



Student Opportunities

MODULE 8

Promoting
Advising for
Student
Success
PORTal



At USM we strive to provide excellent opportunities for students to get connected, become involved, and prepare for life beyond the university.

8. STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

One important part of being a good advisor is being a great connector.

Being able to recognize when students can take advantage of opportunities – and inspiring them to do so - will open up a whole new set of doors for them. The University of Southern Maine has several avenues through which you can connect students at all stages of their academic careers. Several of them are explained here.

Immediately upon arriving to the university, students can take advantage of and participate in any of the myriad student groups. Encourage your students to get involved as early as possible. The sooner someone makes connections, the more likely he or she will persist and graduate from USM.

Once students get a little farther along in their academic career they can begin to look at other opportunities for involvement. Some require that students have a minimum cumulative GPA and/or a minimum number of credits in order to participate. Please see the individual program or department for specific criteria.



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International Programs

Study opportunities are available at over 200 universities throughout the world.

Students interested in applying for an international student exchange must meet the following criteria:

- **Must be highly motivated successful students.**
- **Have a minimum grade point average of 2.5, however, a 3.0 is required for many programs.**
- **Have completed a minimum of 24 USM degree credits prior to their departure.**
- **Do not need to be fluent in another language to study away.**
- **Students can study for 3 weeks during the summer, one semester or for the entire year.**

Credits earned through International Exchange will be listed on a USM transcript as "transfer credits" and although the grades will be listed, these credits will not be factored into the student's cumulative GPA.

Deadlines:

It is advisable for students to plan a year ahead for any exchange program.

Contact the International Office FMI
207/ 780-4959 or international@usm.maine.edu

Website:
<http://www.usm.maine.edu/international>

International Programs

[The Office of International Programs](#) promotes international education and understanding on campus in a variety of ways. In addition to coordinating support services for international and study away students, faculty exchange participants, and international visitors, the office serves as a resource to the University and as liaison to the broader community. The experienced and knowledgeable staff members routinely seek opportunities to encourage international affiliations and experiences for USM students, faculty, and staff.

Student Involvement

There are a variety of ways students can become involved in the USM community. Getting involved on and off campus is an excellent opportunity for students develop and improve their personal and professional skills as well as become connected.

- [Community Service Learning](#)
- [Community Service Volunteer Opportunities](#)
- [Student Groups](#)
- [Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program \(UROP\)](#)

Academic Peer Advising

[Academic Peer Advising](#) at the University of Southern Maine is a nationally recognized program. Academic Peer Advisors are advanced students who work closely with faculty and professional mentors in developing connections and opportunities for students. In addition to working with their mentors, Academic Peer Advisors participate in an intensive training program and take a course.

Career Development at USM

At USM we offer career services in an integrative format across the university. A centralized virtual website is designed to help navigate students through your career development and the faculty and staff who are available to help in this process. The [career decision-making wheel](#) can help guide the process and the links on the right to access the various services and departments available on each "spoke." The career development process, like the wheel, is not linear, and so revisiting one or more "spokes" is very common as students learn about themselves, and explore career and occupational prospects available.

[Student Success Center](#) Advisors have completed Career Development training programs in Global Career Development Facilitator, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and Strong Interest Inventory, which are beneficial to students interested in exploring various career paths.



Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

If students would like to explore the possibility of earning credit for college-level learning competencies gained outside the traditional classroom they should contact the Office for Prior Learning Assessment. Services are available to the general public as well as to USM students.

[USM's Prior Learning Assessment](#) program is an academic function. As such, PLA invites the approval and involvement of the faculty in all credit decisions, and is consistent with USM's mission to "provide a wide range of programs responsive to students diverse in age, background, and experience, many of whom are part-time employed and/or commuter students." Credits are issued in compatibility with the University of Maine System, which grants credit for a minimum of C level work.

PLA may be able to reward learning with one or more of the testing options, credential reviews, military evaluations, and/or portfolio development options.

Internships, Cooperative Education, and Career Placement

The [Office of Internships and Career Placement \(OICP\)](#) works with Faculty and Employers to connect students to internships, jobs, and experiential education. OICP provides career skill building programming and resources.

Internships and co-ops are self-directed learning experiences based on the requirements of specific jobs that will allow each student to transfer academic knowledge and skills into competencies required for successful careers. Each student is expected to take control of the learning experience and manage the learning process. The self-directed experience develops critical management abilities such as decision-making, time management, and scheduling, in addition to developing technical job related competencies.

OICP can help with the following:

- Find or prepare for an internship
- Develop professional skills like interviewing and networking
- Connect to on campus recruitment while in school
- Prepare for employment or graduate school after graduation

The Department of Technology offers opportunities for both [cooperative education and internship experiences](#).

