

Introduction

During the preliminary and comprehensive visits to the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI), all members of the campus community were welcoming and candid. Individuals were aware of the self-study report and the purpose of the team's visit. The team conducted individual, open-forum, and small-group meetings. Persons in attendance included the chair of the Board of Trustees, community members, the chair of the foundation board, members of the alumni board, community members, HHEC/Houlton staff, student government leaders, members of the local board of visitors, the Strategic Planning Committee, faculty, staff, students, and administrators. The chair of the team also interviewed Chancellor James Page (November 25, 2014 by telephone). During the visit, a team member also interviewed the vice chancellor in charge of budgets in the Maine system.

The team found the self-study and other materials provided an overall accurate description of the college. The team appreciated the electronic links, most of which were functional, as well as single copies in the work rooms. The chair's preliminary visit on October 11, 2013 (and the entire seven-person team's visit on April 6-9, 2014) yielded information used in preparation for the evaluative judgments contained in the sections of this report, which address the NEASC Standards for Accreditation of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

This evaluation of UMPI is a comprehensive evaluation that follows a letter of March 1, 2011, that confirmed a comprehensive evaluation for fall 2013 (later delayed until spring 2014). That letter gave emphasis to (1) strengthening financial health and (2) increasing enrollment through initiatives in admissions and retention. An earlier letter in January 8, 2009 also emphasized implementing a comprehensive retention program that ensures integration of support programs intended to strengthen retention and graduation rates. Consequently, in addition to reviewing all eleven standards, this report will give special attention to finances and the related matter of increased enrollment through initiatives in admissions and retention. Since the 2014 self-study gave specific emphasis to assessment and strategic planning, two areas cited in the 2008 progress report, the team also looked closely at these areas. (self-study, xi).

1. Mission and Purposes

UMPI, a part of the University of Maine system, is an associate and bachelor degree-granting institution located less than ten miles from the Canadian border. The college was founded in 1903 as a normal school. In 1968, the college became part of the University of Maine system and began a period of growth. In 1970, the Maine Board

renamed the college the University of Maine at Presque Isle and added a foundation. Closure of the Loring Air Force Base in 1995 resulted in enrollment losses offset somewhat by gains in international students and the off-site development of the Houlton Higher Education Center (HHEC).

In 2007-2008, UMPI reviewed the mission and vision statements (in keeping with system policy that the mission and vision be reviewed every five years), but the mission and vision remained basically intact in the belief that the strategic plan most needed updating. These mission and vision statements were still in effect at the time of the April 2014 NEASC visit. The mission and vision statements concisely describe the institution, were publicized, and served as a basic guide in directing activities, serving the students and community, and providing a basis for assessment. Initiation of an online course in 2006, followed by online programs and the installation of a wind turbine in 2009, for example, are evidence that the college took some innovative steps to address enrollment and financial challenges. However, the mission and vision statements have not led to long-term admission and financial stability.

The institution is at a crossroads with a proposed mission, vision and strategic plan and transparent budgeting process ready for possible board approval in May 2014. The campus has refocused time and energy on these new documents. Consequently, the team reviewed the existing mission, vision, and plans and also looked ahead to the plans that the campus has initiated since the arrival of President Schott.

Dr. Linda Schott became the president in July 2012 during a challenging time. Her immediate focus was on improving enrollments, finances, assessment and strategic planning. With these challenges in mind, she viewed recasting the mission, vision and values to be an important vehicle for her to bring about efficiencies and positive change.

The proposed mission, vision, and values statements are closely associated with President Schott, who drafted them. She also chaired the Standard I committee of the self-study and drafted Standard I. Although the president has been the originator and the driving force behind the new documents, she has also spoken widely with all constituent groups: in interviews, the campus community and other stakeholders supported the new documents, President Schott, and her bold thinking. The vision is particularly bold – making UMPI the first university in the state to embrace personalized learning as a means to make UMPI unique, thereby attracting and retaining students.

The notable innovation in the college's vision is proficiency-based education. (See Standard 4 for additional explanation.) She also sees academics and student affairs working together, and technology as a means of intervention and support.

If the mission, vision, and strategic plan are approved without revision by the Board of Trustees in May 2014, the real work still lies ahead: Faculty, administrators and staff will need to work at a significant pace to align their mission statements and their planning with the institution-level documents. The faculty will also have to align their curricula and pedagogy with personalized learning. Recent changes in middle and upper leadership have brought fresh ideas to campus, but also new people to interweave into the campus culture. The campus community has embraced the president as a hard worker who is committed to UMPI, which is a good initial sign as the college moves toward a new mission, vision, strategic plan, and transparent budgeting --and the resulting changes that are bound to cause periodic discomfort.

Institutional Effectiveness: UMPI has periodically reviewed its mission and purposes. The current board-approved mission statement (2003) accurately defines the institution, appears in relevant publications, and has basically guided the institution with results demonstrated in the self-study. However, the mission statement has not been closely linked to vision, transparent budgeting and strategic planning with prioritized goals, and individual units have not aligned their missions with the institutional mission.

The institution anticipates using the proposed mission and vision and strategic plan as the basis for a more effective means of annually assessing and enhancing the institution's effectiveness in a cycle of continuous improvement.

2. Planning and Evaluation

Planning: In 2007, the President asked the VPAA to revise and implement what became the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan. At an open session, faculty noted that little input was gathered from the campus community, so the plan was not particularly effective.

UMPI has now entered the final stages of its third strategic planning process (2015-2020). The recent changes in leadership have brought a renewed sense of optimism. The senior leadership team, during the summer of 2013, developed a strategic plan and during the fall shared it with all campus constituencies. Faculty at the lunch session felt a renewed sense of being heard and being part of the decision-making process on campus. With the focus on proficiency-based, personalized learning, faculty see the new strategic plan as an integral component of their work in and out of the classroom. The proposed strategic plan has gone through an open and transparent process, involving all campus constituencies, with multiple opportunities to weigh in. A junior faculty member from the business department has been facilitating the process, drawing on his experience in business planning. Goals of the 2015 strategic plan focus on personalized learning through proficiency-based education.

Evaluation: Since the 2008 plan was not fully implemented, the plan was also not used as a basis for evaluation. The undated “assessment report for the president” presented in the document workroom, possibly from 2009, reported some actions taken, others with no description, and others that were incomplete.

The 2015-2020 proposed strategic plan features strategic goals focused on student learning, retention and graduation. Each goal has identified three to five broad measures, including some specific metrics, to evaluate the success of the plan. However, given that the plan is pending board approval and full implementation, evaluating the institution’s progress against the strategic goals set still lies ahead.

While an overall academic plan is not in place, academic program review was reinvigorated in 2008 with a five- to- seven- year schedule and recently instituted guidelines. The accredited programs, guided by their national associations, provide evidence of student learning in their self-studies; the non-accredited programs appear to have been slower to adopt this model based on a review of the program self-studies provided in the document workroom. (See *The Academic Program*, p. 8-10 and 14-15.)

The E-Series forms provided a general statement that the recommendations in the self-studies were, or are about to be, enacted. While the exhibit room contained data on student learning and engagement (e.g., ETS Proficiency Profile and NSSE results) and the general results of these instruments appear on the College Portraits website, no evidence about use of the data to improve the institution’s programs and services was evident. According to administrators and faculty, lack of a dedicated information researcher on campus has hampered data-driven decision making.

However, examples of movement toward a more evidence-based culture do exist. In academic affairs, a faculty member has engaged in some of the necessary institutional research. The evaluation of the general education curriculum (GEC) is a good example of using data to affect change. The general education task force developed a list of 12 questions to research, and their study of the effects of placement testing is an excellent use of data to inform curricular decisions. The task force noted the need for more study.

The Student Affairs Division has been able to access data by learning how to query the databases. The Division has a system of evaluation, providing annual reports made available during the team visit. The division will be moving to use a system provided by CAS (the Council for the Advancement for Standards in Higher Education) and will institute a regular cycle of review and aligning their work with the new proficiencies. (See also *Students*, pp. 22-23, for details.)

While the medical laboratory technology program provides data on employment of recent graduates in their 2008 self-study, in general tracking the success of graduates is anecdotal, as discussed during the faculty's open session. For the most part, however, no institutional systematic survey of recent graduates exists to determine the impact of their educations on their career opportunities.

Institutional Effectiveness: While recent initial planning has been broad-based, previous strategic plans were neither fully implemented nor evaluated. Consequently, the institution has yet to establish a pattern of assessment and evaluation used to inform continuous improvement.

