University of Maine Faculty Senate Resolution on the UMSystem's Chief Academic Officers' Council Recommendations on Unified On-Line

Introduction

In response to a request from the University of Maine System's Board of Trustees, the Chief Academic Officers' of the seven UMSystem campuses have written a draft recommendation to the Presidents' Council responding to the Unified On-Line proposal from October, 2015, approved as a concept by the BoT in November, 2016. The CAOs' recommendations, accompanying this resolution, reiterate strongly the need for any UMSystem proposal to include significant Faculty participation in the spirit of shared governance.

Resolution

The Faculty Senate of the University of Maine supports the collaborative intent of the Chief Academic Officers of the UMSystem proposed recommendations to the Presidents' Council and will continue to work very willingly with our Administration to participate in an effective, responsible, accessible, supported, and efficient on-line coordination of our courses and programs with other UMSystem campuses, as appropriate to the responsible teaching, research, and community outreach in our fields. We agree fully with the Chief Academic Officers that: "As the Unified Online, Portfolio Review, and Program Integration initiatives advance, new challenges with respect to academic oversight and shared governance will undoubtedly arise. It will be the responsibility of the Chief Academic Officers to assure that these issues are appropriately processed with their campus faculty governance bodies."

Recommendations for the Implementation of Academic Oversight Related to the Unified Online Implementation Plan

Revised 4-17-2016

Following are the recommendations of the Chief Academic Officers on the implementation of academic oversight and a process for honoring campus-based shared governance of online programs pursuant to the November 2015 Board of Trustees resolution:

1. That the existing campus policies and procedures, pursuant to the policies of the Board of Trustees, related to shared governance are adequate for all academic programs that emanate from a single campus.

2. That shared governance of academic programs that emanate from more than one campus will be as follows:

   Academic Program Governance

   a. A steering committee will be established to include one faculty member from each participating campus. Faculty from each participating campus will make a recommendation for the steering committee appointment from their campus. Such recommendation shall be sent to their campus Provost / Vice President for Academic Affairs who will consider the recommendation and make the final decision for appointment.

   b. Appointment to the Steering committees will be for three-years terms with an unlimited number of consecutive terms possible. However, reappointment at the conclusion of a three year term will follow process outline in *a*.

   c. A chairperson will be elected from the steering committee membership, and that position may rotate among the campuses as deemed appropriate by the steering committee.

   d. Members of the steering committee will also serve as program coordinators on their respective campuses.

   e. The chairperson is responsible for convening the steering committee on a monthly basis and coordinating the schedule and delivery of program course requirements on a year-to-year basis.

   f. The chief academic and student officers from chairperson's home campus will be responsible for representing and supporting the program, as needed, at the System level.

   g. Individual instructors will continue to function as faculty members of their respective campuses with regard to all aspects of BOT policy, campus policy, and relevant collective bargaining agreement (e.g., compensation, performance evaluation, etc.)

h. Primary responsibility for faculty hires remains at the individual campus level. Search committees are encouraged to consider allowing a member or members of the program steering committee—from another campus—to participate in the search process in some manner and provide input and thoughts to the search committee for the search committee's consideration.

i. Faculty members participating in the collaborative program will be reviewed for reappointment, promotion, tenure, post-tenure review, etc. by the peer committee of their home department. The peer committee is expected to consider the faculty members work in the collaborative program in their evaluations and to solicit input from other participating campuses as appropriate.

j. Academic programs that emanate from more that one campus will undergo program review following the normal review schedule and procedures. The UMS campus or campuses that award the degree will be responsible for conducting the program review. For those collaborative programs for which more than one university offers the degree (e.g., the current cybersecurity collaboration), it is expected that the participating universities will coordinate scheduling of the review.

<u>Curriculum</u>

a. Proposals to alter the program curriculum, including significant revisions to individual course syllabi, may be initiated by any of the participating campuses or the program steering committee. When this occurs the proposed alteration will be considered by the program steering committee. If agreed upon, the change must then be vetted and approved through the appropriate faculty process at each participating campus, before implementation.

3. That a step-wise, graduated approach be followed for implementation of the larger set of recommendations included in the Unified Online Report, as follows:

   a. That the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will play a central role and have the authority to shape the collaborative approach to online within the broad parameters outlined in the Unified Online Report;

   b. That the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will assure that the Portfolio Review, Program Integration, and Unified Online initiatives are integrated and that resources allocated to one initiative serves the others to the extent possible;

c. That the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will work closely with the Chief Academic Officers, and pursuant to guidance from the Presidents Council, to coordinate the Portfolio Review, Program Integration, and Unified Online initiatives with the goal of filling key positions and launching specific initiatives by January 2017;

d. That the initial investment for FY2017 be reduced to $550,000 and timed to coincide with implementation by January 2017, and that the Vice Chancellor have the authority to strategically allocate these funds to advance Unified Online; and

e. That it is the responsibility of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs working with the Chief Academic Officers to assure emerging issues with respect to academic oversight and shared governance are appropriately processed with campus faculty governance bodies.

DRAFT

Chief Academic Officer's Council
Recommendations to President's Council Regarding Unified Online

At its November, 2015 meeting, the UMS BOT approved the concept of a collaborative approach to online course/program offerings and charged the UMS CAOs "to seek further input from the faculties of the 7 universities and provide recommendations to the PC on the implementation of academic oversight and a process for honoring campus-based shared governance of online programs. A report back with final recommendations from the PC is due to the BOT at its March meeting."

The Chief Academic Officers have worked with their respective campus faculty governance bodies to develop guidelines for appropriate shared governance of online programs. The scope of the faculty governance discussion was limited to the oversight and management of degree programs that emanate from more than one campus. The attached guidelines reflect the input received from the seven campuses and are recommended for adoption by the Chief Academic Officers Council. For academic programs that emanate from a single campus there already exists adequate policies and procedures related to shared governance. The attached recommendations should be considered a living document that will need to be revisited frequently as the collaborative approach to online course and program offerings develops.

With respect to the larger set of specific recommendations included in the Unified Online report, the CAO Council recommends a step-wise, graduated approach. UMS is currently searching for a Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and that person will play a central role in shaping the collaborative approach to online. With responsibility for Portfolio Review, Program Integration, and Unified Online, it will be the VCAA's responsibility to assure that these three initiative are integrated and that resources allocated to one initiative serves the others as much as possible. Therefore, it is our recommendation that the Unified Online report be considered a set of guidelines for the VCAA rather than a specific template for specific actions and investments.

To position the VCAA for success we recommend an investment of $700,000 for FY2017 (approximately 50% of the proposed FY2017 budget included in the Unified Online report) to be used to launch the Unified Online initiative. This will allow the VCAA six-months to work with the CAO Council to coordinate the Portfolio Review, Program Integration and Unified Online initiatives with the goal of filling key positions and launching specific initiatives in January 2017.

As the Unified Online, Portfolio Review, and Program Integration initiatives advance, new challenges with respect to academic oversight and shared governance will undoubtedly arise. It will be the responsibility of the Chief Academic Officers to assure that these issues are appropriately processed with their campus faculty governance bodies.