



University of Maine System
Community Engagement Multi-Year Plan

*Strengthening the Role of UMS as a
Resource for the State of Maine*

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Community Engagement Multi-year Plan

Overview: Community Engagement is Key to attaining the UMS Vision

More effective community engagement of the University of Maine System campuses with our communities is a major component of the Board of Trustees' Strategic Outcomes document adopted 7/21/14. The vision statement is as follows:

“The University of Maine System is an integrated system of distinct campuses, centers and other facilities operating in concert to provide high-quality educational undergraduate and graduate opportunities that are accessible, affordable and relevant to the needs of Maine students, businesses and communities. It drives economic development by conducting world-class research, commercializing valuable ideas, and partnering successfully with businesses and industries throughout Maine and beyond. It is the state’s most engaged and responsive institution working on behalf of all Maine citizens, communities, and institutions. It is Maine’s most important public asset. “

The following UMS Community Engagement (CE) plan will assist campuses and UMS as a whole to attain this vision more fully.

Why Community Engagement Now?

Community Engagement is the future of public higher education. While educating students remains firmly at the core of higher education’s mission, serving the community through engagement of those students and their institutions in mission-centered ways is also required. Community needs today far outstrip conventional solutions and funding sources, and public support, more than ever, depends on demonstrating the benefits that higher education institutions can provide to their local, regional and statewide communities. Students and faculty expertise are our most important resources in doing this work. Staff and community partners are essential for success. Through active learning and high-impact community engagement, the goals of higher education – educating students, conducting valuable research and scholarship, and serving our constituencies – can be achieved.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recognized the importance of community engagement for the future of higher education and for high-quality student learning, and created a prestigious, nationally-recognized “Engaged Campus” designation, first awarded in 2006, for institutions that underwent a rigorous application and review process. The “engaged campus” designation has now become a goal for many institutions, including UMS. The University of Maine was first designated in 2008 and was re-designated in 2015.

The University of Maine, Machias was designated in 2010. This is an important achievement.

Carnegie defines Community Engagement as follows:

“Community engagement describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”

Further, Carnegie summarizes the purpose of Community Engagement thus:

“The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.”

The definition and purpose of community engagement show that these practices are central to the UMS mission and to our state.

Why a Plan Now?

Maine has some particular challenges that UMS must help to meet. The demographic decline, and the urgent need to attract new citizens and students to our state; the continued viability of our small towns and large cities alike; the need for innovative solutions to problems across the spectrum from arts to social services to business and industry; and the demand for more obvious connections between higher education and workforce development – all demand a more thorough and unified response from UMS.

Individual faculty, students and staff, plus certain units of the UMS, already make tremendous contributions to our communities, businesses, non-profits, and cultural organizations. These are excellent accomplishments and solid relationships with community partners to build upon. But this community engagement work is not always well aligned with the core practices and policies of the institutions.

The public service/community engagement work that is done today depends largely on the individual choices of faculty, the voluntary service of student organizations, the professional requirements of fields like social work, education or engineering, the mission-driven work of individual units within institutions, or the initiative of non-profits or private companies which happen to connect with a member of the university community.

There is insufficient consistency in community engagement, no assurance of opportunities for all students, no established ways for all sectors of the public to connect with their university. And there is insufficient information internally and for the public: we don't know all the activities that are taking place; we don't know enough about their outcomes; there is little coordination; there is no assurance of best value for effort expended; there is inadequate recognition for faculty, students or community partners. It is time to do better.

Principles of the UMS CE Plan

Successful CE for the System will depend both on policy leadership from the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees, and the coordinated participation and actions of each individual campus. This is a function of a basic operating principle of the One University for Maine vision: unified results through a common policy framework and mission differentiation.

The cornerstone of the plan is the Board and the Chancellor's public service strategic outcome targets, that all UMS campuses will be designated as Engaged Campuses by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (or some similar designation that is more appropriate for their mission) by 2019.

Referring to the framework provided by the Carnegie Foundation for first-time Engaged Campus designation, the UMS plan provides a set of CE policy and foundational actions to support campuses to carry out the requisite CE alignment work to meet recognition standards. Each campus's mission, location and current practices of CE will vary, so the details of its plan will vary.

Principle 1- There are two levels of planning: UMS and campuses. The UMS should provide direction and support for the goals that must be achieved; campuses should plan in the context of UMS strategic goals and mission differentiation.