3. Organization and Governance

Appropriate structures are in place to support shared internal decision making at UMPI. Communication is effective as the result of two specific groups. The first is the Faculty Assembly, which handles academic decision making. The Faculty Assembly, comprised of all full-time faculty, decides which faculty serve on various committees. One such committee under the Faculty Assembly is the Curriculum Committee, which meets regularly and forwards recommendations to the Faculty Assembly, which then forwards recommendations to the VPAA. The Curriculum Committee has several templates available on the university web site in order to submit a new course for approval. Other on-line forms available include Change of Catalog, Addition of New Programs, Deletions of Program and Deletion of Courses.

A second group which works through non-academic issues is the University Senate. The University Senate is comprised of all labor units on campus and also has student representation. One issue recently reviewed was whether to develop a campus-wide non-smoking policy for the campus. Minutes for the University Senate are made available through a university portal.

A yearlong effort has been undertaken to develop a new Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan, which have been supported conceptually by the campus community. The documentation is being forwarded to the two campus decision-making bodies for vetting and approval.

The Student Government Association members spoke of the frequent and transparent communication between students and administration, although some evidence existed that students are not sure their voices are heard consistently on all matters.

Faculty, staff and students understood and supported the roles in the various groups that share governance. Composition of University Senate and the Faculty Assembly represents a cross section of the University. Faculty also expressed strong support of senior leadership.

Senior leadership consists of the President, the Vice President for Administration and Finance, who assumed his position in the fall (and who may soon be shared with University of Maine at Machias), an interim Provost/VPAA – hereafter referred to as VPAA - who took his seat in the fall (and was previously the well-respected chair of A and S), and the Interim Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, who is a long-standing employee. Each school has a chair. Other administrative leaders, primarily at director levels, comprise the cohesive leadership team.

Formal governance at the system level is led by Chancellor Page, who evaluates the presidents. In an interview, he expressed support for UMPI and its new leadership and vision as did the chair of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Samuel Collins, who was present at the opening dinner as well as for a follow-up interview. The chair was clearly knowledgeable and concerned about UMPI and about the larger fiscal challenges for the system, as was the Vice Chancellor in charge of budgets. Sharing of IT and IR services between UMPI and the system office has been one collaborative, cost-saving measure of note with sharing of the CFO between UMPI and Machias, perhaps, to follow.

UMPI is also supported by 11 members of a Board of Visitors (out of a possible 17), who are nominated by the president and approved by the trustees; the board advocates to the legislature for UMPI and performs other forms of assistance such as serving on search and strategic planning committees and offering internships to students. The team was particularly impressed with the knowledge and commitment of this group of local volunteers, some of whom attended the evening dinner, with five returning the next day for an interview. The foundation and alumni boards are also supportive, as demonstrated in discussions with their leadership.

Institutional Effectiveness: Internal decisions are made effectively through a well-established committee structure. The three colleges within the university work collegiately with each other and collectively with the administration. The University administration also works well within the University of Maine system (including in sharing services with the system office) and with the local Board of Visitors and the alumni and foundation boards.

4. The Academic Program

Introduction, Undergraduate Education, and the Major or Concentration: UMPI offers Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree and Certificate programs that are consistent with the mission of a rural, public university that aims to provide “...broad educational opportunities for a diverse student body, with particular reference to the people of its region and state. The University emphasizes professional programs and a balanced curriculum that promotes a strong foundation in the arts and sciences.” (UMPI Course Catalog, page 1). UMPI offers 26 undergraduate academic majors in the arts, sciences, education, and the professional fields. Of those academic majors, six lead to Associate’s

degrees, seven to the Bachelor of Arts degree, one to a Bachelor of Fine Arts, eight to the Bachelor of Science degree (four in Education and Physical Education), one to a Bachelor of Art in Art Education, and one to the Bachelor of Social Work. UMPI offers 30 academic minors and eight concentrations. The Baccalaureate degree requires the completion of 120 credit hours with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 and no less than a minimum of 2.0 in the major. UMPI's academic programs are coherent and appropriate for its mission.

In the last few years UMPI has added three Associate degree programs related to workforce needs (Physical Therapy Assistant, Special Education Paraprofessional, and Professional Communication), revised several programs, and suspended low-enrolled programs in Political Science and Behavioral Science/Sociology. UMPI has added distance learning courses and programs (including the General Education Curriculum and four majors—English, History, Psychology and Liberal Studies offered completely on-line) and off-campus offerings to meet student needs. UMPI offers courses online and at the Houlton Higher Education Center to meet the needs of students in the region.

The newly proposed mission, vision and strategic plan call for development of a personalized, proficiency-based education at UMPI. Faculty and administrators have demonstrated enthusiasm for this innovative new curriculum, and they will develop pedagogy in response to shifting enrollments, to a state requirement for proficiency-based high school programs, and to the desire to offer a personalized education that will maximize learning for a diverse student body. The Davis Foundation and Lumina will be supporting the development of the proficiency-based curricula. Faculty enthusiasm is evident in their high level of interest in the Innovative Faculty Fellow Program. Twice as many applicants for this designation applied than could be funded using the Davis grant, but UMPI will use internal funds to involve more faculty. As noted by the President, 80 – 90% of faculty members have expressed support for the new mission and plan.

UMPI has an effective system of academic oversight and mechanisms are in place to assure the quality of academic programs wherever and however they are offered. Since 2008 UMPI has organized its academic departments into three Colleges: Arts and Sciences, Professional Programs, and Education. Each College is administered by a Chair from the existing faculty ranks, after being voted to the position by the faculty and approved by the administration. In an interview with the visiting team, Chairs described their activities to evaluate and maintain the quality of academic programs. Schedules and teaching assignments are determined by faculty under the Chair's guidance. Departments develop their own courses, faculty develop course syllabi, and with the chair determine the course modality.

A seven-year Program Review Cycle implements Strategic Goal 1 of the University's 2008-2013 Strategic Plan and the University of Maine Academic Program Review Policy and Procedures. Programs with professional program accreditation are reviewed on the schedule mandated by the accrediting agency. UMPI has a Program Review Schedule for

all programs from 2008-2009 to 2021-2022. Program Review Procedures are detailed in a single document entitled “UMPI Program Review Procedures (9/2013)”. The Policies require “...(a) the assessment plan for student learning outcomes, (b) the results of assessments, (c) evidence of review of assessment results by the unit faculty, and (d) evidence of the use of assessment results for program improvement.” External Review is required in the process. Program reviews were made available and demonstrated that some program reviews include assessment of student learning outcomes, (Athletic Training, Medical Laboratory Technician, Social Work and College of Education, for example). Others (English and History, for example) included information on student enrollments and grades.

Majors at UMPI range from 40 to 84 credit hours or approximately one to two-thirds of the student’s degree program. Academic majors lead students through introductory, intermediate, and advanced coursework, although the requirements for upper-level coursework vary widely across majors. Program requirements by major adhere to standards within specific disciplines and are assessed by the external review or accreditation process.

Academic programs are supported through a centralized budget maintained by Academic Affairs and by additional budgets maintained by specific programs. College chairs noted in conversations that although budgets allocated to specific programs may not have been adequate, they have been allowed to overspend their assigned allocations when necessary. Faculty expressed concern about inadequacy of funds to purchase necessary teaching materials in Education and equipment in Biology.

The President noted that as UMPI moves toward a personalized, proficiency-based education, cost points will be identified and resources reallocated. According to the Provost, Education and Fine Arts already have elements of proficiency-based curriculum in place, and the English faculty are beginning the process. Proficiencies will be phased into existing courses.

Programmatic learning goals (for most majors) and requirements for all majors, course sequencing, and course information are published in the Course Catalog. Many departments maintain a web page, publish program manuals, and some also use social networking sites to disseminate information.

UMPI’s 2013-2014 course catalog lays out the requirements for each academic program, including the General Education requirements, required courses in each major, and elective courses in each major. Each major program has a coherent design with appropriate breadth, a sequence of courses that builds from introductory to advanced courses, and opportunities for practical learning experiences. Some majors (Criminal Justice, Elementary Education/Special Education Concentration and English/Professional Communication, for example) at UMPI include a capstone experience or course that

requires application and/or synthesis of learning. The VPAA indicated that they are moving toward requiring this type of course or experience in all majors.

Students' proficiency with standard written English is clearly identified as an educational objective within the catalog and listed as one of the five GEC Essential Learning Outcomes, with four specific learning objectives. These objectives are included on all syllabi designated to address effective written and oral communication.

UMPI utilizes SAT and Accuplacer scores for reading and writing placement. The ETS Collegiate Learning Assessment and embedded assessment within GEC courses have been used to assess reading and writing proficiency. A campus-developed rubric for written and oral communication has been used in one round of assessment and should be evaluated for both validity and reliability. Some upper-level courses in many majors include some of the objectives for written and oral communication proficiency as well.

