of this university. Those four approaches were: “Traditionalists,” local and onsite delivery; “International Traditionalists,” onsite and global delivery; “Techies,” local and online delivery; and “International Techies,” global and online delivery. More than 95 faculty and staff volunteered for the four quadrants to develop a plan that most suited each of the four approaches.

In April 2010, each quadrant presented a scenario for the UMA community. All employees were asked to vote on the quadrant that most aligned with their vision for UMA's future. Two groups were close enough in popularity, quadrants one and three, Traditionalists and Techies, that they were combined and met again as a larger group and submitted a final report to the Provost and the President in June 2010. The strategic plan that follows is a summation of campus wide consensus.

Overview of Key Goals



Key Goals in UMA's Strategic Plan

The Fiscal Year 2007 – 2011 UMA Strategic Plan was written in anticipation of a new mission statement that would launch the University as a full partner within the University of Maine System as a regional baccalaureate university. A new mission statement was approved, and guided by it, UMA began its formal transition from being a primary provider of associate to baccalaureate degrees. Much of that plan has been successfully implemented, some portions of it need further attention and other objectives are no longer relevant.

UMA's Fiscal Year 2012 – 2016 Strategic Plan builds upon the successes and picks up on the incomplete work of the old plan, as well as sets critical new objectives for the University. Three critical areas being introduced in this plan are student housing, institutional research and advancement. These were all noted as needs in the Introduction of the 2007 Plan but determined not to be fiscally feasible to pursue at that time.

In this current Strategic Plan, UMA will accomplish the following key goals to achieve its mission and to meet the needs of its students:

Key Goal 1: Enhance and expand the University's ability to provide quality baccalaureate education and select associate degrees built on rigorous learning outcomes to help students reach their aspirations and respond to the employment needs of the state.

Key Goal 2: Further develop and extend the campus' student-centered philosophy to increase student retention, provide opportunities for students to be part of a community of learners, and improve students' abilities to graduate with a degree or certificate in their chosen fields.

Key Goal 3: Continue to expand UMA's online and hybrid programs and provide exceptional support services for faculty and students.

Key Goal 4: Foster a "culture of assessment" and data-driven decision-making to measure and improve institutional effectiveness.

Key Goal 5: Engage with a variety of constituencies external to UMA to enhance the University's public image, attract students, and advance its mission to provide educational and cultural opportunities for the state.

Key Goal 6: Expand UMA's development and fundraising activities to diversify sources of revenue and reduce reliance on tuition and state funding.

Key Goal 7: Support the institution's academic goals with sound financial policies and practices, a supportive infrastructure of facilities and technology, appropriate staffing, and transparent administrative policies and procedures.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 1

Key Goal 1: Enhance and expand the University's ability to provide quality baccalaureate education and select associate degrees built on rigorous learning outcomes to help students reach their aspirations and respond to the employment needs of the state.

The University of Maine at Augusta is committed to providing a high quality, accessible and affordable baccalaureate education to the citizens of Maine. UMA's programs are designed to meet many of the employment and career needs of the State of Maine. To meet that goal, faculty strive to develop programs and modes of delivery to address the demographics and life-styles of their students. The primary role of faculty is to provide ownership and quality for their respective degree programs.

The University will continue to develop new and innovative degrees, certificates, and opportunities for professional development in response to the ever-changing demands of the state and will continue to satisfy its regional baccalaureate mission by refining and assessing its programmatic and general education requirements and enhance its undergraduate education with new student-centered research opportunities.

1.1 Adapt curriculum to provide students with an excellent education for the global requirements of the 21st century.

1.1.1 Continue to develop and integrate core and general education throughout the curriculum.

1.1.2 Build upon programs and coordinate activities that strengthen UMA's commitment to civic engagement.

1.1.3 Provide opportunities that foster in students an awareness of the world from diverse cultural, linguistic, and geographic perspectives.

1.2 Expand opportunities for faculty to enhance their pedagogical expertise.

1.2.1 Work with faculty to identify their pedagogical needs and develop work plans to meet those needs.

1.2.2 Offer new and advanced training opportunities designed to integrate technologies to enhance the quality of teaching.

