



Internal Communications and Engagement Draft Plan
University of Maine System

One University

“Seven differentiated campuses operating as one fully integrated university singularly focused on student success and responsive service to the State of Maine.”



“The more elaborate our means of communications, the less we communicate.”

Joseph Priestley

I. Purpose

The purpose of this internal communications and engagement plan is to provide a roadmap for:

- The successful communication of strategic initiatives related to the vision for One University.
- Pathways to engagement that will enhance the ability of the University of Maine System, as well as each campus to achieve their respective goals within those initiatives.

This plan will serve as the principal internal communications and engagement roadmap to ensure that the broad strategies and tactics herein are achieved. It should also be noted that this plan is intended to be a living, breathing document that can and will be altered as circumstances change and as strategies, goals, and objectives are achieved.

II. Target Audiences

The primary target audiences of this plan:

1. Employees – All employees of the University of Maine System and seven campuses including administration, staff, and faculty.
2. Students – All students enrolled at each of the seven campuses.
3. Boards of Visitors

III. Scope

This plan is limited in scope to the audiences identified in the previous section. It is also limited in scope in terms of its purpose, which is to effectively enhance awareness, understanding and engagement in events, plans, policies, issues, and developments related to “One University” initiatives. This plan does not seek to replace existing structured and systematic communications or channels and tools that already exist,



rather it seeks to work with and within existing people and processes to enhance current processes.

IV. Key Objectives

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1. Provide opportunities for audiences to increase their awareness and directly engage in dialogue, planning and feedback related to One University strategies and tactics.
2. Provide the One University planning team with a process that increases feedback and invites the level of engagement necessary to gain insights, increase understanding and engender commitment for initiatives designed to create a successful model for a thriving public university system in Maine.
3. Build confidence in the potential and capacity for change.

V. Core Strategies

1. Build trust in the process for change – communicate, communicate, communicate using different channels and heavily relying on opportunities that create dialogue and engagement.
2. Implement a cascading system of communication that provides guidance in crafting and delivering internal messages related to One University.
3. Identify systemic and systematic vehicles of communication in order to provide reliable communication channels so that internal constituencies are aware of events, plans, policies, issues, and developments related to One University.
4. Enhance communications at and between all levels by informing, educating and engaging target audiences in the planning and implementation process. Critical to achieving success is ensuring that all key leaders understand their roles as key communicators on a daily basis. A principal task of leadership is to “create a new consensus about the goals to be pursued and how to achieve them.” (A Leader’s Guide to Storytelling, Stephen Denning)
5. Engage the communicators in creating the communication process, thereby increasing ownership and commitment.



VI. Tactics and Timeline

1. Engage the system and campus communicators in developing the best approach and vehicles for communication to the respective audiences, as well as methods for feedback. Complete final plan by August 21, 2015.
 - a. Visit each Campus in May and June (complete except UMaine)
 - b. Share President's Council retreat conversations with a broader group of leaders – key staff and stakeholders (set by Council for 8/13/15)
 - c. Convene campus communicators to develop strategy for following up on fall conversations by the end of August. (Scheduled for 8/19/15)
 - i. Invite Campus Communicators to 9/21 Board of Trustees meeting
 - d. Craft messages and content. Customize to delivery tools. Emphasize the storyline and the people. Find success stories. Acknowledge the challenges.
 - i. One University
 1. Strategic Initiatives 1-4
 2. Single Accreditation
 - ii. The specific changes that are occurring with IT, HR, Procurement, Facilities, etc. Build confidence and credibility, as well as recognize the necessary investments of time and money in making it the best that it can be for internal customers. (Hub Burton has a major role within shared services FOR shared services personnel.)
 - iii. APRIP process stories
 - e. Identify, develop and collaborate with key messengers.
 - i. Chancellor Jim Page
 - ii. CFO Ryan Low
 - iii. Presidents
 - iv. Dr. Ellen Chaffee
 - v. Dr. Cynthia Huggins, Chief CAO
 - vi. Key Systems Communicators
 1. Rosa Redonnet
 2. Hub (Crompton) Burton
 3. All the Systems Teams
 - vii. Key External Communicators
 1. Dan Demeritt
 2. Campus PR
 - viii. APRIP Team Leaders (current and incoming)
 - ix. Key Campus Communicators