As a result of formative assessment that took place in recent years, developmental writing courses have been replaced with mastery-based learning components within college-level English courses for those who need additional instruction.

New degree programs at UMPI are generally developed through faculty or program initiatives, although UMS funding has supported development of specific programs including Physical Therapist Assistant. Proposals for new degree programs must proceed beyond campus administration for approval by the System's Board of Trustees. Aside from general NEASC accreditation, individual programs at UMPI are accredited by specific agencies.

In recent years UMPI has undertaken some academic planning and evaluation to enhance achievement of its mission. UMPI's 2008-2013 Strategic Plan Goal I: "Student Success," identified four areas for targeted emphasis: academic programs, student affairs programs, academic support services, and connections and relevance. Target Emphasis 1 was "Academic Programs: Academic Affairs will pursue three primary avenues of program development, with the aim of creating and supporting excellence in learning and teaching." This academic planning yielded 3 objectives: to support high-quality, mission-relevant professional programs; to support high-quality, mission-relevant non-professional programs; and to support a strong arts and sciences general education program. Evidence that this type of review and planning occurred is that following the adoption of the strategic plan several programs were added, eliminated, and modified, and the administrative structure was modified.

In March 2011 NEASC accepted UMPI's report on distance education, effectively including distance education within the institution's accreditation. At that time three Bachelor's degrees were to be offered fully online. UMPI's 2014 self-study indicates that it now offers four Bachelor's degrees online. For any program to be eliminated, Trustee policy requires the development of a Program Elimination Proposal with attention to

specific guidelines. The University and individual programs make provisions for students impacted by curricular change to complete the program with minimal disruption.

UMPI offers courses at the Houlton Higher Education Center (HHEC), located approximately one hour from the main campus. HHEC is managed by UMPI but maintained as a cooperative venture among several significant partners, including Northern Maine Community College, the Carlton Project (a private, non-profit alternative high school), Women Work and Community, and the Houlton and Hodgdon Adult Education programs. The Coordinator of HHEC reports to the UMPI VPAA. The UMS University College, a distance learning vehicle of the UM-System, maintains statewide video conferencing and ITV services to students at all campus and center locations. HHEC relies on this service and on Blackboard for delivery of online courses.

UMPI employs adjunct faculty specifically assigned to deliver courses at HHEC and several full-time UMPI faculty teach courses there each semester. UMPI also provides a limited number of requested courses, primarily in Business Administration, to a site located at the Loring Commerce Center, formerly known as Loring Air Force Base. The team chair visited HHEC in October 2013 and found the facility to be in good condition and well-equipped, except for the science lab, which is supplemented by use of labs in a local high school.

General Education: All students completing BA and BS degrees are required to fulfill General Educational Curriculum requirements of no fewer than 40 credit hours. The institution has devoted considerable thought and energy to a comprehensive integration of the General Education Curriculum (adopted in 2012) across all degree programs. An earlier version (adopted in 2007) was revised based on recommendations from a self-study conducted by the General Education Task Force, a committee convened by the VPAA in 2011. Revisions were driven by student learning outcomes data (a direct course assessment, ETS data, and an additional self-study) and by the aspirational goal to provide personalized education.

UMPI has crafted a GEC that is both coherent and substantive and is consistent with the institutional mission. Guided by LEAP principles, GEC essential learning outcomes (ELOs) are stated with operational definitions, mapped to individual courses, and assessed by instructors within all GEC courses. Specific ELOs and corresponding objectives are stated as learning goals on all GEC syllabi. Results are aggregated to assess outcomes by student cohort. Stated in several documents and proposals currently before governance committees are goal statements to implement an assessment plan that can measure and track GEC outcomes at the individual level to ensure that every student achieves each of the five adopted ELOs.

UMPI's five general education ELOs do not strictly fall into traditional disciplinary divisions (arts and humanities, the science & mathematics, and the social sciences), but rather concern the skills and knowledge that are foundational to intellectual inquiry and

career and civic preparation broadly defined (Effective Written and Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Information Literacy, and Global and Intercultural Awareness). All GEC courses, with the exception of Freshmen Year Experience, are taught within discipline-specific courses and are distributed across traditional academic disciplines. Limiting which courses receive GEC designation will, in practice, ensure disciplinary breath for every student.

The adopted general education curriculum at UMPI addresses competencies in written and oral communication in English; the ability for scientific and quantitative reasoning, for critical analysis and logical thinking; and the capability for continuing learning, including the skills of information literacy. A comprehensive assessment plan for the measurement of these competencies is under development.

Students are required to take courses that address knowledge and understanding of scientific, historical, and social phenomena; and knowledge and appreciation of the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of humankind. Institutional assessment of these competencies for individual students is currently limited to grades in relevant courses.

In regard to the major or concentration, UMPI's majors have requirements that include introductory courses leading to upper-division required and elective courses. As detailed in the Course Catalog (pages 49 – 98), most programs are based on articulated learning objectives and allow a student to develop appropriate knowledge and its interrelatedness to other areas of inquiry. Professional programs incorporate opportunities for application of knowledge in the field. Program requirements, discussions with faculty and students, and review of course syllabi indicate that expectations for student learning are high and that graduating students achieve the learning objectives.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

UMPI offers degrees and certificates that are consistent with common institutional practices in the U.S. UMPI's degree requirements meet the minimum degree requirements of 60 semester credits at the associate's level and 120 semester credits at the baccalaureate level.

UMPI has made efforts to offer courses with sufficient availability. Historical data of course offerings and enrollments were provided for Colleges to analyze and use in schedule development to assist in scheduling necessary course sections. Additional initiatives to assist four-year degree completion rates include a significant expansion of summer course offerings. The University increased its on-line course offerings to accommodate student schedules (by 854 percent between fall 2008 and fall 2012). Students and faculty reported in several sessions during the visit that sufficient offerings of standard format are not available in some programs.

UMPI's IPEDs report indicates that in 2011-2012 six degrees were awarded in Environmental Studies, 5 in Biology, 3 in Mathematics, 4 in Applied Science, 6 in

Recreation/Leisure Services, 8 in Behavioral Science-Sociology, 7 in Applied Art and Fine Arts and 6 in History. Low numbers of graduates and corresponding low levels of enrollment create problems for students when upper-level courses either cannot be run or must be offered in an online format, due to low course enrollment. The problem of low-enrolled courses being cancelled or taught online was mentioned by students in Education, English, and other majors and confirmed by faculty and administrators. The mathematics program is currently being reviewed in light of this low enrollment. The review will consider implications for renewal of junior faculty. The University of Maine system stipulates a minimum class size of 12. The VPAA and chairs do occasionally offer courses with lower enrollment in order to promote timely graduation and will also offer a Directed Studies option for individual students. As a result of this flexibility, the Chairs reported that they rarely have to cancel courses. They do frequently have to offer courses in an online format to generate sufficient enrollment. UMPI students and faculty expressed dissatisfaction with this alternative to offering sufficient sections of on-ground classes.

In accordance with the AFUM Contract, UMPI faculty and administration maintain control over all academic matters (policies, procedures, and curricula) including the awarding of credits (both matriculated and non-matriculated students, including the assigning of transfer credits) and the conferral of all degrees regardless of the modality of the program or course location. College chairs, in consultation with faculty, arrange course offerings and hiring of faculty. UMPI faculty evaluate student learning and assign grades guided by learning objectives for the GEC and for most majors; the objectives are clearly specified in print and online and are appropriate for the degree level.

UMPI awards credit for coursework based on the semester hour. Consistent with the AFUM Contract and the NEASC "Statement on Credits and Degree," one semester hour of credit is awarded for one 50-minute block of instruction during the week for a semester consisting of approximately 14 weeks of instruction. Weekly meeting times of any courses offered in a shorter time frame (summer and winter sessions, as well as "short semester" sessions during the fall and spring semesters) are adjusted accordingly to ensure a standard number of instructional hours.

A review of course syllabi in all disciplines confirmed that courses require outside work including homework, papers, projects, assignments, reading, and studying that corresponds to at least two hours outside of class for each hour in class. Few syllabi specify that students are expected to work 2 hours outside of class for each class hour. Students reported spending between 18 (for 4 courses) and 40 hours a week (for 5 courses) preparing for classes. Chairs could not identify systematic means of informing faculty that their syllabi should require two hours of work outside of class for each class hour, although the course catalog (page 30) stipulates that each UMPI course requires 15 hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction as part of a total of 45 hours of student academic engagement per course. On-line courses are designed to reflect the same number of "in class" hours during a standard week of instruction. The calculation

of hours includes assigned work, such as timely submission of assignments and participation in discussion boards.