Principle 2- Plans must accommodate needed time for appropriate governance and consultation processes to take place. Faculty, students, staff, System committees and the Board of Trustees all have roles to play on various topics; time must be allotted for appropriate consideration. Community partners and campuses also need time to set directions, choose and implement appropriate projects and then evaluate and build on results.

Principle 3- The UMS plan uses major categories from the application for the initial Carnegie Engaged Campus designation, to facilitate recognition applications. While the System is not eligible for this designation, it can help campuses achieve it.

Campuses that wish to apply for the initial Carnegie designation may do so beginning in 2018 for the 2020 announcement cycle. The next possibility for designation is 2020.

UM has its designation until 2025, UMM will be up for re-designation, and the other campuses will apply for the first time. This is a major undertaking similar to a NEASC decennial accreditation report. Campuses will need to allocate responsibility and resources to accomplish it. UM and UMM can serve as advisors for System colleagues.

Principle 4 - CE work needs to be coordinated with other UMS change efforts; with each campus's own current strategic planning process; and with regional and specialized accreditation cycles.

Principle 5 - UMS actions are indicated in the plan. Campus actions are not, because they depend on specific campus situations. Campuses need to create their own plans, to further the UMS strategic goals. Each campus should assess its status with respect to each area of the Carnegie Framework and determine appropriate campus coordination responsibility, activities and timetables to attain its CE goals.

Campuses should submit their CE plans to the Board of Trustees by January 2016, to aid the UMS CE committee to identify priorities for future system-wide alignment, capacity-building and support.

Conclusion

The many accomplishments of UMS campuses in CE have often been made in spite of policies, in contravention of departmental norms, or in silos at the periphery of our organizations. Following the plan given here will go a long way toward eventually making CE a guiding principle for teaching, research and service in UMS that transforms students' lives and prospects, renews our institutions, and partners in creative and sustaining ways with our communities.

UMS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Introduction

Much of the work of the System in the past two years has been centered on integrating different aspects of foundational university administrative operations, such as facilities, IT and finances. As the work moves on to encompass core mission areas such as teaching and learning, student success, academic program integration, and other topics, there is also a need for alignment among these areas. Community engagement is ripe for alignment with these mission areas.

Indeed, the Carnegie Foundation is looking for a higher degree of alignment of CE with other campus priorities, as a result of its assessment of the outcomes of the first and second rounds of Engaged Campus designations. The Foundation highlights four areas of practice that must continue to be developed:

- Alignment of community engagement practices with other campus priorities such as first-year programs, learning communities, diversity initiatives that link academic success of underrepresented students with active community-based learning;
- Assessment of a broad range of activities;
- Partnerships that attain a high level of reciprocity and collaboration;
- A culture of community engagement that includes appropriate policies and practices to reward faculty teaching and learning, research and creative activity in CE, and the scholarship and engagement of practice generally.

This plan provides a framework for UMS and its campuses to meet this expectation for enhanced CE practice.

NOTE: in the outline below, year 1 is the current academic year, 2014-15.

II. Leadership, Coordination and Campus Support

Leadership Model and Options

System CE work with campuses and community should continue to be part of the UMS mission and goals. Stable CE leadership can ensure that campuses receive support for success with Carnegie; the Chancellor and Board receive direct information about CE support, initiatives, accomplishments and impacts; CE can be a central theme in UMS communication and marketing; policies and procedures can be reviewed for their impact on campus CE work; external funding can be sought; and faculty development, student engagement, and community partnering can all be enhanced.

RECOMMENDATION 1: A central office, (1-2 FTE), modeled, for example, on the California State University Office of Community Service Learning, should be established to provide system-wide coordination, capacity-building and strategic support for campus-centered activities and multi-campus collaboration.

The CE committee suggests 3 options for CE leadership:

1. A full-time VCAA has CE responsibility;
2. Other current UMS employee has release time from appropriate level of current responsibilities, and CE is added to job description; reports to the VCAA;
3. A new employee is hired and charged with CE task; reports to the VCAA.

TIMELINE:

Year 1, end of AY 2014-15: UMS leadership chooses option (or other); creates appropriate job description(s) and makes staffing and budget decisions.

The basic job description should include: minimum of master's degree; 5 years experience with CE work including leadership of some aspect of it; track record or potential in fundraising and development; track record or potential in communication/marketing strongly suggested.

Beginning Year 2: hire, establish office, and immediately build connections with designated campus contacts.

CE Steering Committee

RECOMMENDATION 2. The CE Steering Committee should continue with a revised membership and charge.

