2011-2012 USM Strategic Planning
Steering Committee Final Report

Monique LaRocque and Robert Sanford, Co-Chairs
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Strategic Planning in General

Strategic Planning in higher education is more important today than ever. Never have there been such revolutionary and destabilizing forces to challenge the very foundations of higher education institutions. Colleges and Universities can no longer afford to meander into the future; they must be visionary and intentional and they must implement steps today that will ensure their future success.

USM must be bold. Not only must it consider improving on current practices—implementing the existing strategic plan—it must imagine its future as the center and driver of the educational ecosystem in the region and create a concrete plan that will support that vision. To position itself as the educational center it must command internal and external resources and expertise that will lead USM to a sustainable future. Strategic planning is about sustainability—meeting the needs of the present and future community. It begins with the articulation of a mission, and proceeds to a visioning of how that mission is enacted.

The colleges and universities that will thrive over the next decades are the ones that have a clear vision and a plan for enactment over the next 5-10 years. Strategic Planning is an essential process for universities who want to move forward into the future with deliberation and intention (see Appendix A). The Society for College and University Planning is the lead organization for strategic planning (http://www.scup.org/page/index). There are many other associated organizations such as the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (http://www.aashe.org/ USM is a member), reflecting the fact that strategic planning is as much about survival as it is about advancement. Strategic Planning is absolutely critical for the university’s organizational effectiveness. A shared vision and plan by major internal and external stakeholders and decision-makers enables the university to move forward effectively towards its stated mission.

We have witnessed that strategic planning at the university level is particularly challenging without a corresponding commitment of financial and other resources. USM’s complex structure with attendant multiple and varying priorities requires a management tool: a comprehensive implementation and tracking database for strategic planning. The database needs to document past, current, and proposed actions to implement the plan, and it needs to be the repository of linkages, budgets, resources, strategies, and other organizational information to enable the individual units and the university as a whole to work together effectively.

USM Strategic Planning Implementation Group

The 2011-12 Strategic Planning Implementation Group was comprised of a Steering Committee (SC) and 8 Task Teams. The SC itself was comprised of fourteen members, appointed by the President upon recommendation of the Co-chairs (see Appendix B for listing of all members). Using a facilitated process at the beginning of the term, the SC established objectives and a structure to guide forthcoming work, including the establishment of a database to inventory the
work of strategic planning from its inception in Fall 2009. The SC also invested considerable time in discussing, debating, and assessing the value of strategic planning in general, and in relationship to USM. Over the course of the academic year, these discussions led to a deeper understanding and commitment to the value and purpose of strategic planning and to its critical role in preparing USM for the future.

Chairs (and in some cases, co-chairs) were appointed for each of the eight Task Teams. As in the past, each team was assigned one of the eight Strategic Plan Goals. The chairs were responsible for setting their own meeting schedules, establishing membership, inventorying activities and actions around each of their objectives, and making recommendations for further activity to support the goals. Each task team built a matrix by looking at the intersection of activities with goals and objectives. They identified key recommendations to move the goals forward. The work of the Task Teams is reflected in the Access database (Appendix C); it captures important data about the progress of strategic planning implementation since Fall 09 and serves as an important tool for managing, assessing and planning for future activities that will support the overall goals of the 2009-14 Strategic Plan.

The Implementation Group adopted a standard three-phased approach to strategic planning: inventorying, analysis, and action (see Appendix D). For 2011-12, the team focused considerable attention on the first phase—inventorying—as it forms the basis of a coherent planning process and is the most effective tool for analysis and action. We documented activities in support of the SP, and noted that there are many more activities to be inventoried. From individual matrices for each goal, we created a basic database, which documents progress made towards implementing the eight goals of the plan. We created the database so that important data on the work of implementation could be easily accessible to everyone. With management of this information, we can see more readily where the university has put its resources and its energy to date, and determine where our energy and focus will be as we continue to implement the Strategic Plan.

Although the Implementation Group was able to identify much of the work that was being done across campus to support the various goals, it felt somewhat powerless to effect any significant change, as it had no real authority or financial resources to create action. For example, the Task Teams had no real accountability over the goals they were reviewing, which was a source of confusion and frustration in this and past years. In taking a real honest look at the implementation process to date, we determined that changes were needed in the structure and process to enable more effective implementation of the strategic plan.