UMPI does not allow remedial or developmental coursework as credit toward graduation. UMPI offers one non-credit developmental course (MAT 17: Basic Algebra). All other “remedial” courses have been revised to provide college-level credit with additional lab hours for students testing below specific competency levels or provide elective credit but no GEC credit.

Prior Learning credit at UMPI is currently awarded through nationally recognized programs such as CLEP and Advanced Placement (pages 4 and 5 of the Course Catalog). In addition, UMPI follows the recommendations of the American Council on Education in granting transfer credit for military and other nationally recognized training in subject areas taught by the University (including some GEC credit).

UMPI’s requirements for continuation in, termination from, or readmission to academic programs are clear (pages 30 and 31 of the Course Catalogue and are available on-line). UMPI’s Student Academic Integrity Policy is on page 30 of the catalog and the complete policy and procedures are at the Student Life section of the UMPI web site. Most syllabi include the Student Academic Integrity Policy.

No UMPI programs offered either at the HHEC or via on-line modalities differ in terms of requirements and program goals/objectives from traditional “live” modalities available on the main campus. Currently, approximately 25 percent of all enrollments are generated through on-line and other distance education modalities, provided either through the UMPI campus or the HHEC. Online and off-site course offerings are coordinated by the College Chairs in consultation with faculty.

Instructional designers from the UMS University College are available to provide assistance to UMPI faculty who are developing online courses. Courses are developed and offered under the oversight of UMPI College chairs, who also hire faculty to teach the courses. Online course sections are expected to have the same learning outcomes as on-ground sections. UMPI has implemented procedures for evaluating the design of online courses. An online course evaluation rubric is used to evaluate the presentation and appropriateness of the course structure and accessibility. The standards and sub-standards incorporated in the rubric are clear and appropriate. One course of each instructor teaching online is evaluated every other year. New online courses are evaluated in the curriculum committee approval process.

Matriculated students taking online courses have full-time UMPI faculty and professional advisors. They have access online to career and some tutoring services and have full access to digital library resources. Students at HHEC get assistance from a full-time advisor there and also have access to faculty advisors at UMPI. They have access to in-person tutoring at HHEC and to additional online tutoring. UMPI’s library books are

delivered to HHEC upon request, and they have full access to digital library resources. A HHEC student interviewed during the visit confirmed the ready availability and effectiveness of these resources. Video conferencing is available between HHEC and UMPI. Library instruction is provided for HHEC and online students through UMS University College rather than by UMPI library staff. Offerings of science lab courses at HHEC are limited but can be offered using laboratories at Holton High School and through online labs. Online course syllabi indicate students can interact with faculty.

A single sign-on procedure is used to establish that a student who registers for a course is the same student who participates in the course (or logs into an online course) and submits course work. The VPAA reported that UMS University College instructional designers do work with faculty to incorporate pedagogy into online courses that help to ensure that students who get credit for online courses complete all submitted work.

UMPI complies with University of Maine Transfer Policies and Practices (detailed on pages 2 – 3 and page 29 of the Catalog with information on transfer of credits both within the University of Maine system and from institutions outside the system). UMS maintains a Transfer Credit Evaluation Portal that allows current and prospective students to identify precise course-by-course transferability among the seven campuses as well as program transferability. Transfer of courses to be applied to the major, minor, or concentration is reviewed by faculty in the appropriate department or discipline and approved by College Chairs. The UMPI Course Catalog (page 3) identifies Canadian Universities with which UMPI has articulation agreements. According to the VPAA, there are three existing articulation agreements with community colleges and an additional agreement pending. These are not listed on the web site.

College Chairs, a trustee and the Interim VPAA indicated that while the existing procedures and transfer policies are consistent and ensure academic quality and integrity, they result in some courses transferred across universities within the UM system being counted only as electives. Through the University of Maine Transfer Initiative, UMS is developing a comprehensive transfer policy between each of the System institutions as well as the Community Colleges with the goal of increasing transferability of courses (including General Education credit).

UMPI requires that all four-year degree candidates complete at least 30 credit hours out of the total of 120 through UMPI. At least 12 of these credits must be in the major and at least 9 of the 12 must be at the 300-level or above. Two-year degrees require completion of 15 credits through UMPI. To obtain a degree, UMPI students are expected to demonstrate learning consistent with UMPI's mission.

Assessment of Student Learning:

Assessment. UMPI has made a concerted effort to be more systematic regarding student learning assessment at the individual, cohort, course, GEC, and program-level.

Significant progress has been made with GEC assessment and within some program-level reviews, but not all. Several external program reviews recommend the development of routine assessment for stated learning outcomes within their programs, and systematic and comprehensive assessment of student learning is a key aspirational goal of the proposed strategic plan.

UMPI has adopted a vertical curriculum, beginning with first-year seminar, foundational disciplinary courses, and the GEC, followed by upper-level courses in the disciplines and, in many majors, synthesis of knowledge within capstone courses or field experience. Throughout, students have opportunities to learn from peer and instructor feedback within individual and group assignments.

Measures of Student Success. UMPI uses a variety of direct and indirect measures to understand the experiences and learning outcomes of its students, and includes external perspectives. Direct methods include embedded assessment, the ETS Collegiate Learning Assessment, and some disciplinary assessments of knowledge and skills as part of professional accreditation. Indirect methods include the results of UMS mandated program reviews, and NSSE & BCSSE surveys. These data, while collected, are yet to be systematically analyzed to make data-informed decisions.

Understanding How Students Are Learning. Significant efforts to understand student learning within the GEC have taken place and changes to the curriculum have been made twice since the last accreditation visit. Formative assessment appears to be a priority among the faculty and administrative leadership. Faculty involvement in the development of instruments is high according to the self-study and discussions with faculty during the NEASC visit. Faculty are also interested in assessing optimal delivery and instructional practices that will increase student learning, retention and success.

Moving forward, administrators and faculty report not enough existing professional support on campus and capacity within the faculty and staff workload to fully implement the GEC assessment plan, to develop measurable proficiencies for all majors, and to utilize the results to measure and monitor individual student progress, to engage in formative course-level assessment, and to evaluate the validity and efficacy of curriculum for student learning, retention and post-baccalaureate success.

In response, the administration has been successful in obtaining a Davis Foundation grant (and has provided matching institutional funds) to support 20 faculty fellowships to develop assessment rubrics for essential learning outcomes. In addition, the administration has secured the services of two UMS curricular designers to help with the current GEC implementation. However, additional permanent support in the area of institutional research, teaching innovation, and student learning assessment will be necessary for a full-scale, successful roll-out of their visionary approach to general education. In addition, as the college is in a state of transformation with a move

towards a proficiency-based model of learning for the entire curriculum, a revision of key institutional documents will also be needed.

Institutional Effectiveness: UMPI has developed policies and procedures for thorough assessment of academic programs. The assessment focuses on program quality, integrity, and effectiveness and is guided by clear guidelines, policies and procedures that are aligned with those of the University of Maine System. At the time of the NEASC visit, UMPI had used an assessment procedure to evaluate and revise the General Education Curriculum, had completed assessment of most academic programs, and was in the process of revising programs to incorporate personalized proficiency-based curricula and pedagogy.

5. FACULTY

Faculty at UMPI are employed under two statewide collective bargaining agreements, one for full-time faculty (AFUM) and another for part-time faculty (PATFA). During the 2012-2013 year, there were 52 full-time employees, 16 at the rank of full professor, 12 at the associate rank, 14 at the assistant rank, and 10 at the instructor rank with 48 part-time faculty across the ranks.

Faculty roles and workloads are clearly defined by contractual agreements and are compatible with the mission and purposes of UMPI. The full-time faculty carry 24 contact hours per academic year and have additional contractual obligations, including student advising, service to the department and University, course and curricula development, and professional activities. Part-time faculty typically teach one or two sections per semester. The AFUM and PATFA agreements afford reasonable contractual security and set minimum salary and benefit criteria for adequate and equitable compensation and allow UMPI to attract and maintain a qualified faculty. Faculty contractual workloads and responsibilities are evaluated periodically through the collective bargaining process.

The size and composition of the faculty are appropriate to support the mission of the institution and are periodically reviewed by the administration, informed by individual program reviews. During the 2012-2013 academic year, full-time faculty taught 68% of all sections and were the primary advisors of all matriculated students in all modalities. The institution's academic organization and governance structure reflect the composition of faculty appointments; faculty are spread across three academic units (colleges) led by faculty chairpersons with a direct report to the VPAA, in order to support 26 degree programs.

