**University of Maine at Augusta**

**NEASC Decennial Self-Study**

**UMA NEASC Self-Study**

**Overview**

In the midst of its fiftieth year celebration, the University of Maine at Augusta has become the third largest campus in the University of Maine System, the seven-campus system of public higher education in the state of Maine. From its beginnings as a university outreach center and then a community college, UMA has grown and responded to the needs of its communities and state, fulfilling the same mission that it began with: to make higher education available to the widest range of students possible.

Though UMA faculty and staff have a very strong sense of the school’s mission, defining UMA as an institution for others is problematic. It is no *one* kind of institution with a specific kind of student body. More accurately, it is many kinds of campuses serving various student “bodies.” In addition, the issues defining UMA are complex due to the way that UMA has grown and developed. Originally an outreach center of Maine’s land grant campus, The University of Maine (Orono), and then the community college of the University of Maine System that offered only associate’s degrees and two reduced credit B.S. degrees for employed professionals, it has offered a wider range of bachelor degrees since the 1980s. A pioneer in distance education for the state, UMA also serves traditional students on its two campuses. For example, while maintaining its long-standing, strong commitment to non-traditional students and distance education, UMA has also developed specific programs that are located live on its campuses to meet state educational and professional needs; it also has programs that are entirely online. While UMA has recently developed a number of professional, career-oriented programs, it has also retained and strengthened its commitment to the liberal arts. Some of UMA’s programs are stand-alone and unique in the UM System, while others are being developed in collaboration with other UM System campuses. Its slogan for the past decade has been “Stay close; go far,” expressing its ties to local communities. However, as UMA is considering development of student housing that will attract out-of-state students, and with its growing population of international students, it may no longer exclusively be considered the commuter school of the System.

Defining UMA is also problematic at a statewide level. The UM System is undergoing major reorganization in light of declining state funding, falling enrollments, and changing student demographics. The seven campuses have traditionally acted as separate, independent entities, and the UM System is demanding that they act collaboratively as a *system*. Thus, while UMA has in the past clearly defined its role as the school within the System for non-traditional college students, this is now a market demographic that all campuses, to varying levels, seek to serve in order to make up for their declining enrollments. UMA and its sister campuses will no longer have the ability to define their roles autonomously; the role of each campus will be defined by both the campus itself and the central administration of the UM System in relation to the other six campuses.

Traditionally, the campuses of the UM System have defined their roles in terms of their function and corresponding student demographic. The University of Maine at Orono is the land-grant and primary research institution; the University of Maine at Farmington is the public liberal arts college of the System; the University of Southern Maine has recently rebranded itself as Maine’s “metropolitan” university. UMA’s historic role has been the school for the non-traditional student with a clear commitment to access and distance education,but its new initiatives and its changing role within the System make it difficult to make the case that this is only what UMA is and equally difficult to state in a simple way UMA’s “brand.”

But rather than describing what it *is*, it is more accurate to describe what UMA *does* and, even more important, *how* it does it. Defining UMA by its *attributes* rather than by its demographics better captures its sense of mission and how it fulfills that mission.

Five attributes emerge that define how UMA does what it does:

**UMA is responsive.** UMA has traditionally responded to regional and state employment needs in developing its curriculum, and it continues that tradition. For example, UMA recently partnered with the University of Maine at Fort Kent in creating a new four-year nursing program because there is demonstrated need in Maine for such a degree. Likewise, responding to state needs, UMA is in the process of converting its two-year veterinary technology degree to a four-year degree in order to better serve its constituents. Additionally, UMA responds to the needs of its local communities. At its Augusta campus, UMA served workers for the State of Maine for many years, who took college courses in state office buildings. Currently, on both of its campuses, UMA is working with high schools in the creation of programs for students to take UMA courses for college credit.

**UMA is nimble**. UMA responds to needs more quickly than any other campus in the UM System. To give a very recent example, in October 2014 the Verso Paper Company announced that its paper plant in Bucksport, Maine would be shut down after 80 years, thus putting 200 workers out of work and eliminating about 45% of that town’s tax base. In finding out that most of the workers have associate’s degrees, UMA administrators, within days of the announcement of the plant’s closure, were in Bucksport to present a plan that would allow those workers to attain a bachelor’s degree in a little more than a year so that they could be retooled for the new job market. These plans are going forward as of this writing.

UMA’s ability to turn on a dime gives it the leverage to not only serve workforce needs when and where they are needed, but also to present itself and the UM System positively to the citizens of Maine. In an era of declining state funding in which members of the public sector are increasingly asked to fund public education at higher and higher levels, UMA gives them ample reasons to do so.

**UMA is adaptable.** UMA serves many students who, because of their life circumstances, cannot commit to enrolling for classes until just before the term begins. Because of this, their financial aid often cannot be processed quickly enough for them to actually begin classes. UMA administrators are thus discussing the creation of a ten-week term (rather than a usual fifteen- week term) that would have the same number of credit hours and class hours, but would begin a month later than the typical term did in order to best accommodate these students and provide them with enough time to get their financial aid in order. UMA commits itself to helping students, wherever they are—physically, financially, and under whatever life circumstances—to begin their education, further their education, and complete their education.

**UMA is collaborative.** The UM System has demanded that its seven campuses work together so that the University is a seamless system of campuses rather than seven autonomous schools.

UMA has always been a leader in this regard, having developed an A.S. in Medical Laboratory Technology that it has administered with the University of Maine at Presque Isle for 16 years. One of its most recent programs, a B.S. in Aviation, came about because a local flight school approached UMA about partnering on a degree, with UMA providing core academics and the flight school providing the flight training. Likewise, UMA has developed a pathways program to certification in Education by collaborating with two campuses in the UM System that already offer education degrees.

UMA collaborates in *all* of its initiatives. UMA is currently the only campus in the UM System collaborating with a system consortium of five French universities by placing exchange students from the University of Western Brittany in UMA classes for a year. UMA is developing a relationship with the Snow Pond Center for the Arts, a summer music camp in Sidney, Maine, to augment its jazz and contemporary music program.

**UMA is accessible.** UMA takes its heritage as a community college very seriously, providing access to students who ordinarily would not be able to attend college. UMA’s tuition rates are the lowest in the UM System. This is in large part because UMA is fiscally responsible, using its resources wisely and collaborating in order to leverage the larger resources of the System.

This report will present UMA as it stands in the midst of its fiftieth year. Few stakeholders from its 1965 beginnings would recognize the institution today. They would, however, recognize its guiding philosophy, which has not changed since the day it opened its doors: to make higher education available to those who did not have access to it, regardless of who they are, where they are, or how they are. This philosophy undergirds all decisions UMA makes about its current and future operation. We are proud to continue what our predecessors began.

**Standard One**

**Mission and Purposes**

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA’s planning, budgeting, and operational activities are guided by three significant statements: 1) our Vision Statement; 2) seven Key Goals, the driving principles of the 2011-2016 UMA Strategic Plan *Transforming Lives: Educating Our Students to be Global Citizens*; and 3) our Mission Statement. As we begin the process of creating the next edition of our strategic plan, we are pleased to report that significant progress has been made in accomplishing the seven Key Goals (See progress chart in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). In addition, during the past 15 months a revised Mission Statement has been drafted with significant involvement of all UMA communities. It will be processed through the usual approval steps at UMA and the UM System.

**Vision Statement**

As the third largest campus in the UM 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 meet 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 high quality learning environments for faculty and students.

**Mission and Purposes**

UMA’s current Mission and Purposes Statements were written in 2006, prior to the last NEASC visit. Since 2006, the “Purposes Statements” have evolved into the seven Key Goals that define UMA’s 2011-2016 Strategic Plan (See Plan in workroom or in Links Folder in Portal). These key goals have allowed UMA to achieve its mission and meet the needs of our students.

**Key Goal 1** (Standards 4 & 6): 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** (Standard 6): 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** (Standards 4 – 6): Continue to expand UMA’s online and hybrid programs and provide exceptional support services for faculty and students.

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

**Key Goal 5** (Standard 7): 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** (Standard 9): Expand UMA’s development and fundraising activities to diversify sources of revenue and reduce reliance on tuition and state funding.

**Key Goal 7** (Standards 5, 7, 8, & 9): 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.

The **current Mission Statement**, approved by the UM System Board of Trustees on July 10, 2006, reads as follows:

*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.*

Recent and rapid growth in demand for online courses and new program delivery models by UMA students statewide and beyond, as well as persistent economic pressure to reduce costs, are all currently driving change in our mission. UMA’s response to these pressures is focused on enhancing access and support for “non-traditional” students, expanding options for course delivery, adding and strengthening professional career-related programs, and collaborating with other UM System campuses on degree offerings.

In the fall of 2013, then President Allyson Handley met with the NEASC Standard One Committee and asked its members to begin the process of reviewing and revising the UMA Mission Statement. The Standard One committee created a survey about the mission and distinctive characteristics of the institution, which was open to the UMA community and stakeholders in December 2013 and January 2014. The survey results (See workroom or Links folder in Portal), by the UMA Office of Institutional Research, formed the basis of the draft of a new mission statement. The dominant themes in the survey responses were that UMA has:

* multiple modalities for course delivery
* strengths in distance learning
* statewide access through Augusta, Bangor, sites, and centers
* a focus on students
* an approachable faculty
* high-quality student services

The Standard One committee evaluated the top responses from the survey and drafted a revised Mission Statement, which was then evaluated by President Handley and UMA’s senior management team. After some revision, the Mission Statement received two more rounds of feedback from the UMA community, the first in May and the second in September 2014. Finally, a second draft of the Mission Statement was presented to Interim President Glenn Cummings and UMA’s senior management team in October 2014. President Cummings has considered all the feedback and input and prepared the revised draft Mission Statement that appears in the projections below. Our plan is to present the Mission Statement at the March 2015 Board of Trustee meeting.

**APPRAISAL**

UMA’s 2006 Mission statement has served its purpose and now needs to be adjusted to reflect the current outlook and address future opportunities for the University and its students. The time for revising the Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Purposes is ideal as UMA is in the process of updating its next Strategic Plan. This evaluation is even more appropriate now, as the University, as well as the UM System, have undergone and are undergoing transformative changes. The 2006 mission statement no longer “defines the distinctive character of the university and of the students it serves,” nor does it reflect the institution’s traditions and its vision for the future. Most important, its vagueness prevents it from guiding the curriculum and the evaluation of the University’s achievements.

UMA’s Mission Statement needs to better reflect its emerging status in the UM System. Attributes of that status include:

* + simplified access and enhanced support for “non-traditional” students
  + more varied course delivery options
  + more professional career-related and “practical” programs
  + degree offerings developed between and among our UM System campuses to best use existing resources

While UMA has embraced these attributes for many years, the UM System and its other campuses have come to value them as well. Not surprisingly, the current and extended decline in high school graduates and greater competition from an increasing number of private schools recruiting the same adult (non-traditional) students are driving the other UM System campuses to adopt these attributes as well. Therefore, the UM System’s Board of Trustees is asking that each campus clarify and focus on its own unique status in the System to reduce duplication, encourage collaboration, and reduce overall expenditures, as the [BOT’s Strategic Plan](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/) makes clear. UMA expects that all UM System campuses will recruit more non-traditional students in the future. As we seek to clarify our position within the UM System, it is incumbent upon UMA to emphasize that these attributes have always been at the core of our identity and mission.

Like the Mission Statement, the current Key Goals within our Strategic Plan have served us well for the last five years. As our Standards chapters will make clear, progress has been made on many aspects of goal implementation, and UMA has begun the process of building the next comprehensive five-year plan. We are moving this process forward deliberately so we accommodate and adjust to UM System changes already underway. (See workroom or the Links folder for the latest draft of the new 2016 to 2020 Plan)’

**PROJECTIONS**

Based on the results of the UMA Mission Survey and discussions with Interim President Glenn Cummings and UMA’s senior management team, the following draft Mission Statement was created and is the discussion phase with the UM System leadership.

*The University of Maine at Augusta transforms the lives of students of every age and background across the State of Maine through quality on-site and online education combined with excellence in student support.*

This new proposed mission statement was considered by the UMA community in December 2013 and again in January 2015. All UMA employees also had the opportunity to complete the survey mentioned above. President Cummings began the process of System review on January 2015, and once we have feedback from the UM System leadership on the draft, the document will be revised for formal submission to the BOT at their March 2015 meeting. UMA’s mission statement, revised key goals in our 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and the current vision statement will continue to guide UMA’s future.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Understanding that mission statements need periodic revisiting and revising as appropriate, UMA has undergone a thorough process for updating its own mission statement, with feedback from its many communities and stakeholders as well as transparency in its process.

**Standard Two**

**Planning and Evaluation**

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA has made measurable progress with all of the areas of emphasis and the projections that were highlighted in our 2011 Interim Report. We continue to enhance educational effectiveness and institutional capacity in all areas of planning and evaluation which we describe below.

**Establish an Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP).** After several years of study from UMA’s Institutional Research Committee, the OIRP was established in December 2011 and an executive director hired shortly after. This was followed by reorganization to bring together several UMA employees dealing with data a related institutional research from various decentralized offices.

**Develop academic program productivity matrices with stakeholder involvement.** In 2009, the first evolution of the Academic Program Matrices was completed, comparing expense versus revenue for each academic program as a first effort at performance measurement. Based on considerable methodological and process criticism from the across campus, the OIRP took on an immediate revision of the 2009 Matrices with greater community involvement and more accurate data. Since the first revision in 2011, two more revisions have been completed, most recently in July 2013. This report was used by the Academic Program Discontinuance Committee (APDC), charged with developing criteria and comparisons for potential program elimination. The Committee’s work resulted in the decision to eliminate two associate degree programs.

**Create an assessment schedule of General Education and completion of a cycle.** In 2013, the Director and Associate Director of Assessment collaborated with the Senate Assessment Committee to develop an attainable general education assessment cycle. The 3-year process for each outcome (Year 1 Pilot; Year 2 Assessment; and Year 3 Improvement) was endorsed by the Faculty Senate in 2013. The first 2 of eleven outcomes were assessed in AY 2103-2014, the second are being assessed AY 2014- 2015, and the next 2 are being prepared for assessment in AY 2015-2016.

**Develop specific assessment-related content on UMA website.** The Office of Assessment is developing an [external website](http://www.uma.edu/umaoai.html) and internal Blackboard site aimed at helping interested parties obtain an overview of UMA’s institutional research and planning efforts.

**Strengthen transparency and communication with continuous improvement initiatives.** In 2009, an annual series of President’s Forums began, and in 2013 an annual Assessment Summit was initiated to help foster engagement and transparency in various continuous improvement initiatives such as the Baldrige Improvement Program (now in its fifth iteration) and General Education assessment process. The OIRP also maintains a blog and regularly presents survey results, student success metrics, and student enrollment information.

**Complete a cycle of academic program review with improvement evidence.** Each academic program completes an annual Program Report that includes information about assessment activities, enrollment patterns, personnel and facilities which builds toward a five-year program review. The first cycle of program reviews was completed for all 19 degree programs in 2013. Over the past several years, UMA has also made significant progress in demonstrating its ability to carry out planning and evaluation to monitor its development as a baccalaureate institution. Former President Handley arrived in March 2008 and accelerated the identification of institutional planning and evaluation priorities and authorized consolidation and identification of related resources in support of three primary processes: the [Scenario to Strategy](http://www.uma.edu/umastrageticplan.html) (S2S) process, the Baldrige Performance Excellence Programs ([Baldrige](http://oirap.rutgers.edu/msa/documents/eheguide5-29.pdf)), and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The Student Learning Progress Model ([SLPM](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ir/reports/success/)) was adopted in 2013 to monitor and more effectively describe student success for the public, regulators, accreditors, and higher education authorities on student success metrics.

The Scenario to Strategy (S2S) planning process was introduced in November 2009, with opportunity for more than 100 faculty and staff to think broadly about UMA’s future and its external environment by bringing their detailed institutional knowledge and to develop institutional goals. Faculty and staff served on one of four scenario committees, each based on a potential model for UMA’s future. Scenario committees developed action plans based on a set of 16 brainstorming questions that most suited each of the four UMA created scenarios (“Traditionalists,” local and on-site delivery; “International Traditionalists,” on-site and global delivery; “Techies,” local and online delivery; and “International Techies,” global and online delivery). In April 2010, each scenario committee presented their action plan to the UMA community through open meetings. Faculty and staff then voted online on which scenario offered the best future for UMA. The winning scenario, combining the Traditionalists and Techies, provided the framework for UMA’s 2011-2016 strategic plan (See Workroom or Links folder in Portal). The resulting strategic plan encompasses the UMA-wide consensus in our 7 key goals and 27 high-level objectives, with 80 specific day-to-day tasks required to achieve the plan goals by 2016.

During the strategic planning cycle, President Handley also introduced an adapted [Baldrige Performance Excellence](http://www.baldrigepe.org/) program in 2009. Its purpose was to help guide planning efforts, evaluate administrative performance, and assess where improvements were/are most needed, with solutions aimed at our baccalaureate mission. This [Baldrige process](http://oirap.rutgers.edu/msa/documents/eheguide5-29.pdf) enhanced prioritization of many of the 80 specific day-to-day projects or tasks required to achieve the 7 key strategic plan goals. Since 2009, UMA has reviewed and acted on 4 out of 7 Baldrige defined key management categories: “Process Management” in 2008-09, “Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management” in 2009-10, “Workforce Focus” in 2010-11, and “Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus” in 2012-13. (Details in workroom or in Links folder in Portal) The Committee’s final report highlights specific processes, results, and recommendations for the President’s Cabinet to review and consider. To date, numerous recommendations have been implemented.

Over the last ten years, UMA’s focused transition to a four-year mission encouraged participation in the NSSE. Beginning in 2006, data from NSSE has helped UMA to better understand student participation in our programs and activities. Results have been used to inform resource decisions, curriculum organization, and learning opportunities. UMA also participated in NSSE in 2009-2010 and 2012-2013 to support trend analysis efforts. The survey administration and reporting of NSSE results is now supported by OIRP and the Associate Director of Assessment in the Provost’s Office. The 2013 NSSE attained a significantly higher student response rate relative to UMA peer institutions (47% vs. 31%). Due to competing priorities, we have been delayed in producing comprehensive results from the 2013 version; the NSSE Snapshot is available (See Snapshot in workroom or in the Links folder in the Portal). Readers will find a few highlights of how NSSE student engagement data is being used to guide improvements and potential next steps within this self-study.

[The Student Learning Progress Model](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/ir/reports/success/) (SLPM) was introduced in March 2013 with a System-wide reception and discussion at UMA on measuring adult student retention and academic progress. The SLPM is an alternative to the IPEDS metrics for evaluating student success. The SLPM highlights the inflow and outflow of students over a 10-year period following initial entry into UMA. The model follows and profiles students by “the tracks they leave” at UMA through six possible status conditions: *Graduated, Interim Award, Enrolled, Intermittent, Transferred Out,* and *Not Enrolled.* The SLPM also provides a summary metric, the Student Learning Rate, which represents a measure of how well UMA is addressing its student instructional mission. An SLPM Advisory Committee was formed to guide implementation efforts and decisions and to champion the awareness and usage of outcomes. SLPM has been piloted at the UMA program level. Again, Standard 6 highlights examples of SLPM model usage for assessment of retention and persistence, as well as potential next steps.

OIRP developmental student research identified the follow data about retention and preparedness, with concerns in the appraisal section:

* UMA has a 47% fall to fall retention rate (5-year average for the 2013 fall cohort)
* 37% (655 out of 1,760 students) of all 2013-2014 admissions were not prepared for college-level academic demands in reading, writing, and/or mathematics and were recommended/required for developmental coursework.
* 11% (187/1,760) of all 2013-2014 admissions received an Adult Education recommendation, 94% of students who did not meet the proficiency benchmark in reading, writing, and/or mathematics and were recommended/required to take developmental coursework and required developmental coursework in Mathematics (618/655) - UMA will develop an action plan to address this student success area of concern. In fall 2014, 4% of total credits (1,548/40,492) were developmental credits, and 8% of all withdrawal credits (231/3,175) were developmental credits.

In July 2014, the Assessment/Research Analyst position within OIRP was reclassified into an Associate Director of Assessment position and transferred to the Provost’s Office to support student learning assessment. The current OIRP staff includes the Executive Director, Senior Research Programmer Analyst, and a Research Analyst. The Executive Director reports to the President and is a member of his Executive Team.

OIRP serves as the official clearinghouse and repository for most statistical information about UMA, and it collaborates with the UMA community to help answer essential questions about how well the institution does its work by applying research, actionable analysis, and strategic counsel. Over the last few years, OIRP has increased data and analysis development to support planning, enrollment, assessment, and institutional effectiveness:

* + Annual update and adaptation of all NEASC Data First and S-Forms to inform decision-making in a familiar format
  + Annual Barrier Course Completion Reports (See workroom or Links Folder in Portal) providing a trend analysis of each course with sections, enrollments, and participant student grades. (See Std6).
  + Weekly credit distribution and productivity report that provides benchmarking, forecasting and metrics for new admissions, continuing students and non-degree students for real-time enrollment management semester competitor analysis of the National Student Clearinghouse database to track enrollment, if any, of students who did not attend UMA after acceptance. (See Standard 6).
  + Recent Graduating Student Survey, administered every semester and asking each graduate about their educational experience and future plans—used to strengthen academic programs and students services. (See Standard 6).
  + Annual enrollment projections, providing estimates of students and credits for new admissions, continuing students, stop-outs and non-degree students by academic program, college and university-wide. The model has an estimated 1-2% error rate and uses a survival analysis to forecast targets— as a guide for enrollment and budget goals
  + Semester program fact books that shares student statistics enrolled in each degree program, including demographic information, indebtedness, and GPA to inform programming. (See Standard 6.) This report was an outcome of an OIRP listening campaign that surveyed more than 100 faculty and staff. This survey helps UMA understand current its current strengths and gaps in information.

# Planning:

# The S2S strategic planning process resulted in the implementation of a collaborative five-year plan (2011-2016) linking to UMA’s planning and budget activities and aligning with UMA’s vision, mission and academic priorities. UMA has made significant progress (56% complete at this writing) in achieving our strategic plan goals. For example, Key Goal 4 stating that UMA will make specific progress in developing institutional assessment and data-driven decision-making has been completed with the hire of the OIRP Executive Director, and appointment of a half-time Director of Assessment, and full-time Associate Director of Assessment. Additionally, Key Goal 1 specifies identification of new academic programming opportunities. Since 2012, UMA has established the Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.) program, a five-year professional degree program now in candidacy for accreditation by the National Architectural Accrediting Board, and the B.S. in Aviation through a public-private partnership with a local flight school. Additionally, in 2011, using existing resources, UMA added an A.S. degree option in Rehabilitation Services to respond to regional employer needs and to create another feeder option for the Mental Health and Human Services program. Our strategic plan guided these difficult financial decisions that required UMA to make choices in investments to support these endeavors while decreasing expenses in fiscal year 2014 at a time when target enrollment goals were missed.

# Evaluation:

# During this past year, UMA completed the Adult Learning Focused Institution (ALFI) Toolkit. This Toolkit consists of two surveys: the Institutional Self-Assessment, which reflects the perceptions of the faculty, staff, and administrators; and the Adult Learning Inventory, which reflects the perceptions of the adult students. The surveys are based on the nine Essential Principles for Serving Adult Learners that the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning has identified. This program supported our work with NSSE and the Baldrige program. (Results will be available in the Workroom.)

# In 2013, UMA was ranked as a Best Online Bachelor’s Program (#103) by *U.S. News & World Report*. Faculty has taken on many of *U.S. News*’ criteria as “best practices” and implemented changes that follow these practices. (See workroom or Links folder in Portal) Over the past year, UMA implemented the best practice of having students sign an ethics statement verifying that work submitted online will be their own work before being allowed to sign into an online course. As a result of implementing such practices, UMA climbed to #61 in 2014 and #40 in 2015. More recently, by invitation from the Teachers College of Columbia University, UMA partnered with the [College Educational Quality](http://collegeedquality.weebly.com/) project to measure the construct of educational quality including elements of academic rigor, teaching quality, and learning objectives. The project began in fall 2014 and included four data collection methods: a student survey, syllabus analysis, class observations, and analysis of student work. Preliminary data strongly shows that UMA courses have considerable academic rigor. (See workroom or Links folder in Portal)

# In the last year, UMA has made considerable effort to collect and analyze verifiable information to better understand the impact of degree completion for graduates and their pursuit of higher learning after graduation. Standard 6 provides concrete assessment examples of our use and analyses of the National Student Clearinghouse data to better understand what happens to our students after they leave UMA. Initial results from the State of Maine Department of Labor Center for Workforce Research and information also displays first-year wage and employment outcomes for UMA graduates from 2009-2011.

# APPRAISAL

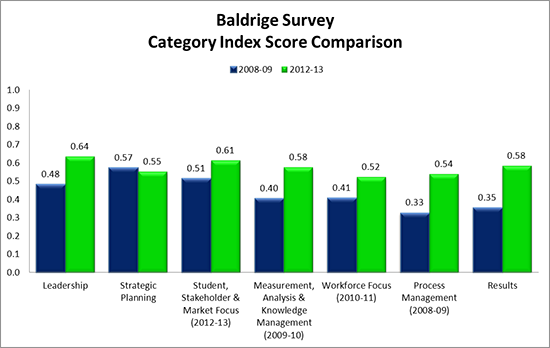
# Over the past several years, UMA has made planning and evaluation across the enterprise a top priority and integrated this requirement into all academic and administrative decision-making. A culture of evidence and learning continues to evolve; there is now an implicit understanding that choices should be informed by contextualized quantitative data linked and aligned to UMA’s planning goals.

# The Baldrige Program serves as UMA’s primary administrative assessment tool and has been successful over several evolutions. Baldrige Committee research, and a number of recommendations have been put into action, as noted above.

# The current Baldrige program achieved a respectable 51% response rate in the online survey of all UMA employees and stakeholders In general, data indicates that faculty and staff are not as well informed about how UMA does its business and makes decisions as it should be. UMA will continue to review feedback and make operational changes as we have done to date.

# The bar graph below shows each category’s 2008-2009 vs. 2012-2013 index score—the weighted average of individual questions within each category. The questions in each category asked about

whether UMA “was being successful” at managing or addressing each of these Baldrige evaluation categories. A category index score of 1.0 means that all respondents answered “yes” to all questions within a category and 0 would mean that all respondents said “no” to all questions in a category.



One of the most telling observations in the first survey was how high the “Don’t Know” response was across all questions. This implies that many faculty and staff did not have sufficient information to respond to certain questions.

The average percentage responding “don’t know” to a Student, Stakeholder, and market Focus question was 32% in 2008-09 and 31% in 2012-13.These results point to minor improvement but a remaining unacceptable proportions of “don’t know” responses. The Baldrige Committee is committed to identifying strategies to improve employee participation as well as reducing “don’t know” responses.

The UMA community has strongly responded to the new UMA institutional research function; future plans include 100+ projects with a large percentage of time spent on core institutional research functions of compliance reporting, college guide surveys, recurring and unique data reports, survey construction and administration and statistical analysis. As decision-makers have a better understanding of their specific data needs and as institutional research matures, OIRP will be able to develop functional data-specific queries for managers. We anticipate that the effectiveness of department access to and analysis of data will improve.

Data organization, extraction, reporting, and analysis is an area for improvement, especially in this time of budget cuts, competitive positioning, and strategic decision-making. UMA continues to build on a strong foundation of data collection and reporting through MaineStreet (the UM System’s Enterprise Resource Planning system) that was implemented between 2007-2009, the administration of opinion surveys, and System support with data-warehousing and data reporting. In response to increasing concerns about support for access to data, the UM System is conducting a study to better understand capacity across the System and where consolidation may benefit the campuses. Across UMA, opinions are mixed about access to basic data being more consolidated at the UM System level, especially when that data is needed to enhance institutional effectiveness at the local campus level. On the one hand, OIRP is self-sufficient and generally has access to the basic data needed in the areas of student data and access to financial information. On the other hand, OIRP currently has only limited access to restricted specific Human Resource data.

# Planning

The current strategic plan will expire in 2016. Given the strong foundation and success of the current plan, UMA’s president’s Executive Team has made the decision to build from the 2011-2016 plan. The process of creating the next iteration (2016-2020) of UMA’s Strategic Plan began earlier this year with feedback from University-wide planning sessions and will be finalized next fall. It will include output from the NEASC Self-Study process, and visioning and prioritization from President Cummings. A Strategy Team, made up of 4 faculty and 5 administrators, has been meeting regularly throughout the fall and spring semester to evaluate results from multiple workshops. To date, attendance at Strategic Planning workshops has not met expectations, but the preliminary data and strategies collected and discussed have been rich and thoughtful. The table below highlights a summary of the current status of all actions to realize the seven 2011-16 goals.

2011-16 Strategic Plan Actions Update

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Actions Status as of December 9, 2014** | **Total Actions to Realize Goal** | **Complete** | **In-Progress** | **Planning** | **On Hold** | **Don't**  **Know** |
| Key Goal 1: Enhance and expand the University’s ability to provide quality baccalaureate education and select associate degrees… | 28 | 46.4% | 46.4% | 0.0% | 3.6% | 3.6% |
| Key Goal 2: Further develop and extend the campus’ student-centered philosophy… | 14 | 28.6% | 50.0% | 7.1% | 7.1% | 7.1% |
| Key Goal 3: Continue to expand UMA’s online and hybrid programs and provide exceptional support services… | 9 | 22.2% | 55.6% | 0.0% | 11.1% | 11.1% |
| Key Goal 4: Foster a “culture of assessment” and data‐driven decision-making… | 4 | 100.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Key Goal 5: Engage with a variety of constituencies external to UMA… | 20 | 90.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% |
| Key Goal 6: Expand UMA’s development and fundraising activities to diversify sources of revenue… | 10 | 35.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Key Goal 7: Support the institution’s academic goals with sound financial policies and practices, a supportive infrastructure… | 22 | 40.9% | 54.5% | 4.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| **2011-16 Strategic Plan** | 107 | 56.1% | 35.5% | 1.9% | 3.7% | 2.8% |

UMA Office of Institutional Research and Planning

# PROJECTIONS

# UMA will make the following planning and evaluation commitments to maintain and enhance strengths and to address areas of improvement.

**Planning:**

UMA’s 2016-2020 strategic planning process is well underway, and the new strategic plan should be complete in the coming fall semester, with efforts being made toward greater participation and engagement from all employees and stakeholders. The new strategic plan will align projections with those of the UM System for UMA within the System, and with actions still not completed in the current strategic plan. Based on preliminary market research by OIRP and institutional consensus, the next strategic plan will include pathways for graduate programs to meet current demands and help close the budget gap. As a first, essential step to begin in the coming year (2015-2016), UMA will pilot a systemic, real-time, personalized data management system for one or more academic programs to track and better understand what is happening to our students throughout their entire academic career.

Within the first two years of the new Strategic Plan, UMA will put into action a specific staffing and institutional training plan for departmental staff to effectively support to support their information needs. This may include revisiting the discontinued “Academic Data Analyst” search and the transferred “Research/Assessment Analyst” position to accomplish and improve the achievement of UMA’s mission and purposes.

Based on a 2012-2013 Baldrige Program recommendation, the institution will develop a systemic and systematic infrastructure to archive, share, and discuss the large body of data, analysis, and research available to help answer essential questions by 2019-2020.

**Evaluation:**

The OIRP will:

* + develop an annual Fact Book that better profiles our student body by 2015-2016
  + complete a 2013-2014 Recent Graduate Survey analysis and report by 2014-2015, and develop the infrastructure for timely annual administration and reporting by 2016-2017
  + implement a continuous Student Satisfaction Survey by 2016-2017
  + develop new Enrollment and Admissions Funnel Reports for campus distribution by 2015-2016
  + complete the Survival Analysis Enrollment Projections Model to support enrollment and budget goal development by 2014-2015
  + continue follow-up survey of accepted students who didn’t enroll *and* are not enrolled in other college education to inform enrollment strategies by 2014-2015
  + continue the Baldrige Performance Excellence program to complete the final three categories: Leadership, Strategic Planning, and Results by 2019-2020

Once data needs are clarified and enhanced, especially in UMA’s Enrollment Management unit and not later than 2016-2017, UMA will begin a thorough review of our responsible admissions policy and seek options to better shape incoming classes of students so we can identify and admit student with greater potential to succeed. The related goal is to increase fall to fall retention to at least 60% by 2020.

