**USM NEASC 5-Year Interim Report**

**Information Session**

What’s included on the Interim Report?

* **Each of the components identified on the 2011 reaccreditation report**
	+ Developing the capacity to regularly collect and analyze data to inform decision making and planning;
	+ Engaging faculty and staff in the design and implementation of a comprehensive and systematic approach to program review AND assessment of student learning across all academic programs and using the results for improvement;
	+ Assessing the full time/part time composition of the faculty and developing systems to support and evaluate part time faculty and graduate teaching assistants to enhance the quality of instruction provided;
	+ Establishing achievable enrollment goals and enrolling students who demonstrate potential for success with evidence of improved first-to-second year retention rates;
	+ Developing policies to guide the design and delivery of online courses and an approach to evaluating their effectiveness to assure comparable quality with traditional forms of instruction.
* **Additionally, the 5-Year Interim Report requires:**
	+ Brief responses to the 11 NEASC standards;
	+ A 15-20 page reflective essay on assessment, retention, and student success;
	+ Institutional plans for the next five years leading to the 2021 reaccreditation cycle;
	+ Data first forms related to the 11 standards;
	+ Specific data forms documenting assessment and also documenting student success.

The 5-Year Interim Report will be taken up by NEASC in Spring 2016. The completed 50+ page report is due January 15, 2016.

Resources:

* [www.neasc.org](http://www.neasc.org)
* http://usm.maine.edu/accreditation

**From the 2011 Accreditation Report:**

**Developing the capacity to regularly collect and analyze data to inform decision making and planning**

* 2.2 – Institutional research is sufficient to support planning and evaluation. The institution systematically collects and uses data necessary to support its planning efforts and to enhance institutional effectiveness.
* 2.5 – The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the achievement of its mission and purposes, giving primary focus to the realization of its educational objectives. Its system of evaluation is designed to provide relevant and trustworthy information to support institutional improvements, with an emphasis on the academic program. The institution’s evaluation efforts are effective for addressing its unique circumstances. These efforts use both quantitative and qualitative methods.

**Engaging faculty and staff in the design and implementation of a comprehensive and systematic approach to program review AND assessment of student learning across all academic programs and using the results for improvement**

* 2.6 – The institution has a system of periodic review of academic and other programs that includes the use of external perspectives.
* 4.9 – The institution develops, approves, administers, and on a regular cycle reviews its degree programs under effective institutional policies that are implemented by designated bodies with established channels of communication and control. Faculty have a substantive voice in these matters.
* 4.48 – The institution implements and provides support for systematic and broad-based assessment of what and how students are learning through their academic program and experiences outside the classroom. Assessment is based on clear statements of what students are expected to gain, achieve, demonstrate, or know by the time they complete their academic program. Assessment provides useful information that helps the institution to improve the experiences provided for students, as well as to assure that the level of student achievement is appropriate for the degree awarded.
* 4.49 – The institution’s approach to understanding student learning focuses on the course, program, and institutional level. Evidence is considered at the appropriate level of focus, with the results being a demonstrable factor in improving the learning opportunities and results for students.
* 4.51 – The institution’s approach to understanding what and how students are learning and using the results for improvement has the support of the institution’s academic and institutional leadership and the systematic involvement of faculty.
* 5.12 – Faculty accept the responsibility for ensuring . . . that considerations of program improvement are informed by a shared understanding of what and how students are learning in the program.

**Assessing the full time/part time composition of the faculty and developing systems to support and evaluate part time faculty and graduate teaching assistants to enhance the quality of instruction provided**

* 5.5 – Where graduate teaching assistants are employed, the institution carefully selects, trains, supervises, and evaluates them.
* 5.8 – The full-time/part-time composition of the faculty reflects the institution’s mission, programs, and student body and is periodically reviewed. The institution avoids undue dependence on part-time faculty, adjuncts, temporary appointments, and graduate assistants to conduct instruction. Institutions that employ part-time, adjunct, clinical, or temporary faculty assure their appropriate integration into the department and institution and provide opportunities for faculty development.
* 5.11 – Faculty are demonstrably effective in carrying out their assigned responsibilities. The institution employs effective procedures for the regular evaluation of faculty appointments, performance, and retention. The evaluative criteria reflect the mission and purpose of the institution and the importance it attaches to the various responsibilities of faculty, e.g., teaching, assessment, scholarship, creative activities, research, and professional and community service. The institution has equitable and broad-based procedures for such evaluation applying to both full- and part-time faculty, in which its expectations are stated clearly and weighted appropriately for use in the evaluative process.

**Establishing achievable enrollment goals and enrolling students who demonstrate potential for success with evidence of improved first-to-second year retention rates**

* 6.5 – The institution demonstrates its ability to admit students who can be successful in the institution’s academic program, including specifically recruited populations. It ensures a systematic approach to providing accessible and effective programs and services designed to provide opportunities for enrolled students to be successful in achieving their academic goals. The institution provides students with information and guidance regarding opportunities and experiences that may help ensure their academic success.
* 6.8 – The institution’s goals for retention and graduation reflect institutional purposes, and the results are used to inform recruitment and the review of programs and services.
* 6.9 – Data on retention, graduation, and other measures of student success are regularly reviewed within the institution, with the results being used for planning, resource allocation, and improvement.