Membership

The CE leader should staff/lead the committee, and there should be two representatives from each campus (suggested: 1 faculty, 1 staff member), plus one from Cooperative Extension and one from the Sea Grant, plus two representing community partners. This working group would be responsible for two-way communication with campuses and others regarding CE efforts. The committee would add additional faculty, staff, students and community partners for short-term task forces to address particular topics or issues.

There should be regular advisory meetings with the CE Steering Committee and faculty, community partners, and student practitioners.

Charge

A new charge for the CE committee should be written in Year 2, to include the following tasks:

a. Support campuses as they apply for the Carnegie designation by carrying out capacity-building activities, including educational/professional development opportunities; cross-campus collaboration; and communication.

--The campus faculty development workshops scheduled for May-June 2015, and the Spring 2016 Showcase, in conjunction with Maine Campus Compact, are already planned.

-- Campus CE reports due January 2016 will be reviewed and synthesized; supportive activities will be chosen.

b. Explore with campuses beginning in Year 2 the Carnegie goal of alignment of community engagement practices with other campus priorities such as (among many other possibilities) first-year programs, learning communities, diversity initiatives that link academic success of underrepresented students with active community-based learning; include in discussions the CAOs, faculty, and other relevant groups. (Campuses that have already received the Carnegie designation could lead in this work.)

c. Undertake multi-year process to review policies and procedures in all areas to facilitate support for CE and remove barriers. Consult with system, campuses, community, students to set priorities. Choose areas for review and determine whether CE committee should undertake reviews, or if another area of UMS would be more appropriate, e.g., a Board of Trustees committee, the Presidents, the CAOs, the CSAOs, or other, with appropriate consultations from campuses/community partners; or some other option. Set timeline for results.

d. Continue software and data management CE sub-committee and make recommendations for data-gathering and reporting on amount and impact of campus CE work. (See III. below)

e. Act as a resource for other bodies which may be active in portions of CE work, providing examples of best practice, research findings, sample policies, etc.

f. Explore and share best practices to enact partnerships with community. Continue linkages with other community-oriented groups such as Maine Campus Compact, or Maine Commission for Community Service, to cultivate community partnerships, identify applied CE research needs, or other specified tasks.

Year 2 & ongoing: support CE on UMS website; aggregate data from campus reports; mine campus results for featured stories on CE; Chancellor and Board of Trustees incorporate CE into state-wide reports. (Software chosen as in III below will be very helpful to accomplish these tasks.)

III. Data Management, Reporting and Assessment

RECOMMENDATION 3. Build capacity for a robust, unified CE data management and reporting system.

Build capacity for campuses and UMS to have accurate accounting of CE work, numerical and anecdotal; enable systematic assessment of community perceptions and outcomes; measure impacts on various participants (faculty, students and community partners) resulting from the institution's engagement with the community.

TIMELINE:

Year 1: CE sub-committee on Software carrying out design and planning work in conjunction with UMS IT, to aid in evaluation of software packages and recommendation for purchase.

Year 2: Select and pilot CE software, assess pilot(s) and begin system-wide implementation of successful software package(s).

Year 3: Continue implementation, use data for campus Carnegie applications, and continue assessment of initial results.

IV. Academic Integration

RECOMMENDATION 4. Chief Academic Officers should lead a collaborative effort with faculty to review and revise promotion, tenure and post-tenure review criteria to ensure appropriate recognition and valuation of high impact community engagement practices.

TIMELINE:

Year 1: Best practice resources identified by CE Sub-committee and shared with Chief Academic Officers.

Year 2: CAO's work collectively and individually to lead campus efforts to review and revise standards and policies as necessary and appropriate.

V. Fiscal Resources

RECOMMENDATION 5. Provide internal and external budget support for CE activities.

Internal

Year 1&2: UMS support leadership of CE work, plus that of CE committee.

Year 2: CE work with UMS leadership to begin consideration of budgetary principles and practices which will support system and campus CE work; pilot selected models.

Specific items to be supported this year include CE leadership/office model; software purchase and deployment; faculty development activities already committed for spring 2016.

External

Year 2: next CE leader and CE committee identify projects for external support and engage in development work. The work plan and outcomes may be attractive to a national or regional funder.

VI. Awards and Celebrations of CE

RECOMMENDATION 6. To bolster the culture of CE on campuses and across the system, build recognition of the centrality of CE to mission through public ceremonies and acknowledgments.