UMA will continue to build upon our success in online learning and, when applicable, use the

*U.S. News’* Best Online Bachelor’s Programs Rankings to maintain or improve ranking factors by implementing best practices for continuous improvement. This initiative will also support continuous evaluation and enhancement of our branding initiatives.

# Institutional Effectiveness

In order to continue improvement of student learning and success, as well as sustain its history of successful financial management, UMA will continue to use applied research and analysis, strategic planning, enrollment management, assessment, and accreditation and ensure that systematic and ongoing evaluation continues. UMA will continue to use verifiable evidence for planning and assessment activities to inform strategic planning, academic, and enrollment goals.

**Standard Three**

**Organization and Governance**

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA is one of seven public universities comprising the University of Maine System. The UM System also includes eight [University College](http://learn.maine.edu/) outreach Centers, a law school, and an additional 31 course delivery and Cooperative Extension sites throughout the state. The seven System universities are different in size, mission, number of locations, and student body demographics. UMA, with campuses in Augusta and Bangor, and courses offered electronically to over 2700 students statewide, is the third largest university in the System. It provides both bachelor and associate degrees statewide to a non-residential student body through both traditional and non-traditional modalities. UMA offers courses to approximately 5000 students a semester. UMA annually graduates approximately 600 students.

The UM System is governed by the Board of Trustees (BOT) and the Chancellor, pursuant to the laws of the State of Maine and federal laws (**Policy Manual, Board of Trustee Bylaws, sections** [103](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section103/) and [201](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section201/)). UMA’s original legislative authorization can be found [here.](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section102/) The Board has final authority over all areas of the System: education, finances, public service, and relations with the State of Maine and federal government (**section** [103,](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section103/) 1.3A). All powers and duties of the Board, Chancellor, officers of the Board, committees and chairs are spelled out in the Policy Manual **(sections** [102,](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section102/) [103](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section103/), [201](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section201/)), which was updated on July 15, 2013. One such duty is the selection of University presidents. The president of each University is responsible for the day-to-day operations of his or her university, including admissions, academic programs, extracurricular programs, long-term planning, and supervision of the faculty (**section** [102](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section102/)).

**The Chancellor and Board of Trustees**

The UM System’s Policy Manual states that “The Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Chancellor, is the governing and planning body of the University and in addition has responsibility for preparing and approving the operating and capital budgets of the University and presenting them in accordance with the direction in the Maine Revised Statutes” (**section** [102,](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section102/) 4B). The Board’s mission is to establish “policies that enable the System institutions to provide higher education of excellent quality to Maine and its citizens” (**section** [301](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section301/)). Members of the Board are appointed by the governor and approved by the Maine Legislature. In appointing Board members, the governor is directed to select Board members based upon affirmative action, educational and professional criteria as well as geographical dispersion (**section** [102, 3A](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section102/)). Thus, the Trustees include “representation of the public interest” and “reflects areas of competence” necessary for the position.

The BOT in turn selects the Chancellor, who serves at the Board’s pleasure as the chief administrative and education officer of the System. The Chancellor’s performance is evaluated by the Board every year, with a comprehensive review occurring during the third year and every fourth year thereafter (**section** [103](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section103/)). In March 2012, the [BOT appointed](http://www.pressherald.com/2012/02/16/umaine-trustees-ready-to-name-chancellor/) Dr. James Page as the new Chancellor for the UM System.

Under Chancellor Page’s leadership, and in response to recent difficult economic trends, the System is undergoing significant changes in the way it operates. It has introduced outcomes-based funding for the seven campuses, limited the number of credit hours for a bachelor’s degree, is and developing a [seamless credit transfer process](http://www.maine.edu/.../TAB6.1-CreditTransferSteeringCommitteeExecSummary/) among the System universities and from the Maine Community College System to the UM System campuses. In January 2012, the BOT also developed an outreach program focused on adults in Maine who have some college credit but never finished their degree.

In an effort to make the System more sustainable, the BOT and the Chancellor are [actively consolidating and standardizing](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/) “enterprise” services (layers of components aggregating data and applications that support UM System administrative and academic functions) across the System. The Offices of Human Resources, Information Technology, and Procurement have already been consolidated. Other services such as Facilities will be consolidated in the near future. Once new organizational structures are in place, the System has suggested that it plans to charge some level of fees for service back to the Universities for these services, whereas funding for these services was once part of each University’s budget. The implications of this plan are outlined further in Appraisal Section.

In addition, increased consolidation of or cooperation among academic programs on the UM campuses is being implemented through the [Academic Program Review and Integration Process.](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/academic-affairs/administrative-procedures-manual/) Its purpose is to reduce and ultimately minimize program duplication among the campuses, share scarce resources, and provide opportunities for students for programs where individual campuses lack a critical mass to support them ([See BOT goals](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/)). Included in this new plan is remote (online) statewide access to these specialized campus-specific programs, again aimed at promoting inter-campus collaboration and effective use of existing resources.

The BOT establishes and maintains appropriate and productive channels of communication among its members and within the leadership of the System community. The University Presidents implement plans, policies, and directives from the BOT and the Chancellor while maintaining effective communications with the members of the UMA community. UMA’s Vice President of Academic Affairs (Provost) meets monthly with the Provosts from all seven universities, and our Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services meets monthly with all seven Chief Financial Officers. BOT meetings are public, and Trustee and System information, meeting agenda, and related documents are available on UM System website, including committee minutes and reports. Faculty and student representatives from each of the seven universities attend the BOT meetings and regularly meet with trustees and the chancellor, in turn disseminating the information back to their constituents (**section** [205](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section205/)).

**UMA Administration**

UMA has a governance structure headed by a President, Provost, two academic Deans, a Bangor Campus Dean, and other administrative staff members. Though she reports to the Provost, the Bangor Campus Dean has no academic responsibilities, but rather oversees the day-to-day operation of the campus and interacts with functional counterparts in Augusta. [See UMA overview org chart in Appendix or full set of charts in Links folder].

Reporting to the Chancellor, the UMA President implements plans, policies, and directives from the BOT and the Chancellor, provides academic leadership, develops and administers UMA’s budgets, establishes priorities for expenditures, administers student life and student services, develops effective community relations programs; oversees fund raising; and has the ultimate authority for developing, maintaining, and operating the physical facilities of UMA. S/he also oversees the operations of the services of University College, which oversees distance education to the UM System, as well as the operations of their eight regional Outreach Centers. The Executive Director of UC reports to the UMA President, and s/he or a UC representative attends Provost’s Staff biweekly meetings.

Although UC’s Centers, sites, and employees serve the entire UM System, UMA has a unique relationship with them. UMA created these “educational outreach Centers” in the early 1980s when it was designated as the “Community College of Maine” as a means to reach rural citizens who had very limited access to higher education. Today, despite UC now being a UM System service, UMA manages UC, and most of the students it serves (78%) are those working on UMA degrees and taking UMA courses. As such, UMA academic and student service personnel work in a partnership with and support the staff at the Centers. The UC Centers recruit, enroll, and advise students on UMA’s behalf. This cadre of students makes up about 26% of UMA’s semester enrollments. The appended data first forms provide detail about UMA enrollments by modality at UC Centers.

The Board of **Trustees (section** [102](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section102/), #5) requires each university to have a Board of Visitors. UMA’s Board of Visitors is a community advisory board established to advocate for the institution, advise the president on campus and community needs, and review new program proposals. The relatively recent creation of campus Boards of Visitors to BOT policy was introduced in 1997 after long-standing concerns finally came to the surface about the UM System BOT being too removed from the individual campuses. UMA has benefited from improved community engagement as well as significant advocacy for UMA with the addition of the Board of Visitors. For example, with its strong ties to local communities, the Board has taken the lead on UMA’s capital campaign in asking for contributions from area businesses, foundations, and community leaders.

In March 2008, Dr. Allyson Hughes Handley began her tenure as the eleventh President of UMA. In December 2010, at the end of her first contract, a very favorable external review was completed, and President Handley was recommended by the Chancellor and re-appointed by the Board for another two-year term beginning July 2011. In August 2014, President Handley notified UMA and the System that she would be leaving to take a position at National University in San Diego as Executive Director of the University’s Sanford Education Center. On September 9, 2014 Dr. Glenn Cummings was [appointed Interim President](https://www.uma.edu/dr-glenn-cummings-appointed-president-of-the-university-of-maine-at-augusta.html) MA, and the process of a national search for UMA’s next president is in the planning stages.

During her six-year tenure as President, Dr. Handley was responsible for leading UMA and ensuring academic quality and accessibility for its students. Under her leadership, President Handley initiated the Baldrige Quality Assessment process, a community-wide biennial survey of stakeholder perceptions of UMA’s performance. Reports on that survey were issued in 2009, 2011, and in 2013 (changing in 2012 to a semi-annual process). A number of recommendations (Details available in workroom or in Links folder in Portal) from the Baldrige reports have been implemented, and the overall concept of expanding institutional assessment beyond academic functions is well underway.

In 2013, on the recommendation of the faculty Committee on Academic Reorganization, President Handley streamlined administrative functions and reorganized the academic unit from three colleges to two, [the College of Professional Studies](http://www.uma.edu/professionalstudies.html) and the [College of Arts and Sciences](http://www.uma.edu/artsandsciences.html), eliminating one dean’s position and appointing one of the two college deans as Associate Provost. The President also successfully advocated for returning the administration of UC from the UM System back to UMA.

UMA’s internal governance structure provides multiple opportunities for communication among its constituents. The President meets with Senior Staff, Executive Committee, the Cabinet, and the President’s Advisory Council (PAC), and the Board of Visitors. The PAC has broad representation including faculty, students, and community members. Membership and purposes of each of UMA’s constituent committees can be found in the [faculty handbook](http://www.uma.edu/facultyhandbook.html) on pages 29-32. President’s Forums on various topics have been held to present ideas, outline future plans, and hear feedback from faculty, staff, and students – the most recent on UMA’s budget and our new strategic plan. The Provost meets biweekly with UMA unit leaders to discuss issues related to academic and student development matters. He also meets with Academic Program Coordinators (the UMA equivalent of department heads) at least once per semester, and academic coordinators meet monthly with their program faculty. In addition, each college meets at least twice per semester.

**Faculty, Staff, and Student Governance**

The voice of the faculty is expressed primarily through the Faculty Senate and its standing committees (See Faculty Senate Constitution in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). The Executive Committee of the Senate meets with the President prior to the monthly meeting of the Senate, and the President, the Provost, and other administrators regularly attend Senate meetings.

The Bangor Faculty Assembly meets twice per semester to discuss issues that are unique to the Bangor campus. All non-faculty personnel on the Bangor campus are invited to participate in the Bangor Faculty Assembly; they may submit agenda items and address the Assembly but do not have a vote. Upon a vote of the majority of the faculty present, the issues raised at an Assembly meeting are referred to the appropriate administrator (See Bangor Assembly By-Laws) and/or forwarded to the UMA Faculty Senate for follow-up.

The Associated Faculties of the University of Maine System (<http://www.afum.org/>) is the full-time faculty’s collective bargaining unit, one of five such collective bargaining units for the System, and negotiates the salaries and working conditions for all faculty.

The Board of Trustees of the UM System has a statement on shared governance ([www.maine.edu/pdf/SharedGovernanceStatementMarch2007.pdf](http://www.maine.edu/pdf/SharedGovernanceStatementMarch2007.pdf)), which gives the faculty a governance role in: academic policies, peer review and academic administrative selection processes, and budget and strategic planning. Although UMA works within a framework of shared governance, the UMA Faculty Senate has not yet written its own shared governance statement. Four examples of UMA’s faculty working within this framework are their contributions to UMA’s Strategic Plan, which involved the entire UMA community; the Academic Program Discontinuance plan, developed by members of the Senate in 2013; providing a co-chair to the 11 NEASC self-study committees; and sharing the leadership on joint administrative/faculty committees including the e-Learning Committee and the Assessment Committee.

Non-faculty employees are represented through their respective collective bargaining agreements with the UM System:

* Universities of Maine Professional Staff Association ([UMPSA](http://www.umpsa.org/))
* Associated Clerical, Office, Laboratory and Technical Staff of the UM ([COLT](http://www.acsum.org/))
* Service & Maintenance Teamsters Union Local #340
* Police Teamsters Union Local #340, although campus security personnel have recently petitioned to be represented by different organization
* Maine Part-Time Faculty Association ([PATFA](http://patfa.me.aft.org/))

The UMA student voice is expressed primarily through the UMA Student Government Association (SGA). The Augusta, Bangor, and Distance Education Student Associations represent the student body collectively, each with delegates on the UMA SGA General Assembly, which includes representatives from UMA’s two campuses and all off-campus students. Details are spelled out in the [UMA Student Handbook](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbook-rs.html#sga).

**APPRAISAL**

Like its sister campuses in the UM System, UMA is facing significant challenges at this point in its history. These challenges are the result of declining enrollments and a freeze in tuition rates that began in 2012 and has only recently changed with the governor’s current budget proposal recommending a 1.7% increase for the UM System. The general reduction in state funding exacerbated by growing expenses, and the consolidation of services within the UM System add to the uncertainly about the future. These challenges threaten the additional loss of programs and personnel and have had a negative impact on the University and some of its personnel. The Bangor campus had to close for six weeks during the summer of 2014, with the subsequent furloughing of library staff and student services staff. In the coming years both campuses may see further reductions in faculty and staff to help balance the budget. With such losses, however, have come opportunities. Though the Augusta campus lost its A.S. degree in Nursing, it has partnered with the University of Maine-Fort Kent to offer a B.S. in Nursing. Though the Bangor campus is losing its A.S. degree in Veterinary Technology, the program is being reconfigured into a B.S. degree. Both degrees, while requiring significant resources up front, are expected to reap greater payoff in the long term. We expect more such UM System partnerships and reconfiguration of programs in the future.

The streamlining of three colleges into two has increased the workloads for deans, program coordinators, and College administrative staff. In general, there are fewer and fewer faculty to carry out the committee work of running the University. This is especially a concern among recently hired, untenured faculty who are trying to meet the tenure requirements of teaching, research, and public service. The pressure to take on ever more responsibility may be why the Faculty Senate has difficulty filling leadership positions on both the Senate Executive Committee and its other Committees. On a related note, one factor that limits faculty participation in shared governance is that most faculty members are on nine-month contracts, but university business continues year round. This often leads to the Senate being reactive as opposed to proactive in regard to university business that develops over the summer. Ultimately, it will be important to balance expectations of all employees at UMA with the financial and personnel resources available as expected downsizing takes place. The new strategic planning process that began in the fall of 2014 has this matter as a central concern and will help clarify our expectations, given current budget realities.

We hope that the consolidation of services at the UM System level will indeed reduce costs, as well as improve overall services and response time for those at UMA who depend on them to teach and support students. However, the effects of UM System consolidation of support services raises questions about UMA’s ability to pay for these services with current budgets if an early proposal to charge campuses for those services comes to pass. Furthermore, consolidation moves control of services farther from the UMA faculty, staff, and students who depend upon them and continues to raise concerns.

**PROJECTIONS**

By May 2015 the Faculty Senate will have developed a draft statement of shared governance for consideration at the first fall Senate meeting.

To provide opportunity for year-round engagement, the Senate has encouraged President Cummings to continue President Handley’s practice of meeting with faculty leadership throughout the year—including the summer. Interim President Cummings has agreed to hold regular meetings with faculty leadership year round. The president has agreed and is pleased to continue this practice year round.

All members of the UMA community, including the Board of Visitors, will be engaged in planning for UMA's future as we move forward with fewer employees and students, reduced funding, reliance on consolidated services from the System, and shared programs across the System, a process UMA has already begun. Beyond the creation of the new 2016-2020 UMA Strategic Plan, the details of that planning are unclear, and will remain so until UMA has a permanent new president in place, who will take the lead in articulating how we plan.

UMA will review annually the need for new full-time faculty lines based on enrollments. We will, through the new strategic plan, establish “triggers” where enrollment changes would justify new faculty lines or the reallocation of existing faculty when lines become available.  For existing faculty, the Provost will begin working in AY 2015-16 with the Faculty Senate leadership to revise the faculty handbook to cover guidelines for expectations of full-time faculty regarding university service regardless of tenure or seniority status, and in the long-term work with faculty to establish clearer service expectations for tenure and promotion.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

UMA recognizes the need for periodic and systematic review of and adjustments to its organizational structure and system of governance. It does so through a variety of means, including supporting “out of the box” ideas that may lead to new structures and designs: entrepreneurial responses to opportunities like the Aviation Program, sharing resources with other campuses to meet state needs, and analysis of data from OIRP. UMA will also continue to provide leadership in the UM System by leading or serving on committees where it can make contributions based on its specialized expertise—especially in the realm of distance education and teaching with technologies.

**Standard Four**

**The Academic Program**

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA offers 13 associate degrees and 18 bachelor degrees. Within these degree programs, UMA offers 22 majors with 39 concentrations. Since the 2007 self-study, UMA’s admissions and enrollment processes have emphasized moving students into baccalaureate programs. This change is due in part to the increased availability of associate degrees in the Maine Community College system. UMA also offers select 2+2 programs (to encourage associate degree students to begin and then move into “paired” baccalaureate degrees) and an assortment of 30 credit-hour post- baccalaureate degree options.

UMA has made significant changes to its academic programs since our last NEASC visit in 2007. In addition to the new B.S. in Aviation and a five-year professional Bachelors of Architecture (B.Arch.) degree, we have also developed new concentrations and minors in response to [Key Goal 1](http://www.uma.edu/artsandsciences.html) in our 2011-2016 strategic plan, to “enhance and expand the University’s ability to provide quality baccalaureate education.” We have also updated our general education requirements and have begun assessing two of our general education outcomes each academic year.

As we have developed new programs in strategic areas, all of our academic programs have also come under stricter financial scrutiny. Responding to the difficult economic situation in Maine, declining high school graduation rates, and increased competition (especially online), the UM System Board of Trustees (BOT) has implemented an ongoing tuition freeze for undergraduate tuition on all campuses that began in 2011. This, combined with declining state appropriations, has required a careful assessment of programs, especially those that are expensive to run. In 2013, the Provost and Faculty Senate created an Academic Program Discontinuance Committee (APDC), composed of faculty and academic administrators, who established criteria for program elimination. As a result of this report’s recommendation, the A.S. in Nutrition and the B.S. in Financial Services were identified for elimination. In 2015-2016, the A.S. in Veterinary Technology will be phased out and replaced with a B.S., and the A.S. in Nursing will be closed and integrated into a B.S. in Nursing shared with the University of Maine at Fort Kent, following the BOT strategy of collaboration. All students who have been accepted into the A.S. in Nursing will be able to complete the degree, with the last class entering in 2015; alternatively, they also may enroll in UMFK's baccalaureate degree. Those who have completed their general education requirements have been offered an accelerated 3-year B.S. in Nursing through this collaboration with UMFK. Likewise, all Veterinary Technology students will be able to complete the A.S., with the final entry class in fall 2105, or move into the new B.S. program, which will begin admitting students in fall 2016.

The approval of UMA’s mission and purposes in 2006 reaffirmed its role in the UM System as a regional state university in central Maine. In keeping with UMA’s mission to “meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of central Maine,” degrees offered at UMA include professional preparation programs such as Architecture, Aviation, Nursing, Medical Laboratory Technology, and Dental Health; pre-professional degrees in Business Administration, Justice Studies, Mental Health and Human Services, Information and Library Information Services, Computer Information Systems, and Public Administration; and liberal arts degrees in English, Social Science, Biology, Art, and Jazz and Contemporary Music. Three additional baccalaureate degrees - Interdisciplinary Studies, Applied Science, and Liberal Studies - provide flexibility for students to design majors that meet their unique academic goals as first-time or as degree completers.

In 2013, a five-year professional Bachelors of Architecture—the only such degree offered by a public institution north of New York City—was inaugurated with a first class of 17 students. The degree was developed to meet demand for an in-state degree and licensure program. The program received initial candidacy status from the National Architecture Accrediting Board and is on track to be accredited when the first cohort of students graduates in 2018.

Collaboration with community and UM System campuses has allowed UMA to expand its curriculum. For example, partnering with [Maine Instrument Flight](http://www.maineinstrumentflight.com/), a private flight school located in Augusta, enabled UMA to offer Maine’s first Bachelor of Science degree in Aviation. UMA worked closely with the Chief Flight Instructor at MIF to develop a curriculum for a four-year degree that met all FAA requirements. The program allows students to earn a B.S. degree as well as their commercial pilot and flight instructor certification in just four years. A substantive change proposal was approved by NEASC in April 2013, and a successful follow-up site visit was conducted by a NEASC reviewer in April 2014. (Aviation document are in workroom or can be found in Links folder in Portal)

To give another example, UMA developed multiple partnership with UM System campuses to make education courses, student teaching, and state certification available to UMA students on campus and at a distance. Unlike all other UM System campuses, UMA has never had an Education major. In 2008, and in response to a well-documented need, UMA began working with the Universities of Maine at Presque Isle and at Machias to create memoranda of understanding to provide pathways for UMA students to Maine teacher certification in Elementary Education (K-8) and Special Education (K-12). In 2011, UMA hired a doctorally prepared Education Coordinator to create a secondary education pathway, create Education courses, and coordinate existing pathways. Since that hire, secondary education, early childhood, and early elementary education pathways have been created. Eleven UMA education courses have been developed, and nine existing Mental Health and Human Services have been approved for certification by the state and are cross-listed. These types of partnerships underscore UMA’s motivation to meet its Strategic Plan Key Goal #5 to “engage with a variety of constituencies external to UMA to enhance the University’s public image, attract students, and advance its mission.”

Also based on student interest and using available resources, other new credentials have been created to enhance recruitment. A minor in American Studies and in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies (collaborating with the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine located at UMA) have been initiated. Photography was shifted to a minor and a concentration in the art department. A new concentration, Adult Mental Health, within the Mental Health and Human Services degree program has also been developed, as well as certificates in Crime Analysis and Social Media. Many of these new options are the product of inter-departmental collaboration. New interdisciplinary minors include Music Business, Human Resource Management, Secondary Education, Sociology, Fraud Examination, Information Systems Security, and Network Security.

UMA’s evolving academic profile is thus based on a thoughtful approach to meeting its strategic plan Key Goal #1 to expand its ability to provide quality baccalaureate education. The plan’s implementation continues to depend on identifying workforce development needs, creatively developing programs, and leveraging available resources.

Supporting the [UM System’s Diversity for the 21st Century i](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/diversity-for-the-21st-century/)nitiative to “serve the racially and ethnically diverse people and communities in Maine,” UMA maintains a Multicultural Center (in Bangor), an International Advocacy Committee and Cultural Events Committee (in Augusta), and Diversity Committees on both campuses. These organizations offer cultural events and encourage awareness and inclusion of multicultural topics in academics. To increase the diversity and globalization of our curriculum, UMA has partnered with East Carolina University to explore their model for internationalizing the curriculum.

*DEFINITION from East Carolina’s Plan for Achieving their Internationalization Goals: “ECU’s “Global Classroom” has become one of the signature programs of the University. Now conducting six sections of the “Global Understanding” course per term, the Global Classroom program supports direct, contact with students and classrooms in such far-off places as Pakistan, China, The Gambia, Brazil and Algeria.*

At UMA, following the ideas brought to us by ECU, and using a video-conferencing classroom, UMA students now join (live) with students at an international university in the context of an academic course offered at both institutions. Two of our faculty members have piloted several of courses focused on “Global Citizenship.” As the effort expands we plan to partner with more schools abroad.

UMA has a longstanding Honors Program that provides enriching educational opportunities for highly motivated students showing academic potential. The Honors Program focuses on scholarship, leadership, and citizenship. Recent Honors Program initiatives include academic theme-related activities, deliberative forums, and volunteer and community service projects.

Academic responsibility at UMA is shared among the Provost, faculty, and the academic deans. Associate and baccalaureate curricula are well designed and rigorous, as demonstrated by external accreditation for some programs, and internal and external reviews for all programs (Details in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). General education, core curriculum, and writing intensive requirements are in place. In addition, most programs have capstone courses (List available in workroom or in Links folder in Portal) to ensure students’ competency in their discipline. Students must demonstrate college- level proficiency in the English language. All students must take a semester of composition, followed by required writing-intensive courses. Information and computer literacy skills development are included in all baccalaureate programs; however, there is recognition of a need for a more consistent university-wide approach to this growing need. These competencies are part of UMA’s general education expectations. Assessment of general education outcomes has begun and is ongoing, following a five-year cycle. Once the assessment of each outcome is complete, changes to the overall curriculum will be made through the academic approval process.

Academic planning for new programs and program elimination is collaborative, well established, and requires UM System approval. New course development and significant course or program

changes also go through a thoughtful and comprehensive review, adjustment, and approval process in which the program and college faculties; the Faculty Senate, and the Provost all participate.

As a leader in distance education in Maine, UMA offers seven associate degrees, as well as the following baccalaureate degrees, at a distance: Mental Health and Human Services, Computer Information Systems, Information and Library Science, Nursing (with some travel to Augusta required), Social Science, Justice Studies, Public Administration, Business, Applied Science, and Liberal Studies. (Students may also complete the A.S. in CIS degree at the University Center Rockland.) As of November 1st, 2013, 55% of UMA’s total head count takes at least one distance course away from campus. This percentage is divided between online students (29%) and those taking classes at the University College (UC) centers and learning sites (26%) [See Data First Forms Std. 3]. UM System census data from October 15, 2013 shows that the largest UC enrollments are at the Rockland, Bath/Brunswick, Ellsworth, and Rumford Centers.

Courses are available to students at a distance through a variety of methods: online courses and on- site courses at the Centers through the use of video conferencing and delayed viewing technologies, interactive television, Blackboard, or some combination of these options. UC Directors and Student Services counselors located at the Centers strongly support academic advising for UMA’s distance students. The UC Directors meet annually with UMA’s Provost, academic deans, Dean of Students, and the Associate Provost to discuss planned program and policy changes, establish priorities and course schedules, and maintain effective relationships. A representative of UC meets regularly with the Provost’s staff.

**Undergraduate Degree Programs**

UMA has always been the champion of the many college students who are place-bound and non- traditional. The high cost of other colleges, as well as UMA’s expanded and improved baccalaureate offerings, increasingly attract Maine high school graduates who can attend college and live at home or near home. In 2010, 19.5% of UMA students were in the 21 or under age group; this year that age group represented 22.11% of the enrolled UMA students. UMA is in fact becoming a college of choice for more students in the region, and with the addition of UMA’s first-ever residential housing (70 beds planned for 2016, assuming no major delays), we will begin more intentionally reaching beyond Maine’s borders and into our regional communities.

As UMA eliminates or consolidates its associate degree programs, the majority of its students are now baccalaureate degree candidates. In 2010, the number of students enrolled in an associate degree program was 2,074, while in 2013 it was 1,624. During the same period, the bachelor degree enrollment grew from 3,390 to 3,992. In this same time frame, the number of credit hours related to associate degree enrollment has fallen from 31,044 to 24,730, while the bachelor degree enrollment increased from 55,154 to 69,445. These results mirror the 2011 trend that UMA has fewer students but more full-time baccalaureate students so that the FTE remains stable. (See data forms) [See appendix chart]

**General Education**

In our 2007 NEASC interim report, UMA outlined several steps and a implementation plan (See workroom or Links folder in Portal) developed in October 2012 to address shortcomings in our core and Gen Ed outcomes and the assessment of these outcomes. Many of the steps of updating UMA’s Gen Ed requirements have been completed and have wide acceptance. Since that report, our Gen Ed curriculum has been reviewed and has resulted in curriculum changes in each program for the 2014-2015 catalog.

In 2010, the Core and General Education Committee developed and received Faculty Senate and Provost’s approval for all areas of UMA’s core and general education curriculum (See Appendix for UMA General Education Policy). The Curriculum Committee completed approval of new checksheets of program requirements based upon these courses in the spring of 2013 for inclusion into the 2014-2015 catalog. The breadth of expected learning outcomes includes written communication, humanities, arts, social sciences, laboratory sciences, mathematics, computer literacy, information literacy, diversity, and critical thinking. Computer literacy, information literacy, and critical thinking were added to the previous list of general education requirements to prepare our students for a changing technological world. These last three outcomes were specifically identified in our previous NEASC reports as missing. In addition, Faculty Senate took up the issue of UMA’s “[educated person](http://www.uma.edu/assets/docs/facultyhandbook/FacultyHandbook.pdf)” statement in order to make it consistent with our new general education.

In 2013, the Maine [Legislature directed](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_126th/billtexts/SP004102.asp) the UM System to make transfer among its universities and the Maine Community College institutions seamless. UMA’s improved understanding and clarity of its general education competencies will allow us to better assess incoming transfer credits in general education and to be more effective in evaluating outcomes for our own degree candidates. UMA has always been a leader in accepting transfer students, with a comprehensive [transfer equivalency matrix](https://www.uma.edu/pla.html) in place. At the UM System level, discussions are underway at several campuses about accepting block transfer of general education courses from one campus to another, meaning that a student at any UM System campus who successfully completes general education requirements will, on transfer to another campus, receive full credit in place of that campus’s general education requirements toward any degree. A report on this initiative should be ready in fall 2015.

**The Major or Concentration**

For a baccalaureate degree, students must complete 30 credit hours of residency, 9 of which must consist of upper-level courses in the major. For an associate degree, 15 are required, 9 within the major. Concentrations within a particular major provide students the opportunity to gain special expertise through a particular cluster of courses within their degree. As with a minor, concentrations usually include at least 18 credits.

Academic program [checksheets](http://www.uma.edu/checksheets.html) for each degree, major, or concentration demonstrate evidence of the careful thinking that has gone into that degree's design. Checksheets are readily available in print in the College offices and online. Because such a large percentage of UMA’s students are non- traditional—because they average under 9 credit hours per semester (8.52 in fall 2013), bring in a large number of transfer credits (average 46), and take advantage of such a wide range of modalities— checksheets are an important tool for faculty and students alike. UMA helps students navigate the degree-planning process in a variety of ways, including robust academic advising center services online and in person, course registration wish list events, a student degree audit option w[ithin](http://www.uma.edu/assets/docs/studentsupport/ewaydegree.pdf) [MaineStreet](http://www.uma.edu/assets/docs/studentsupport/ewaydegree.pdf) (the UM System’s enterprise application), a forward-looking calendar showing when courses are typically offered, and training for faculty advisors. Beginning in 2014, program faculty began to schedule future courses a full year in advance (rather than a semester) to assist in students' degree-planning progress. An effort is underway to use student degree audit data to build “just in time” semester schedules that are more responsive to student needs. This initiative will be tested during the 2015-2016 academic year.

UMA uses pre- and co-requisite courses or requirements such as gatekeeping models (for example, music auditions or art portfolios) to ensure that students are prepared for higher-level coursework. Faculty members from each academic discipline review their degree curricula regularly, and degree requirements evolve to reflect new developments or changes of emphases in their fields and to respond to the assessment findings related to student achievement. In the Art program, for example, an assessment of their portfolio review of student work led to a curriculum change that increased the number of writing assignments— to improve the quality of writing in student artist statements.

Information about specific academic program learning goals, academic skills that students will acquire, and career options related to their degree are published in print in program fact sheets and featured on [each program’s webpage](http://www.uma.edu/degrees.html#all). The UM System website [OnlineMaine](http://online.maine.edu/) lists online classes at all campuses, but the large assortment of course modalities does lead to some confusion and frustration with course schedule planning for program coordinators and students. As new modalities develop and change, UMA continues to clarify and standardize nomenclature related to them.