The number of full-time faculty has been relatively stable for the past six years, and their credentials are appropriate for the areas in which they teach. As evidenced by curricula vitae on file in Academic Affairs and made available to the NEASC visiting team, all full-time faculty members have graduate degrees, and the majority of faculty

members have earned the highest degrees in their fields. Nearly all faculty are engaged in professional activities on an annual basis that supplement their teaching and campus duties. Part-time faculty have a complementary set of professional qualifications and experiences that enhance programs and provide community-campus linkages.

Full-time and part-time faculty receive regular email about important notices. Re-appointment, tenure, promotion, and quadrennial post-tenure review procedures, established by the collective bargaining agreements, ensure that faculty are carrying out their assigned responsibilities. The evaluative criteria of both contracts are consistent with the mission and purposes of UMPI and appropriate to each classification of faculty.

The faculty have a strong, generalized commitment to student learning success, as evidenced by discussions during the open forums and the luncheons with faculty and students. Course syllabi describe a high level of faculty-student engagement (problem-based learning, service-learning, involvement in learning communities, collaborative capstone research and creative activities) and by service to the University as faculty advisors for co-curricular clubs, organizations, and activities as described in faculty CVs. Faculty affirmed a shared sense of purpose during meetings, particularly around the proposed institutional vision statement and a new strategic plan. Faculty participate in policy-making, curricular development, and institutional governance.

UMPI has a transparent and systematic process for recruiting and appointing new faculty that ensures equal employment opportunity consistent with legal requirements and ensures the achievement of diversity among its faculty, including disciplinary expertise and training. All search hires must be approved by the Director of AA/EEO, who provides oversight of federal and system standards, the VPAA, and the President of UMPI and, in the case of full-time faculty, by the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine system. All new hires receive a letter with the nature and term of the initial appointment and, where applicable, contractual considerations that might affect future appointments. In addition, a comprehensive faculty handbook delineates the rights, responsibilities and expectations of faculty and the criteria for their recruitment, appointment, evaluation, promotion, and tenure and a variety of policy matters. The handbook is reviewed annually to reflect changes to policies or changes made within AFUM and PATFA contracts.

The UMPI academic integrity policy is published in the student handbook, the faculty handbook, on many course syllabi, and on the online learning management system. With the administration, the faculty work systematically to ensure an environment supportive of academic integrity.

Teaching and Advising. The formal assessment of teaching effectiveness includes student evaluations, a review of course syllabi and other optional documents such as course assignments and statements of teaching philosophy. Online teaching is evaluated with a campus-designed tool which has face validity and general acceptance

among the faculty. Part-time faculty are evaluated by student evaluations and with class visitations each semester.

Faculty embrace teaching as their primary role and actively participate in course and pedagogical development based on formal and informal feedback from students and their performance (within course assignments and tests) and other products of learning. The University provides workshops led by peer, regional and national experts on timely topics, as part of the *Lunch and Learn* series. Additional support for teaching is provided by two UMS course designers, who work one-on-one with faculty upon request. Both full-time and part-time faculty participate in these opportunities to improve their teaching effectiveness.

UMPI provides full-time faculty with substantial and equitable opportunities for continued professional development that enhance achievement of the institution's mission and purposes. Annually, faculty are invited to apply for professional funds (up to \$1,100 per person in FY2013). Proposals are vetted and approved by the VPAA and stipulate an end-of-academic year report. In addition, UMPI approves (on average) two sabbatical leaves per year for faculty to undertake significant research and creative activities in their fields. Review of curriculum vita show that nearly all full-time faculty have pursued scholarship to keep current in theory, knowledge, skills, and pedagogy of their discipline or profession. Conversations with faculty during the team visit affirm that they have academic freedom in these professional activities and the classroom.

The campus is designed with learning in mind; classrooms are small, thus prohibiting the use of large lecture-style formats. The campus has two computer classrooms for technologically enhanced teaching and a satellite location to support distance education. The faculty and staff at UMPI have embraced many teaching practices shown to be effective in the literature including discussion-based courses, writing intensive courses, learning communities, honors coursework, lab work, group projects, fieldwork, internships, service-learning, problem-based learning, flipped classrooms, and online discussions and coursework. Specific instructional techniques and delivery modalities are tailored to the learning goals of academic programs, objectives of individual courses, and to students' capabilities and learning needs.

Students are provided opportunities to engage in significant scholarly and creative activities that are shared annually, campus-wide on University Day. A review of this year's program reveals that hundreds of students showcase their work in this venue. A new e-portfolio system available to students and faculty on campus allows students to collect their exemplar papers, essays and other artifacts of learning, and the system has potential to facilitate a longitudinal assessment of student learning and development and inform program review.

Students in each program are taught by a variety of full-time and part-time faculty in order to ensure students encounter different methods of instruction and exposure to

different viewpoints. When possible, Chairs endeavor to assign different faculty to sections of the same course and to offer the course in different modalities (online and face-to-face).

UMPI periodically assesses the effectiveness of instruction but not with systematic, adequate and reliable procedures. The campus is piloting the IDEA assessment tool. (IDEA – Individual Development and Educational Assessment – is a nationally-normed student ratings of instruction system created in 1975 at Kansas State University that gives a rating on 12 outcomes.) Faculty input at two forums indicated that a lack of training and low response rates from students renders these evaluations less informative than they might be for teaching evaluation and for personnel actions.

Several programs (e.g., Athletic Training, English, and Psychology) have developed well-defined and measurable student learning outcomes at the course level, the results of which have provided formative feedback about teaching pedagogy effectiveness. Faculty report adequate support is needed to accomplish this task, across all courses and all modalities, in a more comprehensive and systematic manner.

UMPI has in place an effective system of academic advising that is capable of meeting students' needs for information and advice and is compatible with its educational objectives. All full-time faculty are responsible for academic advising, with a typical load of 40-50 students per year. All matriculated students, regardless of location or modality of delivery, are assigned a full-time faculty advisor. Advising is also supported by three professional advisors located within each of the three colleges. Faculty are adequately informed and prepared to discharge their advising functions.

Institutional Effectiveness: UMPI has a qualified, committed and engaged faculty that is sufficient in size and composition to support the mission of the institution. Faculty engage their students in small classes, using a variety of high-impact instructional practices. Academic advising is personal with a focus on timely completion of degree programs and post-baccalaureate success. Professional development enhances teaching. Evaluation procedures for re-appointment, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review reinforce the continuation of practices that lead to student success.

6. Students

The University has a full-time enrollment of 709 students, 76 of whom are in associate degree programs. In addition, UMPI reports a part-time enrollment of 215 (headcount). 71% of students qualify for TRIO services (2008 grant). UMPI has seen a 30% increase in minority students (since 2002), reflecting a growth from 70-90 students. In all, 83% of the student body hails from Maine, with 12% from other countries, and an average age of 23. The team found students to be open, articulate, passionate, and engaging.

Admissions

The University and the Admissions Office have developed a plan that sets goals for the enrollment of students at the University. In 2009 the entire Maine system engaged in the use of the Noel- Levitz *"comprehensive study of markets, strategic pricing, and financial aid to improve access and affordability."* Goals were established with a plan for increasing new student enrollment 3% by the fall of 2015. The self-study reports that in keeping with the data suggested by the Noel-Levitz study, those enrollment projections are not being met. In fact, the study indicates that for the system as a whole, without major modifications, enrollment declines of 5.9 to 14.7% are likely, and similar statistics were cited for market segments other than the first-time new students. The study also cites significant declines in market share lost to the community college system of Maine. The 2013 Enrollment Management Report reasserts some of the data found in the Noel-Levitz study. The report details the positives and negatives surrounding demographics in Aroostook County. The Canadian Government is providing incentives to increase recruiting efforts in Maine and other New England states. Tuition discounting programs have been created to entice more Canadians to enroll at UMPI, but the pressure is working in both directions. To highlight some of these concerns, the University of Maine's spring enrollment report shows a spring '13 to spring'14 headcount enrollment decline of -11.7%, and a -8.7% decline over five years. The self-study shows a projected enrollment change of -13.5% for fall 2013, and a one-year decline for FTE undergraduates of 91 (892 to 801). In spring headcount numbers, the State's report shows a three-year change of 1398, 1,343, and 1,186 for 2012 to 2014 respectively. President Schott projects a flat enrollment, or perhaps better, for fall 2014.

The Common App has been implemented for the first time this application cycle, and a slight increase in applications has been noted. Data-driven decision-making has reportedly been hindered by the lack of an institutional researcher on the campus.