In addition to the inventory and actions carried out by the group, a number of primary and secondary recommendations were derived.

**Primary Recommendations**

**Recommendation #1**: That there be a USM Planning office that is accountable for two major functions: 1) directing the activity of current strategic planning, including working with all responsible units to align the major USM initiatives with the Strategic Plan goals and establishing clear and relevant metrics, and 2) establishing the process for USM’s next Strategic Plan. The Planning office should report directly to the President’s office; it would be supported by an annual Planning Team comprised of both internal and external stakeholders and would be funded and supported with institutional marketing, demographic, economic, financial and other relevant data
to inform its recommendations. The Planning office needs to be able to bridge recruitment activity, academic programs, student support services, physical plant, and other major function areas within the university. Improved linkages between these major areas will provide increased efficiency, responsiveness and greater resource management (Appendix E summarizes the four most common planning office structures found at universities).

**Recommendation #2:** That the work that has been done this year on creating a database be continued, and that the database evolve to become an integral part of decision-making at USM (see possible “next step” options in Appendix C, section 4). This database would be managed by the Planning office.

**Recommendation #3:** That there be continuity from the current Steering Committee to next year’s Planning Team to preserve momentum to the strategic planning process. Next year’s Planning Team could be aligned with major strategic areas rather than around the 8 goals. For example, it could be made up of key stakeholders accountable for: Enrollment, Budget, Academic Programs Facilities Master Plan, Gorham Task Force, Research, External Relations. External stakeholders from local industry and government would be added. The Planning team would be coordinated and supported by the new Planning office.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee firmly believes that we must make a mid-cycle adjustment in how we implement the current strategic plan. In addition, it is critical that we begin planning now for a new strategic plan that will imagine USM’s future in 5-10 years. A Planning office supported by a Planning Team must begin setting a bold course of action so that USM remain viable and strong in the years ahead.

In addition to the above recommendations, the Steering Committee and Task Teams have compiled a list of secondary recommendations as the starting point of activity for next year’s planning team. This list of recommendations and the context from which these emerged can be found in Appendix F and G respectively.

In conclusion, we believe that the work we have accomplished in 2011-12 along with the recommendations we make here, lays an important foundation for future work. The database is a key management tool and is at the heart of our recommendations. Strategic Planning Implementation must be central and at top of mind in the work we all do. It should not be perceived as a separate, marginalized function that adds to faculty/staff workload. There is a need to increase university buy-in to SP work, and that it be understood as an active and meaningful process rather than a passive plan that sits on the shelf collecting dust.
Strategic planning is different from long-range- and tactical planning, yet it is a valuable partner to them. Strategic planning is an essential tool for long-term sustainability of a university. In our approaches to implementing USM’s Strategic Plan we examined strategic planning at many other institutions. The following websites were of great value to us as we considered our own strategic planning process:

*The University of Wisconsin-Madison report is a useful summary of the need for strategic planning at universities:  

*Penn State documented millions of dollars in savings after doing strategic planning:  
http://www.psu.edu/president/pia/plans/

*Cornell University also found major savings: http://www.cornell.edu/reimagining/

*Texas A&M put cost savings performance standards into its strategic plan:  
APPENDIX B: MEMBERSHIP

2011-2012 Steering Committee Members

Monique LaRocque, Co-chair, University Outreach/Professional & Continuing Education
Rob Sanford, Co-chair, Environmental Science & Policy

Nancy Artz, Business Administration
Roxie Black, LAC Academic Programs
Chris Camire / John Burgess, Student Senate
Katherine Greenleaf, Chief Operating Office
David Nutty, Library Administration
Judith Ryan, Human Resources
Susan Sepples, School of Nursing
James Smith, Engineering
Adam Tuchinsky, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
Jeannine Uzzi, Modern & Classical Language & Literature
Glenn Wilson, Department of Technology