Most programs have capstone courses (Appendix), and many have juries or portfolio reviews to ensure students are learning appropriate course related outcomes.

Multi-stage curriculum change process provides appropriate checks and balances; recommendations for curriculum changes begin with program faculty, advance through respective colleges for approval, and then proceed to Curriculum Committee for approval (and for major changes, such as the creation of a new program, to the Senate) before being presented to the Provost for approval. This process provides ample opportunity to develop majors, minors, and concentrations. Assessment and curricular improvements are part of the ongoing work for academic departments at UMA.

**E-Learning**

The number of student registrations in online courses had increased from 6,084 in 2009-2010 to 10,367 in 2012-13 [See S-Form]. In 2012-2013, 29% of UMA students are now completing the majority of their coursework online. To maintain and improve the quality of online learning, instructional designers work closely with faculty members, implementing and teaching how to use various software and technology applications. The instructional designers conducted a survey in 2013 to assess faculty needs for instructional technology and support and are working with faculty to match technological complexity with course levels and curriculum objectives including Gen Ed outcomes. In the survey, the faculty resoundingly requested more technology support.  There was a clear preference for one-to-one sessions for development opportunities; experience by current support personnel further confirms this to be a just-in-time expectation. Regarding student need for tech support, the most frequently identified source of who provides support to students, were the faculty themselves evenly split with the call-in help desk.

In 2014, UMA’s position in U.S. News and World Report’s [Best Online Bachelor’s Degree Programs](http://www.usnews.com/education/online-education/bachelors/rankings) improved to 40th place nationally out of 400 schools, based on UMA’s use of best practices in online education. Using the data collected by the publication, we identified four areas of best practices: 1) requiring students to sign an ethics statement verifying that the work they submit is theirs, 2) continuing faculty training of online teaching practices, 3) creating a system of 24/7 technical support, and 4) creating a time-to-degree deadline. UMA is in the process of implementing these best practices. Having determined that course completion rates are the same for online and not-online students, the Provost has asked OIRP to conduct a further comparison of student learning experiences for these two groups.

**Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit**

The quality of the courses and programs offered at UMA is monitored and approved by various internal faculty academic groups. The academic program faculty and their departments and colleges provide initial monitoring; Senate committees (Core/General Education, Assessment, Academic Policy, and Curriculum Committees) provide oversight and support. Program approval, review, suspension, elimination, and the brokering of programs with other UM System campuses follow [guidelines established by the System](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/academic-affairs/administrative-procedures-manual/). UMA’s award of academic credit, as demonstrated by its definition in our [faculty handbook](http://www.uma.edu/facultyhandbook.html) catalog, is consistent with NEASC policy.

Some programs are reviewed and accredited externally by national professional organizations. The A.S. in and B.S. in Nursing are both accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing; the B.S. underwent a successful accreditation review in 2013. The Dental Health programs are accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation and the American Dental Association. The Medical Laboratory Technology program is accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science. The Veterinary Technology program is accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association. UMA’s partner in the Aviation program is Maine Instrument Flight, a “Part 141” school certified by the Federal Aviation Administration to prepare commercial pilots. The Bachelor of Architecture program received its initial candidacy status through the [National Architectural Accrediting Board](http://www.naab.org/home) in 2013. The 15 programs that do not have external accreditation are reviewed externally by academic peers on a five-year basis after completing an internal self-study that evaluates its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats ([SWOT](http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4245-swot-analysis.html) analysis process).

While all transfer courses with a passing grade of C- or higher from regionally accredited university are accepted and posted by UMA, individual programs may require higher minimum grades for transfer courses to meet program requirements. These higher grades are consistent with those required for internal (non-transfer) UMA students. For example, the Information and Library Services program requires a C for transfer of program courses. All incoming transfer courses are posted to the student’s record during the admissions process, even those that do not meet requirements for, or fit within, the student’s current program. This process allows for future opportunity to apply such “extraneous” courses to another degree program, should the student elect to change programs.

All baccalaureate degree programs require the minimum of 120 to 121 credits, with the exception of the professional five-year Bachelor of Architecture degree program, which requires 150 credit hours to graduate. Associate degrees require between 60 and 90 credits, with the professional health programs requiring the highest number. All baccalaureate degree programs also require that 25% of the program requirements be upper-level courses. UMA also offers certificates and minors ranging between 18 to 32 credits, all of which require the student to take at least 25% of the program’s courses from UMA for residency purposes. There are four post-baccalaureate programs ranging from 30 to 45 credits that also have the same residency requirements as the other baccalaureate degree programs.

Following advice gleaned from the UMA’s 2007 NEASC visit, all 2+2 programs designed for incoming transfer students were discontinued, the issue being that students transferring in whole associate degrees may or may not have met UMA’s general education associate requirements. Today, UMA evaluates all incoming courses (individually) and advises transfer students of any Gen Ed prerequisites they may need to make up before the student can proceed to the next level of coursework. [[See UMA transfer matrix]](https://www.uma.edu/pla.html)

UMA programs offer an adequate choice of required and elective courses so students can complete their degrees in a logical sequence. Students are informed of course offerings, semester by semester, through a variety of mechanisms such as online course schedules, academic advisors, and coordinator mailings. Despite faculty and program reminders and recommendations, UMA students often delay the completion of developmental and Gen Ed requirements. For example, many students put off required Mathematics courses until the last minute, often leaving as many as four Math courses to finish when one counts often required developmental courses. Faculty and administrators are currently exploring means of addressing these problems through improved guidance for students; the Math Department has worked with the Office of Enrollment Services to send out letters to students recommending that they start their required developmental coursework. More stringent course registration restrictions may be required.

UMA offers courses through multiple modalities and with high levels of personal support. This flexibility and UMA’s support systems allow students to complete degree requirements without disrupting their lives. Typical learning modalities include traditional live or face-to-face classroom delivery, video conferencing and interactive television (ITV) delivery, online courses, and “blended” courses. UMA’s ITV courses are broadcast to high school adult education sites and UC Centers throughout the state. UC staff are available at all Center locations to assist and support students with the registration process, the proctoring of exams, the delivery of course materials, and guidance about succeeding in college, as well as accessing and using library learning resources.

The duration of a course can span from five to fifteen weeks. Regardless of the duration of the course or modality, contact hours, course and credit hour requirements and learning outcomes, and the process of assessing courses remains constant. (Sample syllabi will be available in the Workroom.) Differences have been found in the comparison of student success among courses of varying lengths but may well be related to the profile of the student taking 7-week courses during the summer. The regular academic semester completion rate is 74%, while the all summer 14-week session rate is 89%. The summer 7-week course show completion rates of 80% for the early summer session and 74% for the later summer session. The mini-session of 7 weeks beginning in October shows a 69% completion rate. Clearly more detailed analysis is needed to make use of this data.

Students at distant locations and online are able to connect with a tutor at one of UMA’s main campuses by phone or experience real-time tutoring through web conferencing and screen sharing. Distance students often “affiliate” with their nearest regional Center and take excellent advantage of resources available at each.

Award of academic credit for live, ITV, and videoconference courses follows UMA's catalog policy that each credit hour requires 15 hours of active and engaged classroom learning, 45 hours for a three-credit class. Students are also expected to average two to three hours of work outside of class at a minimum for each hour of in class work. Studio classes in Art and Architecture meet for a minimum of 75 contact hours, recognizing that students are expected to work in a self-directed way as part of the studio environment. In UMA's most recent NSSE survey (Appendix), students reported that they spend significantly longer hours per week preparing for class when compared with UMA's peer institutions. First-year students report working 13.1 hours per week outside of class, and seniors report working 15.6 hours outside of class in preparation for coursework. Students are familiarized with UMA's credit-hour policy in student orientation, and it is found in the student handbook. Faculty are made aware of the policy upon hire, and it is in the faculty handbook. For hybrid and online courses, where contact hours and preparation hours are less clearly defined given the increased participation options for online technologies, UMA’s policy is to have an equivalent total number of hours including similar activities as are found in live classes utilizing discussion boards, group projects, and exams and quizzes.

Academic deans and office support staff work closely with the programs to ensure that their scheduled offerings dovetail with the program’s offerings and needs. Faculty coordinate with program advisors to ensure that student needs are met and, as needed, offer directed studies to students missing a specific requirement for their programs. (See Directed Study application in workroom or in Links folder).

The UMA faculty determines the content of and appropriate delivery mode for all courses. New and revised courses progress through a thorough review process which includes the review and approval of the program faculty, College Dean, Curriculum Committee, and Chief Academic Officer. Many face-to-face courses at UMA also have an online component using Blackboard. The Information Technology Department works closely with the faculty to ensure that current, high-quality tools are readily available to assist faculty in the delivery and quality of their program’s offerings. In addition, the university employs instructional design and technology specialists who provide formal training and development, “just in time” assistance to faculty, and online student resources.

Early fill rates for available UMA online courses, along with a trend for UMA students to take online courses from other campuses when those online courses are not offered by UMA (or those online courses are full), suggest that many students prefer online courses. Rather than lose UMA students to other campuses, academic departments and programs have continued to respond to the growing demand for online course access by increasing the number and variety of online courses. In order to help faculty teach effectively online, the University has provided opportunities for participation in the [Sloan-C](http://sloanconsortium.org/) conferences (devoted to teaching and technology) at the University of Southern Maine and, more recently, a statewide Teaching with Technology workshop presented by University College—all to better understand the current trends and technologies and to further develop strong online pedagogy.

In addition to scheduled courses, there are a variety of means by which students may receive credit for prior learning. UMA follows UM System and NEASC policies and guidelines for awarding transfer credit. Credit accepted reflects the appropriate level of the courses taken or level equivalent at UMA. Such incoming courses are also routinely reviewed by the various program coordinators to ensure the appropriate course equivalencies. Discrepancies regarding transcript evaluations are handled at the college level. Transfer from non-regionally accredited institutions or agencies are considered and evaluated by appropriate academic program faculty and approved through the UMA academic approval processes. The most recent example of such a specialized approval is a number of FAA-approved certificates/ratings for Private, Instrument, Commercial and Instructor flight training—from flight schools not affiliated with an accredited academic institution that UMA accepts as comparable to UMA’s flight training courses in the same categories that lead to the same FAA certificates. (See AVI Substantive Change Proposal in workroom or in Links folder)

UMA uses the UM System student information system, [MaineStreet](http://www.uma.edu/navigatingmainestreet9.html), to publicize all transfer equivalencies between System institutions, Maine community colleges, and other colleges and universities in which other articulations or equivalencies have been established. Listings of current course equivalencies are posted in MaineStreet and are open to the public. Articulation agreements and equivalencies are reviewed and approved by the relevant program’s Coordinator and the College Deans. UMA also publishe[s transfer guides](http://www.uma.edu/pla.html%23transfer-from-the-maine-community-college-system) between the Maine community colleges and each UMA baccalaureate program on its website; these guides are updated annually and maintained by the Enrollment Services Department. Since 2014, UMA also has used transfer portal designed by the UM System that allows prospective and current students to fill in completed coursework from other institutions with established equivalencies and run “what if” degree progress reports. Such reports allow perspective students to test a number of degree options to determine which one provides the most suitable fit.

The number of transfer students in our annual admission pool is significant (See Data Forms), and the average number of credits they bring with them (46 for fall 2013) is high and helps explain the profile of our applicant pool and their importance to UMA. Our ongoing clarification of the UMA Gen Ed curriculum and better understanding how to assess these skills and knowledge will support the transfer processes and improve these student’s success.

UMA accepts credit for prior learning through the form of external exams such as CLEP and Department of Defense challenge exams, advanced placement exams, American Council on Education (ACE)-recommended credits for military education and training, and portfolio assessment review. Portfolio assessment is a standardized process through which students demonstrate knowledge and experience in a particular field in order to gain credit for specific UMA courses. It involves compiling information that demonstrates learning comparable to the expectation in specific UMA courses into a portfolio and submitting it for faculty review. All approved exams and portfolios are reviewed by faculty and/or coordinators of the respective programs. The Office of Enrollment Services coordinates the award of credit for prior learning and serves as the contact point for all prior learning options. General information, policies, and procedures are posted on the office’s [website](http://www.uma.edu/enrollmentservices.html) and contained in [UMA’s catalog.](http://www.uma.edu/courseguide.html) In 2013, UMA also instituted two new policies to accept other forms of external training for credit. The first new policy grants credit for courses from other non-accredited training organizations that have been evaluated by ACE. Credit is awarded at the ACE-recommended lower or upper level and is posted as either general elective credit, subject elective credit, or specific course credit, with approval from the specific coordinator of the discipline. The second new policy provides a process by which other external trainings may be reviewed for credit. Such action requires approval from a faculty sponsor, the related Program Coordinator, College Dean, and the Provost. Approved external trainings remain active and valid for five years, at which point it must be reviewed again for continued approval.

While all acceptable coursework that can be transferred is posted on a student’s transcript, each program requires specific residency requirements—typically 25% of their degree requirements. All programs require a capstone course for which no transferable equivalency is possible. Transferring in all acceptable credits means that some students end up with “extra” or extraneous credits on their transcripts. There have been some instances of students asking why their transfer credits don’t count toward their degree, but for the most part an explanation of degree and program requirements, along with the program checksheet, satisfies these questions. The B.A. in Liberal Studies and B.S. in Applied Science provide a high degree of flexibility for incoming transfer students.

Recently, UMA implemented a Dual Enrollment Program option for local high schools. The English program faculty took the lead by working collaboratively with the faculty and staff of one local high school (Monmouth Academy in Monmouth, Maine) to offer opportunities in first-year composition courses. These dual enrollment courses are overseen by a UMA program faculty member who serves as a mentor for the host high school faculty members who are teaching UMA’s courses. These UMA faculty members also supervise course and faculty evaluations. (See detailed report in Dual Enrollment Report section (4.1) following this Standard chapter)

The University [catalog](http://www.uma.edu/courseguide.html) and [student handbook](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbook.html) contain all policies related to program requirements and degree requirements. This information can also be found in program-specific handbooks published. The online version of the catalog is updated annually and for purposes of UMA student requirements and expectations, UMA has established April 30 as the annual official date for publishing the new catalog. Program requirement checksheets are also published online and available in college and advising offices. Unless they opt for the current edition, students are held to program requirements in place at their time of their admission. All academic policies are established by the Educational Policy Committee and approved by the Senate and Provost.

The university continually monitors admissions and registration processes and retention data. Through our Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP), we are now able to access course, program, and student data, which are immensely helpful in our academic decision making, especially for course scheduling and modality decisions. One example of new and very useful data is course completion data for individual courses. Data that identifies courses with low success rates (“barrier courses”) has already been used to evaluate and prepare changes in courses, program requirements, and student advising, as will be seen in the section on course-level assessment. We believe solutions being developed to address such barriers to student success will help improve retention as well as UMA’s reputation among its students and potential students. (See workroom or Links folder in portal).

**Assessment of Student Learning**

UMA conceptualizes learning outcomes assessment at various levels (course, program, and institution), a conventional approach adopted in numerous institutions. Still, we acknowledge the complexity of the varying structures and interpretations of such assessment levels. For instance, should the levels be determined by the level of learning outcomes, sampling design, and improvement efforts, or all together?

*Course-Level Assessment*

Student course evaluation is the primary tool for assessment at UMA. Traditionally, student course evaluations cover mostly instructional skills, course content, and examinations. The results are reported back to individual instructors for their continuous pedagogical improvement.

In 2014, the Provost Office developed a new online course evaluation based on previous versions with an added section on learning outcomes for each course. Course learning outcomes are reconfigured into questions, and students report their perception of achieving them. The Provost’s Office started collecting the data from spring 2014 with a pilot in the Architecture program and instituted the learning outcomes section for all courses in fall 2014. The Associate Director of Assessment will be analyzing the learning outcomes data to support assessment activities at the program level.

Another approach to course-level assessment is the university-wide analysis of barrier courses. In this analysis, student success is defined as the percentage of students who received a grade from A through C- and the other categories are the percentages of Ds and Es, of Incompletes, and of missing grades. University-wide, the average student success rate was 75%, which is used as a threshold to identify “barrier” courses”. Former Provost Joshua Nadel first conducted the analysis in 2010 and current Provost Joseph Szakas is reviewing chronological trends. Program Coordinators (equivalent of department heads) received the data analysis and discussed with their faculty members with the goal of developing workable solutions to increase student success. The Director of Assessment led this effort and completed the previously mentioned summary report of improvement strategies by all academic programs.

*Program Level Assessment*

Every year, led by Academic Program Coordinators, faculty members within each degree program at UMA write an Annual Program Report (See Appendix for the list of required forms). The College Deans and Provost review the Annual Program Reports to determine and implement recommended program changes. (See summary changes recommended in workroom or in Links folder). The five multiple years ofAnnual Program Reports culminate in the comprehensive five-year Program Review, as required by the UM System, in which each academic program conducts an internal and external review. This comprehensive five-year Program Review includes assessment and recommendations covering all aspects of the programs health, needs and plans. In addition, eight programs require external professional accreditation reviews.

The former Director of Assessment completed a model for a first iteration of the five-year-cycle of the Program Review for all 19 degree programs. The new Associate Director of Assessment is ensuring all the documents in the Annual Program Reports and Program Reviews are complete and in notebooks, which are publicly available in the Provost’s office for faculty review. These will be in the NEASC visitors’ workroom. Both Annual Program Reports and comprehensive five-year Program Reviews encompass data elements in the NEASC S-form. Academic programs employ various assessment tools and processes, both direct and indirect measures.

*Direct Measures:* The Architecture, Computer Information Systems, Fine Arts, and Education Pathways, Justice Studies, and Mental Health and Human Services programs have created their own electronic and paper portfolios for their program. The Business, Education, and Nursing programs administer national tests (respectively, Major Field Test, Praxis Exam, and National Council Licensure Examination).

*Indirect Measures:* The Computer Information Science, Mental Health, Nursing, Public Administration, and Sociology programs have conducted student and alumni surveys. NSSE data especially related to faculty and student interactions also supports academic program reviews.

Through both direct and indirect measures, academic programs utilize assessment results to inform their continuous improvement on curriculum changes, course development, and other learning facilities and are described in the E-Series document.

*General Education Assessment*

In 2012, the Core & General Education (Gen Ed) Committee finalized review of the 11 Gen Ed learning outcome areas, each with a set of intended outcome indicators. In fall 2013, the Director of Assessment and Associate Director of Assessment created a prototype Gen Ed assessment schedule (See Appendix) and presented the draft to the Core & Gen Ed Committee, the Assessment Committee, and the faculty at large in College meetings. The Faculty Senate endorsed the five-year cycle for 11 Gen Ed outcome areas, with two (or three) Gen Ed outcome areas to be assessed each year followed by a one-year break for methodological review, for a total six-year process.

UMA’s Gen Ed assessment cycle follows this process: 1) The Assessment Committee produces a report on methodological recommendations for those outcome areas to be studied ; 2) in year 1, the Provost’s Office supports Gen Ed faculty groups to prepare for a pilot study for their Gen Ed assessment; 3) in year 2, Gen Ed faculty groups gather assessment data and write an analysis report; and 4) in year 3, Gen Ed faculty groups develop an action plan to further improve their Gen Ed outcomes and make needed curricular adjustments.

*Written Communication:*In spring 2012, the English program faculty piloted a preliminary assessment of its pass-fail standard. In spring and summer 2013, as a full Gen Ed assessment, English program faculty assessed student writing samples at the end of English 101: College Composition classes. A dozen English faculty members assessed student writing by applying SAT’s essay rubric. Data analysis indicated that students were strong in grammar and use of language, while weak in development of position and organization. As the English faculty identified limitations with the SAT rubric, they revised the test and rubric itself, are aligning findings with the course outcomes for English 101, and are preparing to read essays from the

assessment carried out in fall 2014 in order to best to integrate these findings into their teaching of first-year writing. (full report in workroom or in Links folder)

*Critical Thinking:*The Social Science program faculty administered the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) beginning in 2012, and they expanded the test administration in spring and summer 2014. Seven full-time and adjunct faculty members implemented CCTST as extra credit in 100-level sociology and psychology courses and also a 300-level Human Service course. Students scored higher in interpretation and inferences, while lower in deduction and evaluation. Analysis of student growth between first-year and senior students by using t-test and effect size indicated that seniors had a higher overall test score. (Data available). The Social Science faculty are working to understand these and other findings to “close the loop” with appropriate curricular and pedagogical changes. (Full report in the workroom and in Links folder)

*Fine Arts and Information Literacy:* In spring 2014, the Assessment Committee researched various assessment methods for the Gen Ed Fine Arts and Information Literacy outcomes. During 2014-15, one Music faculty and two Art History faculty members created and will implement a common test across knowledge-based Gen Ed Fine Arts courses where a large population of non-major students are enrolled. A group including a Librarian Educator, the Director of Libraries, and three Computer and Information Systems faculty members are working with two dozen course instructors university-wide to implement an online information literacy test called Standardized Assessment of Information Library Skills (SAILS), developed at Kent State University.

*Natural Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Skills:* Also in 2014-2015, the Assessment Committee is researching assessment methods in these two respective areas.

**Institution-Level Assessment**

The Faculty Senate approved UMA’s “Educated Person” statement in 2011. It is considered a statement of expected student learning outcomes at the institutional level. It includes learning outcomes addressed in academic programs and those from the general education sequence. As illustrated above, these learning outcomes are measured, reported, and used to inform curricular changes and student support services.

Another approach to institution-level assessment is student surveys. OIRP launched a Graduating Student Survey in 2013, and the Office of Enrollment Services has been conducting a Recent Alumni Survey. (Surveys in workroom and in the Links folder) The latest National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2013 indicated that UMA students rate the quality of interactions with faculty and administrative service staff higher than that of its national peers. Still, UMA students had fewer opportunities to interact with people with diverse backgrounds, collaboratively work with other students, and practice quantitative skills. The first issue is partly derived from the homogenous nature of our student population, (as well as the population of the state of Maine in general). The second item may be related to the fact that UMA is a commuter institution and offers a great deal of distance education. The “quantitative” outcome is being examined and is expected to lead to alternative ways to teach and learn mathematics.

UMA participated in a pilot study of the [College Educational Quality](http://collegeedquality.weebly.com/) project led by faculty of the Teacher’s College at Columbia University. Earlier in 2014-2015, approximately 70 faculty members responded to the study, showed external visitors their syllabi and Blackboard sites, and invited them into their classrooms (about 100 courses both face to face, ITV, and online). The assessment process is still ongoing, and analysis reports are due in late summer 2015. Preliminary reports suggests that UMA students find their courses rigorous and of high quality.

**Learning Assessment**

Currently, e-learning assessment relies heavily on student enrollment data such as numbers of course registrations and successful completion rates. However, a different assessment approach is emerging. In our 2011 self-study report, an accounting professor experimented in one of his accounting courses teaching it in three different modalities (face to face, ITV, and online) in the same semester. He found that student test scores were comparable across the three modalities (See details in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). As more faculty members change their courses from the conventional classroom to online, they are noticing similar findings and adjusting to the technology in an effort to teach the same concepts well. In addition to course assessment, OIRP utilizes the Online Degree College Ranking as a process of institutional assessment. OIRP also analyzed NSSE 2013 to identify that online students face challenges regarding interaction with their instructors. The Provost has acknowledged the issue and has included online enrollment retention as one of his primary academic agenda items in 2014-2015. Improvement activities being promoted this year include ongoing and enhanced training for faculty teaching with technology, implementing ITV 2.0 focused on improving faculty-student and student-student interaction in “tape delay” ITV courses, delivering an online orientation program, and improved support services for students at a distance.

**APPRAISAL**

While UMA has made significant progress on the assessment of program outcomes and the new core and general education outcomes, we have only begun considering how to assess institutional level outcomes. Survey data, employer feedback, Department of Labor salary information are beginning to show our strong and weak points. To gain a complete picture of whether we have moved our students to the level of “Educated Person” at time of graduation, we must have the ability to comprehensively measure all Gen Ed outcomes, each set of program outcomes as well as those personal development goals we strive to support. That will take additional time, but we can report that since our 2007 visit we now have begun the process to study each Gen Ed outcome, and a strong Office of Institutional Research that is support the assessment processes.

While our assessment processes unfold, we remain focused or continuous program reviews, we continue to build assessment into our culture, and we continue to seek opportunities to promote improvements that do in fact increase levels of student success. We are pleased to report that available results of our first round of Gen Ed assessment (Written Communication) were disseminated to the faculty in fall 2014, and faculty are becoming involved with developing processes for improvement where weaknesses are identified. At a future point when a more complete set of data from Gen Ed assessment is available, UMA will move the assessment discussion to the level of the Educated Person and determine how well UMA is doing in preparing graduates for success beyond the university.

**General Education**

CIHE requires 25% of a total degree credit hours be devoted to general education. UMA’s associate degree Gen Ed curriculum is currently being aligned with the new baccalaureate outcomes, with 22 to 25 credit hours (37% to 42%, respectively) of general education required for associate degree programs. While UMA’s new Gen Ed policy satisfies the criterion (40 credits of a total 120 to 121 credit hours), a few academic programs fall short of 3 credit hours in Gen Ed; these programs count 100-and 200-level courses as requirements for the major instead of for Gen Ed. UMA's Faculty Senate was apprised of this deficiency at its November 2014 meeting, and UMA will be making necessary changes as detailed in our projections. We are considering adding an “Ethics” Gen Ed outcome to address the shortcoming identified. It exists as a program requirement (as a course) within several programs already and also is a Gen Ed outcome included in several other UM System campus Gen Ed requirements. Such an adjustment could make future Gen Ed transfer issues within the UM System easier to manage.

**The Major and Concentration**

New course proposals and curriculum changes remain strictly internal UMA processes and are functioning well. Starting at the program level, new courses and curriculum changes are proposed and follow an approval process through the college, to the Curriculum Committee of the Senate, and finally to the Provost. Depending upon the nature of a curriculum change, it may follow the same route as a new course, or go directly from the program’s faculty to the dean (bypassing the college), and then to the Provost (bypassing the Senate’s Curriculum Committee).

Program coordinators work closely with their faculty peers to ensure that course scheduling allows for timely completion of degrees and minimizes student schedule conflicts. Despite these efforts, students sometimes have difficulty finding classes that enable them to graduate in a timely manner. Continued work on a rolling three-semester class schedule and listing regularly scheduled classes on MaineStreet has begun to resolve these problems.

Four or eight-semester sample curricula for each program are no longer being published in the catalog, as they are not useful for the majority of our non-traditional students. Instead, we are focused on better scheduling options for our students. In 2014, UMA began publishing a rolling three-semester course schedule to help facilitate faculty assignments, hiring of adjuncts, and student course planning. In response to needed improvements, we have begun planning a “just-in-time” scheduling process that would identify courses that individual students need to graduate or move to the next level in an “on-demand” manner at the time of registration. We believe this approach would allow us to build a more useful schedule for our students. Not only would such scheduling simplify selection of courses for students, as well and advising for faculty, but would help improve overall course enrollments, make better use of existing resources, and improve retention and graduation rates. Once a model is developed, it will be piloted in the coming year to determine if it should go “into production” for all students.

**E-Learning**

UMA’s leadership role in e-learning and teaching within the UM System is predicated on innovative and motivated faculty, many of whom began teaching with technology 35 years ago; the availability of current and improving technologies; and readily available, skilled instructional design and technology support. The addition of a permanent UMA instructional design team in 2011 who provides formal and as-needed assistance has been very beneficial to faculty. The faculty-driven Blackboard redesign project for MHHS led to a consistent Blackboard course menu template/structure so that students could find course components under the same headings in all MHHS courses. UMA faculty’s heavy dependence on current, reliable technologies has motivated UMA to insist strongly that the new UM System consolidated restructuring of Information

There is also a perception among some at UMA that rapid growth in online offerings negatively affects UMA’s retention and student satisfaction rates. This reaction comes mainly from those who believe face-to-face teaching and learning is the better method. While this may be true in their experience, UMA’s experience with the majority of non-traditional students is often that courses at a distance (using technology) are the only option for them - as they are unable to come to campus to participate in face to face classes. Additionally, we have documented (See workroom or Links folder) that student completion and course success rates (grades) across modalities are significantly the same. Given the wide range and type of students and their preferred methods of learning, as well as similar faculty diversity, it is clear that UMA will need to continue to offer choices of modality each semester, the balance perhaps varying by program. With enrollments in online and other technology-based modalities growing in double digits each year, it is clearly in UMA’s best interest to continue to build strong online courses and programs.

On a related note and despite our best efforts thus far, some students assume that online courses will be easier than face-to-face classes. There is a clear need to better prepare students to become more successful in online courses. We anticipate the planned online orientation program becoming available in the summer of 2014-2015, along with other preparatory programs for students will help address this problem.

Additionally, we acknowledge that not all online courses are developed and presented in the same manner, with some reports of delayed response to students by faculty members, varying and confusing Blackboard formats, and inadequate direction for students on how to navigate the online course details. Numerous efforts to address these problems are underway, including pedagogical training by program, technical literacy development options for faculty, and improvements in online student supports (such as the Online Writing Center, online student orientation, and strengthened online library services.)

Although numerous applications and technology resources are available, not all faculty members are fully aware they exist. The addition of instructional design and technology support by UMA and workshops have helped with the transition to more online and asynchronous courses. The driving force for UMA to continue to expand availability of high-quality online courses and programs is the growing UM System and external competition for our students. Five years of UMA data indicates that UMA degree candidates will go to other campuses if we don’t offer the online courses they want (See workroom or Links folder in Portal). These efforts, combined with developing new program niches, will help us maintain and grow enrollment levels in order to fund our expenditure budget and help avoid additional layoffs and program elimination.

UMA has embraced e-learning and its technology. Acknowledging that e-learning is the beginning of a new way of educating is probably the best thing we can do—not at the expense of traditional teaching and learning but rather as a requirement for future survival. New investments are needed for faculty development in successful asynchronous teaching; students need better preparation and support to be successful using these methodologies; and rigorous assessment, analysis and focused adjustments of the entire process of e-learning needs to become a core institutional commitment.

**Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit**

Course credit awards are based on the number of contact hours and content coverage. Again, the faculty, in consultation with the academic administration, has developed a thorough process to safeguard the academic integrity of all courses, programs, and certificates. Approximately 70% of students who take the UMA placement tests in reading, mathematics and writing find themselves being recommended for developmental or remedial courses. In 2013-14, approximately 1,760 students (first-time, transfer, readmits) were accepted and enrolled at UMA. Approximately, 49% or 855 of these students did not require placement testing, and 51% or 905 students did. Of the 905 students that did require placement testing and based on testing performance, 250 students (28%) met the proficiency benchmark and 655 students (72%) did not meet the proficiency benchmark and were recommended/required for developmental coursework. Although students who test into developmental courses do not receive degree credit, they are expected to successfully complete their remedial courses prior to registering for a credit-bearing course in that discipline. Unfortunately, this requirement has not been consistently enforced, thus setting students up with false hopes of success. Notably, the barrier course review process identified several developmental courses as significant problems. Discussions continue about how to balance access with the responsibility of adequately preparing students with academic deficiencies to be successful.

Academic honesty is taken very seriously at UMA, yet it remains an ongoing concern, especially with the expansion of online courses. Faculty are responsible for reporting alleged cheating or plagiarism to the Office of the Dean of Students. That Office’s staff follows up with the faculty member and student to determine what (if any) disciplinary action should be taken. As is the case nationally, UMA still has concern about the integrity of online testing. We continue to work with NEASC and follow legislative and policy discussions concerning the issue. At the moment, the decision whether to require proctored exams with online courses remains the prerogative of the instructor. UMA, like other campuses in the UM System, has support from University College to arrange support for proctored exams anywhere our students are taking courses.

