Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) Proposal

Cross-university Public Service Degree Programs:
Provide Graduate and Undergraduate Education in Public Administration through a Durable Coalition of UMS Campuses

Draft 4/7/10

BASIC PROPOSAL

Plan and implement a multi-university approach for providing public administration education within the University of Maine System.

At the graduate level, create a permanent arrangement between the University of Maine and the University of Southern Maine to staff and deliver masters-level public administration education throughout the State; both UM and UMS already house independently operated graduate programs.

At the undergraduate level, create a similar permanent arrangement between the University of Maine and the University of Maine at Augusta to staff and deliver undergraduate public administration; both UM and UMA already house independent undergraduate programs.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT RELEVANCE

Operating public service degree programs in a cross-university mode will support all seven of the Strategic Investment Fund’s broad objectives:

- “Enhancing the quality and organizational effectiveness of teaching, the student experience, research and scholarship, or community outreach.” The proposal promotes each of these elements.
- “Supporting curricular developments that align programs more strategically with the changing economy.” Now, more than ever, we need a public service workforce that is skilled, professional, and well prepared.
- “Creating opportunities for teaching, learning, research, scholarship, professional development, or service that foster improved academic rigor, effectiveness, accountability, and/or innovation.” The proposal promotes each of these elements.
- “Fostering changes in administrative and managerial practices that are designed to improve the delivery of support services more efficiently and at higher levels of quality and sophistication.” This is a secondary but crucial aspect of operating programs jointly through multiple universities.
- “Modeling collaboration, accountability, and close attention to analysis of resulting data.” The proposal creates a straightforward two-level collaboration that promotes accountability and transparency.
- “Promoting cross-university cooperation, programmatic coordination, and scalability.” This is a primary function of the proposal.
• “Applying technology and technological strategies that bring greater efficiency and effectiveness to academic and administrative work.” Having an adequate and effectively used technological infrastructure is essential to the proposal.

The proposal also reflects these SIF operating principles: “Scalable, transformative, or innovative. . . . Increase efficiency, reduce costs, or generate new revenues. . . . Broad multi-camps impacts. . . . Collaborative across universities. . . . Matching funds. . . . Self-sustaining. . . . Benchmarks, timeframes, and clear outcomes.” As outline below, the SIF’s operating principles and goals are well-supported both by the fundamental concept of jointly-offered programs in public affairs and management, and by the specific actions that implement this concept.

VALUE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION

Who cares? Can’t just about anyone handle a career in government? Run a nonprofit organization? Engage in effective community service? Don’t disciplines such as political science or business serve our students and our State for such things? The reality is that although public administration links with many disciplines, it is a specialty itself. Public administration helps professionalize students going into public service as well as students already mid-career. Political theory (from political science) and besting competition (from business) have their place, but they are insufficient preparation for running agencies and municipalities effectively, responsively, transparently, and in the public interest.

UNIVERSITIES AND ACADEMIC UNITS INVOLVED

**University of Maine**
College of Business, Public Policy, and Health
Department of Public Administration

*Graduate:* Master of Public Administration (MPA) Degree Program
*Undergraduate:* Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree Program
- Major in Public Management
- BA+1 Program
- Minor in Public Management
- Interdisciplinary Minor in Public Policy

Contact: Ken Nichols, Prof. – 581-1875 – ken.nichols@umit.maine.edu
Tom Taylor, Chair – 581-1872 – thomas.taylor@umit.maine.edu

**University of Southern Maine**
Muskie School of Public Policy

*Graduate:* Master of Public Policy & Management (PPM) Degree Program
Contact: Bruce Clary, PPM Dir. – 780-4865 – brucec@usm.maine.edu
University of Maine at Augusta
College of Business and Professional Studies

Undergraduate: Bachelor of Science (BS) Degree Program
Major in Public Administration
Minor in Public Administration
Contact: Frank Bean, Dean – 621-3357 – fgbean@maine.edu

Project Name
Cross-university Public Service Degree Programs

Project Description (w/outcomes, milestones, timetable, how relates to New Challenges, how serves Mainers)

The crux of our proposal is to enable the University of Maine, the University of Southern Maine, and the University of Maine at Augusta to provide shared graduate and undergraduate public administration courses for their students, thereby expanding offerings available to students in existing degree programs, adding enrollment in numerous courses, taking advantage of specialized expertise among the three faculties, and using faculty members as productively as possible. In addition, the proposal lays groundwork for statewide delivery of these programs. It also lays groundwork for offering joint programs through these institutions.