Sara Johnson-Berz, Staff Support
Mike Watson, Grad Assistant

2011-2012 Task Team Members

Goal 1: Serving the needs and aspirations of 21st Century Maine
Glenn Wilson, Department of Technology, Co-chair
Monroe Duboise, Applied Medical Sciences, Co-chair
Katherine Greenleaf, Chief Operating Office, SPSC Liaison
Rita Heimes, Law School
David Nutty, Library Administration
Jan Piribeck, Art Department
Susan Nevins, Professional and Continuing Education
TJ Williams, Student Government

Goal 2: Making Student Success a core university priority
Craig Hutchinson, Student and University Life, Chair
Adam Tuchinsky, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, SPSC Liaison
Susan Campbell, Student Success
Alice Cash, School of Business
Paul Dexter, Learning Commons
Bonnie Stearns, College of Science, Technology, and Health
Andrea Thompson-McCall, Community Service Learning
Jason Saucier, Student Life
Joy Pufhal, Student and University Life
Bob Caswell, Office of Public Affairs
Stacy Calderwood, Professional and Continuing Education
Goal 3: Providing distinctive graduate and professional education
Bob Kuech, Teacher Education, Chair
Roxie Black, LAC Academic Programs, SPSC Liaison
Jim Curry, Professional Education
Jeanette Andonian, Social Work

Goal 4: Supporting faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity
Samantha Langley-Turnbaugh, Academic Affairs, Chair
Jeannine Uzioni, Modern & Classical Language & Literature, SPSC Liaison
Glenn Wilson, Technology Department
Bonnie Farmer, School of Nursing
Mark Steege, Professional Education
Susan Chinn, Business Administration
Kim Grant, Art Department
James Messerschmidt, Criminology Department
Benjamin Bertram, English Department
Elizabeth Turesky, LAC Academic Programs
Carol Nemeroff, LAC Academic Programs
Jennifer Wriggins, Law School
Ross Hickey, Office of Research Integrity and Outreach
Larry Waxler, Sponsored Programs
Terry Shehata, Institutional & Research Grant Development

Goal 5: Ensuring the university's fiscal sustainability
Janet Warnert, Finance and Administration, Chair
Nancy Artz, Business Administration, SPSC Liaison
Cherie Tate, Professional & Continuing Education
Amy Blaisdell, Finance and Administration
Marty Berry, Finance and Administration
Vicki LaQuerre, University Advancement
Carol O'Donnell, Provost's Office
Pat Davis, Institutional Research & Assessment
Holly Letarte, USM Student

Goal 6: Furthering the university's commitment to diversity
Wendy Chapkis, Women and Gender Studies, Co-chair
Susan Evans, Multicultural Student Affairs, Co-chair
Judy Ryan, Human Resources, Liaison
Jerry Long, USM Student
Rachel Morales, Undergraduate Admissions
Lisa Sweet, Graduate Admissions
Karen Zukerman, School of Nursing

Goal 7: Strengthening community
Amy Gieseke, Professional and Continuing Education, Co-chair
Ross Hickey, Research Integrity and Outreach, Co-chair
David Nutty, Library Administration, SPSC Liaison
Chris O'Connor, Student Life
Pete Gillis, Database Application & Support
Sydney Pontau, Graduate Student
Rebecca Silverman, Graduate Studies
Casey Webster, Office of Research Integrity and Outreach
Goal 8: Deploying USM's physical plant in support of the university's mission

Bob Bertram, Facilities Management, *Co-chair*
Bill Wells, Information and Technology, *Co-chair*
John Burgess, *SPSC Liaison*
Nancy Austin, Telecommunications
Angela Cook, Instructional Technology and Media Services
Dan Gearan, Facilities Management
Dana Gray, Facilities Management
Stephen Houser, Database Application & Support
Tyler Kidder, Facilities Management
Gary Stephenson, Residential Life
APPENDIX C: DATABASE

COLLECTING AND MAINTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLAN AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

The recommendations of USM's 2009-2014 Strategic Plan are given in a hierarchical structure of four types of Elements: Goals, Strategies, Actions and Initiatives. These are described in the Plan, and additional information about each Element is also needed including metrics and targets defining success, priority for implementation and a contact person who understands and can explain and interpret the Element.