Within condensed courses in seven-week sessions, there is a concern that students do not have the same opportunities for reflection, analysis, and synthesis as with semester-long courses. UMA’s Instructional Design staff is available to assist faculty with teaching strategies and course structural changes for these shorter term courses; developmental courses do not lend themselves to a shortened term are not offered in this format. Recent studies suggest that students in short (7 week) courses actually do better than students in 14- or 15-week semesters, but analysis is ongoing (See details in workroom or in Links folder in Portal).

There continues to be a need to expand active faculty connections to students. Many who teach students at a distance do “advise” students on Blackboard and through e-mail, yet receive little formal recognition for that student support, nor is such support spelled out as an expectation within the context of their advising responsibilities. Reaching students who participate in “delayed viewing” courses is a particular concern. In the delayed viewing scenario, students are not synchronously connected to the faculty member during the ITV course, and technology supports to reach students are not always deployed in a consistent manner.

UMA faculty continue to strive for instructional excellence through innovative strategies and techniques and web-based technologies that allow distant students real-time participation in traditional classrooms and blended classrooms. A small core of Arts and Sciences faculty continue to offer “integrated courses” that bring together multiple disciplines. Although students value the unique educational opportunities offered in integrated courses, the number of faculty participating in this course grouping is small, generally only allowing one six or nine-credit course per year. Interest is growing in the option to complete multiple Gen Ed requirements in one highly integrated course.

A recent Cuba course encompassing literature, art and architecture offered in the spring of 2014 is the latest such course and was considered very successful, with 18 students enrolled. Based on the success of the “integrated courses,” UMA is evaluating whether this approach to meeting multiple Gen Ed requirements within one course is an educational niche UMA should pursue.

The UM System website [OnlineMaine](http://online.maine.edu/) has been a mixed blessing. As predicted, this web service makes it easier for students to locate online or blended courses, and to evaluate in-hand credits and transfer credits among campuses. OnlineMaine also allows students to find “equivalent” non-UMA courses rather easily often sending out students away from UMA. Additionally, the fast fill rate of available online courses at UMA often pushes UMA students to seek equivalent online courses at our sister universities rather than selecting a televised or traditional classes at UMA. In response to this “outflow” phenomenon, UMA faculty have radically increased the number of online courses, as well as increased capacity within scheduled courses. This move has dramatically reduced the imbalance away course registration by UMA students versus incoming registration from other UM System campuses each semester.

Although Maine’s community colleges continue to seek 2+2 transfer agreements, UMA has determined that course-by-course transfer process—based on previous NEASC recommendations—is the best approach, allowing us to ensure transfer students meet UMA general education requirements. [Baccalaureate Transfer Guide](http://www.uma.edu/pla.html#transfer-from-the-maine-community-college-system)s have been created and posted by the Enrollment Services Department for all Maine community colleges to assist their students in transferring credits smoothly. UMA will continue to evaluate the success of community college transfers to UMA and make necessary adjustments to requirements for incoming students.

**Assessment of Student Learning**

As addressed in the description, UMA has made a significant effort to advance the assessment activities and mechanisms across the curriculum. Still, there are areas of improvement in our critical examination.

*Course-Level Assessment*

Academic departments and programs continue to work diligently to ensure that all UMA courses have clearly stated learning outcomes and that a mapping of approved assessment techniques links outcomes from each course to learning outcome for the program. (See program assessment folders in Workroom) Course charters (also in workroom and samples in Links folder) for all UMA courses are nearly complete. Faculty are not in agreement that the generally stated learning outcomes in these charters are sufficient to provide adjunct and new faculty with a clear understanding of the expected depth of content coverage. We are taking further steps to provide faculty with guidance to ensure consistency, especially among multiple sections of the same course. For example, the Mathematics Department will continue to provide adjuncts with sample syllabi, department selected materials, and guidelines for assessment. The Curriculum Committee checks to ensure that the stated prerequisites and student assessments are consistent with the level of the course and compatible with precursor courses. Anticipated additional research, especially comparing student success across the same courses taught by adjuncts and full-time faculty, will provide a comparison benchmark.

Regarding the new online course evaluation, faculty members are concerned about a decreased student response rate (30% in fall 2014). In response, the Provost will allow a special consideration for individual faculty members to either include or exclude their online course evaluation results in their personnel file during the first iterations. Furthermore, the Provost also drafted an institutional policy on the online course evaluation and shared with the Faculty Senate in October 2014. The details of collecting and managing online course evaluation data remain a work in progress.

*Program Level Assessment*

Course assessments and program reviews have improved dramatically over the past ten years. The framework and process of program reviews are fully established, and data and information are collected annually. Administrators and faculty are now able to access a great deal of data to aid them in decision-making, and recommendations for improvements are being presented in the five-year comprehensive report. In the past, these type of recommendations never had a platform for consideration.

UMA has documented successes in assessing student learning outcomes, the results of which have changed program requirements or the delivery of courses. One example is the Art program’s assessment of student writing in the capstone art project class mentioned earlier, and many other examples of this kind are documented in program assessment folders. The revisiting of student learning outcomes, course charters, and program curriculum maps have provided valuable information to faculty about the effectiveness of their curriculum. Because of this, academic programs are becoming stronger. However, there still exists varying degrees of rigor regarding assessment methods and continuous improvement efforts among the degree programs. This is partly because of an allegedly increasing faculty workload and a lack of assessment support at the program level. Some solutions will be addressed in our projection.

*General Education Assessment*

As outlined above, UMA’s Gen Ed assessment is still in the formative stage. Faculty groups are working on the four Gen Ed outcome areas and are gradually building their confidence and expertise with the measurement designs, methodologies, and the use of assessment results for program improvement. Still, the institutional guide that coordinates the implementation of individual outcome area assessment is still a work in progress.

In addition to establishing an organizational structure and coordination, agreeing on faculty ownership of Gen Ed and interest in its assessment is critical to the success of UMA. Many program faculty who do not teach Gen Ed courses view UMA’s breadth of such courses as worthwhile but the responsibility of others. While it is not unusual that Gen Ed courses be spread across multiple academic programs, it is a weakness in the overall structure of how UMA manages Gen Ed. In response to the lack of faculty ownership, program faculty have been asked to map their program curricula to the Gen Ed outcomes. This process began in the fall of 2013 and is ongoing. This process will help provide opportunities for program faculty to consider and then create a program-specific (thematic) means for their students to complete one or more of the 11 UMA general education outcomes. Future efforts will engage more faculty with Gen Ed and ultimately with understanding if our graduates meet our standards for the “educated person.”

Once assessment tools are in place for all 11 Gen Ed outcomes, it will much easier for program faculty to argue that their program courses can meet the outcomes thematically. At least one other campus within the UM System, the University of Southern Maine, tracks general education competencies across the curriculum by adding a fourth digit (HTYW-History with Writing competency) to the course number to indicate the general education competency addressed in the course. Various other models are under discussion.

*Institution Level Assessment*

UMA’s Educated Person statement has been refined and published and is integrated to some degree in academic program outcomes but is not consistently used as a base for those outcomes. As of yet, no comprehensive process for assessment at this institutional level has been developed. A comprehensive review of the alignment between institutional and program learning outcomes process should be developed as a part of program review, and as noted will be easier if not intuitive once the entire Gen Ed cycle has been assessed.

While UMA administers various student surveys and collected significant amount of data, the analysis has not been fully completed and shared with the campus community. UMA still has potential to further advance data-informed decision-making. Some initiatives were begun in the spring of 2015 (See Standard 4 Projections for details).

*E-Learning Assessment*

*US News and World Report*’s College Ranking serves as one indicator of the quality of UMA’s online degree programs. There are other potential data analyses awaited for e-learning assessment. Other than course completion comparisons and the Business faculty member comparing student success in the same course taught in three different modalities during the same semester mentioned earlier, little specialized assessment has been completed for e-learning. More specialized assessment is needed for the entire realm of UMA e-learning offerings.

**PROJECTIONS**

**General Education**

In the fall of 2015, individual programs will modify their course checksheets if needed to indicate how they will meet all 11 Gen Ed outcomes. These new requirements will be required institution- wide by the time of the 2016-2017 catalog’s publication. Assessment of student success on Gen Ed outcomes will then be evaluated within the context of each academic program.

Driven by economic changes, increased competition, as well as declining numbers of high school graduates, the UM System is expected to increase its scrutiny of the sustainability of existing programs, allowing UMA to take a closer look at the feasibility of maintaining particular programs. While this could mean the elimination of additional programs and positions, UMA will continue to evaluate all programs and services in the context of the UM System changes underway, and reallocate and repurpose resources to increase financial efficiency—ultimately to make the institution better able to address the educational, economic, and cultural needs of central Maine with the resources we have.

**The Major and Concentration**

UMA will encourage a wider range of integrated and interdisciplinary courses, including more cross-college and “integrated” courses—offering at least one per year—to allow students to satisfy general education requirements integrated with disciplinary studies. These integrated courses will become a niche for UMA and their availability will help attract students to UMA. We believe integrated courses that satisfy a number of Gen Ed requirements and offer unique opportunities will allow UMA to educate our students about the value and purpose of “general education” as well as interdisciplinary studies.

**E- Learning**

UMA will continue to invest in instructional design and technology support and maintain strong working relationships with the UM System IT staff who manage teaching technologies across the System. Greater investments in faculty development, technology applications, and supports for student success in these courses will mirror, at least in focus and priority, the investments made in “bricks and mortar” in the last century. Developing a strategy to engage all faculty and programs in methods of including online, hybrid, and other asynchronous technologies in their courses and programs will be an institutional priority and included in the developing 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, along with benchmarks, timelines, and budgetary implications.

UMA will continue to be a leader in distance education and e-learning within and outside the State of Maine. This will be made possible through the exploration of and investment in new technologies and the continuing professional development and support of UMA’s full- and part- time faculty. UMA will enhance the current ITV modality to encompass a more blended class environment utilizing “real time anywhere” technologies. In 2011-2012, we implemented an expanded faculty assistant policy to provide more support to faculty and plan to look for expanded ways to leverage faculty assistants to help address the retention issue. One innovative idea in the works is the creation of “virtual cohorts” of students in the same online course – working together in the virtual cohort outside of class. As they have been to date, UMA faculty will be early adaptors for these new approaches, testing them, refining their use, integrating them in their classes to enhance student learning, and sharing these techniques with faculty at other UM System campuses.

UMA will work with a marketing consultant to learn to be more effective at competing with private and out-of-state online schools to recruit and retain distance students.

**Assessment of Student Learning**

UMA will continue the assessment processes already begun and further invest to improve our students’ opportunity to complete their education.

*Course-Level Assessment*

Changing from paper to online course evaluation has caused a decrease in student responses. To address this, various strategies will be implemented beginning in the spring of 2015. They include such possibilities as using a portable cart of laptops in face-to-face classes so students can complete the evaluation then and there and providing incentives for evaluation completion. To alleviate faculty concerns about the use of course evaluation results, a transitional institutional policy has been drafted by the Provost and will be presented to the Faculty Senate as a proposal for making inclusion of the first year’s evaluations inclusion in an instructor’s personnel file optional.

*Program-Level Assessment*

Recognizing that the academic departments are using a common template and process of program review, the Provost, working with the Faculty Senate, will plan and offer another Assessment Summit in fall 2015, focusing on academic assessment asking program coordinators to share their practices and strategies to make this “cross-institutional” assessment process useful and meaningful. The criteria defining “the educated person” will be integrated into all program outcomes, leading the way to help students better understand what they know and why it’s important that they know it.

*General Education Assessment*

The Director of Assessment and the new Associate Director, in collaboration with OIRP, will continue to implement the new five-year Gen Ed assessment plan, ultimately covering all 11 areas of expected competency. During the coming year, these same individuals will collaborate with the Provost and academic deans to draft a plan for the proposed Center or Council for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. As funding allows, this new unit will develop strategies that increase ownership of Gen Ed across the university, gather and exchange good practices across a wide variety of assessment exercises at all curricular levels, build institutional policy, and nurture faculty engagement to enhance and expand UMA’s culture of assessment. We believe this new unit could effectively consolidate the assorted assessment functions and committees now operating at UMA (the Assessment Committee, the Core & Gen Ed Committee, and the E-Leaning Council).

Because of the challenge of transferability of general education requirements, as UMA continues its cycle of annual general education assessment, we will begin to assess student success at a variety of levels, from first-year students to, transfer students to graduating seniors. This will begin with the 2015 assessment of information literacy both in first-year classes as well as senior capstone courses. This pilot will guide the process of ongoing assessment of Gen Ed outcomes for students at every level. By 2019, UMA will have completed one full cycle of general education assessment, with improvements already completed in many of the earlier general education course offerings. Opportunities for program faculty to build general education themes within their major courses that successfully address the one or more general education competencies will be in place, beginning as pilot efforts in select programs, and then moving across all programs. The “educated person” criteria will become successfully linked to all program outcomes and related assessment by June of 2019 when the first Gen Ed cycle is completed.

*Institution-Level Assessment*

For the institution-level learning outcomes assessment, UMA will continue to examine various student surveys (such as NSSE, Noel Levitz, and Alumni Career Survey) and other direct measures to better inform university-wide educational initiatives. In spring 2015, the Dean of Students, the Program Coordinator of Biology from the Augusta Campus, the Campus Dean at Bangor, the Program Coordinator Mental Health and Human Services from the Bangor Campus, and the Associate Director of Assessment formed a NSSE Roll-out project team. This project will analyze three iterations of NSSE 2007, 2010, and 2013 and will share the findings with the campus community. UMA’s statement about “An Educated Person” will be considered as this process rolls out, and it will be revised or confirmed and operationalized as part of the institutional-level assessment.

As noted above, in 2015-2106, UMA will consider creating a Center or Council for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by combining and redefining the roles of the Assessment Committee, the Core & Gen Ed Committee, and the E-Leaning Council. Initial conversations and brainstorming will begin after receiving feedback from the NEASC review in 2015, thus allowing the UMA community to better understand the limitations and opportunities to improve our student learning.

*E-Learning Assessment*

To further enhance e-learning assessment, the Provost’s Office, the E-learning Committee, and OIRP will collaborate for further analysis of existing data (such as NSSE and Blackboard use). The effort will align with the online enrollment retention effort begun in 2014-15.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

UMA has developed a much stronger culture of academic assessment over the past decade. Every academic program submits annual reports that document the assessment of student learning. At five-year intervals, programs submit a comprehensive program review that includes student learning outcomes, which are reviewed by external reviewers. Several programs have external accreditation as well. We are also making and documenting data-driven improvements to courses, programs, and our overall efforts to improve the opportunity for success for students and faculty.

UMA has seen a significant migration of students to online courses. To meet this need, UMA faculty have begun offering many courses in online or hybrid format. Acknowledging that higher education is in a period of transition as alternative modalities are explored and developed, UMA continues to support faculty in their teaching, students in their learning, and these technologies in their development. We are committed to offering the best learning experiences possible for students. It is safe to say that the next ten years will bring many new ways of educating, and we expect that our historic agility and ability to respond to new challenges will allow us to remain successful.

# Dual Enrollment Program at UMA

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA has had dual enrollment agreements with several local high schools since the fall of 2012. Over the course of these two years, we have offered our English 101 and various 100 level Math courses in Gardiner, Cony, Hall-Dale and Monmouth High Schools, all located within twenty miles of our Augusta campus. These are semester-long classes without tuition, but with a posting fee of $50 that provides students with a UMA transcript reflecting their award of credit and grade for each course. In the fall of 2014, we offered English 101, College Writing, at Monmouth and at Cony High Schools; we are currently offering no Math dual enrollment courses.

Last spring (2014), the Bridge Year program, affiliated with United Technology Center in Bangor requested that we offer twelve English 101 (College Writing) and four History 103 (American History 1) courses at high schools, mostly in the Bangor area. [Bridge Year](http://mainedoenews.net/tag/bridge-year-program-maine/) is a Maine Department of Education funded program that supports Maine Career and Technical Education centers to offer college level courses for these technical center students. This program has financial support from Maine’s legislature. In addition, Bridge Year courses run the full year, which enables students to have more time to demonstrate that they have achieved our student learning outcomes. UMA has identified this population of Bridge Year students as an appropriate fit for our student profile. The fact that Bridge Year encourages career and technical focused students to consider continuing their college education immediately after high school has the potential to reduce the amount of remedial classes that we offer because the average age of our students is 32, and so many students need refresher courses before enrolling in college level classes. We anticipate that Bridge Year will encourage these students to continue on to get their degree immediately, mitigating these concerns.

This upcoming academic year (2015-2016), Bridge Year has requested that UMA offer up to 100 courses at various high schools, including ENG 101, ENG 102, HTY 103, HTY 104, MAT 112, MAT 115, BIO 100, CHY 105, COM 102, PSY 100, and SOC 101. Because this is a significant increase in time and capacity of UMA instructors and resources, we reviewed this request on two levels during the fall semester of 2014. First, we did a thorough financial analysis. UMA’s senior administrative team determined that the income for this expanded Bridge Year dual enrollment program covered the financial expenses for faculty oversight, additional student support resources and effective outreach to students. Our Office of Institutional Research provided evidence that UMA dual enrollment programs attract high school students to enroll directly in UMA upon graduation, over and above what would be expected in the general high school population. Based on the promise of enrolling more well- prepared students directly from high school, we considered the Bridge Year program consistent with UMA’s current mission to provide for the “educational, economic and cultural needs of Central Maine.” Second, UMA’s Faculty Senate developed an ad hoc committee to provide academic oversight for this initiative. The committee reviewed feedback from current dual enrollment instructors as well as faculty critics of dual enrollment programs and recommended in its December 2014 report that UMA expand the program with appropriate academic and other safeguards in place. This ad hoc committee will also provide recommendations to the Senate and to the administration for any future commitments that UMA will make to the Bridge Year high schools. UMA and Bridge Year of Maine have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to offer up to 100 courses for next academic year.

Each of UMA’s dual enrollment courses will be assigned a faculty liaison within the discipline, who will visit the high school where the dual enrollment courses are being taught, provide syllabi, learning outcomes expected and other resources for the teaching faculty, and work with the high schools to provide representative samples of student work that demonstrate that students are achieving UMA learning outcomes for these courses. Each discipline will also have an oversight faculty, who is a member of UMA’s full time faculty. These oversight faculty review resumes of high school instructors to ensure consistency with UMA adjunct faculty standards, including the possession of Master’s degrees at a minimum. The oversight faculty also are charged with assessing the student learning that occurs in these classes and making recommendations regarding faculty and high schools based on this assessment. They will be provided release time from their regular teaching load in order to accomplish these tasks. The Provost will have an ultimate determination as to whether to continue partnering with high schools, and ultimately with the Bridge Year program based on this faculty assessment.

UMA operates on the principle that our dual enrollment courses are UMA courses and that dual enrollment students are UMA students. Following from this principle, all our dual enrollment courses must adhere to the following standards to ensure that all our students meet our expectations for student learning:

* Every course undergoes UMA’s regular student evaluation procedure at the conclusion of each class with identical questions to classes offered at UMA campuses and centers. All UMA course evaluations include student responses to intended learning outcomes.
* All dual enrollment students receive a UMA student ID, and activates their email account. This will enable students to receive UMA messages consistent with other students and also take trainings related to Title IX and other UMA student policies that our on-campus students must undergo. It will also enable Bridge Year students access to our student portal and learning management system.
* All dual enrollment courses will be reflected on student transcripts just as any other course taken at UMA.
* Bridge Year will offer a February workshop where UMA’s oversight faculty and liaisons will meet with high school faculty in order to set appropriate expectations for student work.
* Dual enrollment students have access to UMA’s online writing center and access to UMA library resources comparable to our students at a distance. UMA has a long history of serving students at a distance, and dual enrollment students will have access to identical resources as all our distance students.
* Dual enrollment students need to satisfy prerequisites for these courses, including Accuplacer, other courses and sequences. Students will be juniors or seniors in their high school, and dual enrollment courses cannot exceed 100 level classes.
* UMA recommends several methods to assure consistency of grading between dual enrollment courses and UMA courses, including developing a resource of anonymous examples of work at different grade levels, calibrating a representative sample of dual enrollment student work with that of regular UMA classes, and assessing student work directly at the conclusion of the class. The faculty providing oversight for these classes determine the most appropriate combination of assessment techniques.

The Bridge Year program includes financial resources that many dual enrollment programs do not. Bridge Year of Maine provides a $650 stipend for each faculty liaison for each course. In addition, through the agreement with Bridge Year, we charge students $35/ credit hour. This will increase to $40/credit hour in the 2015-2016 academic year. This is significantly reduced from our usual tuition rate and so is very attractive to families of high school students, but it also enables us to develop the income necessary to provide release time for faculty overseers. The stipends from Bridge Year will cover the costs of the faculty liaisons, although UMA will have to cover their travel to visit high schools.

# APPRAISAL

Currently, UMA’s dual enrollment program is in the very early stages and so any appraisal of success is premature. We have identified the factors that will go into a thorough analysis of the program, namely assessment of student learning outcomes, the ongoing enrollment of dual enrollment students in UMA’s programs and successful completion of those programs. We have worked with faculty to build the academic supports necessary for success. But at this early stage, we can only project what is necessary in order to properly evaluate these programs.

# PROJECTIONS

UMA will assess success in our Bridge Year and other dual enrollment programs using a variety of measures. First and most importantly, we will continually assess student outcomes from each of the classes in order to demonstrate that when UMA awards academic credit, students are achieving appropriate college level work comparable to our own classes. UMA administration will work with the Faculty Senate’s ad hoc committee to assure this comparability. At the conclusion of the current academic year (2014-2015), we will have a set of student writing samples from our dual enrollment ENG 101 classes that will be compared with our on campus ENG 101 classes to assess student learning in these classes. Assessment of student learning overall will be an ongoing task and will take place at the conclusion of each class of dual enrollment programming.

UMA will also assess whether this dual enrollment program is achieving our goal of admitting well-prepared students to UMA programs directly out of high school. Because each dual enrollment student is identified within our enrollment program (MaineStreet), we will assess at the beginning of the fall of 2017 and again in 2018 how many of these Bridge Year students have enrolled at UMA after graduation from high school. At that point, we will reassess the success of this program in attracting talented students to our degree programs.

Provided continued legislative support and data supporting the benefits of Bridge Year to our students and our institution, UMA will continue to expand our level of commitment to the program.

**Standard Five**

**Faculty**

*UMA’s mission is fulfilled by the teaching; advising, scholarship and service of its faculty, whose work for, and commitment to, the institution distinguish them as outstanding professionals dedicated to serving the educational needs of the citizens of Central Maine.*

**DESCRIPTION**

**The Faculty**

In the fall 2014 semester, the UMA faculty consisted of 276 members, 89 of whom have full-time status and 187 part-time or adjunct status. Within the full-time ranks, 62 (70%) members were tenured, 13 (15%) held tenure track (probationary) status and the remainder (14) held fixed length or non-tenure track positions. In the description that follows, the term “faculty” generally refers to the full-time members unless otherwise indicated. Data forms reflect 92 full-time faculty members as the Provost and two academic Deans maintain faculty status.

**Full-time Faculty**

Recruitment and appointment of new faculty members is conducted in accordance with [UM System and UMA Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action requirements](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/) as well as per the collective bargaining [Agreements](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/labor-relations/) in effect between UMS and the Associated Faculties of the Universities of Maine (AFUM) and for adjuncts the Part-time Faculty Association (PATFA). Tenure-track faculty positions are normally recruited nationally. All faculty search committees have a majority of faculty membership and recommend finalist candidates to a college dean. As reported elsewhere in this self-study, and despite a proposed 1.7% increase in appropriation in each of the years of the next biennium, UMA has contended with flat appropriation funding for the last three years and a fixed tuition rate while enrollments have declined and costs have risen. As a result, recruitment of some faculty positions have been cancelled or delayed. Under the current AFUM contract, faculty who meet certain criteria are eligible for a special retirement incentive if they retire by August 31, 2015. Consistent with national trends for baby boomers retiring, UMA is seeing higher numbers of tenured faculty members opting to retire. We anticipate that faculty retirements in these higher tenured salary positions will help UMA begin to replace full-time tenure-track faculty positions in the near future.

The types of positions, qualifications and roles of UMA’s full-time faculty members are consistent with the university’s mission as a regional baccalaureate institution. The generic role of faculty members is described in the [Faculty Handbook](http://www.uma.edu/facultyhandbook.html) (Article 11), in the UMS-AFUM 2013- [2015 Contract, and in the UMS](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/labor-relations/)-PATFA Contract for adjunct faculty. These details are articulated further in each member’s letter of appointment (Sample in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). The role is comprised of four areas of responsibility with an emphasis placed upon teaching. Each full-time faculty member teaches base load of 9 to12 credit hours or an equivalent load each semester which may include administrative, project, or research release time. See Appendix for List of Releases.

Full-time faculty are also expected to advise students, participate in curricular development and committee work, produce scholarship/research and creative work, and provide additional services to the university, the UM System, and the broader Central Maine community.

Full-time faculty members are assigned to a peer group representing a degree program, a discipline or a department in one of two academic colleges. The academic program faculty units within colleges have the primary responsibility for the development, delivery, and assessment of the curriculum for their programs.

**Qualifications**

Indicators that reflect the qualifications of the faculty include degrees attained, professional practice experiences (teaching, clinical, leadership, business, and related certifications) and scholarly, professional, or creative achievements. Of the tenured and tenure-track members, 47 (53%) hold a recognized terminal degree. The remaining 47% hold a Master’s degree or other appropriate credentials in their field. In 2000, UMA formally adopted the terminal degree standard for all new full-time faculty hires in support of its transition to a regional baccalaureate institution. A key strength of this university is the depth of teaching experience and professional practice of its faculty. Our senior faculty member started at UMA in 1965 and is in his 50th year of teaching. In contrast, we have just hired 2 new tenure-track faculty members this fall.

The commitment of the faculty to their own continuous learning and practice within their disciplines is evidenced by data from the most recent Faculty Survey respondents (2014). 62% of the full-time and 54% of the part-time faculty attended conferences during the previous year. Of the full-time faculty, 46% hold current memberships in two or more professional organizations; 38% individuals are currently licensed or certified by their professions. See Appendix for the description of creative and scholarly work below.

**Diversity**

UMA has long felt a need to increase the diversity of its faculty. Since our decennial NEASC self-study in 2007, the full-time faculty has become predominantly female (61% as compared to 54% in 2007). Our faculty reflect [Maine’s demographic patterns](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/23000.html).

**The Use of Adjunct Faculty**

The adjunct faculty play an important role at UMA. In fall of 2014, they provided instruction for 52% of the courses offered at UMA (excluding Bridge Year Program instructors). We value their breadth of professional experience, as well as the wealth of community connections. They assure that the UMA curriculum is sensitive to the needs of local professional communities. Though adding the Bridge Year program (see Standard 4.1) may seem to make the number of adjunct faculty increase by 100, those individuals actually are high school teachers who are supervised by a full-time UMA faculty member and, as such, are not employed by UMA.

Adjunct faculty are well qualified to offer courses by virtue of their training and experience. In the fall 2014 semester, 28% held doctoral or other terminal degrees (up from 21% in 2007). Adjunct faculty offer courses using traditional and distance modalities. Given UMA’s emphasis on preparing students for entry into jobs in the many professional studies areas we offer programs in, adjunct faculty with specialty credentials/licenses are an important strategic asset for UMA.

The means by which adjunct faculty members are integrated vary substantially by college and by program. A part-time faculty handbook (Copy in workroom and in Links folder in Portal) workroom) is being developed to assist adjunct faculty with policies and procedures. The recent addition via the PATFA contract includes the requirement of evaluation of adjuncts by full-time faculty. That process is underway and thus far, both UMA faculty and the adjuncts evaluated are very positive about the experience with both partners sensing strengthening of the connection between adjunct faculty and full-time faculty at UMA. (See Appendix for sample evaluation process for adjunct faculty) documents from three different academic programs.)

**The Use of Faculty Assistants and Media Services Technicians**

The NEASC standards do not specifically refer to the use of Faculty Assistants (FAs) and Media Services Technician (MSTs) as such. However, these support personnel are critical to the faculty and their ability to function successfully. In fall of 2014, 42 Faculty Assistants (advanced undergraduate students, qualified community members, and adjunct faculty members) supported the teaching of UMA faculty members. These individuals are typically hired for 90 hours per semester and support faculty teaching larger classes. The average enrollment of an ITV course is 60 students, and can rise to upwards of 175 students distributed at approximately 40 sites and Centers statewide. Faculty Assistants supported 67 courses and managed an average of 54 students per course. Hiring these individuals and ensuring that they have adequate qualifications and training is the responsibility of faculty members teaching the course and is coordinated by the Provost’s Office. Their typical duties include grading assignments, conducting discussion board activities, and interacting with students about exams. FAs do not determine final grades nor do they submit final grades to the Registrar. (See FA contract and confidentiality agreement in workroom and in the Links folder).

University College (UC), an administrative unit of UMA and situated on the Augusta campus, is charged with supporting distance education at all of the UM System institutions. UMA faculty teaching over ITV work with Media Support Technicians (MST) employed by UC. These individuals assist primarily with ITV broadcasts and phone bridging elements of courses. During the fall of 2014, five of these technicians supported instruction in 53 UMA ITV classes.

**Faculty Recruiting, Compensation and Contractual Security**

Full-time Faculty: Recruiting and appointing new faculty members is conducted in accordance with [UM System and EO requirements](http://www.maine.edu/system/policy_manual/policy_section401.php) and follows the Bargaining Agreements in effect. In fall 2014, there were two position replacements added to the faculty to maintain current levels of faculty numbers.

*The Agreement between UMS and Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM)* sets

forth rank minima salaries and benefits according to rank. Salaries in excess of rank minima can be awarded either as a condition of hire or following tenure or post tenure reviews. UMA reviews faculty salaries on a regular basis to assure equity. Full-time faculty (base salary) compensation and comparisons are shown in the Appendix.

Adjunct Faculty: UMA advertises in statewide newspapers when there is a need to increase the pool of available adjunct faculty. Résumés are distributed to program coordinators for their review of applicants’ experience and course availability. If a coordinator wants to hire a new adjunct, he or she recommends to the College Dean, who processes a Personnel Recommendation Form. After teaching for three semesters, adjunct faculty have contractual rights based on their bargaining agreements. Their compensation is based on numbers and types of courses assigned, years of service, and rank, as outlined in the *UMS and Part-time Associated Faculties of the University of Maine System* Agreement (PATFA).

Adjunct faculty earn one service credit for each semester they teach and are assigned to one of three service (“seniority”) lists. Based on total number of credits earned, they move up on the lists: fewer than 6 credits (List 1); 6-12 credits (List 2); more than13 credits (List 3). Beginning with List 3, adjunct faculty on a higher list are offered two classes before those on a lower list. Adjuncts with 25 semesters of teaching experience who have taught at least two courses each semester for the past six semesters are given the opportunity to be appointed for the entire academic year. As mentioned previously, the new PAFTA contract requires that all adjuncts be evaluated regularly by the full-time faculty in their respective programs. Adjuncts earn either a “satisfactory” or “not satisfactory” rating. If an adjunct earns a “not satisfactory” rating, that adjunct faculty member will not earn a service credit for the current semester. Either the Dean or the program coordinator reviews student evaluations of the new adjunct. If the first semester’s evaluations are not positive, the adjunct is advised of the need to improve. After the first semester, peer committees review the adjunct. If the evaluations for the second semester shows no improvement, the adjunct is not hired again.

# Academic Policies, Procedures and Integrity

The primary sources of academic policies used by the faculty include [UM System Policies and Procedures](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/academic-affairs/administrative-procedures-manual/), UMA policies and procedures, and collective bargaining agreements, all of which are accessible online. The [UMA Faculty Handbook](http://www.uma.edu/facultyhandbook.html) has been redesigned and updated, and is also online. It describes the role of the faculty, provides linkage to essential academic policies and entitlements, and informs them of professional development and scholarly support resources. The Part-Time Faculty Handbook now in draft form and addresses many of the same issues but will also include policies and procedures specifically relevant to adjunct faculty.