**Developing policies to guide the design and delivery of online courses and an approach to evaluating their effectiveness to assure comparable quality with traditional forms of instruction**

* 4.39 – The institution offering programs and courses . . . via distance or correspondence learning demonstrates that students completing these programs or courses acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies equivalent to those achieved in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods and modalities. Programs and courses are designed to ensure an opportunity for reflection and for analysis of the subject matter and the identification, analysis and evaluation of information resources beyond those provided directly for the course.
* 4.40 – Courses and programs offered for credit . . . through distance or correspondence education . . . are consistent with the educational objectives of the institution. Such activities are integral parts of the institution and maintain the same academic standards as courses and programs offered on campus. They receive sufficient support for instructional and other needs.

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| **Standard** | **Institutional Effectiveness** |
| 1.MISSION AND PURPOSES | The institution’s mission and purposes are appropriate to higher education, consistent with its charter or other operating authority, and implemented in a manner that complies with the Standards of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.   The institution’s mission gives direction to its activities and provides a basis for the assessment and enhancement of the institution’s effectiveness. | The institution periodically re-evaluates the content and pertinence of its mission and purposes, assessing their usefulness in providing overall direction in planning and resource allocation.  The results of this evaluation are used to enhance institutional effectiveness.  |
| 2.PLANNING AND EVALUATION | The institution undertakes planning and evaluation to accomplish and improve the achievement of its mission and purposes. It identifies its planning and evaluation priorities and pursues them effectively. | The institution determines the effectiveness of its planning and evaluation activities on an ongoing basis. Results of these activities are used to further enhance the institution's implementation of its purposes and objectives. |
| 3. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE | The institution has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission and purposes and supports institutional effectiveness and integrity. Through its organizational design and governance structure, the institution creates and sustains an environment that encourages teaching, learning, service, scholarship, and where appropriate research and creative activity. It assures provision of support adequate for the appropriate functioning of each organizational component.  The institution has sufficient independence from any sponsoring entity to be held accountable for meeting the Commission's Standards for Accreditation. | The effectiveness of the institution’s organizational structure and system of governance is improved through periodic and systematic review. |
| 4.THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM | The institution’s academic programs are consistent with and serve to fulfill its mission and purposes. The institution works systematically and effectively to plan, provide, oversee, evaluate, improve, and assure the academic quality and integrity of its academic programs and the credits and degrees awarded. The institution sets a standard of student achievement appropriate to the degree awarded and develops the systematic means to understand how and what students are learning and to use the evidence obtained to improve the academic program. | The institution’s principal evaluation focus is the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of its academic programs. Evaluation endeavors and systematic assessment are demonstrably effective in the improvement of academic offerings and student learning. |
| 5.FACULTY | The institution develops a faculty that is suited to the fulfillment of the institution’s mission. Faculty qualifications, numbers, and performance are sufficient to accomplish the institution's mission and purposes. Faculty competently offer the institution's academic programs and fulfill those tasks appropriately assigned them. | The institution periodically evaluates the sufficiency of and support for the faculty and the effectiveness of the faculty in teaching and advising, scholarship, service, and as appropriate to institutional mission, research and creative activity. The results of these evaluations are used to enhance fulfillment of the institution’s mission. |
| 6.STUDENTS | Consistent with its mission, the institution defines the characteristics of the students it seeks to serve and provides an environment that fosters the intellectual and personal development of its students. It recruits, admits, enrolls, and endeavors to ensure the success of its students, offering the resources and services that provide them the opportunity to achieve the goals of their program as specified in institutional publications. The institution’s interactions with students and prospective students are characterized by integrity.  | Through a program of regular and systematic evaluation, the institution assesses its effectiveness in admitting and retaining students and the appropriateness and effectiveness of its student services to advance institutional purposes. Information obtained through this evaluation is used to revise these goals and services and improve their achievement. |
| 7.LIBRARY AND OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES | The institution provides sufficient and appropriate library and information resources.  The institution provides adequate access to these resources and demonstrates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.  The institution provides instructional and information technology sufficient to support its teaching and learning environment. | The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the adequacy, utilization, and impact of its library, information resources and services, and instructional and information technology and uses the findings to improve and increase the effectiveness of these services. |
| 8.PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES  | The institution has sufficient and appropriate physical and technological resources necessary for the achievement of its purposes. It manages and maintains these resources in a manner to sustain and enhance the realization of institutional purposes. | The institution’s ongoing evaluation of its physical and technological resources in light of its mission, current needs and plans for the future is a basis of realistic planning and budget allocation. |
| 9.FINANCIAL RESOURCES | The institution's financial resources are sufficient to sustain the quality of its educational program and to support institutional improvement now and in the foreseeable future.  The institution demonstrates, through verifiable internal and external evidence, its financial capacity to graduate its entering class.  The institution administers its financial resources with integrity. | The institution has in place appropriate internal and external mechanisms to evaluate its fiscal condition and financial management and to maintain its integrity.  The institution uses the results of these activities for improvement. |
| 10.PUBLIC DISCLOSURE | In presenting itself to students, prospective students, and other members of the interested public, the institution provides information that is complete, accurate, timely, accessible, clear and sufficient for intended audiences to make informed decisions about the institution. | Through a systematic process of periodic review, the institution ensures that its print and electronic publications are complete, accurate, available, and current. The results of the review are used for improvement. |
| 11.INTEGRITY | The institution subscribes to and advocates high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in all of its dealings with students, prospective students, faculty, staff, its governing board, external agencies and organizations, and the general public.  Through its policies and practices, the institution endeavors to exemplify the values it articulates in its mission and related statements. | The pursuit of institutional integrity is strengthened through the application of findings from periodic and episodic assessments of the policies and conditions that support the achievement of these aims among members of the institutional community. |