

Responses to UMaine Strategic Vision and Values Statements

Division of Lifelong Learning Units

- Student Support Services
- Bachelor of University Studies Program
- Hutchinson Center
- Early College Program

Fostering Learning Success: *The university is a community committed to fostering learning opportunities for all of its members. We celebrate the diversity of our community and are committed to creating a safe and respectful environment within which all learners can flourish. We create rich learning opportunities in the classroom, laboratory, studio, field, and community as well as the spaces within which students live, work, and socialize. We create academic and co-curricular pathways for success and assure that our students are prepared for successful careers and rich lives. Our faculty and staff are life-long learners and we are committed to their professional development over the span of their careers. Our community welcomes learners who do not easily fit the traditional definition of "student" and we are committed to their learning success.*

Feedback Questions:

- How well do these statements capture a strategic value that should guide the university's development?
- Are there additional strategic values that should be considered or alternative ways of articulating the university's strategic values?

Response:

Student Support Services Team & Bachelor of University Studies Program:

The above statement "Fostering Learner Success" is wonderfully inclusive, yet a general sweep that does not recognize specific populations, such as the online and adult learner. Celebrating diversity is a fine and honorable task. What does it mean? A party? A special day? With only 1.8% international student population and almost 90% white, "diversity" seems a bit disingenuous? Should diversity be present across our curriculum and campus -- thus permeating every aspect of the college experience?

- There is nothing in this statement about online learners.
- All learners should not be lumped together. Online learners and adult learners have different needs.

- If we are going to recognize and celebrate diversity, it has to be done across the curriculum and across campus and cannot just be categorized when you want it to come out.
- Online & Adult learners are not represented, nor how teaching and quality of teaching are in sync with adult student with what their needs are.
- Accessibility should be included due to rural areas we have in the state.
- Maine is 48th in the nation for internet quality, partner with the state to ensure statewide access to reliable internet. Rural areas have consistent problems.

The Hutchinson Center Team & Early College Team:

The strategic statement envisions a wide ideal: diversity, safety, support learning (which implies applying research-based practices), develop a variety of pathways for students (ie. not just traditional “majors” ?), keep faculty happy, and support non-traditional learners -- all good.

- These statements capture the intention of this value (fostering learner success) and encompass a wide variety of “learners”. But does it address the economic diversity and challenges that our students face? Could there be a statement that addresses the efforts UM goes to in terms of scholarships, and student financial support services that allow students who think they do not have the financial means to ever attend college to understand the possibilities available to them?
- Add something like this: “Our community welcomes learners who do not easily fit the traditional definition of “student”, **the working class, the historically undereducated and the financially underprivileged population and we are committed to their learning success.**”
- The statement: **Our community welcomes learners who do not easily fit the traditional definition of “student” and we are committed to their learning success.** Should include more inclusive terminology and elaborate on support we offer our students. To encompass this, we might say: “**We are committed to providing support to each unique learner on campus, online, and in high schools across the state, regardless of their age, gender, or socio-economic background.**”
- We should be creating adaptable and resilient learners in light of the unprecedented rapidly-changing world -- preparing students for the future they are likely to face (not the past we have known). It means ensuring that programs are based on research-based projections of economic, social, environmental, and technological conditions to come.
- Alternative ways of articulating the university’s strategic values should be strongly considered given the rural locations of many of UMaine’s campuses, as well as the economic hardships which challenge many potential students. Programs to support access to internet service and transportation essential.
- “Success” is considered the end goal, a finite term. Perhaps “Attainment” would be better suited in using with vision, since one meaning is “an ability that has been acquired by training”. With life long learning, we want to encourage the continuation of learning and not just stop after getting to a certain point.

- Access to reliable, affordable high-speed internet. Many parts of the state do not have access to reliable internet at a speed sufficient to ensure the ability to successfully participate in online learning.
- The University wants to highlight their status as a “Flagship” in this first value. One way of accomplishing this would be to state that our faculty are vetted for academic excellence and support the integrity of our programming as being the highest rigor statewide.

Creating and Innovation for Maine and Beyond: *At the core of the university's mission is the creation of new knowledge. Fulfillment of this mission takes a wide variety of forms. As Maine's Land and Sea Grant University we are committed to creating knowledge that impacts the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the state. At the same time, the impact of our creativity is not limited to the state's borders. Innovation is present in all aspects of our operation. Our community encompasses designers, builders, makers, and discoverers working in and across a remarkable range of contexts. We champion this work and we apply it in the service of our state, our region, and the world.*

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Response:

Student Support Services Team & Bachelor of University Studies Program:

The adult learner and racial bias and equity in education is an unrecognized part of the UMaine culture which merits focus. UMaine needs to find a unified voice and allocate resources to this issue if it truly seeks to be a diverse campus as stated in value #1.