UM System and UMA’s policies and procedures support academic freedom consistent with the System’s policy and AAUP standards. These policies confirm the value of academic integrity and also require a high standard of ethical conduct on the part of all university employees.

UMA also has in place specific [policies and procedures](http://www.uma.edu/academicpolicies.html) on student academic integrity, sexual harassment, equal opportunity, affirmative action, and conflict of interest. UMA provides access to commercial software for checking plagiarism in student papers. During fall 2013, the System version of [a UMS Student Conduct Code](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#conduct) was approved and implemented and is included in the UMA Student Handbook.

**Faculty Assignments and Workload**

Faculty responsibilities include teaching, advising, service, and scholarly work. There is broad general agreement that the workload of the faculty is aligned with the mission and key goals of the institution. However, the perceived adequacy of the number of full-time faculty positions, workload equity in terms of advising and students taught, and the distribution of overload assignments continues to generate discussion. These concerns were detailed in the 2007 self-study. UMA can male further progress in addressing this significant issue as UMA’s assessment capabilities continue to improve. Progress, especially in adding additional full-time faculty continues to be hampered by the economic conditions described above. The university’s plan is to develop program specific appropriate benchmarks over time that balance faculty resources with teaching loads, and program enrollments. At the time of this self-study, some data is available indicating that differences in class sizes, advising loads and engagement in service do exist. In 2013, the Academic Program Discontinuance Committee identified programs whose direct and indirect costs outweighed their credit hour tuition and fees revenue. As noted, UMA has begun the process of improving “balance” by eliminating two associate degree programs, partnering with another campus to share a degree, integrating separate programs, and reducing the number of sections taught by adjuncts.

Aside from variances that are discipline specific, the actual nature of faculty workloads varies based upon factors including enrollments, course delivery media, location(s) of students, intensity of writing and other core competency requirements, use of media; and other factors including content expertise, overload or administrative release status, and lab, internship, or performance requirements. We have created a preliminary analysis of workload by academic college focusing only upon enrollment sizes and media. Overall (not including one-to-one tutorials), the course section size in fall 2014 varied from 5 students in dental hygiene lab courses to an ITV course with 163. Average enrollments per full-time faculty member ranged from 16 to 329. Efforts are made to acknowledge and address these factors. For example, courses taught via ITV count as double load courses for some faculty, and Faculty Assistants are provided to larger sections of face to face as well as asynchronous courses. In addition to the variation in individual faculty workloads, the limited number of full-time faculty for the relative size of the institution continues to be a significant problem for UMA, as demonstrated in the charts found in the Appendix of this Standard. A copy of the fall 2014 actual faculty workload by individual will be available in the workroom and in the Links folder in the Portal.

**Teaching**

In fall of 2014, UMA offered a total of 565 courses. Of those courses, 339 sections (60%) were conducted face to face (on-site) on the Augusta and Bangor Campuses and at our UC Centers. There were 53 ITV sections (9.4%) taught. For a description of ITV courses, go to the UC website and open “[What are ITV courses](https://learn.maine.edu/faq/)”. Of these 53 ITV sections, 36 (68%) were taught by full-time faculty and 17 (32%) taught by adjunct members taught using ITV. ITV section sizes in fall 2014 averaged 60 students distributed to as many as 40 sites statewide. Twenty-five courses (4.4%) were also offered via video conferencing (VC) with an average of 22 students per course. Of these courses taught by VC, 11 (44%) were taught by full-time faculty and 14 (56%) by adjuncts. There were 148 web sections (26.2%) taught online. The online course enrollments averaged 28 students and are capped at 30, 25, or 22 depending upon individual course demands. Faculty frequently raise the caps to 60, 50 or 44 earning them double compensation when enrollments are doubled above the cap. Of the 148 online sections, 82 (55.4%) were taught by full-time faculty, and 66 (44.6%) were taught by adjuncts.

**Advising**

Faculty advising is primarily the responsibility of full-time faculty members with support from the professional advisors in Enrollment Services and UC Centers. Advisees are assigned to full- time faculty in the student’s respective degree program. New faculty are given the first semester for orientation, training, and mentoring before being assigned advisees. Advising expectations vary by academic program, with formal advising loads ranging from 8 to 268 matriculated students. Some programs have higher numbers of declared majors than others so that faculty in those programs tend to have a higher advising loads. In an effort to balance advising loads, full-time faculty in departments without majors share these advising loads. Faculty advisors may also be assigned based on a double major, a minor, or certificate. Full-time faculty also advise non- matriculated students and, informally, those in their classes. Faculty responsibilities for holding six hours weekly of published office hours and supporting student in and out of class are described in the UMA Faculty Handbooks.

The average number of assigned advisees is 92.5 students per faculty advisor. Actual contact with students varies considerably by faculty member. Many students rely heavily upon Enrollment Services advisors on campuses and at UC locations (Standard 6). Professional advisors support some degree programs with the advising of pre-program admitted students.

Advisees can be campus-based, affiliated with UC Centers, or located out of state.

**Scholarship and Creative Work**

The emphasis on and support for professional development and scholarship has increased as UMA has moved toward becoming a regional baccalaureate institution. An initial survey of scholarly and creative activities of full-time faculty was conducted in 2003 and updated in 2006. Consistent with [Boyer’s Scholarship Reconsidered (1990)](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2007/10/02/wcu), UMA faculty scholarship includes a diverse range of content areas and methods. The scholarship of teaching (and of assessment) has also been embraced by UMA. Over the past two years, a faculty-initiated program (Research and Pedagogy [[RaP])](http://www.uma.edu/rap-home.html) showcasing research and teaching activities has been instituted. RaP sessions are held on the Augusta campus, Bangor campus, and the Rockland Center. They give individual faculty members a forum to present results of their scholarship to the University community.

Full-time and adjunct faculty scholarship in the past three years has included artistic performances and exhibitions, conference presentations, and formal research and publication. Based on faculty surveys, the following indicators demonstrate that UMA faculty are actively involved: 81% attending conferences in their fields; 82% engaged in research, performance, and exhibition or producing other scholarly work in their discipline. In the past three years, 20% published in their fields, and 14% indicated that they received professional recognition for their works. Trustee Professorships which are available at the UM System level, and sabbatical leaves have also resulted in completion of doctorates, art projects, research on oral histories, research on Shakespeare, innovative pedagogy, the fruits of an archeological dig, and publications. Sabbaticals, Educational Leaves, and Trustee Professorships have been regularly available and well used (Details in workroom or in Links folder in Portal).

**Professional Development**

UMA supports professional growth through funding and through release time from teaching. The 2014 Faculty Survey indicated that 46% held membership in professional organizations, and 46 actively engaged in professional development activities during the 2013-2014 year. In FY 2014, professional development funding for conferences or related professional activities was $51,400, divided proportionately between the two Colleges. UMA also provides support in the form of release time for projects and/or course development. University College, as well as the Katz and the Nottage Libraries, also provide faculty training workshops and the acquisition of periodicals, professional media, and texts.

From 2010 to 2014, UMA provided 244 professional development awards to full-time faculty. Each year funds are awarded by deans and can be further supplemented by the Provost and President. Also awarded were 151 grants or fellowships from UMA, the UM System or from external agencies. UMA provides funding, often to the amount requested, but limits awards when necessary to help ensure equitably distribution within the colleges. The total amount awarded during this time frame was $834,115, not counting release time. This represents a significant increase since our 2007 decennial report where such funding was in the $250,000 range.

Adapting new pedagogy to become competent and successful at teaching with technology and at a distance requires a substantial investment in the faculty. Offering stipends, UMA supports three basic investments to assist faculty: 1) training for basic technical literacy; 2) enhanced training for those already using DE technologies; and 3) ongoing training to faculty who are adapting their courses to smart classrooms and other new technologies. (Listing in workroom and in Links folder in Portal).

Using teaching technologies, especially at a distance, continues to be one of the distinguishing strengths of the UMA faculty. All faculty (new and experienced, full-time and adjunct) are provided workshops and one-on-one support to enhance teaching success. This is accomplished with UMA’s two instructional support staff in concert with those employed by UC.

The third component of UMA’s program development efforts in this area involve supplementing the training of faculty who are offering classroom-based instruction but adapting to “smart” classroom environments. In 2014, virtually all of full-time and adjunct faculty made use of one or more forms of technology in their courses.

**Service**

All full-time faculty are expected to engage in university and community service. The range of engagement, however, varies substantially. A core group of faculty is actively involved and carries heavy committee responsibilities. Deans attempt to balance instructional, advising and service workloads as equitably as possible. Qualitative data reported on the faculty surveys indicates that both full- and part-time faculty make substantial contributions in these areas. Forty-four percent of full-time faculty participate in civic organizations. Additionally, 46% participate or hold office in professional organizations.

**Curriculum Development, Maintenance and Evaluation**

Mindful of the need to demonstrate student success and value of each academic program in this era of limited resources, the faculty continues to articulate and refine curriculum standards. Program faculty members have generated course charters for each course and curriculum maps; and have intensified assessment capacity, with an emphasis on redesigning program reviews and assessment of outcomes; and have endorsed a strategy and timeline for implementing a comprehensive set of core curriculum standards with related assessment. Another strength of the faculty is its collective commitment to and success in meeting and exceeding external professional accreditation standards in a number of programs. (s-Forms)

Maintaining a handle on academic standards is a complex task, due in part to multiple delivery methods. Faculty teaching asynchronously must complete a new online course format proposal and have it approved by the dean for that course and modality. Spurred in 2011 by a grant from the UM System Strategic Investment Fund (SIF), UMA faculty have actively increased their engagement in assessment procedures. Program faculty peer groups have completed the first in a series of upgraded program assessment practices. Additionally, the Faculty Senate has expanded its committee structure to address these needs by adding an Assessment Committee. The Provost’s office hired a Director of Assessment in 2009 and that position remains filled by a faculty member. For a discussion of the work done developing assessment capacity related to learning outcomes, refer to the Standard 2 report.

**Quality and Effectiveness of the Faculty’s Work**

The work of UMA faculty is systematically reviewed using procedures described contractually and in the Faculty Handbook. A new uniform model of peer review has been drafted for the colleges. The criteria for tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review are aligned with UMA’s distinctive mission and purpose. Student input into faculty, course, and program evaluations are significant elements of UMA’s assessment practices. Aggregate results of student evaluation surveys are used routinely in pre- and post-tenure performance reviews.

UMA, along with other UMS campuses continue to conduct post-tenure reviews, in which all tenured faculty are reviewed every four years. Within the process, faculty may be awarded a 3.5% base pay adjustment for "satisfactory" performance. An additional discretionary base pay adjustment of up to 3.5% is available for "stellar performance," equity, and salary compression.

Tenure-track and fixed-length full-time faculty members are evaluated annually. They are evaluated based on current contributions within the four areas of the faculty’s responsibilities. Adjunct faculty are evaluated at the end of each course by students using the same evaluation forms used by full-time faculty. Coordinators and Deans review the results of these evaluations and take necessary action as described above. In spring 2014, Academic Program Coordinators were given the names of 24 adjuncts who were to be evaluated by full-time faculty in their respective programs. At the end of December 2014, 33 additional evaluations had been completed for a total of 57 adjunct faculty evaluated. Program Coordinators and faculty will follow up with training and information where needed.

**APPRAISAL**

Since UMA’s last decennial self-study in 2007, the UMA faculty have matured in terms of assessment, building upon its teaching strengths, becoming more comfortable evaluating its work, and increasing its level of scholarly activity. The faculty is currently positioned to make a major contribution toward realizing of UMA’s evolving baccalaureate mission.

* Current UMA faculty members are qualified by training and experience to support UMA’s revised mission, the current economic realities, and increased expectations of accountability. The institution has worked diligently to assure that all full-time tenure- track faculty have terminal degrees. The depth of teaching and the professional expertise of the faculty stands out as notable strengths.
* Working conditions at UMA are congenial, and UMA continues to protect academic freedom and the respectful treatment of faculty, students, staff, and community members. Contractual security was improved by the new faculty contract, which was ratified in 2013. Though the overall composition of the faculty lacks diversity, it mirrors the demographics of the State of Maine. UMA has an open and thorough process for recruiting faculty. The number of recent hires of faculty members having terminal degrees documents UMA’s commitment to hiring more faculty with terminal degrees.
* A key indicator of the university’s commitment to UMA’s goal of becoming a robust baccalaureate institution is strong support for faculty development and scholarly activities. The 2014 Faculty Survey indicated that nearly all of the full-time and a substantial number of adjuncts engage annually in continuing study within their disciplines. Further, a majority of faculty members contribute to their disciplines and professions by producing creative and scholarly works, presentations, or original research.
* University funding for conferences and other scholarly activities has improved significantly in recent years, and faculty are recognized for their efforts to enhance their portfolios.
* In comparison to the numbers of full-time faculty in 2007, today’s numbers reveal no progress towards reducing the reliance upon part-time faculty. Unfortunately, the plan to add a new FT faculty member each year following our 2007 self-study fell prey to the economic issues described above. That reality acknowledged, UMA has begun “tightening its belt” by reducing the number of sections taught by adjuncts and assigning FT faculty to some of those slots, in the process reducing the overall number of sections offered. Where possible, UMA has reallocated faculty slots from retired or departing faculty to higher demand programs.
* This problem is compounded by the decline in full-time faculty when, before the economic downturn, we had planned on adding one or two faculty a year. As has been pointed out, a high number of faculty members have retired as a result of a recent UM System retirement incentive and reduced the number of full-time faculty. Eighteen full-time faculty retired since 2011. Thus far only 15 have been replaced or are currently being searched and will join the faculty in the 2015-2016 academic year.
* Even though baccalaureate graduation rates are low (13%) by IPEDS standards for six years (2006-2007), on balance available evidence suggests that the faculty have successful prepared students for professional roles; the rates of student satisfaction with their contact with faculty continue to be high. To put UMA’s graduation rates in perspective, three of its peer institutions have graduation rates of 29%, 25%, and 16%. Outcome data such as post-graduate licensing exam scores, national capstone exam scores, and anecdotal reports of employers of graduates are also encouraging. (details in workroom and in the Links folder in the Portal)
* The twelve-credit teaching load serves as the cornerstone to define overall faculty workload. However, neither that narrow definition of workload (credit hours alone) nor the means by which it is monitored and adjusted are adequate to describe the challenges of educating UMA’s part-time, non-residential students. Many faculty members actually teach and advise many more students than is customary at peer institutions, reducing the opportunity for individual interactions with students and sufficient time for scholarship and research or service to UMA.
* The impact of the cumulative workload on faculty effectiveness in teaching and scholarship needs additional analysis.

**PROJECTIONS**

UMA has increased its investment in faculty and their professional development. Improving assessment activities and increasing authentic faculty involvement continue to be a priority. UMA will continue its commitment to hire tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees and strong teaching and technology skills. It will also continue to assure a high standard of academic freedom and academic integrity by maintaining and implementing clear policies. UMA has a foundation of technological resources and a history of applying them to the classroom. We are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and scholarship and demonstrating them with strong assessment practices.

To support continued development and success of full-time faculty, UMA will articulate a formal faculty development plan complete with benchmarks ([UMA Strategic Plan 5.1.4), a](http://www.uma.edu/umastrageticplan.html)nd where possible increase the number of full-time faculty in order to improve the full-time to part-time ratios comparable to those in peer institutions (See chart in Appendix)

Working within the UM System, UMA will take advantage of existing and new resource distribution options, including the 2014 BOT faculty retirement incentive that can enhance UMA’s fiscal position. This transition process is especially important in the arena of hiring additional full-time tenure-track faculty for growth areas of the curriculum and to sustain UMA’s transition to a fiscally stable and successful regional baccalaureate institution. Each of the colleges will develop standards and best practices to better integrate, evaluate, and support adjunct faculty and to enhance their teaching, their professional accomplishments, and their support of the institutional mission.

UMA will review and, as feasible, adjust faculty workloads to achieve greater equity and to align with program objectives, numbers of students and advisees, and amount of committee service.

As noted above and within current economic realities, the number of overall sections taught each semester is being reduced, full-time faculty are being moved to sections formerly taught by adjuncts, and where practical, vacancies are being assigned to the fastest growing programs.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

UMA regularly reviews its faculty, each year up to the point of tenure, and every four years thereafter, in regard to their teaching, research or creative activity, and service to the University and/or community. UMA has also begun the process mandated in 2012 of regular reviews and greater integration of adjunct faculty by the full-time faculty in their field. UMA will focus on the need for full-time tenure track faculty who can contribute to recruitment and retention of students, enhancing the use of technology applications in their teaching especially for distance students, and engaging more faculty in the overall work of UMA.

# Standard Six

# Students

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA is dedicated to making learning opportunities accessible statewide through two campuses, eight University College Centers, and online. Fall 2014 total enrollment was 4,743, and FTE was

3,373: 67% at the baccalaureate level, 19% at the associate level, and 14% at the certificate or non –degree level. 41% of fall 2014 baccalaureate students were seniors, 22% were juniors, 18% sophomores, and 19% are first year students. In fall 2014, 63% attended part-time and 37% full –time; 72% were female, 82% white, 7% minorioty, and 97% Maine residents. The average age was 32 years old. 82% received financial aid, and of this group, 80% received a Pell Grant. Approximately, 11% of students were enrolled in developmental English, Math or Reading courses.

**AY2013-14 Total Enrollment by Location (N=6,288)**

**Augusta 28%**

**Online 36%**

**Bangor 13%**

**Univ. College 23%**

**Admissions**: UMA’s Admissions function is located within the Division of Enrollment Services with academic advising, career advising, prior learning assessment, placement testing, transfer services, and photo ID services. This unit is supported by an Enrollment Services Center with a toll-free telephone line and multi-service walk-in counters at all locations. The recent co-location of Enrollment Services, Student Financial Services, the Registrar, and Dean of Students within the Randall Student Center on the Augusta campus improved service to prospective and incoming students and supports UMA’s one-stop, “concierge service” model.

UMA’s typical incoming class is comprised of approximately 40% first-year students, 40% transfers, and 20% re-admits. UMA recruits traditional-age college students through high school visits and college fairs. It reaches out to target populations of non-traditional students, veterans and transfer students via community outreach, such as military Yellow Ribbon events, professional association conferences, and visits to adult education programs and community colleges. Marketing strategies typically target specific academic programs, veterans, and community college transfer students. UMA follows the guidelines of the New England Association for College Admissions and Counseling and the New England Association of Collegiate Registrations and Admissions Officers in all interactions with students. UMA publishes information about admissions requirements in its catalog and on its website.

UMA employs a “responsible admissions policy” [[See UMA catalog, p. 5]](http://www.uma.edu/courseguide.html) as its minimum entrance requirement. Applicants with a class standing in the lower 25% of their high school class or the lower 25th percentile of GED test scores (approximately 5% of all applicants) must complete Accuplacer placement testing prior to the admissions decision. Applicants scoring below the campus developmental cut-off in two of the three tests are denied admission and referred to Adult Education. Only 4% of all applicants are denied admission to the institution. Four of UMA’s associate degree programs and seven of UMA’s baccalaureate programs have supplemental entrance requirements and limited entrance availability. Eligible applicants who lack the prerequisites for a specific program may

be admitted to a corresponding “pre-program” or associate degree program. No applicant is denied admission or given preferential admission on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation (including transgender status and gender expression), national origin or citizenship status, age, disabilities, genetic information, or veteran status.

Admitted students entering without prior college experience take placement tests before registering for courses. [SAT scores](https://www.uma.edu/pla.html#sat-scores-for-placement) may also be used for course placement, and the number of students waiving placement testing based on SAT scores is increasing. Placement testing is available at all UMA instructional locations. Students who score below the cutoff are required to take developmental course(s). At UMA, 72% of admitted and tested students require preparatory skill development in Mathematics, Reading, Writing, or some combination of the three.

UMA is also preparing for the significant changes underway in the Maine K-12 landscape, including the required use of standards-based transcripts (beginning with the class of 2017) and implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessment (replacing the SAT) as the state’s No Child Left Behind measurement, thus maintaining positive relationships with our feeder schools and providing students with a smooth transition into UMA. UMA is also expanding its Bridge program, a dual-enrollment program with high schools in Maine, and described at more length in Standard 4 (and the 4.1 addendum). The high schools with which we partner will also become potential feeder schools for students who then enroll at UMA.

UMA saw growth in applications and entering students between fall 2006 and fall 2010. Poor economic conditions that motivated adults toward retraining opportunities explain most of the growth in new student numbers. Applications and numbers of entering students began to decline in 2010-2011. Multiple factors influenced this change: improved economic conditions and job opportunities (students going back to work), loss of training funds, Maine’s shrinking high school population, and increased competition within Maine’s higher education marketplace. Concurrently, the headcount within the entire UM System for non-traditional students aged 25 and over declined 14.6%. UMA’s decision to discontinue its first-come, first-served wait-list admission process for the A.S. in Nursing program also contributed to UMA’s enrollment decline. (Admission to this degree program was closed in 2011, and the “teach-out” is nearly complete.) While UMA experienced a 16% decrease in completed applications (3,526 vs. 2,964) and a 17% decrease in entering students (2,134 vs. 1,761), the yield rate remained consistent at 61%.

Within the UM System, UMA faculty have stemmed the outflow of UMA students taking online courses from other UM System campuses by adding new online courses and finding ways to increase the capacity of existing courses to accommodate UMA student demand. In the last five years, UMA has succeeded in balancing the outflow of its own students with an influx of students from other UM System campuses.

UMA’s fifty years of experience with a non-traditional student body informs our approach to recruitment. The Enrollment Services staff employ “lean” techniques to improve their recruitment and intake practices and procedures. The resulting personalized approach remains a hallmark of UMA.

**Retention:** UMA’s Strategic Plan, Key Goal 2 states that UMA intends to “Further develop and extend UMA’s student-centered philosophy to increase student retention, provide opportunities for students to be part of a community of learners, and to improve students’ abilities to graduate with a degree or certificate in their chosen fields.” UMA’s goals for student success are carefully aligned and balanced with the deeply rooted institutional mission of access and social justice.

Because of the nature of its student body, UMA has struggled with methods for measuring student retention and graduation. The federal government’s measurement of student success calculated by the IPEDS formula does not serve UMA well. It measures only first-time, full-time students; it typically captures only about 6% or 300+/- of our 5000 student body. Instead, UMA has adopted the Student Learning Progress Model (SLPM), described more fully in Standard 2. SLPM captures not only part-time students but also students who start degree programs, leave, and then return—perhaps repeatedly—as well as those who continue straight through their programs in four years; in addition, it captures students’ experiences over ten years rather than four. For students who must work their education around the rest of their lives—in other words, UMA’s student body—SLPM is a much more accurate measure of their progress. For a detailed description of the SPLM model describing our student body demographics, please see Appendix.

To give one example, SLPM charts student success by calculating a Student Learning Rate (SLR), a reflection of how students learn how to learn over time. The SLR formula is a percentage of successfully completed courses versus the total number of courses attempted. Data suggests that students learn how to learn as they continue through their programs, with the percentage of successfully completed courses increasing over their first four years (and comparing favorably with the very small UMA IPEDS cohort that we also track).

UMA’s goal for retention is 60%, compared with a national benchmark for schools like UMA (based on its ACT peers) of 54%. UMA reports one-year retention statuses according to various parameters: by campus, academic program, date of admission, veteran or military status, transfer status (and from where), and so on. This data is used to inform retention strategies for specific student cohorts.

UMA disseminates retention and graduation success rates by academic program (See workroom or Links folder in Portal). These data have begun to influence the scheduling of courses (time, day, location, sequence and/or modality) that allow for timely degree completion and ultimately improving retention and graduation rates. The identification of barrier courses for each program, coupled with targeted, faculty-driven interventions within them, is also helping improve the probability of student success.

**Graduation:** UMA has not yet set a goal for graduation rates, though it does measure several indicators of academic progress and student success (such as course completion rates, continuing study after UMA, licensure exam pass rates, and data from graduating student exit surveys). In addition, UMA monitors “rate of progress” toward graduation by tracking students backward from time of graduation, calculating how long it takes students to earn their degrees. At UMA, in AY 2014, 85% of all graduates earned their degree in 150% of the normal time (6 years opposed to 4 years), and 93% within 200% of the time (8 years). Compare this with the IPEDS formula, which calculates forward the number of students who complete their degree in 150% to 200% of the normal time—a model in which UMA graduates only 13% in 150% of the time. This new metric removes those who drop or stop out from the algorithm, and we feel it is another useful measure for our student population.

To track students after graduation, UMA uses data from the National Student Clearinghouse, which shows that a substantial number of students continue their education beyond the degree they earned at UMA. Details on the data for retention and graduation rates, with specific numbers and methodological discussion, may be found in the Appendix.

Further data may be found in a Maine Department of Labor website launched in August 2104 that displays first-year wage and employment outcomes from 2009-2011 for the UM System and Maine Community College graduates. The data includes the number of graduates employed in Maine and their wages. (See Standard 6 Appendix for more detail). While this longitudinal data will be very valuable in the future, its usefulness on first-year wages and salaries of our graduates is limited by the fact that most of them were already employed prior to their graduation.

Finally, success rates for our students may be found in their passing rates for career-specific exams. In 2013, 100% of the A.S. graduates in both Medical Laboratory Technology and Dental Health programs sitting for a national registry exam achieved a passing score. Of the MLT graduates, 82% are employed or continuing their education. In 2012-2013, the A.S. in Nursing graduates taking the N-CLEX-RN examination for the first time had an 81% pass rate, in line with the national average. With a second attempt, UMA students’ 2012-2013 N-CLEX-RN pass rate increased to 92%.

# Student Services: UMA assesses the characteristics and needs of our students through a comprehensive process that includes consideration of admissions data, entering student questionnaires, demographic data, nationally normed surveys, direct student input and valuable observations from experienced faculty and staff. The data portrays a student body that is diverse in age, often academically under-prepared, technologically unsophisticated, geographically dispersed, challenged by limited time and competing responsibilities, and often economically disadvantaged and first-generation. Consequently, they are frequently inexperienced in the language, expectations, and culture of higher education, and given their part-time participation, many find it difficult to become part of a “cohort” group that could provide support and encouragement. We believe it is clear that this student population requires a robust student support system. This challenge is not new to UMA, as we have worked with such students for our entire existence.

UMA responds to the needs of its students with a broad range of services delivered at multiple locations using flexible delivery modes. A larger complement of specialists on the Augusta campus enhance and support student services staff on the Bangor campus and at University College Centers. UC staff stationed at the Centers serve as the local face of UMA and as “one stop” student service generalists. Students who attend courses entirely online access their services through technology, as well as at their preferred location (Augusta, Bangor, or one of eight UC Centers). Since UMA students often migrate between course locations and delivery modes, their preferred service provider can and does change frequently. The UM System’s robust MaineStreet student information system, as well as the close ties among all student services staff, enables that flexibility without compromising quality. While services are available at most locations, consultation on complex compliance issues (such as Title IX, ADA accommodations, student conduct, etc.) are provided across UMA by experienced and specially trained Augusta-based staff.

For those within commuting distance of service locations, face-to-face support is available. Increasingly, staff use technology to support students challenged by time and geography. All may access workshops through technologies. Information resources are provided asynchronously via Internet streaming, YouTube, the UMA website, student portal, MaineStreet, Google e-mail and Blackboard. UMA’s IT provider is committed to equal access for students with disabilities.

Qualifying students at all locations may access [appropriate accommodations](http://www.uma.edu/accommodationprocedures.html) arranged by [Learning Support Services](http://www.uma.edu/learningsupport.html) staff, who strive to mitigate any stigma associated with disabilities. On average, 3% of UMA students (about 150 per semester) receive some kind of accommodation. Learning Support Services staff also collaborate with the Writing Centers, Math Labs and UC Centers to provide [tutoring](http://www.uma.edu/lsstutoring.html) and coaching in learning skills for all students. UMA also delivers amplified support for 360 qualified students through its longtime federal TRIO Student Support Service program, [Cornerstone.](http://www.uma.edu/cornerstone.html)

Student Financial Services, representing an integrated approach to managing [money matters](http://www.uma.edu/mmbulletin.html) and the delivery of [financial aid,](http://www.uma.edu/financialaid.html) provide services to help students access educational funding and develop financial literacy. During 2014-15, Student Financial Services distributed over $14.5M in federal, state and institutional grants and work-study funding, plus $23.8M in federal and private loans; packaged 3,872 awards; and serviced approximately 5,283 actionable aid applicants. All federal, state, and need-based institutional aid is awarded on the basis of financial need as determined by federal methodology and in accordance with specific aid program requirements. When UMA’s cohort default rate for Federal Family Education Loan Program and Direct Lending exceeded 18% in 2011, UMA entered into a collaborative arrangement to bring an online financial literacy program to UMA students. UMA’s most current 3-year default rate is 22.7%.

UMA delivers 3 annual [New Student Orientation](http://www.uma.edu/studentorientation.html)  programs at each campus and supports programs at several UC Centers. Staff schedule programs in varied time slots to meet the needs of a largely adult student population. In program-specific sessions, faculty orient students to academic requirements, opportunities, and expectations within that program. To accommodate emerging needs, organizers recently added workshops addressing our technology-based delivery systems and the special concerns of transfer students. An online NSO option will be offered in fall 2015.

Our [Advising](http://www.uma.edu/academicadvising.html) system combines faculty mentoring with professional advisors who are available statewide with extended hours, both in person and via electronic technologies. Advisors also provide career and graduate school advising. An online program, [CareerLink](https://uma-csm.symplicity.com/students/index.php?s=home), provides information via the UMA Portal on job postings, internship openings, and other career resources.

The new, integrated “one-stop/concierge” approach to advising and Enrollment Services has been deployed at all locations.

Each campus employs a well-qualified professional counselor, augmented by graduate interns, to assist students with managing personal challenges that interfere with academic progress. [Counseling](http://www.uma.edu/counseling.html) [services](http://www.uma.edu/counseling.html) are free, and counselors routinely consult with students, faculty and staff at all UMA and UC locations. Responding to an increase in mental health issues among students, in 2012 UMA increased its counseling staff to 1.875 FTE. A multi-discipline [Crisis Assessment Response Evaluation (CARE) Team,](http://www.uma.edu/care.html)  with representatives from both campuses and the Centers, takes reports from faculty, staff and students; monitors students for signs of social or psychological distress; and then arranges interventions, as appropriate.

UMA does not provide traditional health services. However, in 2014 the UM System implemented a policy requiring all students registered for 9 or more credits to enroll in a reasonably priced, ACA-complia[nt insurance plan](http://www.uma.edu/UMAStudentInsurance.html) or waive the policy with proof of insurance. In a health emergency, such as a flu epidemic, UMA can and has arranged vaccination clinics, disseminated health alerts and provided referrals to local providers. [Fitness Centers,](http://www.uma.edu/fitnesscenters.html) free to students (and faculty and staff), are located on each campus and offer programming “to encourage a healthier way of life.” The Office of Student Life sponsors workshops on issues of health and safety.

During 2013-2014, UMA reported that 8% of its total enrollments (490) were veterans, active military, or dependents using military benefits. A 2013 report to the UM System Board of Trustees and a [video](https://www.uma.edu/new-video-highlighting-uma-s-veteran-s-services-program.html) that was originally featured on the UM System website detail UMA’s support for veterans. A Military and Veteran Affairs Advisory Council oversees UMA’s efforts on behalf of veterans. Since 2013, UMA has earned recognition from *Military Times*, ranking 54th for four-year colleges on its 2015 list of military-friendly colleges. Since 2009, *GI Jobs Magazine* has also selected UMA as a Military Friendly School, and in 2014, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked UMA as one of the top 25 Best Online Bachelor’s Program for Veterans.