1.3 Encourage and increase faculty scholarship and research consistent with UMA's baccalaureate mission.

- 1.3.1 Develop an agenda within each program or discipline to guide faculty research and scholarship.
- 1.3.2 Establish base budget funding and other opportunities for faculty research and scholarship.

1.4 Increase student scholarship and research activities.

- 1.4.1 Adjust learning outcomes and curricula to encourage undergraduate research.
- 1.4.2 Survey existing models for promoting research among faculty and students.

1.5 Identify new programmatic opportunities for UMA.

- 1.5.1 Work with the Maine Department of Labor to obtain, analyze and synthesize projected employment needs for UMA's catchment area as well as the entire state.
- 1.5.2 Collaborate with business and government agencies to develop continuing educational opportunities for Maine's work force.
- 1.5.3 Develop recommendations to the appropriate faculty for new degrees and certificates, as well as potential refinements to existing programs to meet the state's needs.
- 1.5.4 Advocate and collaborate with other UMS universities to help meet identified graduate education needs for UMA's region.

1.6 Employ a variety of strategies for faculty to improve student success.

- 1.6.1 Review admissions standards to reflect UMA's baccalaureate mission.
- 1.6.2 Review and adjust graduation requirements (capstone courses, internships and national examinations) in each degree to ensure that students meet programmatic educational outcomes.
- 1.6.3 Survey alumni as part of the program review process to determine their professional and educational success.
- 1.6.4 Establish within the College of Arts & Sciences a Liberal Arts Council to assume oversight of the Liberal Studies AA and BA and the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies and promote new ideas and growth in interdisciplinary fields of study within the College.
- 1.6.5 Collaborate with University College and the other UMS universities to develop a "gateway" activity that tests, educates and helps support first time online student success.

1.7 Develop stronger connections with community colleges to assist students preparing to transfer to UMA.

- 1.7.1 Streamline the process for articulation agreements, with a periodic review to update changes in course equivalencies.
- 1.7.2 Conduct program-specific events for appropriate degrees at KVCC, EMCC and CMCC.
- 1.7.3 Develop opportunities to offer appropriate UMA upper level courses at KVCC, EMCC and CMCC that will introduce community college students to university faculty and course work to improve transfer and baccalaureate degree completion rates among graduates with associate degrees.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 2

Key Goal 2: Further develop and extend the campus' student-centered philosophy to increase student retention, provide opportunities for students to be part of a community of learners, and improve students' abilities to graduate with a degree or certificate in their chosen fields.

UMA student retention and graduation rates are below the national average for a regional baccalaureate institution. A coordinated enrollment management/retention strategy is needed to amplify and operationalize efforts to attract and support students. Academic advising is well documented as a potent retention tool and a fundamental enrollment management strategy. Effective academic advisors provide a personal connection between the student and the institution, guide students through academic policies and degree requirements, and link them to institutional services. UMA's retention strategy will include a revised advising approach that is more proactive, responsive and consistent in supporting student success across all programs, locations, modalities and times of the year.

Also supporting UMA's recruitment and retention efforts is access to student housing. A perceived lack of quality housing in proximity to the campuses 1) hampers the University's ability to attract out-of-state students and to meet the needs of international students, 2) is a deterrent to athletic recruitment, and 3) discourages potential applicants "from away" to UMA programs that are unique in the state and region. Recognizing that learning communities are powerful retention tools, UMA seeks to foster a stronger sense of community for all students -- commuting, telecommuting, and residential.

2.1 Develop annual program enrollment goals beginning with fall 2012.

- 2.1.1 Select academic programs for focused efforts to improve retention based upon various factors including retention and graduation rates, as well as program capacity.
- 2.1.2 Develop specific metrics to define retention specifically for the UMA student population (diverse, prior academic experience and multi-campus) and begin to use these measures to accurately assess UMA retention efforts.
- 2.1.3 Increase the opportunities for students to engage with other students outside of the classroom.