- Nothing about supporting the students and/or faculty is in this statement.
- This language seems idealistic and difficult to measure.
- The development of new programs that are integral to our state (SVT, SFR, etc.) - how do we partner with business?
- Are we adjusting our semester-long courses? How are we developing innovative courses to still meet the needs of our integral learners?
- Micro Credentialing?
- Knowledge statement - Useful for the adult learner to be exposed to the research process.

Hutchinson Center Team & Early College Team:

- Businesses and individuals are more known for innovation than Universities are (including UMaine) -- universities are among the slowest institutions to adopt and adapt to change. What does it mean to “champion” innovation?
- To what extent will or should the University adopt and support the kind of fail early-fail often approach that is important to innovation? To what extent will the University support innovations that are good for the community, but that don’t bring in revenue right away?
- Can the University become more nimble in supporting, testing, and adopting innovations? Does “championing” the work of the University’s innovators include accepting, celebrating, and learning from failure (or failure to produce revenue for the University)?
- Should there be a strategy for how the University will assess or respond to failure?
- How is all of this done? It sounds very vague to me.
- Innovation? How about we start with the basics? Reliable internet access throughout the state of Maine so that ALL Maine people have access to UMaine?
- To what extent should trust be an important strategic value when it comes to supporting innovation and creativity?
- To what extent does the University have the financial and human resource capital to encourage and support innovation efforts with a potential broad reach?

Growing and Stewarding Partnerships: *As a public institution, the university partners with other entities in fulfilling its teaching, research, and service/outreach missions. These partnerships leverage the university's and its collaborators' assets to advance the cultural, economic, and civic interests of Maine communities even when a direct impact on the university's mission is not obvious. In this way, **we serve as good stewards** of the resources entrusted to us by the people of Maine, and by our many partners in science, industry, commerce, state and local government, and the arts.*

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Response:

Student Support Services Team & Bachelor of University Studies Program:

You have to provide outreach and connection before you have accessibility and fostering. Does UM have an outreach strategic plan across the state? This is the first step

that needs to be addressed. Currently there seems to be little coordination across colleges, departments, and units. Outreach initiatives operate in silos instead of strategic partnerships.

- What are we doing to support economic development in the programs we are developing and the collaborations we are fostering?
- Digital badging and micro-credentialing: creating relationships with businesses and what they need from their employees.
- Tuition reimbursement, partnerships with businesses who offer this. Shared mission between university and business partners.

Hutchinson Center Team & Early College Team:

- Partnerships are critical.
- This wording captures the importance of this value - particularly in the use of the word “stewardship”. These partnerships require trust.
- It is important that the University be seen as objective, non-bias and as non-political as possible to continue to foster this trust.
- It is important that the University build relationships in such a way that it is viewed as listening to its partners and stakeholders, not just directing or dictating.
- We should be asking our partners what they need from us so that the resources and information we provide are relevant and useful in the “real world”.
- In terms of community engagement, the University should qualify that faculty and staff are active participants in the open conversation about UM goals that support our community internally and externally.

Responses to UMaine Strategic Vision and Values Statements

Division of Lifelong Learning Units

College Success Programs

General Feedback—All Three Statements:

- The strategic vision and values are extremely grand and sweeping. There are no elements of accountability nor priority, so the university can “say” it values these things, but what does it really mean?
- Given the breadth and hyperbole of the values and vision, what do these statement really say about the identity of the university? Hundreds of other universities could claim these values with only minimal modification to them.

Feedback Specific to Statements:

Fostering Learning Success: *The university is a community committed to fostering learning opportunities for all of its members. We celebrate the diversity of our community and are committed to creating a safe and respectful environment within which all learners can flourish. We create rich learning opportunities in the classroom, laboratory, studio, field, and community as well as the spaces within which students live, work, and socialize. We create academic and co-curricular pathways for success and assure that our students are prepared for successful careers and rich lives. Our faculty and staff are life-long learners and we are committed to their professional development over the span of their careers. Our community welcomes learners who do not easily fit the traditional definition of “student” and we are committed to their learning success.*

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Response:

- The notion of fostering “success” connotes an end-point—a thing that is achieved or reached. This vision lacks mention of a growth mindset. Growth that is personal, social, and intellectual can all occur outside of the traditional definition of success but still be highly enriching and meaningful.

- The statement talks about welcoming all learners, but makes no mention of addressing the unique needs of some of those learners. Online students, transfer students, older adults, international students, low income students, first-gen students, students with disabilities, and underrepresented minorities are all examples of students who have needs that differ from that of the “typical” college student.