TIMELINE:

Year 1: CE Summits held March 2015. Campus faculty development workshops are scheduled for May-June 2015.

Year 2: Use projected professional development showcase in Spring 2016 as an occasion for celebration of (new) campus-community projects. (Maine Campus Compact is scheduled to lead the creation of this showcase.)

Year 3 and ongoing: continue and refine recognition and award programs

VII. Highlight CE as an important focus of UMS for the State

RECOMMENDATION 7. The role of UMS as a resource for the state of Maine should be further strengthened and highlighted.

Mission, values and vision

Year 1&2 – Examine UMS mission, vision and values statements – revise as needed through standard Chancellor/Board of Trustees processes to bring CE commitments into sharper focus. Similarly ensure campuses integrate community engagement into their mission and values as appropriate to their mission differentiation work. CE committee serves as a resource.

It is **recommended** to add one sentence to the current vision statement, right before the last sentence: “It is Maine’s most important public asset” as follows: It actively collaborates with community partners to address civic, social and cultural issues.

Develop common UMS CE lexicon and integrate CE into leadership statements, media releases and marketing materials.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. UMS CE Recommendations Summary

APPENDIX 2. UMS CE FY16 Priorities

APPENDIX 3. 2014-2015 CE Steering Committee Membership & Charter

APPENDIX 4. Chancellor's Metrics for the Success of CE and other UMS Initiatives

APPENDIX 5. Selected Resources and links for Carnegie Classification Designation and Community Engagement

APPENDIX 1. UMS CE Recommendations Summary

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APPENDIX 2. UMS CE FY16 Priorities

To: Theo Kalikow
 From: Emma Gelsinger
 Subject: UMS CE FY16 Priorities
 Date: June 15th, 2015

Priorities: FY16

Community engagement for the University of Maine System requires a foundation and structure that allows each campus to focus on individual needs while adhering to the One University mission. Alignment of current and new activities with system-wide standards is essential to the success and sustainability of these activities. The outline of tasks and responsibilities below is broken down into three tiers: system level, campus level, and academic/administrative unit level. Each of these aligns closely with UMS Strategic Outcomes as indicated below.

Create A Common Message:

- *Public Service Target 1*
- *Strategic Integration Target 1*

System

- Establish a narrative for community engagement to be used on all campuses and that includes relevance, historical context, academic benefits, etc.
- Provide system-wide definitions of community engagement and its related activities – the issue of “what do we mean by community engagement” has recurred many times in just the few short months working on the Metropolitan University Initiative as USM.
(Note: Barbara Holland strongly emphasized not getting into language wars, there are already universally accepted definitions, ex: Carnegie Classification)

Campus

- Disseminate messaging and definitions from the system throughout each campus – campus leaders need to adhere to the same message
- Work with campus leaders (administrative, faculty, staff and student) to create a dialogue about community-engaged teaching, research and service – collective input reduces pushback on official policy changes.

Academic Administrative Units

- Establish in each unit that community engagement is valued and part of the job/faculty agenda.
- Provide resources to inform those interested in learning more about community engagement as a method of teaching, research and service.

Define Excellence & Success:

- *Public Service Target 1*
- *Strategic Integration Target 4*
- *Education Targets 2 & 6*

System

- Establish relevant metrics for success for each campus (number of engaged courses, student hours of community-based learning, etc.).
- Define that excellence in teaching, research and service includes community engagement (this is a way to begin approaching the P&T review issue without officially starting the process).
- Provide all campuses with standards for awards and recognition.

Campus

- Using the system metrics, collect baseline data for metrics of success if the data does not already exist.
- Establish a selection and review process for engagement awards and recognition

Academic/Administrative Units

- Support existing community engagement activities and early adopters.
- Disseminate metrics for evaluation of community engagement, including parameters for awards and recognition.
- Identify programmatic and/or administrative goals related to community engagement.

Build Infrastructure & Capacity:

- *Public Service Targets 1 & 2*
- *Strategic Integration Targets 1, 2 & 3*
- *Education Targets 6 & 7*

System

- Hire a director for community engagement for the system and provide planning and administrative support.
- Identify system liaisons for community engagement at each campus that oversee alignment.
- Review and evaluate financial resources dedicated to community engagement at each campus
- Establish a system-wide community advisory board(s) for community engagement that is representative of all sectors.
- Establish system-wide curriculum committee to make recommendations on an engaged course designator
- Facilitate a process of identifying status, priorities and assistance needed for Carnegie Classification at each campus.
- Implement system-wide data collection software and faculty activity report

Campus

- Review current campus-wide infrastructures related to community engagement and identify areas of overlap and/or areas for improvement.
- Work with the system to identify financial priorities for community engagement.
- Establish a community advisory board for community engagement (this could draw from current advisory boards).
- Work with system director to create a timeline and identify priorities for Carnegie Classification/Reclassification.

