



Board of Trustees  
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January 28, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees  
FR: Ellen N. Doughty, Clerk of the Board  
RE: Notification of Board Actions

The University of Maine At a meeting of the Board of Trustees on January 26-27, 2020 hosted by the University of Maine, the Board approved the following action:

University of Maine  
at Augusta

**Unified Accreditation Authorization**

The Board of Trustees approved the following resolution:

University of Maine  
at Farmington

University of Maine  
at Fort Kent

University of Maine  
at Machias

University of Maine  
at Presque Isle

University of  
Southern Maine

The University of Maine System Board of Trustees directed the Chancellor and UMS University Presidents to prepare and submit an appropriate substantive change application to the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) to transition the current separate UMS university institutional accreditations to a unified institutional accreditation for the University of Maine System, covering all of its universities, in such time as to permit NECHE's initial consideration by June 30, 2020.

Board approval for unified accreditation is subject to the following conditions:

1. Unified accreditation must be planned, applied for, and administered in such ways as will follow the University of Maine System Charter, the Guiding Principles established by the Chancellor in consultation with System University Presidents, the Board's policies on academic freedom and shared governance, and current labor agreements. The unified accreditation model planned and developed by the Chancellor and UMS University Presidents will be structured to achieve the highest quality student experience, academic program quality and relevance, and university financial stability in accord with the System's mission in service to the State of Maine.
2. As the UMS substantive change application to NECHE is developed, the Chancellor and UMS University Presidents will review UMS Board Policies to ensure alignment with the unified accreditation model developed in compliance with NECHE's Standards for Accreditation. The Chancellor and UMS University Presidents will report and provide recommendations to the Board no later than the May 2020 meeting of any changes in existing UMS Board policies, or necessary new policies, that should be adopted for alignment.
3. At each Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting and every other Board meeting through NECHE's comprehensive evaluation of UMS's unified accreditation, there will be a standing agenda item for the Chancellor and Presidents to report to the Board on progress, status, and issues. The Chancellor is directed to, as soon as is

practical, present to the Board a project timeline and milestones, together with a tracking plan with which to monitor progress both toward achieving unified accreditation and the Board's strategic priorities that it advances.

4. Recognizing that NECHE's Standards for Accreditation themselves establish the essential elements of higher education institutional quality, by which UMS universities, acting together in the System in a unified accreditation model, will work together to improve the System's quality, increase its effectiveness, and continually strive for collaborative excellence, the Board expects that the process of developing the unified accreditation substantive change application and comprehensive evaluation report will necessarily identify opportunities to improve System quality on each of the NECHE Standards' elements. At the same time, the Board expects to maintain progress and momentum on its Declaration of Strategic Priorities and Key Performance Indicators. Therefore, as part of the report called for in Paragraph 3 above, the Chancellor will include proposals for aligning UMS's Strategic Priorities and KPIs with the outcomes intended to be achieved through unified compliance with NECHE's Standards at the System level.

5. It is the Board's expectation that unified accreditation will not require substantial increases to System administration or governance at the expense of university administration and governance or academic program and student support resources. UMS University Presidents and the Chancellor will develop and seek from NECHE a unified accreditation model that coordinates System and university-based resources in System-wide coordinated efforts to achieve compliance with NECHE Standards across the System, and sustain those changes to ensure high quality educational experiences in accord with the Standards.

6. Appreciating the Chancellor's transparency in the unified accreditation effort to date, the Board directs that all System and university constituencies be updated regularly on the status of UMS's application for unified accreditation, progress toward achieving the same, and the nature and extent of challenges and successes that are encountered throughout the System and at UMS universities in the process.

cc:  
Dannel Malloy, Chancellor  
System Staff  
Faculty & Student Representatives  
University Presidents  
Boards of Visitors