Creating and Innovating for Maine and Beyond: *At the core of the university's mission is the creation of new knowledge. Fulfillment of this mission takes a wide variety of forms. As Maine's Land and Sea Grant University we are committed to creating knowledge that impacts the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the state. At the same time, the impact of our creativity is not limited to the state's borders. Innovation is present in all aspects of our operation. Our community encompasses designers, builders, makers, and discoverers working in and across a remarkable range of contexts. We champion this work and we apply it in the service of our state, our region, and the world.*

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Response:

- This vision speaks to the creation of new knowledge, but what about the dissemination of that knowledge? What is our responsibility to distribute the knowledge we create?
- Is open access something we value as an institution? How do we ensure that created knowledge is accessible to the citizens of the state?

Growing and Stewarding Partnerships: *As a public institution, the university partners with other entities in fulfilling its teaching, research, and service/outreach missions. These partnerships leverage the university's and its collaborators' assets to advance the cultural, economic, and civic interests of Maine communities even when a direct impact on the university's mission is not obvious. In this way, we serve as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by the people of Maine, and by our many partners in science, industry, commerce, state and local government, and the arts.*

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Response:

- To say “partnerships leverage the university's and its collaborators' assets to advance the cultural, economic, and civic interests of Maine communities **even when a direct impact on the university's mission is not obvious**” seems like a device to justify all partnerships, even if they don't relate to the university's mission. What is our standard for a meaningful or worthwhile partnership?
- “Arts” is the last listed partnership, which makes it seem like an afterthought.
- This value seems to couch the notion of service into that of partnerships. Is this value too narrow? There are ways to serve and outreach to the state that are not partnerships. Why are those not also part of this vision?

Additional Strategic Values:

- **Sustainability & Social Justice:** How do we ensure that we as a university engage in practices that are sustainable and environmentally conscious long-term? As educators and service providers, how do we ensure that our practices foster social justice and equity?
- **Affordability & Access:** With increasing costs of higher education and increasing student loan debt, how are we as a university ensuring that all learners have access to opportunity and education, regardless of socio-economic background?

Responses to UMaine Strategic Vision and Values Statements

Division of Lifelong Learning Units

Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning

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Feedback Question:

- How well do these statements capture a strategic value that should guide the university's development?

Response:

Presentation and Process:

- The presentation seems to have been written by committee in which every groups' area of focus is included to the point that meaning is lost.
- Presentation seems to consist of statements of aspirational values with little or no vision for actual implementation.
- Are there any values in the presentation that any (every?) other university would not claim?
- The presentation lacks data supporting the claims of values. In fact most values are not currently in evidence on campus.
- Need specific steps to achieve the values as presented.
- What are measurable results? Definitions of success?
- How will this effort synch with values articulated by Faculty Senate?
- How will this effort synch with the goals articulated by the System--which seems wholly disconnected from the mission of the University.

Feedback Question:

- Are there additional strategic values that should be considered or alternative ways of articulating the university's strategic values?

Response:

Content:

- No incentives or support for faculty to be lifelong learners related to teaching.
- No meaningful evaluation of or support for teaching.
- No tie into first-year retention initiative.
- How will UM foster learner success? Specifics for execution and evaluation?
- The University needs to view teaching as a cultivated skill that needs continued nurturing.
- We need to stress the importance of rigor in UM courses.
- We need to promote partnerships within and across campuses to meet goals.
- UM seems to have joined a downward trend of treating college courses as undifferentiated commodities.
- This has contributed to students perceiving themselves as customers buying course credits as well as to their focus on grades over learning and to engage in unapologetic cheating.
- This causes us to judge our success or failure based on credit hour production (and the funds generated by credit hours).
- We lack any means of assessing the quality of teaching to the point that we don't utilize (or even collect) data on teaching to inform our understanding of success or failure.
- We have no means of gauging course quality for the learner (e.g. other commodities have things like Brent Crude and West Texas Intermediate [oil] or high grade #2 [corn]). That is, we measure ourselves and the success of our teaching by time rather than learning.