1. Presidents
 2. Human Resources
 3. Students (in key roles)
 4. Faculty
 5. Communication contacts on each campus (invited to 8/19 meeting)
 - Robert Stein
 - Joyce Blanchard
 - Margaret Nagle
 - Jennifer O’Leary
 - Rachel Paling
 - Jennifer Eriksen
 - April Mulherin
 - Ray Phinney
 - Susan Tardie
 - Melvin Adams
 - Amy Lentz
 - Rachel Rice
 - Chris Quint
 - Danielle Vayenas
- f. Identify, increase and develop delivery tools. See Attachment C -
- i. By campus – each is different. Identify the right vehicles to penetrate the audience, creating depth and breadth of knowledge and engagement.
 - ii. Across the system by campus and constituent there are varying levels of knowledge and interest, as well as widely differing reactions to the strategic initiatives integral to One University. Customizing communication processes to reach across and within all of these audience groups will take commitment and persistence on the part of all key communicators.
- g. Identify and schedule campus conversations for the fall with faculty, staff, administration and students with Systems and local staff sharing in the delivery of the messages and engagement of the faculty, admin, staff and students.
2. Summer retreat news, process and stories – release on general email

3. Share One University plan (Chancellor Page, President Foster, Dr. Cynthia Huggins, Dr. Ellen Chaffee, Ryan Low, Becky Wyke, Rosa Redonnet, President Hunter, President Schott ?)
 - i. Share President's Council retreat conversations with a broader group of leaders – key staff and stakeholders – on 8/13/15. This is an important opportunity to report on the President's Council planning process, recognize the contributions of the people in the room, honor the angst and continue to advance strategies prior to finalizing the plan for the Board of Trustees. It's also an opportunity to talk about attendees' roles as communicators to their respective constituents.
 - ii. Share above with Campus Communicators on 8/19/15 (with a subset of key communicators) See Attachment A - outline
 - iii. Announce fall forums on campuses and timing by 9/9/15
 - iv. Present to Board of Trustees on 9/21/15
 - v. On 9/22/15, share highlights of the presentation via email, blog and video from the Chancellor, as well as the Chair of the Board, and through the Presidents, senior leaders and key communicators (cascading communication) with a note to encourage attention and an invitation to the fall forums.
 - vi. During the week of 9/21/15, convene the Boards of Visitors, collectively and in-person, to hear the plan. Alternatively, use web system or conference call. (Note: Have they met each other? If not, building relationships across the system may be helpful.)
 - vii. Between 9/28 and 10/8/15, complete forums on all campuses. Invite Boards of Visitors, faculty, students, and all staff. Include both presentation to and engagement of participants in the forum and in post-forum action. *(Note that during the Lift360 campus tours, there was a preference for October campus visits. Weigh the options, pros and cons. Starting the tour right after the BOT may help curb rumor mills.)* See Attachment B – Outline.
4. Working with President's Council, identify areas for increased, substantive engagement in the process. Beyond APRIP, what are the opportunities for faculty and administrators to provide feedback and engage in creating the path forward? (Not just One University, but ALL system changes, as well as unique opportunities to move forward individual campus initiatives.)

- a. Working within the existing or new hierarchy, identify trickle down engagement. What communication needs to take place at each level, who needs to be involved and what are the goals? Tell that story.
5. Beyond informing and providing feedback, engage the BOVs and BOT as advocates and ambassadors, ensuring that they have the right tools to tell the story to the public and to reinforce the rationale and the underlying need to campus connections.
6. Coordinate all internal and external communication and engagement with Dan Demeritt and Hub Burton.