2.2 Develop a comprehensive advising system that integrates faculty mentorship with professional advising for registration and degree progress.

- 2.2.1 Establish a means to reduce full-time faculty advising loads to manageable student/advisor ratios.

- 2.2.2 Develop a definition and expectation of what is meant by “faculty mentoring,” and identify the different responsibilities of professional advising and mentorship.
- 2.2.3 Provide support for faculty mentors and establish a means to monitor improvements in retention as a result of faculty mentoring.
- 2.3 Coordinate UMA retention efforts and conduct an internal campaign to educate faculty and staff regarding their role and responsibility for enrollment management.**
 - 2.3.1 Refine the admission intake system to include seamless assessment, advising, registration and orientation.
 - 2.3.2 Develop and maintain an online 4-year course schedule available to students and advisors for improved long range planning.
- 2.4 Develop the capacity to accommodate students for whom commuting to campus is not possible.**
 - 2.4.1 Assess and calculate the feasibility and desirability of various student housing approaches to develop a student housing strategy.
 - 2.4.2 Create strategies to optimize the positive impact of improved student housing.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 3

Key Goal 3: Continue to expand UMA's online and hybrid programs and provide exceptional support services for faculty and students.

Since the inception of Interactive Television and the quest for serving distance learners in the mid 1980s at UMA, our institution has served a leadership role in the University of Maine System. With the advancement of technology over time, a new awareness about the importance of pedagogy and learning at a distance via online and hybrid courses has evolved. UMA's infrastructure for distance and e-learning will complement and expand UMA's current offerings.

3.1 Re-establish the UMA Distance Learning Council (DLC) as a Joint Senate and Administrative Committee.

- 3.1.1 Create a "Virtual Center for Teaching Excellence."
- 3.1.2 Implement current strategies for online courses that reflect best practices for distance learning.
- 3.1.3 Assist faculty to improve course development and delivery.
- 3.1.4 Increase students' ability to achieve learning outcomes in online environments.

3.2 Continue to develop programs offered entirely online and to expand online courses that satisfy general education requirements.

- 3.2.1 Increase investments in, and training for, new teaching technologies that support online teaching and technologically supported teaching in traditional classrooms.
- 3.2.2 Explore opportunities for partnering with external entities to deliver innovative educational programs to the citizens of Maine.
- 3.2.3 Review use of online and hybrid course development funding as UMA moves from course development into course maintenance.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 4

Key Goal 4: Foster a “culture of assessment” and data-driven decision-making to measure and improve institutional effectiveness.

The academic units will build on three previous years of assessing student learning outcomes at the course and program levels and will further expand assessment activities to measure students' success in core and general education requirements throughout all programs. Faculty and staff will carry out these activities in accordance with NEASC guidelines for institutional self-study and in compliance with national accreditation standards for UMA's professional programs. Simultaneously, Student Services, Enrollment Services, Library Services and Administrative Services will continue to generate data from their departmental assessment activities and use that data to prioritize decisions about personnel, budget and physical plant.

Through institutional research projects, UMA will measure and determine student success in classrooms, laboratories, online environments and beyond.

All of these activities will combine to create a portrait of UMA's institutional effectiveness to share with its stakeholders, its community and the region and will position the institution to incorporate honest self-reflection and serious analysis into decision-making at all levels of the University.

4.1 Hire a Director of Research, Assessment and Planning to develop an institutional research function to support UMA faculty and staff.

4.2 Convert the half-time Coordinator of Assessment to a full-time Director of Assessment.

4.2.1 Collaborate with the Faculty Senate's Committee on Assessment Practices to incorporate use of online evaluations/assessments of all UMA courses; revise program review process and forms based on three-year “trial run” of program reviews; explore options for portfolio development; and update UMA's annual assessment plan.

4.2.2 Develop assessment protocols to evaluate student learning in general education, both on site and at a distance.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 5

Key Goal 5: Engage with a variety of constituencies external to UMA to enhance the University's public image, attract students, and advance its mission to provide educational and cultural opportunities for the state.