Solutions:

- We need to focus on faculty teaching and student learning.
- Part-time faculty contracts need to start well before the terms in which they teach.
- Grad student/adjunct teaching need to have training available and accessible (financially) prior to teaching at UM.
- Faculty will need buy-outs/course releases to achieve instructional goals.
- Course load for lecturers and non-tenure track instructional staff will need to be calibrated with successful teaching and learning.
- We need to resist turning to outside groups to develop courses (Academic Partners) at the expense of helping our instructional staff and grad students become better instructors.
- We need to engage with data collection and analysis at the faculty, course, and student level.
- **We need to convert general strategy to actual practice. Values need to become supported practices.**

Responses to UMaine Strategic Vision and Values Statements

Division of Lifelong Learning Units

- UMaineOnline
- Student Services

Fostering Learning Success: *The university is a community committed to fostering learning opportunities for all of its members. We celebrate the diversity of our community and are committed to creating a safe and respectful environment within which all learners can flourish. We create rich learning opportunities in the classroom, laboratory, studio, field, and community as well as the spaces within which students live, work, and socialize. We create academic and co-curricular pathways for success and assure that our students are prepared for successful careers and rich lives. Our faculty and staff are life-long learners and we are committed to their professional development over the span of their careers. Our community welcomes learners who do not easily fit the traditional definition of “student” and we are committed to their learning success.*

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Response:

- All learners “lumped” together. There is no mention of the online learner and their different needs.
- The importance of teaching and the quality of teaching to be in sync with the adult and/or online student and what their needs are.
- Maine is 48th in the nation for internet quality and access. It would be important to partner with the state to ensure statewide access to reliable internet. Rural areas have consistent problems.

Creating and Innovating for Maine and Beyond: *At the core of the university's mission is the creation of new knowledge. Fulfillment of this mission takes a wide variety of forms. As Maine's Land and Sea Grant University we are committed to creating knowledge that impacts the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the state. At the same time, the impact of our creativity is not limited to the state's borders. Innovation is present in all*

aspects of our operation. Our community encompasses designers, builders, makers, and discoverers working in and across a remarkable range of contexts. We champion this work and we apply it in the service of our state, our region, and the world.

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- How well do these statements capture a strategic value that should guide the university's development?
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Response:

- The development of new programs that are integral to our state - how do we partner with business/innovators for this development?
- The importance of adjusting to business and student needs, changing from a semester-long course model.
- The need for micro-credentialing.
- Development of innovative courses/programs that still meet the needs of our integral learners and build from our university, system and community partners.
- Support for innovation in the learning environment.

Growing and Stewarding Partnerships: *As a public institution, the university partners with other entities in fulfilling its teaching, research, and service/outreach missions. These partnerships leverage the university's and its collaborators' assets to advance the cultural, economic, and civic interests of Maine communities even when a direct impact on the university's mission is not obvious. In this way, we serve as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by the people of Maine, and by our many partners in science, industry, commerce, state and local government, and the arts.*

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- How well do these statements capture a strategic value that should guide the university's development?
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Response:

- The importance of supporting economic development in the programs we are developing and the collaborations we are fostering. The relationship should go both ways. It will be vital to think beyond only their relationship with us.
- Creating relationships with businesses and listening to what they need from their employees: Digital badging and micro-credentialing may be options.
- Statements are very broad and vague with few measurable outcomes.
- A process will need be detailed to ensure that this vision is accomplished. How will success be measured?
- Should these statements align with the University/One University goals?
- Nurturing teaching, along with research to support innovation on both fronts.
- Collaboration with “sister” universities to develop programs and expand expertise/teaching capacity.
- Expand retention efforts beyond first year students. Adult learners have different needs but equal issues with retention at undergrad and graduate levels.

Responses to UMaine Strategic Vision and Values Statements

Division of Lifelong Learning Units

Operations

Fostering Learning Success: *The university is a community committed to fostering learning opportunities for all of its members. We celebrate the diversity of our community and are committed to creating a safe and respectful environment within which all learners can flourish. We create rich learning opportunities in the classroom, laboratory, studio, field, and community as well as the spaces within which students live, work, and socialize. We create academic and co-curricular pathways for success and assure that our students are prepared for successful careers and rich lives. Our faculty and staff are life-long learners and we are committed to their professional development over the span of their careers. Our community welcomes learners who do not easily fit the traditional definition of “student” and we are committed to their learning success.*

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Response:

- Online learning should be directly referenced in the statement.
- If we don’t already, we should have representation on the strategic visioning steering committee from a online or non-traditional learner perspective.
- Last sentence, perhaps “embraces” or “includes” rather than “welcomes”, the sentence in current form makes this sound as though serving this population is a new thing or something “extra.”

