

UMS MCCS General Education Block Transfer: Planning Summit June 8, 2016

Welcome and Purpose of the Day (Dr. Raymond Rice, VPAA and Provost, UMPI) –

- Introductions of those participating today (Name, title, campus and role in this process – see the participant list)
 - Reminder of the Chancellor charge of four years ago (related to block transfer)
 - Minutes from today’s discussion will be distributed to all participants and will be posted on the Mission Excellence website; we also will make available an audio recording of the proceedings
- Our goal today is focused on beginning to address the components contained within section C of the *UMS MCCS General Education Block Transfer agreement* which was approved in some form by all 14 institutions of the two Systems – this is a formative part of the process intended to be inclusive (from the CAOs through to the Faculty Senates and Assemblies). We will begin exploring how the committee described within C will do its work, understanding that each campus will be determining its own assessment and evaluation approaches
- We will receive updates related to where each System is at and what issues must be grappled with

Maine Community College System Update and Next Steps (Dr. Janet Sortor, Chief Academic Officer, Maine Community College System) –

- MCCS campuses are coming together to determine the common language we each use around the learning outcomes we expect our students to achieve (this mirrors work done with the UMS)
- MCCS building a common assessment framework through the lens of the LEAP Value Rubrics so that campuses can work through this
- Have adopted a new general education core for the AA based on that framework – this will be implemented in Fall 2016
- Have created an ambitious schedule over next two years, will have done the full cycles of assessment of all of the domains at least twice over the two years
- Will be having their ten year NEASC visits within the time frame so the timing for all of this is very good given NEASC focus on outcomes and assessment
- We know that students come to us with very different preparation, will be seeing how the common core state standards (K-12) will impact our collective work
- Excited about the work doing within MCCS and also the shared work will be doing with UMS but most importantly the shared work we are doing for the students of Maine

University of Maine System Update and Next Steps (Dr. Ray Rice and Dr. Susan McWilliams)–

- CAO Council met last week and endorses this next step: “The Chief Academic Affairs Council endorses this next step and supports this work moving forward, and will take a role in monitoring the process on an ongoing basis.” (Unanimously approved)
- All of this work is happening nationally (SUNY, Georgia, MA, etc.) – we know that students take courses at multiple institutions, and this is one way to ensure that credits are being appropriately “counted” at the fourteen campuses within our state and that we are using a common set of outcomes.
- Thanks to Rosa for her shepherding of this work, and to Donna for the behind the scene work.
- “Ice Cream Headaches and Escher Prints” – this is hard work, we are all doing this work on our own campuses and some days it gives you an “ice cream headache” as you feel you bite off too much too quickly, plus this issue can be fraught with politics and pressure – have we risen above this? Yes, it’s a collaboration within the System and with the MCCS which is an unprecedented process which is powerful; Escher prints – System organizational work is all about perspective, sometimes need to step away and regain perspective, hard work – it’s a process, not an event
- Why are we doing this? What is the yardstick? Does this matter enough? When use the yardstick of “this is for our students,” and we share them (due to swirling and the rich and diverse experiences they can avail themselves of), and think through how this can improve the learning and outcomes for them, clearly it is worth it;
- Governance is critical and those bodies play a very important role in our next steps and the ultimate oversight in this work

UMS MCCS Assessment Subgroup (Dr. Brian Doore)-

- As the block transfer motion was being passed, it was clear that we did not have a common vocabulary for this work – we each have a different general education;
- We decided that we needed to discuss assessment and why it matters
- Assessment is formative – helps to shape curriculum
- Faculty play a central role in “operationalizing” this
- Wanting to create assessment outcomes that “matter” – “actionable information”
- The importance of respecting the individual general education, individual faculty senates, individual campuses – which resulted in the realization that we needed some kind of common language (knowing that the actual assessments would differ) that can be used for students, with each other, etc.
- Some kind of framework will be important as the glue that holds this together – students will know they will get a good general education experience but there may be differences in actual coursework
- 12 states and 70+ institutions are looking at this through the work of the multi-state collaborative

Feedback Received from Faculty Senates and Assemblies (Dr. Ray Rice and Dr. George Miller) –