UMPI has some special populations such as local Native Americans; UMPI's work on developing summer-bridge programs, first-year seminars, and heavy use of the ACCUPLACER tests allows the University to offer the supports that are appropriate. In general, the University offers a wide array of support services designed to assist students in being successful. The student support services area is highly regarded by students, and the University seeks to increase the percentage of student availing themselves of these services. Good attention is paid to students who are underrepresented or are deemed at greater risk.

The self-study references the admissions policy as being "clearly stated on the admissions webpage;" however, fairly detailed searching failed to locate that information. Discussion with staff confirms this concern: web redesign moved a great deal of material behind a portal, disrupting links and moving some material to an

inaccessible location for external audiences. While not easily accessible, materials were provided that support that UMPI maintains an orderly and ethical admissions program that meets all equal opportunity guidelines. Ethical principles, policies, record-keeping, and EEO compliance were well-documented and given the consistency provided by the University of Maine system were consistent and transparent.

Retention and Graduation: Despite long-standing retention concerns, the first written retention plan was implemented in fall 2012. Retention plans generally yield some benefits immediately but take time for a true cultural shift to occur. With the demographic trends facing Maine, retention is an absolutely essential goal. The emphasis in key academic and student affairs collaborations is critical to ensure substantial improvements in some of the well-known key retention factors.

The S-Series form reflects an IPEDS graduation rate for bachelor's degree students of 30% for 2013. UMPI has acknowledged in their self-study the desire to improve retention and graduation rates, which are the lowest in the Maine system. This past year UMPI showed an impressive increase in retention of associate degree students (from 25% to 45%). UMPI has positioned itself with some impressive tools to enhance retention such as (1) The development of professional and faculty advising teams that work closely with student affairs and use high-touch strategies. (2) The centralizing of services within the Center for Student Success. (3) An impressive list of efforts, many of which enhance collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. Most of these efforts have recently begun, so the challenge will be to assess their effectiveness over time. All constituencies reported excitement regarding the strategic direction.

Student Services: A review of all the support material and websites associated with the division confirms that the institution's and the division's values are operational. A new draft provided during the visit of the "Principles of Lifelong Learning" is receiving very positive cross-divisional support. As evidenced by a credential review, the student services and student affairs staff are highly trained and remain current and involved with professional development opportunities.

Students had high praise for their effectiveness and ease of use of student services. The office of student activities and Residential Life provide leadership opportunities as well as the more traditional programming outside of the classroom. The campus has over 30 recognized student clubs and organizations, many of which are academic major related. Student life is vibrant, although there are two fairly distinct populations on the campus. The residential students are primarily fairly traditional-aged undergraduates, while the majority of the population is predominantly nontraditional, commuting students. This dichotomy poses some challenges for the traditional orientation program in terms of meeting the needs of these distinctly different populations. The departments

involved in sponsoring orientation are well aware of these conflicting demands and are constantly reassessing the best ways to present their programs.

Within the residential life program (with a maximum capacity of approximately 350 students), students are offered the opportunity to participate in the co-curriculum of the campus and to assume leadership positions. Resident assistants sponsor a minimum of eight educational and social programs each academic year. In addition, special programming is directed toward the freshman students through the Preparation for University Life and Learning Program (PULL). However, the residential life system is suffering from a decline in occupancy:

Semester	Percentage of beds full
Fall 2011	89.2%
Spring 2012	82.4%
Fall 2012	81.3%
Spring 2013	73.7%
Fall 2013	81.7%
Spring	73.1%

(Data supplied by VP Stepp)

Students expressed concern about this decline; the administration is considering ways to increase occupancy. There is some long-range discussion regarding renovation of a residence hall to provide more attractive styles of housing to meet student demands. This declining occupancy results in fewer numbers to share the infrastructure costs. Many students also expressed concern regarding the cost and options of the dining program. Student government leaders might need a venue to voice such concerns.

UMPI makes impressive efforts to understand and assess student needs, using many nationally benchmarked tools. When asked, staff members shared the various ways they use these data to assist their goal setting, planning, and assessment processes. The self-study acknowledges that these data need to be analyzed more systemically, distributed more widely across the campus, and routinely assessed by groups comprised of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. Efforts like these were initiated in 2010 but ceased after one semester, due, in part, to some significant staff transitions. These types of collaborative efforts need to be established in a sustainable manner, not contingent on individual staff members. Some of the enrollment concerns being faced currently by UMPI have been known for some time without a consistent response.

A significant percentage of the student body uses federal financial aid (70%), and UMPI boasts one of the lowest debt burdens (approximately \$21,000) for their graduates as compared to other schools in Maine.

Of the approximately one dozen sports offered, the vast majority of coaches are full-time employees, whom UMPI is considering using for the recruitment of students. An appropriate number of additional intermural and recreational opportunities exist for a campus of this size and mission.

Institutional Effectiveness: The Student Affairs Division and all the support services have data that are used, to some extent, to make decisions. Students are well supported in their academic endeavors, although retention rates are lower than desired. Community members mentioned a significant number of individuals have not completed degrees, often due to financial considerations. All officials of the University demonstrated in-depth knowledge of these issues; strong consensus surrounding the new initiatives encouraged the team to believe that these negative trends will reverse.

7. Library and Other Information Resources

Resources and Access

The library's mission is to promote and support the mission of the institution. Resources and access provided through the library achieve this mission with faculty and students expressing satisfaction with the library's collections, services and staff.

During the spring 2013 semester, a Library Planning Committee was formed to address the emerging needs of the academic library. This committee produced a draft report that includes several recommendations for the reorganization of library services and space. During the 2014 reaccreditation visit, UMPI administrators, faculty, and librarians described a new broader role for the library as a Center for Integrative Learning that will support the anticipated new mission to provide personalized, proficiency-based learning. This broader role is consistent with many of the recommendations in the Library Planning Committee's draft report.

Although the library acquisitions budget has remained flat for several years, increased availability of journals in common databases along with UMPI's participation in the statewide URSUS consortium have enabled the library to continue to support student and faculty needs. Students, faculty and administrators all reported during the team visit that they have access to the print, full-text journals and online databases necessary for their work. The library has 160,000 print volumes, 114,000 e-books, and 32,000 full-text electronic journals, partly accessible through UMPI's participation in a consortium.

UMPI imposes a student technology fee to partially cover the costs of instructional technology. UMPI has a robust network that includes wireless networking capability throughout the campus and wired computers and laptops dedicated to student use in

the library and across campus. Faculty can request additional technology. The technology fee often funds these needs, but grants from the UMS are also available on a competitive basis. Students and faculty who participate in online courses were satisfied.

Four permanent, full-time members of the library staff (who are augmented by student employees during the academic year) serve UMPI. The library director was also the Chief Information Officer, but in the last year that role was shifted to a UMS position. The VPAA noted that as the role of the library changes, retraining library personnel will be necessary to align their job descriptions with operational needs.

The library director integrates faculty input into managing the physical and virtual collections. UMPI faculty and staff are involved in system-wide committees which make decisions on information systems used for distance education. The VPAA sits on the technology governance group (CIO Council). The library director, a faculty member, and help-desk staff from UMPI participate in a system-wide governance group for the learning management system.

UMPI has an active inter-library loan program and catalog sharing with other libraries. All campus patrons can use the on-line, inter-library loan application to request journal articles and books. Permanent library staff members participate in statewide committees, which help to ensure maximum benefit from the consortium. The consortium offers training, for example.

UMPI's reference librarian is also the instructional librarian. Students and faculty generally conveyed satisfaction with the bibliographic instruction provided, although some faculty in science programs said that their needs, and those of their students, are not fully met. The number of sessions of library instruction has decreased significantly from 60 in FY 2011 to 21 in FY 2013 (Standard 7 Data First Form, page 98 in the Self-Study). Total attendance in those seminars decreased from 327 to 245. In-person reference questions decreased from 1346 to 850, while virtual reference questions rose slightly, from 90 to 98. The library director attributes these changes to increased numbers of online courses and fewer sections of the First-Year Seminar. Use of library services has decreased, as have the number of visits. Gate counts fell from 31,192 in FY 2011 to 24,374 in FY 2013. Borrowing through consortia did rise from 1185 to 1385. These changes, in part, have prompted discussions about a new role for the library.

Computer Services are located in the library's bottom floor. UMPI also shares in the use of an instructional designer and an instructional technologist from the UMS University College. With the significant expansion of on-line offerings and programs, UMPI's library staff anticipates a need for increased support from instructional design specialists. All UMPI students have worldwide access to the Learning Management System (Blackboard) and library databases. Student access to the library's online resources has recently been improved via a new student portal.

The library is open 77 hours a week, less than other UM libraries, but it supports 24/7 access to the catalog and on-line resources. Students commented that they would appreciate additional library hours, especially during exam weeks.