DRAFT



Attachment A
Presentation of Plan and Engagement of Key Stakeholders
(Post Summer Retreats)
August 13 and 19, 2015

General Outline (to be adjusted for each group)

- High level and some of the key points (Chancellor Page)
 - Case for Change – We have an opportunity (meeting the needs of our State and being even better at delivering on our promise of academic excellence designed to meet the needs of today’s student)...and we have some challenges (financial, infrastructure, etc.). We can meet those needs and tackle those challenges by working together to do so. We each have a role to play.
 - Invitation - We invite you to be part of the solution. We need you to be part of the solution, so we can all focus on what’s most important – education. (Insert Purpose)
 - Recognition –
 - Acknowledge shared challenges
 - Thank for their contributions up until now.
 - Highlight aspects of the work accomplished by the people in the room
 - Highlight unique contributions of campuses
 - Today....we are here to share the plan we have been advancing this summer. Some decisions are fully baked, others are still open for your input and advice.
 - What’s fully baked?
 - We will operate as a single financial entity.
 - Consolidating finance and administration to create a shared services model.
 - The financial health of the organization is a “must.” We will not spend our reserves.
 - Add to this list as necessary.
 - Where is there opportunity to throw in new ideas? In the implementation of the above. Today, you will hear more about the plan and help us address key questions.
- Presentations by Ryan Low, Ellen Chaffee, Cindy Huggins, Kate Foster, Susan Hunter, Rosa Redonnet, Becky Wyke, and Linda Schott, as assigned.
 - Q&A after each presentation. Check for understanding. Questions for clarification.



- Specific questions from the presenters. What input do they want, i.e. here's how you can help in this area, where we want your ideas, etc.
- After all the presentations
 - World Café Style questions and report out.
 - After all that you have heard today, what are your key concerns?
 - What ideas do you have to resolve those concerns?
 - What roles can each of us play in resolving the concerns and moving the plan forward?
 - Following World Café – move to focused conversations on specific topics (concerns or opportunities) –in small groups.
- Next steps for engagement and moving the work forward
- Their roles as communicators, within their discipline and on their campuses
- Close

Attachment B Campus Forums

The potential for creating successful campus forums begins long before the presenters and participants walk in the room and ends when participants feel as though they have made a difference. Each campus has had their own set of experiences – positive and negative - with both system presenters on tour and their own locally focused initiatives. As a result, while there may be some level of eagerness to hear more about One University, there will also be a bit of skepticism, frustration, defiance and disinterest. Nonetheless, there has been an understanding and an expectation from campus personnel that these meetings will happen and, perhaps, be helpful. How do we make it so?

- Clearly define the goals for the forums. What do the presenters want to achieve? What’s in it for the participants? Presenters want to ensure that people are informed and, where possible, engender support for and in engagement in actions that move ideas forward. Participants want to understand what’s happening, who’s doing what, how it impacts them and whether or not they have a role to play (resist, comply, engage or disengage). Being conscious of perspectives helps define the content and design of the forums (campus conversations).
- Define the stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, BOV, BOT, etc.) – Issue a general invitation via email, web, Facebook and more, but also think about, “who do we want to show up for the forums? Who will be impacted? Who can help carry the message? Who will be blockers if we don’t get them on board?” Each campus is structured differently – use that structure to issue more customized invitations. Invite student leaders, deans, faculty senate leaders, etc. depending on the structure at each campus. Let them know that they are needed, they will be heard and that they will engage in substantive conversations, not just come to listen and go home.
- Schedule the forums at times that will work for the campuses and participants.
- Ensure that the space works for forums and small group conversations.
- Create an atmosphere that says you are welcome into this conversation and that allows presenters and participants to connect. Name tags. Informal, casual, opportunity to interact in the room.
- Depending on expected numbers of participants, consider holding multiple forums at each campus to allow participation and ensure the capacity for effective group facilitation.