Research conducted in early 2010 for the UMS by the national enrollment consulting firm, Noel-Levitz, showed the UMA has a "value perception" gap when compared to the three other large campuses in the System. Furthermore, the market study confirmed that demographic declines in Maine, coupled with increasing competition with Maine's Community College System, will exert significant pressure on UMA's ability to maintain enrollments without considerably enhancing its recruiting and marketing efforts.

Under the direction of the Dean of Enrollment Services, a five-year enrollment plan is being written and will be implemented with governance provided by the new Enrollment Management Steering Committee (EMC). The Office of Public Information, led by the Director of External Relations, will continue to revisit, revise and adapt its multi-year marketing and media relations plans to address UMA's need to eliminate the perception gap, advance the growing baccalaureate mission, and sharpen the focus on attracting a more diverse segment of the population.

Providing educational and cultural opportunities for the state is more an issue of communicating existing opportunities rather than increasing them. The Office of Public Information will continue to use a variety of means to promote such events across the state and primarily in the Kennebec Valley and Bangor regions.

5.1 Strengthen UMA's "brand."

- 5.1.1 Undertake targeted and program specific marketing.
- 5.1.2 Develop a new logo that better represents the institution's identity.
- 5.1.3 Conduct advertising and public relations campaigns that align public perception with reality.
- 5.1.4 Generate media exposure for events and programs and UMA faculty, staff and students that convey to the public that UMA is a respected and quality baccalaureate institution.
- 5.1.5 Use an array of communication and social media vehicles to communicate directly with internal and external stakeholders about our identity.
- 5.1.6 Enhance UMA's place in search engine relevance and prepare appropriate materials and strategies to promote UMA's online courses and programs.

5.2 Establish a comprehensive recruitment operation.

- 5.2.1 Develop direct mail/email and social media campaigns to prospective students with strategies specific to each target population; strengthen tour guide and campus visitation programs; expand open-house programs and other “yield” activities; promote faculty phone calls to admitted students; and write and print additional branded recruitment brochures that promote important aspects of the university, such as athletics, veterans, student life, and academic programs.
- 5.2.2 Expand transfer recruitment outreach with a focus on Maine’s Community Colleges. Increase the number of site visits to the MCCS campuses, develop a new transfer student section on the UMA web site, and conduct multiple “Transfer Days” on both the Augusta and Bangor campuses.
- 5.2.3 Strengthen ties with Maine Adult Education centers and promote access to UMA degrees to place-bound and time-bound adults seeking a college degree.
- 5.2.4 Work to position the University to attract a greater number of international students and develop clear and consistent processes to integrate these students into the community.
- 5.2.5 Permanently fund the addition of an Admissions Intake Associate by 2013.
- 5.2.6 In collaboration with University College Centers, increase the number of “on-the-spot” admission programs offered at the Centers.
- 5.2.7 Advance UMA’s strong relationship with veterans and active duty military personnel through outreach visits to Maine National Guard facilities and central command; outreach to Togus VA Center; attendance at Yellow Ribbon events; and joint promotional ventures with the National Guard Recruiting Command.

5.3 Promote to the students, faculty and staff, as well as to the greater community, the cultural and educational opportunities available at UMA.

- 5.3.1 Use an array of communication and social media vehicles make general public and key stakeholders aware of upcoming educational and cultural opportunities.
- 5.3.2 Generate media coverage for UMA events and offerings, both in advance of the events as well as day-of coverage. The Office of Public information will also make sure events are listed in various media calendars.
- 5.3.3 Work closely with faculty and staff in planning events to ensure that public relations and media coverage of the event effectively takes place.
- 5.3.4 Expand and strengthen Senior College and generate greater exposure of Senior College offerings and special programs.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 6

Key Goal 6: Expand UMA’s development and fundraising activities to diversify sources of revenue and to reduce reliance on tuition and state funding.

