

Sharoo Wengland - USM's New President's Council

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Subject: USM's New President's Council

Dear Colleagues:

USM needs and deserves the best management team we can put together in this time of transformation in higher education, deep deficits and declining enrollments. We cannot afford business as usual. We need new thinking, relevant experience, high performance reputations, and rigorous intellect. We need people that can work together as a team and collaborate and consult openly both within the university and in the broader community.

The new [President's Council](#) is comprised of highly talented and competent professionals who are committed to the hard work of transforming USM to ensure its future for the people of Maine. I am confident this team will adhere to the construct of servant leadership and will work fairly, transparently, and collaboratively, always with the University's best interests in mind.

1) Provost

In the choice of a provost, the following criteria were paramount:

- A. A provost with extensive administrative experience who knows USM intimately and who could hit the ground running immediately in light of the urgency of our need for restructuring.
- B. A provost with a doctorate and teaching experience as recommended by the Faculty Senate.
- C. A provost who understands the magnitude of our challenges and has already proven that he or she can think imaginatively and constructively about new ways to deliver courses interdisciplinary with greater efficiency.
- D. A provost who can collaborate with the whole management team in developing global solutions to challenges like recruitment, retention, technology, and career services.

With those criteria in mind, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Joseph W. McDonnell as USM's next Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. McDonnell has extensive academic administrative experience having served as a Dean at USM and earlier at Stony Brook University for more than six years in total, as well as years of direct classroom teaching experience. During his tenure at USM, Dr. McDonnell has effectively reached out to wider community, which positions him well to lead USM's efforts to become a "metropolitan university."

Not a criterion, but helpful, was that Dr. McDonnell had worked closely with me as Chair of the Muskie External Review Committee, where I was impressed by the quality and intellectual honesty of his thinking. We worked well together.

Also not a criterion, but a material consideration, is that Dr. McDonnell will continue to lead the College of Management and Human Service while serving as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, until a future reorganization can be accomplished to redistribute the responsibilities of the other deans, resulting in salary savings that will be applied to our overall budget deficit.

Dr. McDonnell has led a diverse college including undergraduate programs, graduate programs and the largest funded research programs at the university. He has an entrepreneurial approach as evidenced by the creation of the interdisciplinary Tourism and Hospitality major and the PhD collaboration between the Muskie School and the School of Education and Human Development. He has focused on enrollment growth, including creating articulation agreements between USM's academic programs and Southern Maine Community College.

As a result of Dr. McDonnell's efforts and his considerable experience in China, USM was awarded a Confucius Institute last year. Dr. McDonnell has demonstrated thought leadership by writing more than 20 articles on a wide range of topics in the Portland Press Herald and the Bangor Daily News, including advocating for greater integration of the liberal arts and other parts of the university.

It is also important to note that while having a long working relationship with Dr. McDonnell, I appreciated the several nominations made by the Faculty Senate. Six individuals were proposed, all with various combinations of administrative and academic experience.

I interviewed them all, read materials they submitted, and reviewed their CVs. I was impressed by these nominees, and learned a great deal from each of our discussions. They were all worthy candidates and I will continue to value their help and counsel during the coming year.

The official description of the Provost's duties includes leadership in strategic planning, developing budgets for the academic departments, constituting 53% of the total USM budget, as well as development of all academic activities, promoting excellence, faculty development and support services.

I believe Dr. McDonnell has the skill and experience to carry out this challenging array of duties, including those of paramount importance in a time of financial crisis.

In addition to these traditional responsibilities, I am also asking Dr. McDonnell to take on management of critical Student Affairs functions to better integrate the complete student experience with academics. This integration will be a focus of our reform efforts in the coming year. I've asked Susan Campbell to immediately take on a special assignment focusing on the key area of Enrollment Management as a direct report to the Provost.

This is a tremendous work load, and encompasses a number of strategic functions, but I am confident Joe McDonnell has the energy, intelligence, and integrity to effectively deal with them all.

2) Martha Freeman will add to her duties as Chief Human Resource Officer by assuming the role of Chief of Staff.

We must pursue an ambitious agenda to move this institution forward in the coming year. To accomplish this work will require an operations plan, a budget process, administrative reform, and academic restructuring. In other words, there are many moving parts.

I have asked Martha to serve as a coordinator of these various activities and provide the oversight necessary to make sure we keep on track with our diverse initiatives. I am also asking her to work closely with the Faculty Senate to make sure we are collaborating fully in accordance with both the letter, and spirit, of the governance agreements.

Martha is a graduate of the University of Maine, School of Law and the USM Master's Program in Clinical Counseling. Before joining USM Human Resources she directed the nonpartisan policy

committee staff of the Maine Legislature, headed the Maine State Planning Office, conducted a counseling and legal and policy consulting practice, and edited a book of Rachel Carson's letters published by Beacon Press.

Her clear thinking and extensive experience will serve us well.

3) Tom Dunne is moving into a newly created position we are calling Executive Director of Initiatives. This is a temporary, yearlong appointment created to deal with the present fiscal crisis.

It is his primary task to analyze USM's cost structure and put together the building blocks for a balanced budget for FY16. Tom's other major responsibility is to put together the data, including key performance indicators, necessary to restructure USM's administrative functions to be more efficient.

In support of his work, the Institutional Research Office will report to Mr. Dunne.

Tom is a SUNY Geneseo graduate who holds a Master's in Business from the Amos Tuck School at Dartmouth. His primary work experience for almost 20 years was at the international consulting firm Accenture, where as Partner in the Financial Services practice, he worked on a wide variety of technology and operations initiatives. Since leaving Accenture, has worked in government and the non-profit sector including being the first Executive Director of the Dirigo Health Agency, and the Executive Director of Ingraham, a social services non-profit. He has also taught at Muskie, and for several years was the co-moderator of the Governance & Ethics Symposium at the University of Maine School of Law.

4) Chris Quint has been hired into the position of Executive Director of Public Affairs.

It is obvious there is tremendous public interest and concern with the future of USM, and a constant demand for information.

When I agreed to take on this responsibility I committed to transparency and inclusion of the entire USM community in our agenda for change. We need a replacement for Bob Caswell who can carry out this mandate.

Moreover, it is clear that we need to step up our marketing efforts in an increasingly competitive environment, one in which USM is losing market share. I expect Chris to bring new energy and focus to this vital function by creating greater efficiency and collaboration in our communications and marketing operations. We must better inform and engage staff, faculty, students, stakeholders and concerned Maine citizens about the important, transformative work we will be doing at USM.

Chris comes to us from the Maine State Employees Association, SEIU Local 1989 (MSEA-SEIU) where he served as the Executive Director. Prior to his work at MSEA-SEIU, Chris was the Senior Public Affairs Director for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. A Maine native, Chris brings nearly 15 years of experience in all facets of public relations, governmental relations, and managing large, diverse organizations in difficult times.

The appointment of Chris Quint results from a thorough external search. Chris stood out among the applicants with his diverse background that has prepared him well to take on these responsibilities. I am confident he is the right person for this position and for USM.

5) In addition to the above restructuring of the President's Council, Dick Campbell will remain as CFO and Cecile Aitchison as Vice President for University Advancement.

In the aggregate, this initial restructuring of our Senior Management team will save on the order of \$135,000, compared to the historic salary cost of these positions, while assembling a first rate team to lead USM's efforts to tackle the formidable problems we face in the immediate future.

I am deeply grateful to all of them for their willingness to serve the university community and the people of Maine. While this group will serve as a key leadership team, we plan additional administrative changes in the months ahead as part of the overall restructuring initiative.

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