Academic/Administrative Units

- Review unit level human and financial resources dedicated to community engagement.
- Identify where resources are needed most.

Appendix 3. 2014-2015 UMS CE Steering Committee Membership & Charter**Community Engagement Steering Committee
FY15**

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Sponsor:

Rebecca Wyke, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration & Treasurer

UMS 2014-15 Community Engagement Steering Committee Charter

Role

The Community Engagement Steering Committee will advise and assist the Vice-Chancellor for Community Engagement in researching and developing a multi-year action plan to unify, elevate and enhance Community Engagement (CE) across the University of Maine System.

Community Engagement Project Outcomes *(Approved by BOT September 2014)*

1. To offer every student the opportunity to become a reflective practitioner through high-impact, experiential learning settings.
2. To contribute to Maine communities and the state through mutually beneficial CE partnerships.

Deliverables *(Approved by the Chancellor January 2014)*

Begin the process of alignment and establishment of CE as a signature attribute of the University of Maine System

A multi-year plan, implementation timeline, and priorities for development of a common structure and framework of policy, practice, expectations, and initiatives to enhance and expand community engagement within the UMS in three to five years.

Faculty development to encourage and extend CE efforts.

A plan for a unified method of data collection, analysis, assessment, and reporting of CE activities and impacts throughout UMS and the State of Maine.

Membership and Responsibilities

The steering committee brings together stakeholders with a variety of experience as learners, teachers, researchers, administrators, business and community leaders, and service providers.

Steering committee members will be asked to:

- Attend and actively participate in meetings of the whole
- Complete requested pre-work (readings, research, etc.) prior to meetings
- Participate on one or more sub-groups or committees that will be formed to research and summarize relevant data and information, draft sections of the plan and assist in planning faculty summits.
- Assist in identifying and recruiting additional volunteers to provide input and/or serve on subcommittees
- Support outreach and education efforts to raise awareness and understanding of the UMS Community Engagement efforts

Meeting Schedule

The steering committee will hold in-person meetings in late fall, winter and early spring. Additional technologically mediated meetings-of-the whole and/or subcommittee meetings will be arranged as needed.

APPENDIX 4. Chancellor's Metrics for the Success of CE and other UMS Initiatives

The Chancellor has outlined several additional results to be expected from CE in conjunction with other System initiatives. The CE steering committee suggests that these results are best obtained through a system-wide coordinated effort involving CE, Cooperative extension, research, marketing, etc. They are:

*Community impact studies at each institution or major program will show a continuous upward trend-line of community engagement and economic value.

*80% of families surveyed in ME will be able to identify a key connection whereby UMS has helped them or their business.

*Employer surveys show that UMS works actively with businesses to meet their workforce needs, and that UMS graduates are best-prepared to meet those needs at graduate and undergraduate levels.

*Alumni and student surveys should establish a baseline for the measurement of civic engagement and career success.

APPENDIX 5. Selected Resources

Carnegie Classification

Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE)

http://www.nerche.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=341:carnegie-foundation-community-engagement-classification-&catid=914&Itemid=92

Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement First-time Classification Documentation Framework,

http://www.nerche.org/images/stories/projects/Carnegie/2015/2015_first-time_framework.pdf

Community Engagement

AAC&U, Diversity & Democracy, Publicly Engaged Scholarship and Teaching, Winter 2015, Vol.18 no. 1

(Up-to-date summary of best practice in the field.)

AAC&U, Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP),

<http://www.aacu.org/leap>

AASCU, Stepping Forward as Stewards of Place: A Guide for Leading Public Engagement at State Colleges and Universities,

<http://www.aascu.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=5458>

Beere, Carol A., Votruba, James C., Wells, Gail W., Becoming an Engaged Campus, Jossey-Bass, 2011

(Indispensable guidebook to CE at the campus level. Alignment advice for all areas of the institution is provided. Highly recommended.)

California State University, Office of the Chancellor, Office of Community Service Learning, Strategic Plan 2008-2013, also

https://www.calstate.edu/cce/about_us/

(A model of a central System office designed to support CE activities on multiple campuses.)