UMA’s [Office of Student Life](http://www.uma.edu/studentlife.html) provides opportunities to expand students’ personal support systems, develop leadership skills, engage in volunteerism, experience life beyond Maine’s borders, and temporarily escape the relentless tug of competing obligations. The majority of sponsored activities are family-friendly, making it easier for students with families to participate. Activities sponsored by the Office of Student Life complement student government-sponsored programming and draw together UMA students from all locations. Leasing two 15-passenger campus buses has increased the range of activities for students. Spurred by 2007 NSSE results, UMA increased its focus on [student clubs and](http://www.uma.edu/studentclubs.html) [organizations](http://www.uma.edu/studentclubs.html) to connect students with faculty and staff outside the classroom. Presidential Mini-Grant funds supported an increase in creative faculty projects involving students; service to local food banks and outreach ministries, travel to U.S. urban centers, Haitian health clinics, and Nicaraguan eco-lodges for classes and service learning projects. NSSE results indicate a threefold increase for “first-year students working with faculty members on activities other than coursework,” from 4% in 2007 to 13% in 2013.

Students at all UMA locations, including UC Centers, may participate in governance through election to their local student government organization. Representatives of the [UMA](http://www.uma.edu/sga.html) Student [Government Association’s](http://www.uma.edu/sga.html) (SGA) [General Assembly](http://www.uma.edu/generalassembly.html) (GA), which includes representation from distance students, sit on the President’s Cabinet. The GA elects a representative to the UM System Board of Trustees. The campus SGAs (Augusta and Bangor) and UC Student Associations (SAs) also use dedicated Student Activity Fees to sponsor activities, including leadership programs, social, recreational, and educational events. [Women, Work & Community,](http://womenworkandcommunity.org/programs/become-a-leader/) a statewide organization affiliated with UMA that “works to improve the economic lives of Maine women and their families through workforce, asset management and business development,” also supports UMA students through its association with the Coalition for Maine Women's Annual Day at the State House and the Margaret Chase Smith’s National Education for Women leadership training for female college students.

UMA added four varsity sports between 2008 and 2011, bringing UMA to an historic high of eight teams: men’s and women’s basketball, soccer, and cross country, as well as co-ed golf and bowling teams. (Budget limitations required elimination of men’s and women’s soccer after the 2013 season.) UMA is part of the [Yankee Conference](http://www.yankeeconference.org/landing/index) of the [United](http://www.theuscaa.com/landing/index) States [Collegiate Athletic](http://www.theuscaa.com/landing/index) [Association](http://www.theuscaa.com/landing/index) (USCAA). All student athletes must meet university and USCAA eligibility criteria, with eligibility certified by the UMA Registrar and athletic director. An Athletics Advisory Board, including faculty and student support staff, provide additional oversight to the program and ensures compliance with all University standards. Sample athletics-related documents will be in the workroom.

To enhance recruitment of out-of-state/area students to our Architecture and Aviation programs, UMA has improved online resources for students seeking [off-campus housing](http://www.uma.edu/offcampushousing.html) and roommates. As noted in UMA’s Strategic Plan, UMA is pursuing a public-private arrangement for student housing on the Augusta campus to fulfill the anticipated need and is seeking an arrangement for housing at the UC Center in Brunswick.

Consistent with its mission, UMA provides individuals of all backgrounds the opportunity for academic achievement. In fulfilling its due diligence, UMA participates in a System-wide review process prior to the admission of applicants with criminal records. UMA also extends its programs to currently incarcerated individuals and celebrates their success at [graduation](https://www.uma.edu/14-maine-state-prison-inmates-to-receive-college-degrees-from-uma-on-november-4th.html) [ceremonies](https://www.uma.edu/14-maine-state-prison-inmates-to-receive-college-degrees-from-uma-on-november-4th.html) held at the prison.

In 2011, the UMA Academic Policy Committee reviewed and updated the UMA Student Academic [Grievance Policy and Procedures.](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html) During fall 2013, the UM System reviewed and updated the [UM](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html%23conduct) [System Student Conduct Code](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html%23conduct) to improve organization and clarity and more explicitly address Title IX obligations. UMA publishes the federally mandated Annual Security [Report](http://www.uma.edu/securityreport.html) and the [Annual Equity](http://www.umamoose.com/information/University_of_Maine_at_Augusta_Equity_Athletics.pdf) [in Athletic Report](http://www.umamoose.com/information/University_of_Maine_at_Augusta_Equity_Athletics.pdf) on its website. To fully comply with recent federal guidance, the UM System updated its [Policy](http://www.maine.edu/search-results/?cx=011230229266321559753%3Ahhodcwv63i4&ie=UTF-8&q=Discrimination&sa=Search) on Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation. The UM System requires all students and employees to participate in related, online [training.](https://studentsuccess.org/ums14e-notAnyMore/home) All key University policies are addressed in the [UMA Student](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbook.html) [Handbook](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbook.html) which is distributed electronically to all students a minimum of once per year.

UMA complies with the [UM System Information Security Standards Policy](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/information-security/) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](http://www.uma.edu/ferpa.html)). A [description of FERPA](http://www.uma.edu/ferpa.html) and its implications is in the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and is linked from the Registrar’s webpage. All employees are briefed on FERPA upon hire. Student employees with access to confidential student information sign a Confidentiality Contract.

UMA’s website links from its homepage to information on student support and services: UMA’s internal Portal, social media presence, and traditional copy publications also provide related information.

Employees responsible for delivering student services at UMA are well prepared and qualified. (See staff résumés in workroom or in Links folder) Staff recruitment procedures follow the letter and spirit of all state, federal, and University policies that apply. Position requirements comply with professional standards and good practice. UMA provides staff with adequate office space, facilities, and technology to carry out their responsibilities. Those who require private offices to protect the privacy rights of students have such space.

In fall 2014, the Student Development Division updated and endorsed its ethics statement, drawing heavily upon the relevant ACPA (College Student Education International) document. The Division also reviewed its mission statement which now reads “Mentoring students to accomplish their academic goals and successfully engage in a complex world.” (See Learning Outcomes and Charters). Likewise, the Division of Enrollment Services updated its mission statement to read: “Committed to providing students with clear pathways into the institution and guidance throughout their UMA tenure.” The team works to provide a collaborative, high-quality approach to student recruitment, enrollment, and retention.

# APPRAISAL

**Enrollment:** UMA competes for fewer students in the overall pool of potential applicants and saw a significant enrollment loss due to the recent closure of the A.S. in Nursing program. (See Standard 4.) In response, UMA adjusted its enrollment goals (and budget) downward to reflect a cumulative loss of 4.5% through FY15. The admissions yield rate declined 4.5% from FY13 to FY14 (62.3% vs. 57.8%), largely because many A.S. in Nursing applicants transferred to University of Maine at Fort Kent’s Augusta-based B.S. in Nursing program, because there were reduced slots for A.S. in Nursing admits, and because UMA could not meet the housing expectations of out-of-state/region applicants attracted to new programs. That said, the average yield rate for our current peer group is 45.4%. Relative to its peers, UMA still sustains a robust yield rate.

To address related recruitment issues, the institution is exploring alternate “aggregators,” online college search tools for potential students seeking specific programs. UMA is also offering more program-specific rather than generic open houses, more early registration events. It is also adding multiple follow-up communications to potential students. All of these initiatives will need to be assessed in terms of their effectiveness.

The addition of new programs could also boost enrollment. In addition to undergraduate options, UMA is positioning itself to seek authorization to offer select Master’s level programs with demonstrated demand— probably in collaboration with faculty and existing programs at other UM System campuses. Data supports this initiative; for example, 2013 Clearinghouse data shows that an increasing number of our graduates pursue more education after graduation. Over the last 5 years, 18% (316 of 1,793) of UMA baccalaureate graduates have pursued a master's or higher degree, many within our region. In addition, we found a relatively large percentage (13%) of students graduating between 2009 and 2014 attended local private and online for-profit colleges to complete an MBA or similar degree. Further, a survey of graduating Business students in 2014 found that 88% of those responding would likely enroll in a UMA-offered MBA program.

UMA can report success toward its goal (UMA Strategic Plan, 5.2.7) of increasing the numbers of veterans and active-duty military personnel. Numbers increased from 259 students in 2009 to 453 in 2013, an increase of 175%. In another population targeted since UMA began primarily focusing on baccalaureate programs, incoming transfer students now make up 40% of each incoming class.

**Retention:** While we believe the SLPM will be more effective in documenting our students’ learning progress and award completion, this application is only in its first year. We will continue to expand our understanding of this data and determine over time how it will be applied. For example, this first edition of our SLPM tells us that 30.7% of all incoming students will not return and 26.1% will not make satisfactory progress towards a credential over a ten-year period—they just disappear. We need to study who they are, why they left, and whether we can engage them toward credential completion.

In response to the NSSE analysis and to meet our goals for student success and retention in key courses delivered online, the Provost is spearheading plans for an early intervention project. It will expand the role of faculty assistants (FAs) to help faculty improve the timeliness of responses to student questions, keep students informed regarding their course/grade standing, intervene in the event of missed assignments, make timely referrals to other UMA resources, and support students in resolving technology glitches.

In sum, remaining faithful to our “open access” philosophy while improving the rate of student success remains a challenge. UMA must continue to assess the efficacy of its admissions criteria and process, first-year success strategies, developmental resources and strategies, student support infrastructure, academic policies, as well as course quality, design, scheduling, and delivery.

**Student Services:** Evidence supports UMA’s pride in its student services. The 2013 NSSE results indicated (See NSSE Snapshot in workroom or Links folder in portal) that UMA significantly outperformed its NSSE peers several relevant measures, including the quality of interactions with administrative staff and offices, student services staff, and academic advisors. The [ALFI](http://www.cael.org/alfi) (Adult Learner Focused Institution Toolkit) also indicates that adult students at UMA find student support a significant strength. UMA outperformed its UM System sister institutions on all six measures of adult student support, but does show opportunity for improvement on all measures in comparison to a national group of 4-year adult learners.

In NSSE’s global evaluation of the student experience at UMA, we appear to be doing better with our first-year students. In evaluating their entire educational experience at UMA, the percentage of first-year students who rated it “excellent” rose from 32% in 2007 to 49% in 2013. When asked “… if you were to start over again, would you go to the same institution?” first-year responders saying “definitely yes” moved from 42% in 2007 to 57% in 2013.

In evaluating 9 factors considered critical in successfully serving adult students, ALFI identified several strengths and areas of concern (See workroom or Links folder in Portal). It confirmed that technology and student support are significant UMA strengths. However, it uncovered discrepancies regarding the teaching/learning process (rated #3 by students and #7 by the institution) and financing (rated # 5 by students and #2 by the institution). UMA must share the ALFI outcomes more broadly, seek to align institutional and student perceptions and propose steps to improve the adult student experience. For example, ALFI suggested a need for increased access to career planning resources (which scored last in UMA’s ALI ranking), to which UMA has responded with increased attention and resources, such as the aforementioned “CareerLink” program. In a time of constrained resources, a better understanding of which of our students are successful and why (predictive analytics) would permit student services personnel to focus attention on the students most in need and/or most likely to benefit from intervention.

Maintaining a traditional college experience, albeit without residence halls thus far, while simultaneously addressing the needs of the growing online and distributed student population is a challenge. Limited staff are pulled in multiple directions. We do understand that staff-intensive, one-on-one personal attention is the key to success for at-risk students. We will continue to explore the application of emerging technologies to facilitate more “high touch” experiences for those most likely to benefit.

According to NSSE, levels of student engagement are mixed, with an upward trend in attendance at campus events and activities but a downward trend in attendance at cultural events (such as concerts, films, and theatrical performances). The increased participation in events is noteworthy in view of the high percentage of students reported as working more than 30 hours per week off-campus (First Year: 29% working more than 30 hours and Senior Year: 43%), and the increasing percentage of students taking all courses online. Many students also have significant family obligations. The focus on family-friendly activities, more variety, better use of social media and electronic newsletters (such as UMA’s electronic newsletter [*Moosebytes*](http://www.uma.edu/moosebytes.html)), and the use of a “free” hour at lunchtime create more opportunities for meetings and informal interaction between faculty and students. In addition, live webcasting of campus events such as Jazz Week and Convocation allow students to access programming without traveling to campus.

The addition in 2011 of a dedicated Coordinator of Community Standards and Mediation (CCSM) has improved response time to student conduct issues and other student concerns. Our new Coordinator has also improved the recruitment and training of [Conduct Committee](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#responsibilitiesofcommittee) members as they must now deal with increasingly complex cases. The CCSM also chairs the CARE Team and assists in the compliance with complex University, state, and federal regulations.

Lack of health care poses a significant enrollment risk factor for UMA’s largely non-traditional students. Many UMA students do not meet the minimum income to qualify for health care under the Affordable Care Act. Maine also chose not to expand MaineCare, its Medicaid program, and recent changes in its qualifications removed even more students from its rolls. The UM System move to a mandatory insurance (with a waiver option) has significantly reduced the cost of premiums, and resulted in an eightfold (57 in 2013 to 478 in 2014) increase in the number of UMA students covered by insurance.

UMA continues to assess the role of athletics at the institution, but participation on athletic teams has increased. In 2013-2014, 31 men and 20 women (unduplicated headcount) participated in varsity athletics, compared 15 men and 9 women in 2008-09. The athletics program, guided by its 2013-2016 [Strategic Plan,](http://www.umamoose.com/information/UMA_Strategic_Plan_2013-2016.pdf) has implemented several strategies to strengthen itself and promote the well-being, academic success, and retention of student athletes. For example, UMA added required medical screenings and protocols, updated transportation and emergency protocols, increased insurance coverage, added new orientation programs, added several assistant coaches, upgraded basketball practice facilities, and advanced recruitment, promotion, and branding. Even so, the program still struggles with a lack of campus housing and its own basketball facility, as well as the challenge of fielding teams with an older student body that must juggle multiple roles and responsibilities.

In the face of increasing cyber-threats, the UM System has stepped up efforts to protect student records and personal information by creating an [Office of Information Security](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/information-security/) and has provided a new security policy and standards document.

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The merging of the offices of Student Accounts and Financial Aid into Student Financial Services and the cross training of staff allows a more seamless approach to providing students with answers and information regarding their bills and loans. New student-managed financial processes have improved efficiency for both students and the staff. MaineStreet now provides vital electronic resources for students within a user-friendly, comprehensive system where students can accept a financial aid award, view their account, and pay a bill.

The last overhaul of UMA’s website focused on external recruitment. While this focus was effective in many ways, it underestimated the site’s role in informing prospective (and current) students regarding student services and meeting regulatory requirements. A UMA Web Committee is addressing the problem. A Student Portal has been launched, but to adequately meet student needs and expectations requires additional development and further integration as described in Standard 7 Projections.

UMA has a distributed organizational structure for student services. University College and the Division of Enrollment Services report directly to the President, the Division of Student Development and the Registrar report to the Provost, and the Division of Student Financial Services reports to the Vice President for Finance. There are costs and benefits to this arrangement. It presents a challenge to maintaining a common mission/philosophy and coordinating among offices. However, on the plus side, it also eliminates the “silo effect” in which all student services are administratively under one roof and isolated from other university functions. It also requires all senior administrators to be in touch with the student experience.

UMA’s recent student services staff and budget reductions taxed the resilience of employees, but also spurred creativity and a collaborative spirit in seeking solutions. The commitment to UMA’s mission is undiminished, and we continue to provide excellent services within the available resources.

# PROJECTIONS

Over five years, UMA will increase and stabilize annual enrollment from 89,396 (FY 14) to 95,000 credits, an increase of 5.6 %.

By 2019-20, UMA will increase enrollment in its new signature programs:

1. B.A. in Architecture: from 25 students in 2014-15 to 60 students by 2020-21
2. B.S. in Aviation: from 18 students in 2014-15 to 80 students by 2020-21
3. Education Pathways: from 300 students in 2014-15 to 600 students by 2020-21
4. B.S. in Computer and Information Systems: from 180 in 2014-15 to 360 students by 2020-21

By July 2015, Enrollment Services will launch the institution's new customer relationship management (CRM) tool, which will enable us to better “target market” potential students and expand channels of communication to include more social media, such as Twitter.

By July 2015, Enrollment Services will change its student recruitment aggregators from [Cappex](https://www.cappex.com/) to Chegg and expand our use of emerging best practices to more effectively target potential students.

By August 2015, student services’ leadership will collaborate with the Office of External Relations to incorporate more efficient and user-friendly access to student services information and resources into the UMA website.

By 2016-17, the academic Deans will lead the process to increase the number of high school classes participating in the Bridge Year Program (from 12 to over 100) as a means of increasing the flow of the student “pipeline” into UMA programs.

UMA will carefully consider seeking authorization to offer select Master’s level programs that that have demonstrated potential. Potential programs being discussed at this point are Master’s-level Business and Education Programs. Discussions at the level of Chief Academic Officers will begin in fall of 2015.

UMA’s Student Housing Project Leadership Team, including the Dean of Students, will actively engage with its designated private partner that is responsible to design and build a facility that is fiscally sustainable, safe, attractive to prospective students, affordable, environmentally responsible, well maintained, and operated in a manner that enhances students’ personal development and academic success and supports the educational goals of the university. Project design will be substantially complete by June 2015, construction will be substantially complete by June 2016, and the facility will open fall 2016.

The Deans of Students and Enrollment Services will collaborate with the private housing management team to publicize the new campus housing and fill all beds by September 2016. Early registration for housing will commence by April 2016.

The Dean of Students will work with the private housing management team to establish mutually agreed upon communication systems, training for on-site management staff, targeted programming, behavioral management strategies, and strategies to evaluate student satisfaction. Agreements will be substantially complete by June 2016 with ongoing review.

UMA will work to increase retention and graduation rates. Specifically, it will:

* + - Increase bachelor’s year-to-year retention rate from 54% (2014-15) to 61% over five years, a 13% increase
    - Increase the 5-year average course completion rates from the current 75% to 80% over five years, a 6.7% increase
    - Increase our rates of graduation within 6 years from 85% to 90% in five years, a 5.9% increase
    - Decrease the “three-year cohort default rate” from 22.7% to 18% and sustain or reduce it further over 5 years. (As reported in Standard 9 page 8, the DOE FY 2012 3-year DRAFT default rate has begun to decline – tentative reported rate is 19%)
    - Implement a fully functioning SLPM by the end of AY 2015-16
    - Develop a complete series of alumni surveys to include a 1-year survey, 5 years after graduation survey, and an employer survey in five years
    - Beginning in 2017-2018, we will generate an annual report of first-year wage and employment outcomes through the Maine Department of Labor
    - Analyze fully NSSE reports within one year of participating and initiate interventions to improve performance prior to the next administration

Academic Deans will lead process to pilot with one academic program, creation of real-time, personalized student course schedules based on an on-demand analysis of their degree audit and upcoming semester(s) course schedule. (This model is similar in concept to Amazon online shopping model of “you may also like this item,” pointing students to other courses.)

Academic Deans will address the high failure rate in developmental Mathematics by working with faculty to pilot new models of delivery. Possibilities include expanding the role of Mathematics Labs and using a competency-based approaches.

The Provost will spearhead an initiative to improve student retention rates in online courses by creating incentives for online students to join virtual cohorts. Knowing that engagement in a cohort enhances student support and increases the likelihood of success, by the fall semester of 2015 UMA will identify select students and encourage them (with incentives) to enroll in common online courses for the academic year and arrange support to build their “virtual cohort.”

**Student Services:** By 2016, the Dean of Students and Student Development staff will integrate evidence-based practices related to the development of non-cognitive skills into UMA student retention initiatives.

Student services’ leadership will lead a process to further refine its support services by employing personalized, “high touch” strategies, including: further refinement of the concierge model and making the academic and career advising process more proactive. Student services’ leadership will lead a process to select and employ a greater variety of social media technologies such as social media, Panopto, Skype, and Google Chat to increase student engagement and strengthen cohorts,

By 2016-2017, the Office of Student Life will augment its programming to better serve UMA’s new residential students, considering their demographics, availability, and so on.

# Institutional Effectiveness

The consistency and range of available data about UMA students has dramatically improved with the launch of the Office of Institution Research and Planning in 2012. UMA will use this increased capacity in support of its efforts to improve student success. UMA is committed to the continued administration of NSSE and use of the SLPM for these purposes.

The Division of Student Development will continue to monitor student participation levels, routinely survey students regarding satisfaction with services, and evaluate progress in meeting learning objectives, as relevant. The Division of Enrollment Services will routinely monitor data reports that provide timely feedback on efficiency and progress toward enrollment goals, as well as periodically assess satisfaction with advising services.

**Standard Seven**

**Libraries and other Information Resources**

**DESCRIPTION**

**Libraries**

Uma manages libraries on the Augusta and Bangor campuses, as well as an Off-Campus Library Services department ([OCLS](http://learn.maine.edu/library)) serving distance-education students across the entire UM System. The [Katz Library](http://www.uma.edu/libraries.html) serves the Augusta campus and houses the offices for Off-Campus Library Services. The [Nottage Library](http://www.uma.edu/nottagelibrary.html) serves the Bangor campus. The UMA Libraries are members of [URSUS](http://www.maineinfonet.org/ursus/about/) (University Resources Serving Users Statewide), which includes a [joint library catalog](http://ursus.maine.edu/) shared among all UM System libraries as well as the Bangor Public Library, the Maine State Library, and the Law and Legislative Reference Library. URSUS libraries collaborate to purchase resources together and share best practices.

The libraries’ chief strength is their experienced, thoughtful, dedicated staff. Of the ten library employees, four have MLS degrees; two more have B.S. degrees in library science, and all have bachelor’s degrees. Staff work with students across two libraries and eight UC Centers, using technology to interact with distance students. A staff listing with credentials and duties can be found in the workroom or in the Links folder in the portal. Both libraries are open 60+ hours per week during the academic year.

The Katz Library has been without a day-to-day operations director since the spring of 2012. With the retirement of the Dean (May 2014) and the elimination of the Assistant Dean position (spring 2012), the Nottage Library director took on the role of Interim Director for both campus libraries. He maintains his responsibilities in Bangor, supervises all eleven library positions, and is responsible for leading ongoing planning. The library staff have worked together to define “year one goals” (See workroom on Links folder in the portal) for FY2015 and will continue to operate in a collaborative manner.

OCLS is a department of the Katz Library that serves the library needs of faculty and students at a distance throughout the UM System. OCLS was created in 1988 by the UMA Libraries. Today it is officially part of the University College organization. However, based on UMA’s history and experience, UC contracted with UMA in 2013 to provide these services. The contract or Service Level Agreement identifies required services in exchange for a contract fee. A new OCLS Coordinator was hired in 2013, and she has been working diligently to improve and identify new ways to provide library services to her constituency while developing and applying appropriate performance measures. It is worthy of note that in the absence of an OCLS Coordinator for more than a year, UMA librarians and staff successfully and admirably provided a full range of off-campus library services to students and faculty across the state. (See Contract and Services in workroom and Links folder in Portal).

The library facilities are sufficient to house collections and provide study, group work and research spaces. In Augusta, the library space includes the student computer lab; technical support for students is provided by a student assistant or by phone. The campus Writing Center occupies space in the Katz Library. In Bangor, the library occupies the first floor of a building that houses the Writing Center, Math Lab, a computer lab, the Cornerstone (TRIO) program, and offices.

All library instruction is performed by librarians with MLS degrees. From spring 2013 to fall 2014, 81 instructional sessions were delivered at seven locations. To support online students, the Library staff has been developing online tutorials and other learning objects. These learning objects include guided interactive tutorials, [YouTube video tutorials,](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqAgCP0pqvc0VtJV_IOVOpg/feed?view_as=public) and “[LibGuides](http://umalibguides.uma.edu/guides)”—customized webpages for UMA courses, disciplines, and programs. The new 2013 [UMA Libraries website](http://www.uma.edu/libraries.html) features a tabbed search box which foregrounds OneSearch, a specialized search tools that simplify searches.

# Instruction and Information Technology (IT) Resources

UMA uses technology appropriate for its mission with a strong emphasis on its distance teaching role. Innovations include technology-rich “smart classrooms,” computerized teaching labs, interactive television (ITV) classrooms, video conferencing (VC), the web via Blackboard, and discipline-specific technologies such as the radiology labs in Bangor for the Dental and Animal Veterinary Technology programs. Computer teaching lab classrooms contain Internet access, a range of 20 to 30 computers, an instructor’s computer, an LCD projector, a DVD player, a VCR, a document camera, and PANOPTO course capture software. Both campuses maintain staffed computer labs for student use and are open 60+ hours a week during the academic year. Augusta houses the ITV broadcast center and can deliver a signal to approximately 60 locations, including UC Centers. The [UMA Technology Plan](http://www.uma.edu/umatechplan.html) aligns with the current 2011-2016 UMA Strategic Plan and will be adjusted to meet the UM System consolidated IT Plan.

**Technologies benefiting UMA students** include those listed below: (See Listing in Workroom or Links Folder in Portal)

* smart classrooms: equipped with assorted technologies that can play various media formats for classroom use
* Panopto course capture software: allows students to watch course content live or later on their own computers
* Blackboard: UM System’s course management system supporting all course delivery modalities. In addition, UMA has instructional support staff who assist faculty in designing such courses, and training faculty in its use
* visualization lab: allows students high-resolution visualization on a multi-monitor wall to support visual analysis of large data sets for presentation and decision making
* interactive television (ITV): a closed “television” broadcast system delivering courses to 60+ receive locations for students at a distance (one way video and two way audio)
* video conferencing: a system that allows students to interact in a live course in real time from various locations around the state
* telephone: recently updated voice-over internet system that is simpler for faculty and staff to manage
* UMA Portal: a new access point on the UMA website that allows students and employees to access email, Blackboard, MaineStreet, and other applications from one single webpage – it eventually will serve as UMA’s internal resource website

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Resulting from the [UM System’s strategic planning](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/) (and consolidation) efforts mentioned earlier in this self-study, an early and significant change affecting UMA is that our longtime IT Director and all of her employees are now part of the UM System IT operation. Our former Director is based in Augusta and continues to manage IT Services for UMA; she attends, the UMA Provost’s biweekly staff meetings. In addition to her UMS duties and with newly added support staff, she continues to oversee all UMA computing, including instructional and student computer labs, computer support to faculty, and computer support in general. Our former Director and her employees now report to the UM System’s Chief Information Officer (CIO). The implications of this centralized reorganization from UMA’s perspective are discussed later in the appraisal and projection sections.

# APPRAISAL

**Libraries**

Based on comparisons with other baccalaureate institutions, current library staffing levels are low. The staff of the libraries has been reduced from a total 13.5 FTE staff in 2007 to 10.5 now. This staff reduction has been most significant at the Katz Library; not including OCLS staff, the Katz Library had 9 staff in 2007, 7.8 in 2011, and has only 6 FTE now, with one of those positions vacant. During the same time, Nottage Library staff has reduced from 3 full-time staff in 2007 to 2.25 in 2014.

Meanwhile, the amount of the work handled by this staff has increased significantly, and the nature of the work has become more complex. For instance, UMA has increased online course offerings dramatically since our 2007 report, so a smaller staff must now provide instruction to online students (as well as face-to-face, ITV, and compressed video.) Creating and developing new teaching and learning objects for online use is time-consuming and labor-intensive.

Many at UMA believe the current organization of the library staff is unsustainable. The duties of the Interim Director will be reviewed and clarified for the long term. The library can react to problems as they arise, but the library lacks a leader with the time and mandate to develop the libraries’ active role within the ongoing changes at UMA. Currently, materials for all academic programs are funded adequately, as demonstrated in the increase in materials budget shown in our Data First Forms.

# Instruction and Information Technology Resources

This section evaluates instruction and IT resources and is comprised of two parts. The first part examines UMA’s general effectiveness in providing computer/IT services during the past 10 years. The second part examines in closer detail the unfolding reorganization of UMS IT services and the possible risks (as well as benefits) it may create for UMA. In the Projection section that follows, we address how UMA will assess and address those changes.

UMA has done a good to excellent job in providing IT hardware, support, and training to students, faculty, and staff over the past 10 years, as acknowledged (See document in workroom or in Links folder in Portal) by a faculty and staff group convened to discuss these concerns, and has been recognized by the UM System IT leadership. IT staff meets individually and in groups with the end-users to determine needs and responds as resources allow. IT staff research new technologies and collaborate with the other six campuses and use this information to guide the processes at UMA. Members of the IT staff working at UMA participate in the UMA e-Learning Council to maintain a two way flow of information on technology needs and resources. The e-Learning Council is a joint Provost/Senate committee that reviews and advises on e-Learning and teaching policies, procedures, technological applications, and strategies for faculty support. The introduction and eventual adoption of Panopto course capturing software is an excellent example of responding to a specific faculty and student need. Faculty consider IT staff to be critically important to the delivery of technologically enhanced education.

Under the UM System IT consolidation plan, UMA’s IT Director serves a dual role. She coordinates “field services,” day-to-day support for UMA’s IT needs; she also coordinates virtual service desk and user communications for the rest of the UM System. As we prepare for the unfolding changes in our IT world and because UMA relies heavily on instructional technology to deliver instruction and services, it is important that we acknowledge concerns and benefits related to the plan. Significantly, as this plan was rolled out in 2013, the official UMS administrative SWOT analysis of this consolidation identified several potential weaknesses and threats. They included: disruption of existing staff and systems, level of effort to implement exceeding current capacity, loss of campus autonomy over IT services, and staffing challenges. With this in mind, the following concerns and benefits were identified:

**Concern #1: UMA IT staff morale.** As part of its information gathering process as the plan was rolled out, the Standard 7 Committee met with and surveyed IT staff on both UMA campuses. At that time, feedback indicated IT staff were very supportive of UMA’s IT Director but dubious of the UMS IT consolidation plan. Staff expressed concern about loss of local decision-making autonomy, job security, expanded job responsibilities, and insufficient staff to cover UMA’s extensive IT responsibilities. However, feedback was not entirely dismissive of the proposed consolidation efforts. Staff cited VoIP phone system as a successful example of cross-campus consolidation. Staff asked for more transparency about the process, especially planned employee assignments.

**Concern #2: Instructional Technology Innovation**. The intent of the consolidation plan is to reduce IT costs System-wide. However, consolidating IT service and resources at the System level *may* hinder UMA’s ability to experiment with and introduce new technology.

**Concern #3: Dual Role of UMA IT Director**: UMA’s Director has done an exemplary job coordinating IT services at all of UMA’s locations. Under the new plan, all of these duties remain with the IT Director—along with the new system-wide responsibilities described above. These additional responsibilities raise the possibility of burnout, and, in the opinion of the committee reinforce the earlier identified weakness that “the level of effort would exceed current.” **Note:** Additional staff were added July 1, 2014 to respond to Director’s success in developing and managing several aspects of the new consolidated IT model for the UM System, and staffing needs related to these successes were recognized and added (See Benefit #2 below)

**Benefit #1: Single IT Helpdesk:** Led by the UMA IT Director, a single UM System IT helpdesk was implemented in August 2014. Our Director was chosen to lead this endeavor based on her experience with introducing the UMA helpdesk and because of her commitment to customer service. As the “agents” learned how to manage calls from seven separate campuses, it became apparent that a self-registration tool for student devices was needed because calls for registration of devices such as laptops, tablets, X- Boxes and PlayStations quickly overwhelmed the agents. The new UMS IT consolidated organization allowed for a rapid response, to investigate, develop, and test solutions and successfully roll it out in time for the spring semester 2015. Under the previous independent campus IT structure, responses to such needs were inconsistent often exacerbating customer service concerns – especially for multi-campus students.

**Benefit #2: Extra staff assigned to UMA campus**. Based on observations and metrics from the consolidation efforts, as noted above, four employee were added to the UMA IT site to fulfill essential duties. In the past, UMA would not have been able to fund these on its own. These positions have significantly improved technical response time for UMA employees and students, and added an Administrative Assistant to assist the IT Director, who has never had an assistant.