Information and Technological Literacy

UMPI's revised General Education Curriculum integrates information literacy modules and includes an essential learning outcome: "students will identify and employ the tools and technologies appropriate for identifying, accessing, evaluating, and using information effectively." Assessment occurs through embedded assignments within individual courses. Four specific learning objectives for Information Literacy are identified in the catalog and on all syllabi of courses designated to address this proficiency. Some upper-level courses in many majors include objectives regarding information literacy. UMPI Library services and IT provide support both for the incorporation of information literacy within course components and training on the use of information technology by faculty and students.

Institutional Effectiveness: UMPI's library staff regularly work with faculty to systematically evaluate the adequacy, utilization and impact of its library, information resources and services, and instructional and information technology. The findings are used to improve and increase effectiveness. Library staff, administrators, and faculty are aware that students and faculty are changing their needs for library and information services and resources and are planning to make appropriate changes. The changes envisioned align with the university's proposed new mission, vision, and strategic plan.

8. Physical and Technological Resources

UMPI is located on 150 acres in rural Presque Isle, Maine. The main campus consists of 23 buildings totaling approximately 417,000 gross square feet with approximately 385,000 square feet assignable. Buildings which support academic activities are equipped with classrooms, learning labs and computer-equipped student lounges. The newest building on campus is Gentile Hall, a recreation facility which supports an academic learning lab, student life and community wellness. All other buildings were constructed in the 1960s or earlier.

UMPI maintains an offsite location, Houlton Higher Education Center, located approximately one hour from the main campus. Facilities and IT support are provided on site when necessary.

Condition of the physical plant is of great concern for UMPI. They have contracted with an external vendor, Sightlines, to assess the deferred maintenance needs on the main campus. The Sightlines ROPA+ report cites a \$32.6 million backlog of deferred maintenance which needs to be addressed. A total of \$5.5 million of \$32.6 million is cited as an immediate need, but funding has not been identified. A new Director of

Facilities Management has been hired to oversee projects and maintenance of the campuses. He is currently working with campus and System leadership to determine the feasibility of a few of the most pressing deferred maintenance projects.

A project of \$1.2 million has been approved by the Board of Trustees to renovate classrooms and laboratory space in Folsom Hall. This project will address only a portion of the \$32.6 million in improvement needs. As noted in discussions with the Director of Facilities, three studies have been launched to determine the feasibility of renovating Wiedon Hall, Normal Hall and a Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) heating plant. Funding sources for all three projects vary from fundraising campaigns for Wiedon Hall to a five-year contract inclusion for the CNG plant.

The campus has a “Green Initiative” mandate which requires reducing the carbon footprint by 80%. Four initiatives have been implemented to begin to address this mandate. Those projects are the installation of a Wind Turbine to produce energy for the campus, heat pumps and pellet boilers and a rooftop arrangement of solar panels.

Included in the deferred maintenance challenges previously noted, UMPI also recognizes that areas are not all ADA compliant. Normal Hall is the building that is most deficient, along with some rest rooms and other small sites located around campus. Correction of the deficiency in Normal Hall is included in the feasibility study. A current Master Plan is not in place. The Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Director of Facilities Management expect to begin a planning process for overall campus facilities soon.

Although dated, classrooms are equipped with technology necessary to support teaching and learning. All buildings are wirelessly enabled for Internet. Recently, after an Administrative Review was performed by members of UMS and the Board of Trustees, it was determined that all Information Technology functions should be centralized in a Shared Services model at the System Office. This centralization is not only a cost savings measure but will also allow campus-based generalists to gain wider support in areas in which they do not hold expertise. In interviews with the staff, faculty and students, the change has been seamless and the level of support of the UMPI community remains unchanged under the new reporting structure.

According to the UMS Chief Information Security Officer, policies and procedures based on International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 27000 series best practices are in place to ensure system reliability and security. A System-wide Information Security Council, which is comprised of a cross-functional membership, meets quarterly to discuss risks and ongoing concerns. All UMS institutions use Peoplesoft as an ERP. The information security office ensures appropriate firewalls are in place to protect data stored within the system, provides vulnerability scanning on 1000+ servers across the System, and delivers annual awareness training on data vulnerability and phishing campaigns. A Standard of Acceptable Use policy is in place, including annual training and validation to spread awareness to guide against inappropriate use of technology.

Compliance with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI/DSS) has been verified with the Trustkeeper compliance checklist. A social media policy has not been developed or included in annual training, but the Office of Information Security has issued guidance to campuses.

Institutional Effectiveness: UMPI leadership has a good sense of the needs of the campus buildings and classrooms. The backlog of deferred maintenance is recognized and planning is underway to address it. Major IT systems are well supported through the UMS office with clear campus voices shaping additional needs. The development of a Master Plan will aid UMPI in the long-term needs of the campus physical plant.

9. Financial Resources

A consolidated financial statement for UMS includes the activity of UMPI and is audited annually by an external auditing firm. UMPI's net assets at the end of FY13 totaled \$26.8 million with \$5.4 million designated as unrestricted expendable which includes auxiliary funds.

UMPI receives approximately \$6.2 million in State of Maine appropriation support. State appropriations are allocated to UMS campuses in two ways. According to the UMS Vice Chancellor, 95% of the appropriation is allocated by a historical formula, and 5% is allocated with an outcomes/performance measure. A sample of items that impact the performance measurement are completion rates, offering of degrees in priority fields in areas such as STEM and Allied Health, priority populations, low-economic status, and adult transfers. The weighting of distribution will change annually for the next five years until the split reaches 70% historical formula / 30% performance based. Campuses will be able to impact their own allocations based on the performance measure. UMPI may see an increase in state appropriation allocation under this new methodology.

Over the past five years, UMPI has experienced a decline in student headcount of 113 or -8.7%, a decline of student FTE of 140 or -14.9%, and a decline in credit-hour enrollment of 2,100 or -14.9%. Being a tuition-driven institution, this trend has had a negative impact on financial resources. The change to a proficiency-based curriculum is expected to differentiate UMPI and attract new interest in prospective students.

UMPI is projected to experience a structural deficit for not only FY13 (\$550K actual) but also in FY14 (\$1.0M projected) and FY15 (\$1.0M budgeted). These deficits are expected to be covered by current unrestricted net asset reserve balances and offset by any additional revenues collected. Recruitment efforts to increase enrollments are underway. Preliminary indications are that fall 2014 enrollments will be slightly stronger than projected flat enrollments. A budget reallocation method is being used to fund additional expenses needed to support the new proficiency-based learning model, holding total expenses flat for both FY14 and FY15. The Vice Chancellor noted that the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees will continue to monitor the decline at UMPI and will assist with bridge funding, if necessary.

UMPI recruited a new Vice President for Administration and Finance in the fall of 2013. The community has welcomed his transparency regarding the financial status of the institution and is looking forward to a more open and collaborative budgeting process.

The VP has also developed a plan to co-locate the student financial services offices bringing together the financial aid and bursar's office onto the same floor under the oversight of a single director. The Student Records office will also be located in close proximity. This new model is expected to bring cohesiveness to the financial process for students along with creating a more robust office staff.

A plan has been developed between UMPI and the University of Maine, Machias for a pilot to share the position of Vice President of Administration and Finance. Many of the details of this arrangement have not been solidified between the two campuses, but it is expected to be monitored closely to identify if the arrangement is effective and may be replicated between other smaller UMS institutions.

As part of the System, UMPI's fiscal transactional processing and financial statement management is performed and consolidated by the central office. The UMS Vice Chancellor oversees finance and accounting staff that provide support for financial statement presentment, budgeting and financial analysis, cash management, and sponsored-program accounting. The Vice Chancellor's staff maintains fiscal policies for all institutions within the UMS. UMPI's senior leadership noted that overall institutional specific policies are in need of review and will be revised in the near future.

Although data were freely provided when requested, accuracy and consistency of data was not prevalent. Enrollment data posted on the website were not current. Fiscal data used in the self-study data forms were not accurately presented and did not tie. Updated forms were requested and promptly received.

Multi-year planning is prevalent at both the UMPI campus and at the UMS central office. Realistic assumptions and parameters have been used to model multiple scenarios. In all models, UMPI's annual financial results are deficit for early years. It is not until FY18 & FY19 and with more aggressive assumptions and parameters (4%-5% increases in tuition and state appropriations) that UMPI will begin to show a surplus. Across all years, expenses have been held to a 0%-1% increase. With some of these scenarios, reserves could be fully depleted as early as FY19.