Creating and Innovation for Maine and Beyond: *At the core of the university's mission is the creation of new knowledge. Fulfillment of this mission takes a wide variety of forms. As Maine's Land and Sea Grant University we are committed to creating knowledge that impacts the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the state. At the same time, the impact of our creativity is not limited to the state's borders. Innovation is present in all aspects of our operation. Our community encompasses designers, builders, makers, and discoverers working in and across a remarkable range of contexts. We champion this work and we apply it in the service of our state, our region, and the world.*

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Response:

Innovation should include teaching/learning, and new innovative academic programs (Jessie)

***Growing and Stewarding Partnerships:** As a public institution, the university partners with other entities in fulfilling its teaching, research, and service/outreach missions. These partnerships leverage the university's and its collaborators' assets to advance the cultural, economic, and civic interests of Maine communities even when a direct impact on the university's mission is not obvious. In this way, we serve as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by the people of Maine, and by our many partners in science, industry, commerce, state and local government, and the arts.*

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Response:

This statement lacks emphasis on important partnerships that should exist within both the system and the university.

Responses to UMaine Strategic Vision and Values Statements

Division of Lifelong Learning Units

Conferences & Institutes

General Feedback—All Three Statements:

Feedback Question:

- How well do these statements capture a strategic value that should guide the university's development?

We feel it would be helpful to focus on a defined audience with each value. Which in turn will help capture the strategic values. While reviewing and discussing the current document we ask who is the audience? Students, Faculty, Staff, Legislature, Donors, Corporations, and/or General Public? As you go through each section of the document, it reads as though each individual line is there to speak to a different audience. Therefore, the Vision and Values get lost and the statements are not as strong. Is there value in intentionally defining specifically who the target audience is and purposely write the statement to them?

The Vision and Values statements should be written considering UMaine's primary purpose: educate students/learners of all ages via all methods, provide quality and affordable education, and to provide them skills to be workforce ready.

Feedback Question:

- Are there additional strategic values that should be considered or alternative ways of articulating the university's strategic values?

The Vision and Values should be at the core of our mission. If the University is to be truly anchored to these values we need to "strike" them again and again until they are simplified enough that anyone can easily recite our values. They should help us as a guide for decision making in the present and future. The Vision and Values should be visible everywhere we go on campus, in the State, and worldwide.

A possible solution for more concise statements might be to focus on one audience for each paragraph. This could be accomplished by reducing the audience for each of the three paragraphs to one essential group that best applies to the vision of that specific paragraph; for example, the "Fostering Learner Success" paragraph language might be focused on students, faculty, and staff. "Creating and Innovating for Maine and Beyond" might focus on legislators

and Maine voters. “Growing and Stewarding Partnerships” might best speak to donors and corporate partners.

Along with condensed statements, we also recommend moving away from a narrative format, and instead to a flow chart. The flow chart would include each Vision and Value statement, then bullet points of supporting goals, next essential strategies, and lastly measurable outcomes. Have goals that are clear and measurable and directly tie them to the Vision and Values statements.

To accomplish this there will be a need for a clear system to be in place, inventorying all progress gained as we move towards attaining the paired down goals. There will also be a need for financial and administrative support to achieve some of the goals. For the University to progress, we need to recognize the advantages of collaborative innovation and be open to change.

Feedback Specific to Statements:

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Response:

- Fostering Learner Success – is success the right word (How we define “success can be very interpretational to one’s own life goals)? What about using the word “achievement”?
- Over emphasis of the word “diverse.” Use “inclusive or inclusion.”

- Switched from using “learners” to using the word “student”, which sounds more traditional, and traditional definition.
- Learners “of all ages and paths.”
- There is no flow because each paragraph is trying to reach too many different audiences.
- Formation of each paragraph. One or two opening statements with bulleted lists.

Creating and Innovation for Maine and Beyond: *At the core of the university's mission is the creation of new knowledge. Fulfillment of this mission takes a wide variety of forms. As Maine's Land and Sea Grant University we are committed to creating knowledge that impacts the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the state. At the same time, the impact of our creativity is not limited to the state's borders. Innovation is present in all aspects of our operation. Our community encompasses designers, builders, makers, and discoverers working in and across a remarkable range of contexts. We champion this work and we apply it in the service of our state, our region, and the world.*

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Response:

- Creation and use or application of knowledge.
- Remove “genetic make-up” and any other language that refers to the institution as something biological.
- Our community is inclusive of a workforce.
- Creating is part of Innovating – suggest removing “Creating and...”

Growing and Stewarding Partnerships: *As a public institution, the university partners with other entities in fulfilling its teaching, research, and service/outreach missions. These partnerships leverage the university's and its collaborators' assets to advance the cultural, economic, and civic interests of Maine communities even when a direct impact on the university's mission is not obvious. In this way, we serve as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by the people of Maine, and by our many partners in science, industry, commerce, state and local government, and the arts.*

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Response:

- "Entities" is not the best word.
- Reads that you're trying to reach to many audiences