The Office of University Advancement was created in August 2008 to include fundraising, development and alumni relations. The Office of University Advancement builds a compelling case for support among all of its constituent groups by communicating and advocating for the university's distinctive regional position, role and contributions. Comprehensive giving campaign goals are identified by analyzing the organizations greatest needs and by careful examination of the giving climate among our donor constituencies. University Advancement’s primary strategy is cultivating the University's valued relationships among the business, educational, cultural and political segments of central Maine.

6.1 Create and sustain a culture of philanthropy both on-campus and off campus and support efforts to secure external funding.

6.1.1 Expand efforts to increase donations and contributions across all donor categories.

6.1.2 Strengthen relationships with legislators to advance UMA’s mission and seek opportunities for dedicated funding, when available.

6.1.3 Institute a capital campaign to conclude in 2015, UMA’s 50th anniversary.

6.1.4 Hire a full-time grant writer to support student and faculty research and institutional support services.

6.2 Strengthen foundational elements critical to the success of the UMA Alumni Association.

6.2.1 Attract donors, volunteers, and ambassadors to the Alumni Association “team” and make active participation a priority in the mission and vision.

6.2.2 Increase the Alumni Association’s membership.

6.2.3 Strengthen the Alumni Association’s presence by dedicating physical space on the UMA campus.

6.2.4 Use technology and apply best practices to ensure that Alumni operations are efficient.

FY 2012-2016 UMA Strategic Plan
Key Goal 7

Key Goal 7: Support the institution's academic goals with sound financial policies and practices, a supportive infrastructure of facilities and technology, appropriate staffing, and policies and procedures in place that are transparent and available to all members of the University community.

The University of Maine at Augusta is a complex organization with multiple locations and competing demands for its limited fiscal, human, technological and physical resources. In order to allocate its limited resources in a way that maximizes their use while supporting the diversity of needs, UMA must develop allocation processes that are clear and transparent and perceived as being fundamentally fair and well understood. Financial planning, maintaining and deploying technological resources, maintaining existing and developing new physical resources, and allocation of positions needs to be done in a thoughtful and prudent manner that support the goals of UMA's strategic plan. Campus stakeholders must have the opportunity to participate in the planning processes and must be informed about the decisions that are made.

7.1 Integrate the annual budget development process with UMA's 2012-2016 Strategic Plan.

7.1.1 Establish the annual budget development calendar.

7.1.2 Review the current year budget and develop the list of budgetary needs and priorities for the upcoming year.

7.1.3 Hold annual campus-wide budget meetings to discuss current and future budget priorities.

7.2 Develop a capital plan for facilities to support the goals of the strategic plan.

7.2.1 Create campus-based facilities planning committees for the Augusta and Bangor campuses to develop a list of capital facilities projects.

7.2.2 Work with the Director of University College to develop a list of capital facilities needs for the off-campus centers.

7.2.3 Hold annual facilities forums on each campus to discuss facilities plans and establish priorities.

7.3 Update the technology plan with input from campus stakeholders and share it with all members of the University community.

7.3.1 Develop an annual plan for upgrading computers and related equipment in the student computer labs.

- 7.3.2 Develop annual plans for installing and updating classroom teaching equipment for the Augusta and Bangor campus classrooms.
- 7.3.3 Work with the Director of University College and UMS staff to develop plans for technology at the centers.

7.4 Implement fully UMA’s Climate Action Plan.

- 7.4.1 Engage in energy efficiency and management activities.
- 7.4.2 Promote recycling and waste reduction efforts.
- 7.4.3 Reinforce environmental health and safety policies.

7.5 Prepare an all-hazards emergency response plan.

- 7.5.1 Establish and train an emergency response team on National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) protocol.
- 7.5.2 Develop Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) that identify how the function or program will continue to operate in the event of a campus emergency, e.g. an extended closing of a campus building, the campus location, or all UMA locations.
- 7.5.3 Develop close working relationships with the local emergency response units in the geographic region in which the campus is located.

7.6 Develop a succession plan for all senior and mid-level management positions.

7.7 Allocate staffing necessary to support the goals of the strategic plan.

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