The planning phase of the proposed collaborative effort is where many issues policy, organizational, logistical, and technical issues are to be worked out as described below in the Project Schedule. As detailed below in the Requested Investment Section of this proposal, the Strategic Investment Fund will be invaluable in making the initiative realizable by funding critical aspects of the technology infrastructure. Specifically, the cross-university project involves deploying videoconferencing equipment in a classroom or seminar room on each campus; these are necessary to provide sufficient, independently schedulable videoconference facilities for back-to-back classes. The project also involves equipping faculty and staff with high-speed broadband/video-capable computer equipment for preparing and originating online course material.

Matching funds from the universities will support the faculty and staff costs required for planning, implementing, operating, and monitoring a multistage program-delivery effort:

Implementation Phase I. Selected UM and USM graduate courses will be cross-listed and offered through distance technologies for students in the MPA and MPP programs. Similarly, selected UM and UMA undergraduate courses will be cross-listed and offered through distance technologies for students majoring in the two universities’ public management/administration baccalaureate programs. An undergraduate course (e.g. PAA 100, Intro to Public Administration) will be available online as part of the University of Maine Academ-e, which offers courses for university credit to Maine high school seniors through internet-based technologies. Phase I will serve as a pilot to work
out unanticipated coordination and delivery situations, such as differing campus holiday schedules.

**Implementation Phase II.** A substantial percentage of the two graduate programs and the two undergraduate programs will be offered consistently through distance technologies. Essentially redundant courses will be merged or, more likely, designated faculty members will assume responsibility for specific courses; faculty will receive “joint” or “cooperating” status between campuses. Interested UMA students who qualify will have access to UMaine’s 4+1 MPA option. An element of this phase will explore program delivery through a consortium that includes other universities in the region, such as the University of New Hampshire. This phase will extend program access on a pilot basis to interested, qualified students at other campuses in the System – and more intensively market the programs to mid-career workers in government, nonprofit, health, and government-contract-oriented fields.

**Implementation Phase III.** Nearly all courses will be offered through distance technology, even though certain courses may run sections in traditional classroom settings. The two masters-level programs will be offered jointly through both UM and USM, and may ultimately be restructured into a single, multi-track program accreditable through the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPA). Undergraduate studies will be offered jointly as a single cross-campus program by UM, UMA, and possibly USM. Graduate and undergraduate programs will be marketed in-state, out-of-state, and will explore matriculating international distance-based students. This phase may broaden the consortium concept to consider universities elsewhere in the region, such as Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, which operates and MPA program, and the University of Prince Edward Island, which operates undergraduate and certificate programs in public administration.

Throughout each phase, the cross-university public administration project will emphasize maintaining and improving quality, sustaining accreditation where it exists, expanding the student base, and promoting economy through a potentially larger classes and diminished redundancy.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

*FY 2010-2011 – Planning Period*

1. Compare programs.
   a. Inventory and correlate the courses in USM’s PPM program and UM’s MPA program. Select courses from each program that can be useful for students in both programs.
   b. Inventory and correlate the courses in UMA’s public administration program and UM’s public management program. Select courses from each program that can be useful for students in both programs.

2. Investigate, coordinate, and codify administrative policies and practices. Establish memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for important administrative elements including, but not limited to –
a. Course registrations from multiple campuses, tuition, MaineStreet access within each program and campus.
b. Recording and accessing course grades cross-program and cross-campus; harmonizing transfer credit policies.
c. Cross-campus WebNow access.
d. Cross-campus graduate faculty appointments.
e. Academic calendars and scheduling.
f. Coordinated program oversight.
g. Reporting statistics (student FTEs, etc.).
h. Marketing plans.

3. Put in place technology infrastructure.
   a. Designate classroom/seminar space on the UM and UMA campuses appropriate for videoconferencing. (Capacity at USM is adequate.)
   b. Confirm faculty/staff computing requirements for each campus.
   c. Arrange, secure, and install videoconferencing, personal computing, and supporting equipment.
   d. Familiarize/train faculty and staff on the use of these technologies.

4. Evaluate and report. Provide an interim report (for SIF and other purposes) relating performance to anticipated outcomes at this point in the project.

FY 2011-2012 – Phase I
1. Implement Phase I.
2. Monitor, evaluate, and fine-tune.
3. Revisit, amend, and extend MOUs.
4. Assess, maintain, and augment technology infrastructure.
5. Evaluate and report.
   a. Review and apply lessons learned from previous FY.
   b. Provide an interim report (for SIF and other purposes) relating performance to anticipated outcomes at this point in the project.