- This compilation of feedback is as complete as we have at this time but we need to recognize that there are individual concerns that may need to be addressed as we do our work
- As we work through the search for common language, we need to be aware that language has import and force and we need to think this through as we proceed
- Feedback from UMF (Dr. George Miller): UMF is supportive but is in the middle of their own general education reform; some concerns with the language were expressed – tension within some of the language around assessment, also have not endorsed LEAP/Value Rubrics as of yet; worried re: provisions around an institution revising their general education in a way that would modify the agreement; issue re: workload – if “common assessment” is to be pursued, need to bear in mind that this will take time and we need to accommodate that
- UM (Dr. Michael Scott) – faculty has had quite a lot of conversation around this – not clear about the timing (three years to assess?), concerns re: little information on the published general education parameters from the community colleges – new initiative and can campuses see the gen eds; want to ensure that the campuses are still involved in assessing courses as they come forward; the wording in the document states review committee after three years – if there is to be a committee, why wait three years, can we involve faculty sooner than three years out; approve in principal, still some details that need to be understood before folks can get totally behind it; mission differentiation plays a role in this
- Some concerns shared by others, specifically related to the faculty’s right to do local assessment
- USM (Dr. Susan McWilliams): Some concern re impact of block transfer on enrollment – data nationally does not bear this fear out (actually see opposite patterns); the kind of information that we shared within the matrix of how learning outcomes align across our institutions was very helpful for faculty as the Senate considered this (“domains” adopted are those in place across our own System but also adopted by the MCCA) – cross-analysis of each system was an important part of this work
- The issue of how best to get faculty involved from the start is critical – the UMS MCCA Gen Ed Workgroup felt that it was important to do this and to formulate this at an early stage (so address over the course of the three years as opposed to at the end of the three years) – helps frame the work of today and the collaborative nature of that work
- There were no additional questions for the working group and how the process came about thus far.

Breakout Sessions

The group broke into three groups consisting of both UMS and MCCS participants; each group focused on one of the three central tasks outlined in the UMS-MCCS Transfer Block approved by our senates/assemblies. Notes included under each are the group discussions as reflected on the flip charts for each.

Group 1: Program evaluation information/records:

From the UMS-MCCS Transfer Block language approved by Senates:

“Records will be kept by each campus regarding which students transfer either in or out under the block transfer agreement, so that data regarding those students can be collected and analyzed by the committee.”

Task for Group 1: What is the general data/reliable information that will we mutually collect to best assess alignment and preparation and what timeline needs to be in place to ensure that data is available within the three year window for review? What mechanism for reporting/ replacing/aligning the work of the current UMS-MCCS Assessment Subgroup to this work?

Group Discussion:

DATA/RELIABLE INFO

- Question to answer: Continue and amend
 - Data related to block transfer (separate from assessment)

DATA

- #s who take advantage of this
- Those who express interest and meet criteria and do not pursue (*will need to make sure students know about this)
- Those who take advantage:
 - Where transfer to and from
 - Did they graduate? (either before or after)
 - Is it working at UMS school - time to graduate, # credits per semester, process
 - Will in all likelihood be small # - students need to complete all courses in the block
- Should any data include the larger cohort of all transfers as a comparator
- Should any data collected look at large cohort of all transfers as well as this smaller cohort (may tease out any issues related to prerequisites) - will help identify other collaborative work needed at the discipline level and also provide better information for students (academic advising)
- # of credits needed to graduate at entry
- Sort data by program

- Students who apply but do not meet the criteria (would help inform each system re issues)
- Need to be able to identify these students in our student info system (Is there a way to somehow capture id in each system?)
- Demographics - age, etc.
- Are the outcomes identified matching up with outcomes desired? (TBD)
- Reverse transfer #s

TIMELINE

- Important to remember this is based on the AA degree
Immediate/near term (doable, easy to measure, collect)
 - #s using, those not using = what are the issues
 - # credits taking with UMS institution
 - # credits needed to complete degree (broken out by gen ed, program repeats, etc.)
 - Program transferring into
 - Basic demographics

3 YEAR

- Success - completion, graduation, reverse transfer
- See list discussed within focus group (remainder would be long term)

MECHANISM FOR REPORTING/REPLACING ALIGNING TO ASSESSMENT SUBGROUP

- Assessing Gen Ed (independent of student population)
- how are students performing - evidence
- Equivalency of gen ed outcomes across campuses - capacity of MCCS students to be successful at junior level
- Should assessment work focus on 3-4 key areas as opposed to all 8?
- Small #s - how to maintain anonymity (FERPA)
- MOU - data sharing agreement UMS/MCCS

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- Future: would a smaller block (ex 30 cr) benefit more students (Like a 1+3)
- How many students might have qualified for this over the last five years? Impactors: ↓ traditional age (so ↓ AA), UMS campuses have more articulation agreements?
- How is dual enrollment impacting students coming to our systems?
- What happens if curricula changes (need to better share information - connects to governance)

Group 2: Oversight group:

From the UMS-MCCS Transfer Block language approved by Senates:

“A committee composed primarily of faculty, with representation from every UMS and MCCS system campus, will meet starting at the beginning of the third year in which block transfer is in force to evaluate block transfer and recommend to the system faculty senates whether to continue, revise, or terminate the block transfer agreement.”