**Benefit #3**: S**even campuses using one Active Directory to login, print and share files**. The newly formed UM System IT End-User Technology Group, led by the IT Director at University of Southern Maine developed the new Active Directory for the entire UM System. One immediate benefit is that all faculty and staff can seamlessly share files. Without this System effort, UMA would have struggled to move out of Novell and develop its own Active Directory.

# PROJECTIONS

**Library Projection #1:** Within three years and after a review of functionality, effectiveness, and funding availability, UMA will determine whether it can add back the position of UMA Library Director. As the center of learning for students, UMA Libraries need a dedicated leadership position. Many at UMA, agree that the current organizational situation is not a desirable model.

**Library Projection #2:** a) By September 2015, librarians will implement new technologies to expand development of user-friendly tutorials, including making VideoScribe and iMovie available to all librarians and adding “Guide on the Side”.  LibGuides will continue to provide learning objects for students in particular programs.  b) Librarians will continue to expand the stockpile video clips that can be spliced into video presentations aimed at specific disciplines. For instance, a clip explaining peer review course essays could be spliced into a librarian’s teaching video for an English course. c) By January 2016, librarians will develop or purchase an easy-to-use tool allowing students and faculty to locate already-developed videos.

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**IT Projection #1:** UMA leadership will remain engaged in helping IT identify and resolve problems. Committees involved with technological processes at UMA will meet at least twice each semester with IT and UMA leadership to support opportunities and address threats.

**IT Projection #2:** UMA will ensure that priority IT services critical to UMA’s success are fully maintained and updated, especially those having direct impact on delivery of education to distance and online students; and those services on which our employees are dependent. The UMA IT Director, UMA Provost, and UM System Chief Information Officer (CIO) will meet monthly to address concerns.

**IT Projection #3:** UMA leadership will be actively involved with the UM System CIO Council efforts to be more innovative and strategic including the new [Operational Excellence Team](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/informationtechnology/) (OET)

co-led by the UMA IT Director. The OET is charged with identifying key processes essential to moving the entire IT organization toward true Operational Excellence.

**IT Projection #4**: In collaboration with UMS IT staff working on campus**,** UMA will continue to measure IT outcomes that are critical to UMA’s success. We will review progress on a monthly basis, and advocate for needed improvements based on the data collected.

**IT Projection #5:** Within goals set for each of the three upcoming years (2016-2019), UMA will

collaborate with UMS IT to develop the UMA Portal (MyUMA) into a more useful tool for employees and students. By the completion of the project at the end of August 2019, the Portal will be used as UMA’s internal website by specific groups to support their services, for targeted communication with students, and seen as the most useful source of information about all aspects of UMA. Unlike UMA’s external web page directed at individuals for whom this will often be their first and only view of UMA, the Portal will be the daily access point for applications like e-mail, Documentation, MaineStreet, Blackboard, UMS IT support, and institutional research data and information related to analysis and decision-making.

# Institutional Effectiveness:

The UMA Libraries regularly solicit and review feedback from those they support about the quality and content of the libraries’ services. The leadership team in the library is actively evaluating the changes occurring nationally in academic libraries and is in the process of planning adjustments for UMA’s future directions.

The IT Department, within the UM System IT consolidated structure, continues to design, build and improve all aspects of IT services that benefit UMA’s teaching and operational functions. UMA leadership and UMS IT leadership are committed to ensuring that high priority IT services are maintained and updated.

**Standard Eight**

**Physical and Information Resources**

**DESCRIPTION**

UMA is a non-residential institution operating campuses in Augusta and Bangor, along with eight University College Centers statewide. Despite their ages, university facilities are well maintained and meet most of the institution’s current needs. The state map with UMA and University College’s locations identified is in the Appendix describes the breadth of our operation. (See map in appendix)

**Staffing:** A unionized maintenance/custodial staff is responsible for maintaining campus buildings and grounds. Its members perform minor repairs and improvements, snow removal, grounds maintenance, equipment repairs, and minor office relocations. The campuses are routinely inspected for operational deficiencies. The UM System recently purchased a new work order system, Integrated Workplace Management System, which when fully implemented will allow All UMA employees to enter requests for services, as well as track their status. The facilities department also has an annual calendar of required routine maintenance.

UMA uses outside contractors to perform specialized tasks, including licensed electricians and plumbers, as well as professional movers as needed. UMA engages outside contractors to perform preventive inspections and maintenance of all specialized systems.

UMA uses a number of preventive, regulated, and voluntary maintenance programs. UMA has procedures for reporting maintenance needs so they can be funded and scheduled.

UMA uses data to make operational decisions. The UM System uses an outside consulting firm, “Sightlines,” to review facilities criteria. Sightlines builds comparison metrics to compare a given campus against its comparable institutions. Based on the good work of our staff and the relative newness of our facilities, UMA’s results compare very favorably to their standards on numerous factors. UMA makes extremely efficient use of space relative to the size of the student body. (See Sightlines Report in workroom or Links folder in Portal)

**Physical Plant:** Because UMA is a commuter school, we have a limited number of non- academic facilities. Indoor recreational and fitness facilities on the Augusta campus are housed in leased space in the adjacent Augusta Civic Center. The only UMA dining facility is a small café located in the Student Center on the Augusta campus. Recreational fields, tennis courts, and an outdoor walking trail are a part of the Augusta campus. The Bangor campus has a Fitness Center but less outdoor recreational space. Each campus has at least one large student lounge where students can relax and socialize; smaller student gathering spaces exist within many other buildings.

Funding for ongoing and specialized building maintenance projects is available through the annual operating budget. Dedicated funds are budgeted to address deferred maintenance and capital improvement projects, and capital bonding opportunities arise occasionally.

In the last ten years, UMA has accomplished multiple construction and renovation projects, with each complying with applicable laws, codes, and UM System requirements. The number of projects is extensive, and much of the deferred maintenance has been addressed. Recent examples include the new HVAC system and roof for Robinson Hall, renovations to the Randall Center to house Enrollment Services and the Dean of Students, renovation of the sculpture studio to increase space and safety, renovation of first floor of Belfast Hall in Bangor to create new library space, and repaving walkways and parking lots in Bangor. The Bangor College Center was renovated to become a modern Dental Health facility, and the Architecture program and Women, Work and Community’s operation were relocated to Handley Hall in downtown Augusta. The Nursing program in Augusta was allocated more space that includes room for simulation technology.

There are other general improvements to the campuses. For example, both Augusta and Bangor campuses were converted recently to natural gas for heating buildings, realizing significant financial savings and using cleaner energy. In 2007, the North Roadway walkway was created in Augusta to connect two distant portions of the campus together and encourage more walking on campus as part of UMA’s long-term wellness plan. On the Bangor campus, several unused former Air Force buildings have been razed over the last 15 years to create more open green spaces. Every building on both campuses has a wall-mounted video monitor where alerts and campus information can be posted. All members of the UMA community can subscribe to receive text or e-mail emergency alerts.

Campus safety is a priority, and as safety issues are identified, the University responds as needed to address the concern. Safety related examples include increased and improved exterior lighting on walkways, near crosswalks, and in campus parking lots on both campuses. The Facilities Department recently added 15 free-standing emergency call boxes on both campuses, were, floor tiles containing asbestos were removed before they started to deteriorate, and UMA custodial staff use green chemicals that are more environmentally safe.

**Technological Resources:** UMA uses a variety of instructional modalities and has adapted technology and classrooms to support them and the faculty who use them. Each campus has classrooms capable of receiving interactive television (ITV), multiple smart classrooms, compressed video, and smart classrooms equipped with computer technology and equipment. UMA uses Blackboard for online instruction. Students can select a great number of courses based on their preferred modality, as many are offered in multiple or blended modalities. All modalities require technological infrastructure and ongoing support.

The most significant technological resources change is the absorption of UMA’s Information Technology (IT) Department into the new UM System-wide IT Services Group known as University Services (US). This unit provides consolidated services, rather than having individual campuses offer those services. As part of the consolidation, UMA was fortunate to have the same IT staff remain on the campuses to deal with technological issues specific the UMA campus.

University Services maintains all technology supporting students, faculty, and staff on both campuses. Given its educational mission and high level of technological adaptation of its faculty,

UMA makes extensive use of technology. All faculty and staff have computing equipment in their offices.

The facilities department uses an Energy Management System (EMS) to monitor building temperatures and humidity.

**Technology Funding**: UMA addresses requests technology through College and Departmental budgets, requests resulting from annual academic program reviews, through the campus Technology Planning Committee, and through the long-range IT planning process.

Student Technology Fees assessed as a course fee during registration supports student computing technologies and allows UMA to maintain current hard and software for student use.

**Compliance and Assessment:** UMA manages assets in accordance with safety and environmental laws, standards, rules, and regulations regarding safety, health, and environmental protection; establishes written performance and accountability standards and develops objectives to meet the standards; provides and documents adequate training and education; and establishes safety and environmental health committees. The UM System has a myriad of [safety requirements](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section1002/) with which UMA complies. UMA also addresses environmental and ecological impact of all proposed construction.

UMA supports the Facilities Department's effort to maintain and improve the institution's physical assets. Adequate budgets are provided to address deferred maintenance and depreciation. Requests for improvements are prioritized and addressed on an ongoing basis.

The IT department upgrades technology when classes are not in session. UMA considers facilities and technological needs of new programs as a part of their annual planning process. One notable exception was the recent purchase of a flight simulator for UMA’s Aviation Program with $100,000 coming from reserves, to be paid back over five years from user fees.

**Planning and Upgrades:** Specialized space needs for individual programs are addressed on an as needed basis and as funds are identified. As of 2011, the Dental program has a new 24-chair state-of-the-art dental clinic. The Veterinary Technology program has a dedicated veterinary clinic and operating room comparable to those students will find when they are employed.

Additional space requests and program needs may be submitted by any department at any time, and are included on a “wish list” that is then prioritized based on resources available.

Some of the more extensive facility upgrades rely on the University’s ability to obtain funds from external sources such as state-issued bonds or federal earmarks. The Science and Nursing laboratories will be updated with state bond funds within the next two years. The reliance on non-routine funding makes it difficult to create a long-term strategy and plan for addressing facility needs.

**Technological Infrastructure:** Electrical feed, communications, and network cabling infrastructure are mature, reliable, and provide an adequate physical infrastructure. All buildings are wired for portable generators. Each campus is connected to the WAN via a single, fiber-optic connection. Local Area Networks and network fiber are arranged in a star topology. Most software applications administered by UMA are hosted on servers using “virtual” technology, which provides excellent reliability and redundancy.

Enterprise-level systems such as Blackboard and MaineStreet are administered and supported by the UM System and run at a high level of availability. Applications are hosted on servers residing in a dedicated data center. Service outages are infrequent.

**Data Integrity and Security**: The UM System’s Office of Information Security (OIS) works with stakeholders to achieve regulatory and contractual compliance when managing data and related risks. UMA is required to comply with the Information Security Policy (ISO 27000 Series). UMA has consistently been at the forefront of the UM System's information security practices. Servers are catalogued and assessed periodically for security risks. UMS contracts for 24/7 monitoring of intrusion detection, and all security incidents are appropriately investigated. Employees and student workers are required to participate in annual information security training. The UM System has adopted a number of technology-use policies. [Administrative Practice Letter VI-C](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/finances/administrative-practice-letters/) governs use of all UMA computer facilities and equipment and requires training of employees in data security. The treatment of personally identifiable information falls within the compliant data policies and applies to all information maintained in physical and electronic form.

UMA has procedures in place for handling the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material. In the event that a potential violation of this policy is reported, IT staff research the violation and, if applicable, disable the IP address of the computer in violation. The equipment is then brought to the IT department, and the IT staff investigates the issue.

Antivirus security based on industry standard applications is installed on all University-owned computers. OIS actively works to educate users about avoiding phishing emails and how to practice safe browsing.

Applications at UMA run with acceptable reliability and few outages. While there are occasional issues with coverage and response time, those issues are being addressed by the ongoing realignment of UMS IT toward system-wide shared IT Service Management, rather than independent campus efforts.

**Student Academic Support:** UMA supports a legacy ITV (interactive television) class delivery system developed in the mid-1980s when UMA began delivering distance education. This system continues to evolve and continues to provide synchronous class/lecture delivery to remote locations. Students have the ability to participate in real time or via “tape delay,” meaning that they are able to watch a streamed version of the course after the fact from any internet connection. It is expected the use of this delayed viewing option will increase, as it provides the advantages of asynchronous distance education courses for students who may not be able to attend class at the time it is offered. Improvements in this technology are ongoing.

At all instructional locations, UMA provides a physical and electronic atmosphere conducive to student learning. As technological aspects evolve, UMA continuously enhances and improves facilities and services that cover ITV, video conferencing, online, and live classrooms. Cornerstone, the Math Lab, and the Writing Center also provide campus spaces conducive to study and research, providing one-on-one peer tutoring with drop-in and scheduled appointments. Learning support is also available through the Offices of Learning Support and Disability Services (tutoring & needs accommodations).

Electronic [support services](http://www.uma.edu/support.html) for UMA students and employees include:

* text to speech software
* printers that scan from print to digital image
* online math tutorials and workshops
* online Writing Tutors who provide writing support for students
* UMA student portal [[www.uma.edu](https://mycampus.maine.edu/)], providing access to Blackboard, learning support services
* [UMA Library Services](http://www.uma.edu/libraries.html) and a full range of Off-Campus Library Services [(OCLS](https://learn.maine.edu/library/)) for distance students
* distance education modalities, such as ITV, compressed video, online
* software supporting distance education such as Coursecast, Panopto, Blackboard
* 24/7 electronic blackboard access for delayed viewing
* electronic Help Desk, with regularly scheduled availability

**Planning and Evaluation:** UMA utilizes various technologies to manage its physical and technological resources. Integrated Work Management System and Sightlines were previously cited. UMA relies extensively on technology to reach students who take classes at a distance. Faculty are trained to use a variety of technologies that support successful distance teaching including videoconferencing, interactive television, and web-based systems. It is critical that UMA’s teaching technologies remain current and operating properly. Blackboard, the UM System’s “learning management system,” is managed by University Services. Through a System committee, UMA faculty and staff participate in decision-making related to Blackboard. Most faculty use Blackboard to enhance course offerings whether face to face, online or in some blended format.

# APPRAISAL

Generally, facilities adequately meet and sustain the academic needs of the institution. Campus buildings and grounds are well maintained and meet or exceed all safety standards. Repairs are made when issues are identified, and improvements requested are made on a priority basis as operational funds are available; in extraordinary circumstances, UMA’s reserves are used.

As a result of the 2013 UM System’s restructuring and creation of System-wide shared services, the IT staff housed at UMA initially became responsible for many more applications and servers on our campus and beyond. Since that time the consolidation has resulted in the elimination of many servers; all are now managed by the System’s Enterprise Services Team. Additionally, after review of staffing needs, as well as performance success, four additional temporary support employees were added to this operational group. Their performance measures continue to be very positive. Upcoming moves to cloud functionality and System-wide standardization will affect IT’s operations. Many years of each campus operating independently had led to a complex array of disparate technologies that were and are difficult to maintain. We anticipate that standardization will improve application integrity, reliability, and security and allow staff to focus on and become specialists on fewer individual applications.

Due to reliability problems with the current desktop videoconferencing system, the UM System is exploring a change. One of the applications under consideration integrates well with the current Blackboard system, promises ease of use, and is oriented toward education. One improvement students ask for are dedicated spaces where small groups of students can work collaboratively together on assignments. The Katz Library’s recent furniture upgrade to multiple pods on the first floor is one step in the direction of meeting that goal.

UMA continues to covert traditional classroom space into smart classrooms and has increased the currently adequate number of video conference technology available (Augusta: 15 rooms, Bangor: 8 rooms, University College: 20 rooms, plus several executive restricted use installations in offices). The next priority for video conferencing system at UMA is to upgrade the 15 year old technology to high definition. UMA has an adequate number of ITV broadcast and receive sites to address its projected academic needs. As most of our students bring their own electronic devices, the use of computer labs on each campus is declining. These vacated spaces have been reallocated.

Handley Hall serves the needs of the Art and Architecture programs well because both programs require that students have studio space. Although recently renovated, the Music program is not well served by its older buildings on the Augusta campus, which are cramped. In addition, both campuses have identified a need for large gathering spaces—perhaps multi-purpose rooms that can be used as performance space—in which to hold sizable events such as theater productions and receptions. Though a renovation of the Auditorium on the Augusta campus is part of the current capital campaign, there is no equivalent space or plans for one on the Bangor campus.

# PROJECTIONS

Although all programs are currently accessible, not all facilities are ADA compliant. Even though some physical changes are not required by the state due to the age of the buildings, UMA will continue to make physical improvements to buildings as time and funding allows until all buildings meet most recent ADA guidelines.

UMA has been and will continue to follow storm water runoff guidelines and address environmental, safety, and legal implications—a particular issue as the Augusta campus moves closer to having new student housing on campus.

Extraneous space will continue to be eliminated. On the Bangor campus remnants from the original Dow Air Force Base, including Schoodic and Katahdin Halls, will soon be demolished. The Dow Chapel will either be sold to an organization that commits to significantly improve it, or it will be demolished.

VDI, Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (a means of expanding the user’s desktop computer capacity beyond the physical limits of the machine), is currently being developed for use at UMA and will be deployed fall of 2015. This resource will be a significant gain for UMA students (and employees) who will then be able to access any software application that is on their University machine in a computer or Science lab and have use of those resources from anywhere they are working—home, at work, in a library etc. UMA’s CIS faculty are testing the concept now and providing student access to computer programs that simulate networks for their Networking class. This virtual option has already reduced cost and increased access for students. Additional “Bring Your Own Device” technology stations with power outlets will be added to all instructional locations beginning in July 2015.

# Institutional Effectiveness

UMA utilizes its physical and technological resources in a highly efficient manner to meet the academic needs of the institution. The institution has made many physical and technological improvements over the past ten years on both campuses with the goal of creating a comfortable, pleasant environment conducive to teaching, learning, and studying. Technology continues to be upgraded to meet the changing demands of the students and faculty. All faculty and staff are expected to use technology in their day-to-day work.

The institution prides itself on its ability to replace outdated technological equipment with newer, more modern equipment, even with its limited financial resources. Software is continually being replaced with newer versions. The University takes extraordinary steps to inform the UMA community about the measures that are necessary to ensure the integrity of our data management systems. Campus buildings and grounds are well maintained and meet or exceed all safety standards. Major maintenance projects that extend the building life and protect the integrity of the buildings, such as roof replacements and HVAC upgrades, are planned, budgeted, and completed in accordance with UM System policies and procedures.

**Standard Nine**

**Finances**

**DESCRIPTION**

Student welfare and development, as well as the quality and accessibility of higher education that UMA offers, continues to drive virtually every aspect of the institution’s financial decisions.

Despite a more stringent economic climate created by stagnant state appropriations and flat tuition rates for the past three years (FY12 through FY14), UMA continues to display fiscal stability, as is demonstrated by its annually published core financial ratios. (See NEASC Self-Study Appendix). UMA’s Viability Ratio is the second strongest among the UM System campuses and continues to improve (5.82 in FY13 and increasing to 7.04 in FY14). A strong Viability Ratio, combined with an improving Primary Reserve Ratio (0.32 in FY13, increasing to 0.35 in FY14), demonstrates significant balance sheet strength for UMA. Our overall composite financial index has declined slightly from 5.5 in FY13 to 4.7 in FY15, due to a declining education and general (E&G) surplus. UMA has realized unrestricted E&G surpluses from operations for the last four years: $2.64 million in FY11, $1.67 million in FY12, $1.53 million in FY13, and $.7 million in FY14.

The surpluses from recent years have culminated in unrestricted E&G reserves of $8.5 million as of June 30, 2014. When authorized by executive management, these reserves are used to fund unforeseen circumstances, financial emergencies (such as FY13’s $189,383 curtailment of state appropriation, for example), and planned extraordinary expenses not contained within operational budgets (such as accreditation expenses). In addition, reserves have been used to provide significant investments in areas specified in UMA’s strategic plan such as staff development, academic innovation, community integration, and other student-centered initiatives. For example, $150,000 in Presidential “mini-grants,” which fund various initiatives designed to promote student retention and research grants for faculty, was designated during FY 2013 and FY 2014 for a variety of initiatives ranging from a faculty member’s attendance at a global health conference to a campus community garden that serves a local food bank. Also during FY 2013 and 2014, $25,000 and $30,000 were allotted for staff and faculty professional development, respectively.

Since FY 2006 and according to the institution’s Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position combined operating and non-operating revenues have ranged from between $33.6 million and $48.6 million. In 2014, tuition and fees and state appropriation dollars make up close to 95% of the institution’s total unrestricted revenues. This high reliance makes UMA vulnerable to the most recent leveled revenue stream created by fixed state appropriations and the static tuition rates mandated by the UM System Board of Trustees. The remaining elements of the institution’s unrestricted revenues originate from grants, auxiliary services, and miscellaneous revenue. This revenue stream distribution has been relatively consistent over the last several years. UMA continues to assess the lowest tuition rates within the UM System. In addition, with its non-traditional student population, UMA is the only campus within the UM System that currently does not offer residential dormitories. While UMA does forgo a potential incremental revenue benefit without residential dormitory offerings, it has lowered the institution’s overall financial risk profile because of its lower fixed-cost business model.

UMA primarily spends its revenue on academic activities, as seen in the 2014 relative expenditure percentages to total expenditures in conventional higher education categories: instruction (31%), student aid (17%), academic support (14%), student services (10%), institutional support (10%), public service (5%), physical plant and depreciation (10%), and auxiliary services (3%). Compensation continues to account for approximately 75% of the institution’s E&G expenditures while outside services, supplies and services, and depreciation are the other major expenditures. UMA continues to refine the annual budget process by aligning individual budget lines to actual anticipated expenditures rather than controlling simply by the department’s “bottom line.”

Despite realized surpluses in previous years, UMA faces a significant structural gap going forward into future years that is created by the forecast of lower enrollments due to demographic changes, the realities of the consequential heightened competition for the non-traditional population we serve, flat tuition rates and state appropriation, and continued inflationary pressures on expenses.

State appropriation to the UM System has been declining as a percentage of the State budget and consequently as a percentage of the System budget for the past twenty years. The State appropriation for FY14 is $6.2 million below the FY08 level, and State contributions are not projected to return to the FY08 level in the near future. For example, combined pressure from federal and state governments, as well as parents, students, and legislators to contain tuition costs resulted in a 2012 Board of Trustees mandate to freeze tuition and mandatory unified fees across all campuses for one year. After a state curtailment of University appropriation during FY13, the freeze was extended for an additional three years in exchange for an agreement with the State to maintain flat appropriations during FY 2014 and FY 2015. The preliminary FY16 budget initially included a UM System request to the state legislature for a 3.4% increase in state appropriation funding; this increase was dropped to 1.7% with the Governor’s budget recommendation, and the final amount of state support is not yet finalized.

The contraction of State resources (making up approximately 38% of UMA’s unrestricted E&G operations budget) comes with the onset of anticipated decreases in enrollment due to the declining number of traditional college-age students and heightened competition for the adult non-traditional student population that UMA predominantly serves. Maine’s 15- to 24-year-old population is predicted to decline 19.5% between 2010 and 2020, and UMA anticipates increased competition for its adult student population, both from within and outside the UM System.

During UMA’s budget preparations for FY14, department managers were asked to submit targeted expense reductions of 5% to 10% in order to balance the initial $2.6 million structural gap. The FY 2015 budget was reduced again by a similar amount. The balanced FY15 budget submission for UMA required difficult local decisions to resolve the initial $2.7 million shortfall, including the elimination or reduction of work schedules translating to the equivalent of 19 FTEs, two smaller-footprint relocations of UC centers, the planned phase-out of the Veterinary Technology Associate degree program, the reduction of summer hours of operation on the Bangor campus, and other efficiency cost-saving initiatives. Difficult decisions such as these are made with forethought and precision to alleviate as much as possible the negative consequences to those affected. UMA has a well-established budget process that involves consultation with relevant constituencies and provides appropriate integration with the institution’s departments and offices.

UMA is also working to realize savings by making significant investments in energy efficiency, settling retroactive bargaining unit agreements, and containing rising health care costs through an employee wellness program. Meanwhile, UMA continues to test and evaluate new learning modalities and ideas for new niche or collaborative programs to increase enrollments as well as to extend our reach even in this fiscally restrictive environment. Public perception of the UM System is favorable, as evidenced by the 2013 referendum passage of a bond issue authorizing the State to borrow $15.5 million towards the improvement of laboratory and classroom facilities, including the $1.2 million designated for UMA’s renovation of science and nursing laboratory facilities. Utilizing E&G reserves in 2014, UMA purchased a $100,000 state-of-the-art flight simulator to support our new Aviation program.

In addition, UMA is committed to working cooperatively with its sister campuses and the UM System in the [administrative review initiatives](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/afrt/) (Think Mission Excellence) currently underway in the areas of information technology, human resources, procurement, and facilities management. Plans are also underway to centralize the remainder of individual campus finance areas into a UM system function in calendar year 2015.

At the campus level, UMA merged the Financial Aid Office and the Student Accounts Office in November 2012 to create the office of Student Financial Services. This merger reduces duplication, promotes continuity of services, and provides some cost savings through the reduction of staff without the loss of exceptional customer service. In August 2014, these offices were moved along with Enrollment Services staff to a common area within the Randall Center, closer to the heart of the Augusta campus and bolstering the concierge model of student services.

Each year, the Director of Student Financial Services and the Department of Finance review UMA’s financial aid policies and practices to ensure that financial aid packages are a fair mix of grants, scholarships, and student loans. For federally funded grant and contract activity, the UM System submits an annual U.S. Office of [Management and](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/ums-data-book/finance-and-facilities-reports/) Budget Circular A-133 [Compliance Statement](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/ums-data-book/finance-and-facilities-reports/).

At the time of the annual audit, three of the seven UM System campuses are selected to provide test materials for a comprehensive review of compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, as prescribed by each of the federally funded programs. UMA last provided financial aid test materials for the Year Ended in 2009 Audit. This audit showed one deficient area— reporting student statuses to the National Student Loan Data System—which was addressed by tightening National Clearinghouse reporting. UMA provided a written A-133 Corrective Action response. UMA has not been selected to provide specific test data for the years of 2010, 2011, and 2012.

While UMA has not provided student specific data for UM System internal audits for the past three completed years, a Federal Financial Aid Program Review was conducted by the Department of Education in July 2013. An exit interview was conducted, and no significant findings regarding the processing of the federal programs were received in the final report.

In April 2012, UMA was awarded a Title IV waiver of the required 25% match of Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants and Work-study funding. This waiver allowed UMA to shift these matching funds into institutional-based grant programs. UMA’s financial aid packages for its neediest students demonstrate a commitment to keeping education affordable.

Each August, the UM System begins a collaborative process of preparing a comprehensiveMulti-Year Financial Analysis (See MYFA in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). The MYFA combines “first round,” campus-specific financial details with broad assumptions generated at the UM System level to build a five-year framework that identifies major budget drivers and their impact on financial results. The current Trend MYFA scenario describes significant influences (including wage and benefit costs, enrollment trends, infrastructure maintenance and capital commitments, appropriation forecasts, and so on) and serves as the starting point for determining sustainable fiscal strategies and advocacy efforts. In addition to the multi-year forecast exercise submitted each year, the UM System coordinates and posts interim financial forecasting reports for all campuses throughout each fiscal year, beginning in October. This report includes enrollment data, an assessment of current fiscal year revenues and expenses compared to a campus’s budget, and any budget revisions.

Because compensation and benefits comprise approximately 75% of the UM System’s E&G operating budget, they represent the single largest cost driver in the budget, and review is underway to identify redundancy. Positions and services are currently being reorganized to ensure service excellence, cost savings, and efficiency. An Academic Portfolio Review Process Oversight Committee ([http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/academic-review) initiatives/academic- [review](http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/academic-review)) comprised of 17 members (including 14 campus representatives, 9 of whom are faculty) will help facilitate a review of the academic programs among all seven campuses for these same standards.

The UM System Office plans to provide support to campuses—both financial support (for example, FY 15 funding of $50,278 to UMA and $41,907 to the University of Maine at Fort Kent to support a collaborative effort for a B.S. in Nursing program) and direction of strategic reorganizations across the entire System organization designed to gain efficiencies and savings by consolidating and centralizing services. These administrative reviews are expected to generate savings by streamlining business processes, eliminating unnecessary duplication throughout the seven campuses, and either shifting positions to the UM System Office or eliminating them.

Beginning in FY 2013, the Board of Trustees adopted an [Outcomes-Based Funding (OBF) model](http://www.maine.edu/search-results/?cx=011230229266321559753%3Ahhodcwv63i4&ie=UTF-8&q=Outcomes+based+funding&sa=Search) that redistributes an assigned percentage of state appropriated receipts each year to campuses based upon four defined objectives: 1) to increase the education attainment levels of the working-age population of the State, 2) to meet the workforce needs of Maine employers, 3) to contribute to the economic development of the State, and 4) to improve the productivity of UM System institutions. FY14 OBF allocation of state appropriation dollars was $939,658; FY 15’s allocation increased to $1,888,103. As the University of Maine System increasingly moves to a more performance based allocation of state appropriation with the OBF model, UMA will continue to benefit. UMA will continue to focus on these UMS initiatives to help meet the needs of the citizens of Maine.

UMA’s budget preparation process is participatory, with individual meetings scheduled between the Vice President of Finance & Administration and department managers or appropriate designees. These budget meetings facilitate a full understanding of spending trends and causes of potential deficits. Now working with a comprehensive perspective gained from the Multi Year Financial Analysis development, campuses refine their budgets for the following year, incorporating strategic plans and priorities, utilizing the most current information available, and encompassing the involvement of all internal and external stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, and Maine citizens and business communities. There is extensive communication among the System Office, Finance Office, the President’s cabinet members, and UMA’s budget managers as the budget numbers are coalesced into a final balanced budget document.

UMA uses standard operating procedures as mandated by the UM System to record and report its financial activities. Adhering to those procedures is critical for maintaining internal controls and the integrity of the institution’s financial management systems. Each year, the UM System enlists services of an external independent auditing firm that reviews all System financial records. The external auditing firm opines on the financial statements prepared for each fiscal year ending June 30 and evaluates internal controls in order to substantiate their expressed opinion of the financial statements. The UM System has received an unqualified (“clean”) audit opinion of its financial statements, which attests to the material accuracy of the University’s financial reporting practices. Copies of the UM System’s audited financial reports and opinions are available online for all fiscal years 2001 through 2014 on the System office’s website. [http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/finances/annual-financial-reports/.](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/finances/annual-financial-reports/) UMA’s Fiscal 2014 Statements, as well as those from the previous year, will be available in the workroom.

The membership of the Finance/Facilities/Technology Committee of the UM System Board of Trustees consists of at least three voting members of the Board of Trustees, along with the Chair, the Vice-Chair of the Board, and the Chancellor serving as ex-officio non-voting members. The Committee is staffed by the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance and Treasurer, and it may include faculty and student Representatives as well. A comprehensive list of duties and responsibilities of the Finance/Facilities/Technology Committee is outlined in the [Committee Responsibilities and Membership](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/meeting-agendas/finance-facilities-committee/) document. This BOT Committee oversees the financial affairs and real and personal property given to the University, and reviews and monitors the delivery and future of information technology for the UM System.

Internally, UMA’s management—the President, Vice President of Finance and Administration, and Director of Finance—monitor the fiscal condition of the institution by reviewing the monthly financial activities and making any necessary operating changes. There are three positions in UMA Office of Finance: the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Director of Finance, and the Assistant Director of Budget and Finance. The minimum qualifications for the Vice President position are a master’s degree in a relevant field and ten years of successful fiscal administrative management experience. The qualifications required for the Director of Finance are a bachelor’s degree in business or closely related field with a combination and related work experience equivalent to a master’s degree.