The Strategic Plan is realized through a number of Activities that are the work of the University. To effectively answer the question “Is the Plan being realized?” we must answer the questions:

1. What Activities are planned, and what Elements of the Plan do each help realize?
2. What is the status of each planned Activity; in particular, when has or will it be completed?
3. When the planned Activities are realized, will they together realize the Plan (gap analysis)?
4. What additional Activities must we undertake to fully realize the Plan?

Those familiar with Total Quality will recognize this as the “PDCA” cycle of continuous improvement: 1. Plan 2. Do 3. Check 4. Act

The information needed about each Activity includes an identifying name, description, contact person, sponsoring organization, Elements that it supports, status, completion date, any group of which it is a part and links to further documentation including web pages in the USM Content Management System.

C.1 Uses of Plan and Activity Information

At a minimum, this information should be documented and available to the leadership, faculty and staff of USM to understand and coordinate action for the Plan. As a state-funded university, this information must also be available to the public. It demonstrates how USM fulfills its social contract with taxpayers and can be an effective resource for strengthening connections with the community and advocating the work of the University with all our stakeholders. For example, parents want to see that the university is forward thinking: it is planning respectful use of tuition dollars to run the University. The documentation must be traceable to its source – a person or another document – for clarification and maintenance.

This available information will increase accountability, the quality of decisions and support for the Plan. Documenting the person and organization responsible, the status and the completion date records accountability for implementation. If these specifics cannot be documented, an implementation gap is automatically identified that must be addressed by identifying ownership or modifying the Activity as appropriate. Readily available information about Activities improves decision-making for their needed resources – people, budget, time, etc. - by clarifying their relevance to the Plan and its priorities. It also improves decisions about new or proposed activities by improving coordination with established Activities and avoiding unwitting duplication or
overlap. Finally, shared information about the Plan and Activities reinforces them as an overall strategy shared by every stakeholder. Its transparency builds community and cohesiveness—shared mission, shared strategies, shared information about what is being done. We work together on goals, not in silos (see Exhibit

C.2 Collecting, Maintaining and Accessing Plan and Activity Information

Cataloguing and tracking the Element and Activity information must be an ongoing responsibility of the people doing the work. This is an important lesson learned in the 2011-12 Strategic Planning Task Teams. We set about to identify priorities and metrics for each Element of the Plan. This information was not captured in the Plan document; for most Elements the Task Teams were not able to find established metrics and targets. The original plan document did not establish priorities among the Elements; there are so many that some prioritization of what to address first is needed for effective implementation. The 2011-12 Task Teams assigned priorities to each Element using 3 levels. Any future Plan must define not only the desired results, but also how they are measured and their relative importance.

Observers cannot effectively maintain the information about each Activity. This is a second vital lesson learned this year and motivates a significant change in method. The volunteer Task Teams were able to catalog many Activities relevant to the plan, but in this role they were middle-persons seeking information from those doing the work and recording it in a standard form. The process used was “polling” of people thought to have relevant Activities. It limits discovery to the Task Team members’ personal networks and ad-hoc published information vs. the complete knowledge of Activities held by those doing them. Even if every Activity is somehow identified, a periodic poll of contact persons will always give delayed status information. Identifying Activities and publishing current information about them must be the responsibility of those doing the work and become part of the fabric of the University’s operation. To effect this change, leaders at all levels must promote it and require and routinely review the information for their Activities.

Cataloging and tracking the Activities related to the Plan brings the need for a place to keep this information that makes it accessible to those who use and maintain it. Electronic records are an obvious choice, providing easy access by a defined set of users from their personal information device. Ideally the information should be simultaneously accessible by a broad “reader community” and modifiable by a smaller “contributor community” of authorized users. It needs a “moderator” mechanism by which new information and revisions from the contributor community are reviewed before release to the reader community. An administrator function authorizes users to the functions of each community. Users need a query function that searches the information and returns Element and Activity records that match the use’s interest. Reporting functions that consolidate multiple records – e.g. “How many Activities relate to a specific Element” are also needed. Internet access to the information through a web browser is currently the most widely available access mechanism both within and outside USM.