Task for Group 2: What standing committee should be in place by the third year? What should be its membership, name and charge? What mechanism for reporting/replacing/aligning the work of the current UMS-MCCS Assessment Subgroup to this group?

Group Discussion

What: Standing Committee?

- Timing - Fall 2016 to Fall 2018 (Dec 18)
 - Understanding corporate memory discussion of process (so overlap membership important)
 - Peruse preliminary data - data refinement
 - Assessment - gen ed discussion of best practices occurring on each campus
 - Evaluation of system and recommendations of changes or termination
- Charge
 - Evaluate block transfer model data and make recommendations for changes to or termination of block transfer agreement to faculties/Senates by Dec '18 for action at local campuses spring in 2019
 - Who is in charge of assessment?
- Membership Name and charge
 - Reps from each campus - at least one from each
 - No more than 2 from each campus
 - Local culture to determine who
 - At least one faculty member from each campus
 - UMS and MCCS System offices will provide coordination, administration, funding, and logistical support
 - Each campus may/should be represented
 - Reps from UMS will be selected by CAO/Provost and senate leadership
- What's in a name?
 - Evaluation Committee
 - Workgroup group

- UMS MCCS Block Transfer
- UMS-MCCS Block Transfer Evaluation Committee AKA?
- Name will need to be determined as part of committee work

- Reporting/replacing/aligning
 - If there is an oversight group and an assessment group, do we need a 3rd group?
 - Oversight and Assessment = what relationship and structure?
 - Handoff, not just from assessment subgroup but from the larger (UMS-MCCS) working group as well replaced by new standing committee and assessment group
 - Alignment replacing via joint handoff meeting Fall 2016
 - Reporting back to respective systems CAOs and senate/assembly on each campus

- BIN
 - What happens if a college changes their gen-ed requirements
 - Long term commitment: can't change group members each year
 - Reporting process: Members report back to their own campus senate/assemblies

Group 3: Collaboration, Independence and Governance

From the UMS-MCCS Transfer Block language approved by Senates:

*"In addition to this comprehensive third year review of the transfer impact of this policy, **within one year of implementation, the General Education Transfer Work Group will propose to the faculty governance bodies of the UMS and MCCS a plan for collaborative assessment that will give all parties involved clarity regarding appropriate definitions of student mastery at different levels (e.g., rising junior transferring from a Maine community college to a Maine university), and confidence in student preparedness to succeed at our institutions.** Any proposed assessment plans will respect assessment processes already in development or in place on each participating campus while ensuring consistency in expectations for student achievement across our systems."*

Task for Group 3: How do we engage in this process in a way that ensures sufficient collaboration between our campuses and systems to give us confidence in student preparedness while at the same time ensuring each individual campus' right to their own curricular frameworks and assessment approaches? What are the key next steps in terms of faculty governance and review of our work? How can we best utilize LEAP and VALUE frameworks to foster collaboration without prescribing campus-level approaches?

Group Discussion:

- Data on success of transfer students
- 1st focus on writing QL
- Start sooner
- Faculty time

Lunch

Report Outs from Breakout Sessions

Facilitator: Dr. Raymond Rice, VPAA and Provost, University of Maine at Presque Isle

Team 1 (Dr. William Otto, UMM)

- Focus on AA – smaller group – need to explore larger groups and broader analysis.
- Data collected to inform
- How many students take forward
- What are students missing
- Where do students go? Are they successful where they go?
- Is this Block Transfer effective vs. other transfer mechanisms?
- Is this process useful?
- Sort data by program, and transfer of program?
- Is the Block Transfer helping students success in a way that is needed/beneficial?
- Opportunities for immediate feedback/data? No wait for 3 years?
- Assessing student success may require full 3 year time frame.
- How many credits are needed for completion?
- Collaborate with IR, Registrars etc. time and effort needed
- Mechanisms for aligning data collection with assessment.
- Parallel tracks, - be cognizant of various pathways
- Should assessment focus on a couple of areas or more? Areas that must occur, others?
- Parking lot – would a small block be beneficial to more students etc – one year
- Parking lot – how many students would have benefited over the past 5 years – utilizing current data opportunities.
- How does dual enrollment fit?
- What happens if the curriculum on a campus changes?
- Identify better ways to share information

