UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
Stakeholder Input Brief

April 20, 2007

STAKEHOLDER EMAIL TOTALS:

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MULTI-CAMPUS SYSTEM FEEDBACK

1. Students who view multiple campuses as a weakness outnumber students who view it as a strength at a rate of at least 2:1, in direct comments. More likely the actual number is closer to 3:1 or more. This is due to the fact that, since the question about dual campuses was not directly asked of stakeholders, it was alluded to in a number of ways that are not included in the above calculation, including responses regarding the lack of student community, lack of class availability/scheduling, a mixed bag of facilities, confusion about extra- or co-curricular activities available, etc.

2. Administrators who view multiple campuses as a weakness outnumber those who view it as a strength by 7:2.

3. Board even.

4. Faculty who view multiple campuses as a weakness outnumber those who view it as a strength by 5:1.

5. Staff who view multiple campuses as a weakness outnumber those who view it as a strength by 5:1.
STRENGTHS
The top responses in defining USM’s strengths were:

1. **Campus location (22.5%)**: Many stakeholders praised the state of Maine, and specifically Portland, in what was a huge strength for the University. This was the top strength among each stakeholder group.

2. **Academic breadth (14.2%)**: Stakeholders indicated that availability of numerous majors, combined with flexible scheduling, was a top strength of the University.

3. **Cost to attend (12.0%)**: USM was viewed as providing a quality education and a reasonable price, as stakeholders noted the University was affordable.

Other top responses to define strengths:
- Knowledgeable faculty (8.3%)
- Dedicated and caring faculty (8.2%)
- Quality education (7.0%)
- Academic quality (6.8%)
- Diverse community (3.9%)
- Close and friendly community (3.1%)
- Campus size (3.0%)

WEAKNESSES
The top responses in defining USM’s weaknesses were:

1. **Campus facilities (15.7%)**: Ranked as the top weakness for administration and students, and ranked the second weakness for alumni and staff.

2. **Campus location (14.1%)**: The overwhelming majority of responses in this category were in regards to the multiple-campus system USM is composed of. More details surrounding the multiple campus system of USM can be found at the end of this document.

3. **Reputation (11.4%)**: Stakeholders felt the institution’s reputation was weak. Many students noted a lack of any particular specialty than stood out about USM.

Other top responses to define weaknesses:
- Academic breadth (7.5%)
- Leadership, administration, and staff (6.6%)
Close and friendly community (6.1%)  
Quality students (5.0%)  
Cost to attend (4.5%)  
Institution's mission, vision, and/or strategy (3.4%)  
Academic quality (3.2%)

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES
The top responses in defining USM’s competitive advantages were:

1. **Campus location (31.5%)**: The number one competitive advantage among all stakeholder groups, USM’s location was praised. It should be noted that the majority of these responses were not in regards to multiple campuses, but the southern Maine region.

2. **Institution mission, vision, and/or strategy (13.4%)**: Ranking first among administration, respondents saw the institution’s mission as a competitive advantage.†

3. **Cost to attend (7.5%)**: Not surprisingly, as cost was noted a prominent strength, it was also a strong competitive advantage. This was the second-ranked competitive advantage for students.

Other top responses for the brand’s competitive advantage:

- Academic quality (6.2%)
- Career preparation (5.9%)
- Friendly community (5.4%)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
The top responses in defining USM’s guiding principles were:

1. **Campus location (21.4%)**
2. **Institution's mission, vision, and strategy (20.8%)**
3. **Academic quality (17.3%)**

Other top responses for the core brand guiding principle:

- Career Preparation (9.4%)
- Close and friendly community (7.3%)
- Cost to attend (6.6%)
- Institution reputation (3.8%)