- Schedule forums on the campuses that are usually ignored (where staff and faculty normally have to drive to some distant campus to be included). Gorham, Lewiston, etc.
- While delivering a consistent message, customize some of the content to connect to the audience at each campus. Recognize local issues and accomplishments. Link goals to the work of the campus and the roles and opportunities of the faculty, staff and students.
- Use the right presenters for the content and the campus.
- Start with a high level “call to action” and some of the key points (Chancellor Page)
 - Case for Change – We have an opportunity (meeting the needs of our State and being even better at delivering on our promise of academic excellence designed to meet the needs of today’s student)...and we have some challenges (financial, infrastructure, etc.). We can meet those needs and tackle those challenges by working together to do so. We all have roles to play.
 - Invitation - We invited you to be part of the conversation. We need you to be part of the solution, so we can all focus on what’s most important – education. **(Insert Purpose)**
 - Recognition –
 - Acknowledge shared challenges
 - Thank for their contributions up until now.
 - Highlight aspects of the work accomplished by the people in the room
 - Highlight unique contributions of campuses
 - Today....we are here to share the plan we have been advancing this summer. Some decisions are final, others are still open for your input and advice.
 - What’s final?
 - We will operate as a single financial entity.
 - Consolidating finance and administration to create a shared services model.
 - The financial health of the organization is a “must.” We will not spend our reserves.
 - Add to this list as necessary and expand in individual presentations.
 - Where is there opportunity to throw in new ideas? In the implementation of the above. Today, you will hear more about the plan and help us address key questions.

- Presentations by Ryan Low, Ellen Chaffee, Cindy Huggins, Kate Foster, Becky Wyke, Rosa Redonnet, Susan Hunter, Linda Schott, Glenn Cummings, Joyce Hedlund, John Murhphy and others, as appropriate for the campus.
 - Q&A after each presentation. Check for understanding. Questions for clarification.
 - Specific questions from the presenters. What input do they want, i.e. here's how you can help in this area, where we want your ideas, etc.
- After all the presentations
 - World Café Style questions and report out.
 - After all that you have heard today, what are your key concerns?
 - What ideas do you have to resolve those concerns?
 - What roles can each of us play in resolving the concerns and moving the plan forward?
 - Following World Café – move to focused conversations on specific topics (concerns or opportunities) –in small groups.
- Create next steps for engagement and moving the work forward
 - Roles
 - Opportunities to volunteer and work on issues that are both system and local in nature.
- Close by acknowledging the participation of the group and describing next steps. What's the process? Calendar? Call to action?
- Follow-up
 - Provides tools and opportunities for key invitees to help spread the message
 - Set up a structure that lets people know that the conversation will not end when people leave the forum.
 - Provide feedback post the forum – we hear you say XX and we are now considering XX or YY.
 - Engage participants in facilitated work groups, potentially by discipline, location or initiative.
- Continue communication efforts. Deliver the message to people who were not in the forums. Engage communications team at all levels in continuing to meet, spread the word, share the stories of success and recognize the challenges.

Forums are in the middle of a process, not a beginning or end unto themselves. Preparation, design, delivery and follow-up are all integral to their success. Most of the dissatisfaction with forums is not about the forum. It's about the inaction that follows. Due diligence is required.



Attachment C

Communication Content, Tools and Process - Recommendations from the Field

Supplementing and enhancing the current mass email and relay style communication (from Chancellor to President to the President's Cabinet and so on), the following recommendations were made during Lift360's campus tour.

Recommendations: Content

1. Weekly summary of changes, news, etc. – combat the information overload with a summary.
2. Share success stories. Reinforce the stories of people doing the work. Say thank you.
3. Align local planning processes with system planning. How do all the pieces fit together?
4. Address realities of change and losses
5. Really explain – What's One University? What does it mean?
6. Why do the changes make a difference?
7. How is centralization useful?
8. Forewarn, keep track of and communicate changes.
9. Use language that works for all
10. Consistent messages
11. Clear goals
12. Set timelines
 - a. Conversations
 - b. Work groups
 - c. Big changes
 - d. When will this be over?

Recommendations: Tools

1. Two page fact sheet on entire initiative



2. Use multi-media tools to spread the work – Facebook, blogging, website, Chancellor on 207 and MPBN, weekly virtual fireside chats
3. Communication tools site for system-wide use. Share presentations, talking points, videos, etc. (Develop google site)

Recommendations: Strategy and Tactics

1. Develop a Communications Charge
2. Prepare key messengers – give people the training and the tools
3. Communicate through the current infrastructure. People on campuses pay more attention to local vs. system communicators.
4. Keep communicating over the summer.
5. Respect campuses as separate entities, not just lumped in with others.
6. Be inclusive – invite chairs of Faculty, Staff and Student senates
7. COORDINATION across systems and campuses – ie. Controlling the data / information