UMPI seeks revenue diversification to bring much needed additional financial support to campus. According to a conversation with the Vice President for Administration and Finance, negotiations are underway with external partners to allow community members to use wellness facilities for a fee. Other types of revenue enhancements are also being explored such as corporate sponsorships.

Financial Aid is administered according to institutional, state and federal guidelines. Recent external audits resulted in no adverse findings. Although financial literacy

programs, such as SALT, are used, the default rate on student loans continues to rise with the current three-year measure exceeding 18%. According to the Director of Financial Aid, a significant number of students who are defaulting on their loans are also the students who stopped out of their programs.

UMPI's Office of Alumni and Development ensures alumni remain involved with the institution. According to the Director of Development and Alumni Relations, gifts, pledges and bequests are accepted in accordance with UMS APLs and with President and Executive Leadership approval.

UMPI also has an affiliated Foundation whose primary purpose is to raise funds for scholarships. The Foundation is separately accounted for outside of the UMS and invested outside of the UMS endowment pool. The endowment market value at the end of FY13 was approximately \$3.8 million and paid out \$104,000 for current use that same year. According to the Chair of the Foundation Board, fund raising has been stalled but is expected to be rejuvenated with the launch of the new Strategic Plan.

Institutional Effectiveness: Financial planning has not been a focus for UMPI but promises to be linked with the mission and provide realistic projections for the future. The institution is financially stable at the moment but does not have sufficient reserves to support a continued decline into the future.

10. *Public Disclosure*

A functional four-person team oversees the website and school's publications, each of which provides accessible, critical information. Ownership of the different publications is dispersed throughout the University. The major publications are updated annually with the exception that the faculty handbook was updated every two years. UMPI's Conduct code is updated on a three-year cycle. The Course Catalog includes course descriptions and curriculum for the academic programs along with refund policies on how to withdraw from courses or the institution. Learning Outcomes were easily located as part of course syllabi. The faculty handbook identified full-time and part-time faculty with professional credentials.

The total cost of education and the most recent audited financial statement are accessible through the website, as are the size and characteristics of the student body and graduation rates. A statement is located in the Course Catalog regarding accreditation status with NEASC as well as public notice required of an accreditation review.

Discussion with staff, however, confirms a concern: a web redesign moved a great deal of material behind a portal, disrupting links and moving some material to an inaccessible location for external audiences. In addition, not all documents are being monitored for currency and accuracy. E.g., a 2012 draft of the University Senate Constitution with strike-throughs still appears on the web site even though the chair of the University Senate indicated the constitution had been ratified.

Other information that needs to be made available includes alumni success rates in terms of placement and licensure exam passing rates. Also, as noted in Standard 4, meetings with student representatives indicated that, due to declining enrollment and reduction in teaching staff, courses necessary for graduation are not always available in a timely fashion and University publications do not currently indicate which course offerings may be limited, offered on an alternate-year basis, or strictly online.

Institutional Effectiveness: Public Disclosure requires monitoring to ensure complete and accurate information is available. In particular, employment data along with complete disclosure as to how a student can make satisfactory progress towards degree completion, given trends in the reduction in course offerings, need to be addressed.

11. *Integrity*

The legal framework under which the University operates is well defined and established through the Maine University System and the State Legislature.

All admission criteria and processes, financial disclosures, refund and fee schedules, and financial aid information are clearly articulated in the academic catalog and on the University website. Extensive detail is provided on scholarship opportunities, many of which exist for an institution of UMPI's size.

Opportunities for academic and disability support are articulated, as are the institution's anti-discrimination policies. Appropriate policies exist regarding a wide range of issues and behaviors including such things as academic integrity, academic freedom, sexual harassment and nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as appropriate use of electronic media.

University System and UMPI offices have established policies and practices for employment to comply with federal laws and have appropriate offices designated to ensure compliance throughout all employment practices. The EEO officer reviews and orients search committees and then approves candidate selections prior to interviews.

A strong, visible sense of support for diversity of all kinds exists as well as a close-knit community that guards these privileges and rights carefully. A commitment to collaboration and transparency has expanded under the new administration.

Although not easily accessible, materials on the website showed that UMPI maintains an orderly and ethical admissions program that meets equal opportunity guidelines. Principles, policies, record-keeping, and EEO compliance were well-documented.

The visiting team found the entire university to be forthright and open not only in their self-study but in their communications and dialogue during the visit. Any errors or oversights were attributed more to staffs' time pressures than any intentionality.

Institutional effectiveness: The institution in all its dealings promotes high ethical standards and works to exemplify its stated values.

Institutional Effectiveness Summary

UMPI has periodically reviewed its mission and purposes, and the current board-approved mission statement accurately defines the institution, appears in relevant publications, and has basically guided the institution with some results demonstrated in the self-study. However, the mission statement has not been closely linked to vision, transparent budgeting and strategic planning with prioritized goals; also, individual units have not aligned their missions with the institutional mission. In contrast, recent initial planning has been broad-based, and unlike previous strategic planning efforts, the team believes will lead to an institution-wide pattern of assessment and evaluation used to inform continuous improvements.

UMPI has a qualified, committed and engaged faculty that is sufficient in size and composition to support the mission of the institution, provide effective teaching and academic advisement, support academic integrity, and work with others in improvement efforts. However, the faculty report that resources are needed to continue assessment work.

Financial and other resources such as IT are sufficient to support the mission but may be jeopardized by a continued decline in enrollment. Financial planning to date has not been a focus for UMPI but promises to be linked with the mission and provide realistic future projections regarding needs such as deferred maintenance.

The institution is poised, across the standards, to demonstrate improved effectiveness. These promised improvements are rooted in the proposed mission, vision, values, and planning/assessment processes.

Affirmation of Compliance

To document UMPI's compliance with Federal regulations related to Title IV, the team reviewed the Affirmation of Compliance form signed by President Schott. UMPI publicly discloses its transfer policy in the printed and online catalogue; however, the list of U.S. institutions with which UMPI has articulation agreements was not accessible to the team in the catalogue or on the website. Public notification of the evaluation visit, and of the opportunity for public comment, appeared in campus offices and in local newspapers in March as well as in an article on the college website. Grievance procedures are readily available in the course catalogue, and the searchable website offers 26 relevant documents. Student identities are checked via ID numbers to ensure

the integrity of online programs. The team's discussion of credit-hour policy can be found in Chapter Four under **Integrity of the Award of Academic Credit**.

Summary

UMPI is re-inventing itself under a new president. The campus has energetically embraced her vision regarding personalized instruction and is moving rapidly to align all aspects of the university with that vision. The team was heartened to hear about new plans for collection of data that will be assessed and used to inform planning and decision making in student learning and other institution-wide matters, such as facilities planning to deal with extensive deferred maintenance. Similarly, the proposed new mission, vision, and strategic planning process promise to guide the institution toward longer term fiscal stability and increased enrollment and retention. As one employee said, "What we were doing was not working. We need to change." UMPI may be strengthened but also challenged by a number of retirements and resignations from key administrative positions. Newcomers can be selected for their ability to move the institution forward under the new plans. On the other hand, institutional history and continuity also have value. UMPI has been successful in attracting support locally and at the system level as well as through grants, but scarce resources remain a concern as UMPI undertakes campus-wide efforts to ensure incoming students enter an institution that is as personalized as they expect. The institution needs time to demonstrate successful outcomes as a result of the bold, innovative new niche it is carving. The team offers the following summary of the most important strengths and concerns:

Strengths

- UMPI is being responsive to changing economic times, a downward demographic shift, and the needs of external constituents by reinventing itself with revised mission, vision and value statements.
- The campus community and its supporters (e.g., alums, community leaders, and board members) demonstrate a strong and tireless dedication to UMPI and look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm.
- UMPI serves the cultural, athletic, economic, educational and professional needs of Aroostook County in particular, but the institution is also casting a wider net in the Northeast and as far away as China.
- UMPI has attracted support from external funders for initiatives.

Concerns

- The institution is not in immediate fiscal danger. UMPI has the comfort of a modest financial cushion as well as support from the system, if needed, and a projected slight increase in enrollment. However, long-term fiscal stability and stable enrollment are linked concerns because enrollment projections have not been met for the past three years and deferred maintenance is significant.
- UMPI is planning, but does not yet have, a fully developed and approved strategic plan with the resources to support it.
- Campus-wide planning is not yet driven by assessment to ensure continuous improvement.
- The campus has become increasingly attractive over the past two years, but deferred maintenance, not all of which is visible, calls for a master plan and resources in order to take corrective action.
- Resources are needed for campus-wide faculty development and curriculum design as well as for professional development of staff in order for the entire campus to be prepared to offer a personalized experience to students in fulfillment of the new vision of UMPI.