UMA follows internal timelines to ensure that financial reporting to both internal and external groups is completed in a timely manner. The institution summarizes and reviews the outcomes of its monthly financial data within the first seven days of the month following the reporting period to determine any unusual budget to actual variations. The President also discusses the institution’s financial results monthly with UMA’s top-level management in order to gather input and to maintain transparency of the institution’s financial management. As mentioned in Standard 6, UMA also distributes a weekly internal report showing levels of student registrations and related credit hours in order to broaden institution-wide understanding of how well UMA is progressing toward budgeted projections. UMA summarizes its financial results using the UM System financial reporting system, PeopleSoft. UMA continues to properly manage distribution of financial aid to help students in achieve their academic goals. The UM System submits an annual U.S. [Office of](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/ums-data-book/finance-and-facilities-reports/) [Management and](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/ums-data-book/finance-and-facilities-reports/) Budget [Circular A-133 Compliance](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/ums-data-book/finance-and-facilities-reports/) [Statement](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/ums-data-book/finance-and-facilities-reports/).

The June 30, 2014 value of UMA’s endowed investments is $7.3 million. Since the last NEASC visit, UMA has established an Office of University Advancement (OUA) to support the University's many instructional, research, and public service programs through successful friend-raising, fundraising, and alumni activities. This year is the culmination of UMA’s 50th anniversary celebration and has the Advancement Office coordinating a number of celebratory events focused on fund raising. As of February, approximately $3 million has been raised toward the goal of $5 million. An update will be provided at the time of the NEASC visit.

**APPRAISAL**

UMA’s long history of using revenue sources wisely to support the mission of its academic purposes and programs is clearly one of its strengths. The institution employs a proven traditional reporting model that summarizes revenue and documents how the institution expends its resources. This model, which provides an accurate and transparent accounting of the institution’s financial activities, is one of the strengths of the institution’s financial reporting system. The institution’s financial records clearly show a consistent pattern of revenue sources. The records show a consistent pattern and balance of expenditures over the last three years that support the institution’s academic purposes and programs while allowing for prudent future planning.

UMA’s internal and external financial mechanisms work effectively, as shown by the institution’s ability to routinely meet its operating budget. The institution’s ability to join forces and work collaboratively to solve financial issues is a strength and credit to its management’s philosophy of financial transparency.

Nevertheless, UMA faces a period of declining resources, as outlined above. As previously mentioned in this report, two system-wide initiatives designed to augment adult baccalaureate pathways to degree completion and enhance transfer credits are expected to increase student enrollment within the System while meeting the State’s workforce needs. How much these factors and initiatives will ultimately affect UMA’s enrollment numbers is yet to be seen; UMA’s full FY 2014 enrollments declined by 4.8%, and fall 2014 enrollments are down 3.6% from fall 2013. Efforts are being made (primarily through initiatives such as enhanced enrollment reporting and expanded student outreach) to increase enrollments and keep the students we have, but we do not know the long-term effects of these current trends. (Ironically, an improved economy has an inverse relationship to adult learner enrollments, as students often choose to return to the workforce rather than to continue their education.)

The UM System has embarked on an ambitious path to consolidate many services at the System level to best leverage administrative resources and ensure consistent, effective and efficient best practices are implemented at UMA as well as other campuses. While this change effort is in early stages for many of the areas, progress is routinely assessed at a monthly shared services advisory committee meeting. An example of an early win includes a centralized procurement team that, in FY14, achieved $385,000 in documented E&G savings across the System ($18,248 for UMA) by consolidating major expenditures across campuses and negotiating improved vendor terms. Please refer to <http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/priority-initiatives/strategic-procurement/> for full details on strategic procurement’s transformation progress. More broadly, the UM System tracks progress for all areas at: <http://thinkmissionexcellence.maine.edu/>

UMA continues to improve its operational efficiency, as evidenced by a review of its improving performance with inflation-adjusted E&G expense per credit hour. The preliminary FY16 budget anticipates delivering an E&G per credit hour cost of $419 which compares favorably to an inflation adjusted E&G expense per credit hour of $434 in FY09. This represents a 3.5% increase in efficiency on similar credit hour volumes.

**PROJECTIONS**

To ensure that UMA uses a data-driven approach to budgeting, the Finance Office will continue to monitor financial data within MaineStreet and communicate budget-to-actual deviations to appropriate personnel. It will also use data from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning to ensure that its planning and projections are data driven. It will develop a new predictive enrollment model that will help identify enrollment expectations in each academic program and that will be functional in time to prepare the 2016-2017 budget. All of these initiatives will help UMA better meet the employment needs of the state while helping to frame marketing, retention, and academic offerings in a more cost-effective manner.

The UMA finance organization will combine its resources with other campuses within the UM System to become a unified finance organization supporting the needs of all campuses in a more efficient and effective manner. While this organization design is still underway (the first draft of a proposal will be shared with the Board of Trustees in March), preliminary indications are that the new structure will be a matrix, with individuals having reporting relationships to both the campuses and system-wide functions. In addition to the anticipated organizational change, tighter spending controls will also be put into place, with commitment control of campus funds occurring in half-year rather than full-year increments.

UMA will evaluate its loan distribution and monitoring processes in AY 2015-16. Considering that UMA’s federal Stafford default rate has increased from 13.4% in August 2012 to 18.1% in July 2013, UMA recently partnered with American Student Assistance and Finance Authority of Maine to offer SALT, a financial literacy program free of charge to current students and alumni. The U.S. Department of Educations has completed the official transition from a 2-year default rate model to a 3-year model. For FY 2011, UMA’s 3-year default rate was 22.7%. These rates were published in September 2014. The Department of Education released the FY 2012 draft 3-year default rates on February 23, 2015 and we note that UMA’s draft 3-year default rate has begun to decrease. UMA will continue to promote SALT to our students. Official 3-year default rates will be released in late July 2015, and UMA will react appropriately with additional default prevention measures, as appropriate.

Through the cultivation and establishment of new relationships and the perpetuation of ongoing relationships, the Office of University Advancement will continue to promote and encourage the continual growth of UMA beyond this year’s successful 50th anniversary celebration.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

UMA effectively manages its fiscal resources, as evidenced by operating surpluses in the last four years, as well as developing a balanced budget with fully funded depreciation in FY 15. In an ongoing period of austerity and cutbacks, it will become even more important for UMA to consistently apply conservative and sound financial practices. It is imperative that the institution continues to develop transparent and clear objectives, to encourage personnel at all operational levels to participate in developing budgets, and to exercise internal controls that will ensure accurate and consistent financial information records. The institution expects that it will continue to seek out cost savings opportunities and to mitigate any negative consequences to faculty, staff, and students. UMA will continue to allocate resources in a way that does not sacrifice its integrity or educational goals.

# Standard Ten

**Disclosure**

**DESCRIPTION**

In presenting itself to students, prospective students, faculty and staff, and other members of the interested public, UMA provides information that is complete, accurate, timely, accessible, clear, and sufficient for intended audiences to learn more about UMA.

All essential information about UMA is available online. Its website—[www.uma.edu](http://www.uma.edu/)—is the primary source of information for the public. For its internal community (students, faculty, and staff), UMA’s portal—<https://mycampus.maine.edu>—is the primary, password-protected source for information. Because both internal and external communities often seek the same information, there is deliberate overlap between the website content and the portal content.

A Web Oversight Committee, comprising faculty and staff from various sectors of the university, meets quarterly to review the web site and portal. This committee evaluates the website’s effectiveness against the stated goals and makes recommendations and decisions on navigation and design, as well as what content belongs on the website and what belongs on the portal

Other information, particularly information that backs up promises, program outcomes, and other claims put forth on the website and the portal is available through the Office of the Provost, the Offices of the College of Professional Studies, and the College of Arts and Sciences. (See Examples in workroom)

The UMA website makes available the following information to its audiences:

* general information about UMA on the front page under a drop-down menu titled “About,” including its accreditation, its history, its campuses, information on visiting the campuses, links to social media, [UMA fast facts](http://www.uma.edu/fastfacts.html), “[student consumer information,”](http://www.uma.edu/studentconsumerinfo.html)  and web links and contact information for all the university’s offices
* information on the institution’[s mission, objectives, educational outcomes, public](http://www.uma.edu/quick-facts.html) institution, admissions procedures and policies, articulation agreements, [fees, financial](http://www.uma.edu/moneymatters.html) [policies, and student affairs](http://www.uma.edu/moneymatters.html)
* the UMA catalog, which includes the mission statement and is the authoritative source of all academic policies (including entrance and degree requirements) and articulation agreements. Archived copies are also available on the UMA website. The catalog is updated on an ongoing basis throughout the year, with April 30 designated as the annual date when catalog becomes the official document for the following academic year.
* list of all full and part-time faculty and administrators, including their positions and administrative areas, is in the Directory on the front page of the UMA website. Individual faculty web pages are also accessible on the faculty webpage.
* information on our campuses and the programs offered at each instructional location. There are also direct links to [University College and its Centers](http://learn.maine.edu/), which is accessible on our home page and well as a link off “Our Campuses” on our main menu
* the members of the UMA’s [Board of Visitors](http://www.uma.edu/boardofvisitors.html)
* [semester course guides that list](http://www.uma.edu/courseguide.html) the courses being offered in a given semester. (Students can also search for courses in our PeopleSoft-based student information system called MaineStreet.) Students can choose several search parameters, including instructor name, subject area, and instructional location. In addition, students can use a feature called the “planner,” which identifies when courses are typically offered, and allows them to add courses to a list that they can access for registration in future semesters.
* information that describes the size and characteristics of UMA’s student body. The links “[Student Life,](http://www.uma.edu/studentlife.html)” “[Academics,](http://www.uma.edu/academics.html)” and “Student Consumer Information” provide information on student life, student support, the library, fitness centers, housing, the campus settings, and the availability of academic and non-academic opportunities.
* retention and graduation rates under “Student Consumer Information” and at the public site “UMA Fast Facts”
* passage rates for licensure exams, when applicable, on the appropriate program pages
* statements of goals for student learning success, which can be found on pages 12 through 14 of the current [catalog.](http://www.uma.edu/courseguide.html)
* information about tuition costs and availability of financial aid. This information is located in several areas on the website, including a page devoted [Student Consumer](http://www.uma.edu/studentconsumerinfo.html) Information. Additional information regarding tuition and fees is published on the [Student Financial Services page](http://www.uma.edu/moneymatters.html) on the website, which also includes the federally-mandated [Net Price](http://www.uma.edu/netpricecalculator.html) [Calculator.](http://www.uma.edu/netpricecalculator.html) Information regarding [student debt,](http://umafastfacts.blogspot.com/2013/12/student-default-rate-what-we-are-doing.html) [typical length of](http://umafastfacts.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2013-07-10T10%3A44%3A00-04%3A00&amp;amp%3Bmax-results=7&amp;amp%3Bstart=7&amp;amp%3Bby-date=false) [study,](http://umafastfacts.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2013-07-10T10%3A44%3A00-04%3A00&amp;amp%3Bmax-results=7&amp;amp%3Bstart=7&amp;amp%3Bby-date=false) [a new metric on](http://umafastfacts.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2013-04-10T16%3A30%3A00-04%3A00&amp;amp%3Bmax-results=7&amp;amp%3Bstart=14&amp;amp%3Bby-date=false) [measuring length of study,](http://umafastfacts.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2013-04-10T16%3A30%3A00-04%3A00&amp;amp%3Bmax-results=7&amp;amp%3Bstart=14&amp;amp%3Bby-date=false) and other valuable institutional information is available at UMA’s Fast Facts.
* information about UMA’s [accreditation status](http://www.uma.edu/accreditation.html), which can be found off the main menu under “About”

Information about the most recently audited financial statements is only available through the UM System’s financial reports. The financial information is embedded in that report and is not separated out for each campus. This information can be obtained through the [UM System’s website.](http://www.maine.edu/)

# APPRAISAL

Overall, UMA does a proficient job in making relevant and needed information available to both the external community (prospective students and the general public) and the internal community (current students, faculty, and staff).

All forms of print and electronic information are consistent with catalog content and accurately portray the conditions and opportunities available at UMA.

UMA’s website and portal are in a transition period where employees are getting accustomed to the idea that some information they used to find on the website is being relocated to the UMA internal portal. This is happening because much information previously found on the website has no particular usefulness to the public and serves only to clutter and complicate the website’s ease of navigation for the external user.

There is occasional pushback from faculty or staff on content moved from the website to the portal. Similarly, there is occasional pushback on content areas still on the website, but not linked directly from the home page. These issues are first attempted to be resolved between those who have an issue and the External Relations Office, which oversees management of the website and portal. In most cases, issues are resolved to everyone’s satisfaction. Issues that are difficult to resolve are considered by the UMA Web Oversight Committee.

**Content Management System:** We continually work to improve the navigation and content management of our website. Converting to a more user-friendly and manageable system is underway and expected to be completed in early 2015. We expect to see several improvements from this process. First, as the entire UM System is expected to move to WordPress, we can expect better technical support for the maintenance and upgrade of our site. Second, we expect our content managers, especially UMA’s program coordinators, to find that the new system better supports regular updating. This is especially important with our decentralized model for providing content management and updates, better ensuring that promises and program outcomes on our program pages and elsewhere are accurate. Third, we expect the speed of the website will be improved.

**Catalog:** As UMA has moved to a greater reliance on a digital catalog, we have begun the process of making our catalog more user-friendly. We have instructed our webmaster, in coordination with our Web Oversight Committee, to move forward in doing so.

**Portal:** The portal was built through a UM System initiative, with much thought given on how to build it but little thought on how to maintain it. This has been a problem for UMA, where the Office of Information Technology led the portal development but had no designated staff to make upgrades or updates, nor to implement an ongoing communications plan to move the UMA internal community from using the website to using the portal. UMA’s External Relations Office has agreed to take over maintenance for the portal, but due to time constraints, the portal continues to be underserved in terms of attention. Once the move to WordPress is completed in early 2015, the focus will move immediately to improving the navigation and design of the portal.

**Non-digital Catalog:** UMA is undertaking efforts to improve the cataloging of non-digital information and documentation in the Provost’s and College offices. This includes an improved flow of information and documentation from program coordinators to the College Deans.

# PROJECTIONS

By May 2015, UMA will have moved its website to a new content management system. We have been using from Joomla and are moving to WordPress.

The UMA Web Oversight Committee will continue to meet four to six times a year to help ensure that the website presents UMA accurately and easily provides the information external content users need and are looking for. The Web Oversight Committee will also verify that UMA meets its public disclosure requirements.

Once the transition to WordPress is completed in early 2015, the Web Oversight Committee will devote its primary attention to the internal UMA portal. The goal is to have a significantly enhanced and more useful portal for the external UMA community by the beginning of the fall 2015 semester. This will include a staffing strategy that ensures regular attention to the portal content and design, as well as communication and training for the internal community that the portal is where they need to go for information. UMA’s catalog will be converted from its current PDF to a document format that can be updated easily, fully searched, and easily read and used. This will be completed before the 2016-2017 edition is published online.

# Institutional Effectiveness

To ensure that all university print and electronic publications are complete, accurate, available, and current, UMA, under the jurisdiction of the Office of External Relations, has established a process of annual review that includes the following:

* UMA’s Web Oversight Committee will be responsible for an annual review of web content. In order to ensure web content is accurate with the most up-to-date information, the Committee will engage all departments and programs in reviewing their own respective pages.
* The External Relations staff, with the Dean of Enrollment Services and the Admissions staff, will review all non-web site marketing materials, including printed admission pieces, and all advertising (TV, radio, print, and online) to ensure information is accurate and up-to-date. Both reviews will take place over each summer in preparation for the new academic year.

# Standard Eleven

# Integrity

# DESCRIPTION

As reflected in our Statement of Philosophy and Statement of Purposes, all UMA stakeholders are expected to follow a set of core values and maintain a steady commitment to “sustain an environment in which these values are carried out with integrity and a true sense of purpose.” The Statement of Philosophy affirms that “all members of the University should strive for the highest possible standards of quality” and that “review and assessment are necessary components of that striving.” Assessment of the effectiveness of the University’s ethical policies and procedures occurs through CIHE reviews, and various *ad hoc* and committee processes, including those of the Diversity Committee and the Academic Policy Committee. Offices and departments responsible for implementation of specific policies and procedures perform periodic reevaluations and assessment. For example, Administrative Services’ policies and procedures are systematically reviewed and updated. In an effort to maintain high ethical standards, UMA expects a mutual commitment from all of its employees and stakeholders to follow all its and the [UM System policies and procedures](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/), as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

UMA is committed to promoting understanding of and compliance with all student rights protected by state and federal laws. From first contact with students, the University endeavors to assist them with understanding their rights while encouraging them to accept their responsibilities. All new students are notified via e-mail at the start of each semester about the [Student Handbook](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbook.html) and at all [New Student Orientations.](http://www.uma.edu/studentorientation.html) The handbook provides information on UMA and UM System resources, policies, and procedures. The [UMS Student Conduct Code](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#conduct) was revised in November 2013 to meet current federal guidelines and legislation, such as the Campus SaVE Act (Sexual Violence Elimination Act). In relation to Title IX, the UM System Task Force has defined the optimal methods for both broad-based student and employee training and [detailed training](http://www.uma.edu/umaemployeeanti-harassmenttraining.html) for Title IX Coordinators and designated campus officials.

Some academic programs (Architecture, Veterinary Technology, [Nursing](http://www.uma.edu/assets/docs/nursing/bsnhandbook.pdf)) have created program-specific student handbooks, and a specialized handbook for the Aviation Program is in progress—all to provide policies and procedures which regulate those programs. Some programs or minors (Computer Information Systems (workroom) and [Education](http://www.uma.edu/uma-student-teaching.html)) provide specialized materials for student provided as online resources and in newsletters, especially covering such things as internships/practica/student teaching where responsibilities of the students and agencies are covered in detail. Based on concerns raised during recent student practica and to focus attention on this important issue, the faculty in the Mental Health and Human Services program are in the process of creating a new ethics course for their students. The [UMA Faculty Handbook](https://www.uma.edu/facultyhandbook.html) serves as an updated reference to policies and procedures, rights and responsibilities of full-time and part-time faculty, faculty governance, and assessment and evaluation. All employees are informed and trained regarding the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](http://www.uma.edu/ferpa.html) [(FERPA).](http://www.uma.edu/ferpa.html) Concerns relating to conflict of interest are addressed in many policies, such as the [Equal Opportunity](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section401/) [Complaint Procedure](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/equal-opportunity-complaint-procedure-2/), [Sexual Harassment Policy](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/sexual-harassment-policy/), [Student Academic Grievance Policy](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#academicgrievance), UMS [Accounting Practice Letter Section 410, an](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section410/)d [Student Conduct Code](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#conduct). All of the information is transmitted by e-mail and or printed document to employees who need this information, and in some cases a signoff is required and retained in the Human Resources Office.

The UM System values the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. The collective bargaining agreements between the UM System and the [Associated Faculties](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/labor-relations/) of the UM System, Article 2, and the [Maine Part-Time Faculty Association,](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/labor-relations/) Article 3, state that academic freedom is essential to the fulfillment of the purposes of the University. These agreements provide protection for the faculty and protect academic freedom. UMA is equally committed to student freedom of expression and encourages independent thinking.

Regulations on student academic integrity including plagiarism and cheating are found in both the [Student Academic Integrity Code,](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#saic) and [Student Conduct Code.](http://www.uma.edu/studenthandbookpol-s.html#conduct)  To further highlight academic integrity, an ethics statement appears when students first log into their UMA student portal. Students must indicate that they have read and understood the statement by electronically checking a box that states that all work submitted is their own.

As required in the [Faculty Handbook](https://www.uma.edu/facultyhandbook.html), faculty must cover UMA’s academic integrity policy in each course syllabus. Policies on intellectual property which now confirm faculty ownership of their syllabi were also clarified since the last visit. Since then, and following a grievance challenge about whether it was appropriate for UMA to share a faculty member’s syllabi with an adjunct instructor, UMA was advised that syllabi are “owned” by individual faculty members who create them, and has in response developed University-owned course charters (See Sample Course Charters in workroom or in Links folder in Portal) for each course that can be shared as needed. Fairness in matters concerning UMA employees is contained in collective bargaining agreements and state and federal law pertaining to academic freedom and other First Amendment rights. UMA’s Coordinator of Community Standards and Mediation works closely with students to guarantee procedural fairness. UMA is also bound by laws ensuring due process in student and employee discipline cases. Additionally, Board of Trustees procedures set out a system for review of questions about the [awarding of tenure.](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/academic-affairs/administrative-procedures-manual/%23310)

[Human Subject Protections policies and procedures](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section601/) are in place and functioning effectively. The [UMA Institutional Review Board](http://www.uma.edu/irb.html) (IRB) reviews and approves applications for research involving human or animal subjects which reach the level of [federal requirements](http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html) for such review, and assures that the rights and the welfare of the subjects involved are adequately protected, that the risks to the individual are outweighed by the potential benefits, and that informed consent is obtained by appropriate methods. UMA also has an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, charged with protecting the safety and welfare of animals used in research—an issue especially applicable to UMA’s Veterinary Technology program. UMA students studying Education who need to be in a school setting with children are required to complete the state criminal check and sign a risk and release form. Prospective academically admissible students who answer positive to the felony question on UMA’s admission application are referred to the Special Case Admissions Review Committee for assistance and review.

UMA adheres to state, federal and UM System non-discrimination policies. Beginning in 2013, all employees are required to take sensitivity/ harassment training as required by the UM System. Supervisors can participate in Supervisor Development Institute, which offers modules addressing equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and harassment. Search committee members are required to have Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training within the past year, and all processes and documents within the hiring process are vetted and approved by the EEO Director. UMA provides accommodations to students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Designated [ADA contacts](http://www.uma.edu/disabilityservices.html) are found at all instructional locations.

UMA complements nondiscrimination policies by promoting diversity on the campuses. The [Maine Women’s Hall of Fame,](http://www.uma.edu/mwhof.html) in the Katz Library, is dedicated to Maine women whose achievements have a significant impact on Maine. UMA Bangor has a Women Invigorating the Curriculum and Celebrating Diversity Committee, which supports the “invigoration” of curriculum by supplementing and calling attention to issues related to women, gender, sexuality, and social justice issues. Also in Bangor, a Multicultural Center serves as a focal point for diversity events. UMA’s [Senior College](http://www.uma.edu/seniorcollege.html) provides stimulating learning opportunities for those 50 and older. The Holocaust and Human Rights Center [of Maine,](http://hhrcmaine.org/) on the Augusta campus, informs through “initiatives in education, exhibition, and activism” about the “Nazi Holocaust, other genocides, and broader issues of human rights abuses.” Other UMA groups focus on diversity and cultural awareness, including the International Advocacy Committee, the Diversity Committee, and the UMA Military Achievement Project.

UMA’s Diversity Action Plan, was slated for revision during spring 2014. (With the departure of the Diversity Committee chair, this undertaking has been delayed.) UMA’s greater community enjoys a strong [French language and cultural program,](http://www.uma.edu/frenchatuma.html) offering activities centered on all things French. Students can participate in global citizenship courses and in yearly service learning courses and trips to develop intercultural competencies. Recent student trips have included service learning and coursework in Haiti, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. In spring 2014, UMA hosted a [Fulbright](https://www.uma.edu/fulbright-scholar-from-slovenia-teaching-at-uma-this-semester.html) Scholar [from Slovenia,](https://www.uma.edu/fulbright-scholar-from-slovenia-teaching-at-uma-this-semester.html) and offered a [9-credit integrated course using Cuba](https://www.uma.edu/spring-2014-9-credit-travel-course-on-cuba.html) as a case study, with travel to Cuba that integrated courses in art, history, literature, and culture.

UMA also provides students, faculty and staff with informal opportunities for enrichment.

The [Research & Pedagogy (RaP)](http://www.uma.edu/rap-home.html) monthly series allows faculty, staff and students to be part of presentations and discussion highlighting pedagogical practices, research, and scholarship. Recent topics have included student perspectives on international advocacy, best assessment practices, First Amendment rights in the classroom, climate change in the Pacific islands, and other areas of faculty and staff expertise. UMA has hosted and will again host in spring 2014 the UM System’s Spring Faculty Institute, sponsored by University College and devoted to the pedagogy of e-learning and e-teaching. Annual faculty retreats support discussion, open forums, and workshops on important topics selected by the faculty. UMA supports participation in institution-sponsored workshops on useful and interesting topics, including these recent offerings: résumé writing and career development, leadership development, interdisciplinary pedagogy, wellness, and the legislative bill adoption process. Musical performances and art exhibitions by students, faculty, and external artists are presented throughout the academic year. Additionally, UMA’s Senior College offers a successful concert and lecture series in Augusta’s Jewett Hall Auditorium. Many of these activities are supported by Presidential mini-grants, professional development funds, Presidential research grants, the Student Government Association, clubs and organizations, and local union chapters.

UMA strives to inform faculty of its policies and procedures. For example, all new employees are required to meet with a representative of the [Office of Administrative Services](http://www.uma.edu/AdminServices.html) after their initial hire to have policies explained. Since the last accreditation visit in 2007, orientations for new faculty, coordinated by the Provost Office, became more standardized and comprehensive.

UMA strives to inform students of its policies and procedures as well. For example, [New Student Orientation](http://www.uma.edu/nso) is an important tool to acclimate new students to UMA; inform them of resources, policies, and procedures; and increase their chances for educational success. Given UMA’s non-traditional and non-residential student body, it is difficult for many to attend an on-site orientation. Plans are underway to develop an online, web-based version of New Student Orientation, with the goal of providing UMA’s entering students with another convenient and accessible means to participate. (See Standard 6 for more details and a progress report.) This option will benefit a variety of incoming and potential students living at a distance, those with time constraints or family obligations, those who desire more detailed information before making the decision to move to a UMA location, and those who prefer or expect their educational programming in an online format.

In an effort to reduce UMA’s high loan default rates and to educate and empower its students on financial literacy, UMA participates in and promotes the [SALT](http://www.asa.org/for-students/what-is-salt/) (A Responsible Borrower Program) created by the non-profit organization American Student Assistance (ASA). This free financial services program assists students and alumni with responsible debt management. Information on this program is distributed to students at New Student Orientation and is publicized through UMA’s Student Financial Services Office and its [web page.](http://www.uma.edu/financialaid.html)

Ample opportunities exist for students, faculty, and staff to provide feedback and to engage in open discussions about UMA itself. One obvious example is the creation of this self-study; many faculty, staff, and administrators participated throughout the drafting, redrafting, and rewriting processes, and the various drafts of each standard were available for public comment via their publication on the Portal throughout the entire two-year writing process. Other examples include the student responses to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which began in 2007 and has continued every three years (See NSSE Snapshot in workroom or in Links folder in Portal). In 2013, UMA’s response rate was almost 50%, compared to 31% at our peer institutions. On the employee side, all faculty and staff were asked to participate in the Baldrige Performance Excellence Survey. In the third round of this survey (2012-2013), 52% responded and the results have already helped UMA align resources, improve communication, and identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

President’s Open Forums have been held on a regular basis in an effort to disseminate information on topics that have covered online student evaluations, academic initiatives, marketing and recruitment, and budget updates. During the fall semester 2014, under the direction of UMA’s Vice President of Finance, UMA began building the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan. Assessing progress on the Seven Key Goals from the 2011-2016 Plan provides a foundation on which to build the next iteration of the plan. Also contributing to our new plan will be the experiences of this self-study and the new restructuring initiatives of the UM System Board of Trustees. As this process continues to be a moving target, updates will be shared with the visiting team in April of 2015.

In order to foster stronger information sharing for all constituencies, by May 2015 UMA will shift from a Joomla to a WordPress content management system for its website, a more user-friendly distributed model that will encourage department employees to update their segments regularly. The new open architecture content management system allows for content creation and maintenance by designated, trained members of the UMA community. Furthermore, with the introduction of a portal architecture to the University’s IT infrastructure, UMA will be transferring internal web content to the portal and simplifying and refocusing the marketing function of the outward-facing UMA website. In addition, with the rise of social media as a means of communication and marketing, UMA hired a social media expert in 2011 who works with all university constituencies to develop and effectively use Facebook, Twitter, and other social and web tools to communicate university information. Finally, UMA’s internal common drive (the “X-drive”) is accessible to faculty and staff and serves as a repository for evidence of work (data, documents, reports, forms, principles, plans). There are many historic and current items in the X-drive to support UMA’s ethical decision-making processes.

# APPRAISAL

UMA continues to explore its various approaches to communicating with its faculty, staff, students, and larger community; update and change information; and obtain feedback on how well it is communicating. UMA sometimes struggles with finding the best means to do so, especially in light of rapidly changing and often unproven communication technologies. Various committees have been created to develop and monitor how best to communicate which message by which means to which audience, and UMA needs to develop ways to assess how effectively it communicates.

While the Baldrige survey process does seem to be beneficial, feedback indicates that many of its questions should be clarified or given a better higher education context so our employee responses might be more thoughtful.

The move from Joomla to WordPress (May 2015) will benefit UMA in the long run. However, the challenge will be to find time necessary to manage the Portal and for members of the University to agree on what should be on the marketing-oriented, public UMA website and what should be on the internal Portal. We have already determined that there will be some overlap. (See Projection #5 in Standard 7 for details)

The common X-drive is helpful in providing information to faculty and staff, but ridding it of clutter and clearly separating current information from old will improve its navigation. UMA needs to create a system by which the vast amount of material on the X-drive can be organized in a way that is user-friendly—perhaps even being integrated into the updated portal at some point.

While UMA holds true to the standards reflected in its Statement of Philosophy and Statement of Purposes, those statements are no longer mentioned in the catalog or easily found on the web site. Staff and faculty are working to refine the mission statement and statements of purposes and philosophy and linking them to the key goals within our strategic plan. We hope to have this work completed by the April visiting team visit.

The [Student Consumer Information](http://www.uma.edu/studentconsumerinfo.html) is available on the UMA website and the [Institutional Research webpag](http://www.uma.edu/irp.html)e has recently been updated. These documents meet the requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act and NEASC.

Adjunct faculty are not involved in the New Faculty Orientation program, but as that program is revised and reintroduced, new adjunct hires will be included. For the first time, the most recent part-time faculty collective bargaining agreement with UM System requires formal evaluation for adjunct faculty by full-time discipline/program faculty. That process began at UMA in the fall of 2014 and during the evaluations we were pleased to receive very positive responses from adjuncts about the interaction, including statements about they felt more a part of UMA. See program evaluation criteria for the English, Social Sciences and Business programs in the workroom or in the Links folder in the Portal for more detail. Adjuncts are also invited to and many attended the Spring Faculty Institute held at UMA, and several have made RaP presentations.

Anecdotal information suggests that many stakeholders still desire print versions of UMA’s catalog and course guides. To address this, a limited number of printed catalogs will be available for staff use and, during summer/fall 2014, a listing of courses will be printed in the community free papers, with a few hard copies on hand for requests.

# PROJECTIONS

# Under new leadership, the Diversity Committee will revise and update the Diversity Action Plan by September 30, 2015.

# UMA will reinstate the statements of philosophy and purposes in the next edition of the catalog and make these statements, our new mission statement, as well as our Key Goals more visible on the UMA web site.

# The Office of the Dean of Students will continue its progress on completing and implementing an online New Student Orientation program with the goal of making it available for incoming students in fall 2015.

# The process of including adjunct faculty in the New Faculty Orientation program will be phased in beginning with the fall 2015 semester.

# Institutional Effectiveness

UMA is responsible for creating and promoting an environment where academic integrity is a priority for students, faculty and staff members. Within the rules and guidance provided by the UM System Board of Trustees and endorsed by UMA, we adjudicate charges of dishonesty while protecting the rights of all parties. We make every effort to model desired behavior by our words and actions. We understand that integrity is a core principle for any educational institution; we cautiously and continuously monitor our operations, policies, and procedures, and make necessary adjustments as warranted, to meet the high standard of institutional integrity.