FY 2012-2013 – Phase II
1. Implement Phase II.
2. Monitor, evaluate, and fine-tune.
3. Revisit, amend, and extend MOUs.
4. Assess, maintain, and augment technology infrastructure.
5. Evaluate and report.
   c. Review and apply lessons learned from Phase I, especially, elements of the pilot.
   d. Provide an interim report (for SIF and other purposes) relating performance to anticipated outcomes at this point in the project.

FY 2013-2014 – Phase III
1. Implement Phase III.
2. Monitor, evaluate, and fine-tune.
3. Revisit, amend, and extend MOUs.
4. Assess, maintain, and augment technology infrastructure.
5. Evaluate and report.
   a. Review and apply lessons learned from Phase II, especially, elements of the pilot.
   b. Review and apply lessons learned from this phase of the project.
   c. Provide a final report (for SIF and other purposes) relating performance to anticipated outcomes for the project.

**REQUESTED INVESTMENT & 5-YR BUDGET** (bold = SIF request, $101,100 overall)

**FY 2010-2011**

- SIF ($88,100, as detailed)
  - Technology infrastructure
    - 2 PolyCom Videoconferencing Setups @ $25,000 = $50,000
      - Each site (UM, UMA) incorporates:
        - 1 Codec (camera and base unit)
        - 2 Monitors
        - 1 Document camera/platform
        - 1 A/V accessories
        - 18 MacBooks @ $2,000 = $36,000
        - 10 Adobe Connect Pro licenses @ $150 = $1,500
      - Marketing materials and services = $1,000
  - Universities ($60,000 matching, as detailed)
    - Salaries and overhead for planning and reporting (based on 2 faculty/campus x 5 weeks @ $100,000/yr) = $58,000
    - Training on use of technologies = $2,000

**FY 2011-2012**

- SIF ($4,500, as detailed)
  - Technology infrastructure maintenance = $2,000
  - 10 Adobe Connect Pro licenses @ $150 = $1,500
  - Marketing materials and services = $1,000
- Universities ($35,000 matching, as detailed)
  - Salaries and overhead for implementing, evaluating, and reporting (based on 2 UMS faculty/campus x 3 weeks @ $100,000/yr) = $35,000

**FY 2012-2013**

- SIF ($8,500, as detailed)
  - Technology infrastructure maintenance and upgrades = $5,000
  - 10 Adobe Connect Pro licenses @ $150 = $1,500
  - Marketing materials and services, $2,000
- Universities ($35,000 matching, as detailed)
  - Salaries and overhead for implementing, evaluating, and reporting (based on 2 UMS faculty/campus x 3 weeks @ $100,000/yr) = $35,000

**FY 2013-2014**

- Universities ($39,500, as detailed)
  - Technology infrastructure maintenance = $2,000
- 10 Adobe Connect Pro licenses @ $150 = $1,500
- Marketing materials and services = $1,000
- Salaries and overhead for evaluating, and revising (based on 2 UMS faculty/campus x 3 weeks @ $100,000/yr) = $35,000

FY 2014-2015
- Universities ($42,500, as detailed)
  - Technology infrastructure maintenance, $5,000
  - 10 Adobe Connect Pro licenses @ $150 = $1,500
  - Marketing materials and services, $1,000
  - Salaries and overhead for evaluating and revising (based on 2 UMS faculty/campus x 3 weeks @ $100,000/yr) = $35,000

For the University of Maine, as well as the other involved institutions, savings will derive in part from reduced travel requirements for faculty and from more productive use of faculty instructional time. An increase in tuition revenue can be anticipated as the programs are available more widely, provide a broader selection of course offerings, and offer greater scheduling flexibility. At this stage in the project, savings and revenue are not quantifiable. These will depend in large part on MOU arrangements and marketing plans.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Impacts on students, on state and local governments, on nonprofit agencies, and thereby on the public are positive and potentially substantial. Public administration education is a resource that affects the quality of government and public services as well as the career trajectories of our students, whether they are mid-career or are about to join the workforce.

Impacts on the institutions involved in this project are also positive because each institution benefits from shared expertise and course offerings. Everyone’s students similarly benefit from these arrangements—and the institutions themselves gain capacity to reach a greater number of potential students. By the same token, the institutions involved commit to establishing and continuing ongoing administrative arrangements dealing with academic credit, grade-sharing, and other administrative responsibilities.

Institutions not involved in this project but within the University of Maine System will also be affected. Their students will have potential access to a greater number of distance-based courses. In the long-term, the potential exists for agreements with those universities permitting their students, too, to enroll in public administration degree programs available through this project. This, we believe, has substantial positive ramifications for Maine, UMS, and everyone we serve.