Team 2 (Dr. Alex Clifford, WCCC)

What's in a name? The name of the new steering committee will be determined (some discussion around BUMT)

- Timing
 - This fall needs to start the ground work for developing the framework and developing the committee
 - Overall gen ed discussion and best practices
 - Process for working and recommendations for change
 - Peruse preliminary data (collaborate with group one)
 - Evaluating the Block Transfer model and recommend changes by Spring 2019 and come together by the Fall 2018 for Senate presentations.
- Membership
 - Representatives from each campus (at least one, no more than 2)
 - Local culture will determine representatives
 - At least one faculty member
 - UMS/MCCS will provide coordination, funding and administrative support
 - Assessment work/Group will need support.
 - Campus must be representative selected by CAO/Provost and Senate leadership by campuses? – Do we need a question for this language or selection?
 - Dual reporting lines – do we ensure each campus MUST participate or recommend participation? Need to modify language to MAY?
- ✓ **Concern** - Looking to address concerns moving forward – senates approved in principal with expectation for moving forward. – Particular concerns/questions explored by UMF, UM.
- **Replacing and aligning** – Need to explore what we have for current groups and groups moving forward. Assessment Group as part of an Oversight group
- **Recommendation for an oversight/evaluation group?** May be assessment or other roles/expertise involved? A group charged by an oversight group, not on the oversight group.

Bin item

- What happens when an institution changes their curriculum and aligns with learning objectives.

- Steep learning curve for campuses and membership should be a long term commitment and not change every year. – hand-off needs to coordinate through both systems and anticipate for later in the fall.
- Reporting for the committee would report back to senates/committee on a regular basis and a final report with recommendations finished by Fall 2018 for faculty presentation by Fall 2019.
- Representations from system will bring that UP to their organization level forward.
- Part of this charge to provide information to MCCS/UMS Systems? One is information (courtesy to CAO) and one recommendation (Senates get the business).

Team 3 (Dr. Janet Sortor, MCCS)

- Data on success of transfer graduates
 - Respecting time, overlap, no clear sense of how this would play out
 - Do not wait three years
- 1st focus on written communication and Quantitative Reasoning
- Relationship to Block Transfer to the larger scale transfer – Interrelationship is important
- How is data fits into NEASC reporting and ideally beneficial to enrich and enhance assessment.
- Conversations on workload, assessment needs – collaborative assessment to be a subset of what is currently done, not additional work. Perhaps CAO's can work on workload
- Do we want to assess students immediate after the course or at end of their academic career? What is the end-point?
- How are cycles happening on each campus?

Question – How is this work being communicated to admission/advising staffs? Need a communication/meeting plan?

- Some transfer/advisors have met along the way, and continued conversations are necessary. Additional mechanisms/planning is required

Final Report Out and Next Steps

Facilitators: Dr. Raymond Rice, VPAA and Provost, University of Maine at Presque Isle,
Dr. Janet Sortor, Chief Academic Officer, Maine Community College System

CLOSING - Critical Questions/Next Steps

- What are steps to create the new standing committee?
 - See recommendations/ideas from groups 1-3 (above)

Fall 2016 process to select reps

- Finalize preliminary charge for new standing committee (to include possible assessment) - final charge would go to CAOs and to senates
- Want to get composition and governance process set by SP 2017
- Process: through CAOs (CAOs need to lead & take to senate (or delegate), through campus governance
- Initial data collection would happen during the timeline of governance group formation (and then group can expand to the other IR Needs) - define additional data needs
- Question/Concern raised by UM - Will there be a forthcoming list of courses that meet each campus' gen. ed.? Discussion occurred regarding the need for a list. Based on our focus on assessment, no lists of courses are needed and list inspection is not needed nor beneficial. UM representation was present and an active participant in meetings to develop agreement. Other participants displayed confusion regarding why this concern remains at UM? Final result: Issue sounds like a concern between the administration and Senate of UM – it was recommended that the UM representatives discuss this with their CAO
- Domains/outcomes are provided in the initial presentation. Ray Rice will bring to CAO's to discuss and address concern. Information may be already available and need further communication.
- In oversight group/standing committee: need “memory” of the prior work
- Collaborative Assessment – need to determine the best path and scope for this (all 8 domains or key selected domains)
- The day ended with a reminder that we would compile all notes, and both notes and recording of proceedings would be available before the end of the summer. All were thanked for their participation in this important beginning to our work.