C.3 2011-2012 Strategic Planning Process Experience

Initially we used a two-dimensional matrix format to consolidate information about Elements and Activities and the relationships between them. This matrix is implemented in the MS Excel spreadsheet shown in Exhibit C-1, and we built a copy of this Matrix for the Activities of each Task
Team. Each Element of the Plan appears on a row of the spreadsheet, and each Activity on a column. A symbol representing the status of the Activity appears where the Activity column intersects the row of each Element it impacts. For example, column G of Exhibit C-1 shows that the “Ongoing” Web Governance Council impacts six Elements of the Plan: two Strategies and four Actions. Columns B, C and D add information about the Elements: the Priority and any Metric identified by the Task Team, and the SPP team member to contact for more information about that Element. The four top cells in each column give the name of an Activity, a contact person for more information about it, the organization sponsoring the activity and the SPP team member who included the Activity in this Matrix. Cell entries in blue, underlined text contain a link to more information, usually a web page in USM’s web Content Management System. The Activity Name cells marked with a red triangle in the upper-right corner include an Excel Comment with a more detailed description. Excel reveals these comments when the pointer is placed over the marked cell. For example in Exhibit C-1 the comment for the “Gorham Task Force Recommendation 2” Activity is revealed in a yellow box. Matrix spreadsheets for each of the Task Teams are available on the SPP website.

This matrix spreadsheet was easily created and readily displays Element and Activity information for the reader community. However the Task Teams found it very cumbersome to maintain. The Excel comment and hyperlink functions are unfamiliar to many users, and while the spreadsheet can be accessible to many on a shared network drive, Excel does not support simultaneous changes by multiple users. Each Team designated a single person to enter and manage their matrix spreadsheet, and we were not able to consolidate the matrices from all teams into a single copy containing all Activities. The Excel outline and scrolling functions enable visual scanning of the information, but automated queries or reporting require a high level of skill with Excel or Visual Basic beyond most casual users’ experience.

The 2011-12 Task Teams captured standardized information about Activities using the MS Excel spreadsheet form shown in Exhibit C-2. Each Team chose whether and how to use the form. Some designated a member to research Activities and complete a copy of the spreadsheet for each that was then reviewed by the team. Some printed the form and entered the information by hand. Some entered activity information directly into their matrix spreadsheet. Other Teams’ matrices were built from their forms by SPSC staff.

Our experience with using Excel suggested that a database would be a more appropriate home for this information. We consulted with USM’s IT and Computer Science departments to determine what tools were already available in the University infrastructure, and Exhibit C-3 illustrates the general design. While mainstream database tools are available, IT resources are not available to customize them to our use, and they would require significant investment in external resources well beyond the SPP budget to implement even basic functionality.

We could however prototype the database and interface using MS Access. It is already available as part of the standard software load on USM PCs, and IT had expertise and a technical resource that could program it to our needs. While Access provides functionality for web-based interface, this capability is not supported by USM’s IT infrastructure. However the Access files can be stored on a shared network drive accessible by multiple users within the University. The prototype stores the same information about Elements and Activities as the matrix spreadsheets, and in a single consolidated file. It provides user interface screens as shown in Exhibit C-4 to enter Element and
Activity information, similar to the Activity Form spreadsheet used earlier. We have transcribed all the information in the Task Team matrix spreadsheets into this database to demonstrate the benefits of the query capability.

C.4 Next Steps for the Database

We recommend that the University implement, as part of its permanent Strategic Planning infrastructure, a web-accessible database meeting the needs described in C.2 above for information about the Plan and Activities. This software tool need not be hosted on the university IT infrastructure, but it should integrate within the USM computing environment, particularly USM’s web Content Management System. Three possible approaches are to extend the prototype MS Access database created this year, to create a more robust custom database, or to purchase a commercial tool designed for this application.

The existing database could be extended to experiment with the desired functionality. However a solution based on MS Access will not be accessible via the web and can be modified only by a single user at a time. These limitations disqualify it for a permanent solution. USM IT has suggested that the cost of a customized solution can be reduced by prototyping the functionality within USM on MS Access, then extending it to a more robust, multi-user web-based platform based on the prototype. IT does not have the resources to develop the extension, and this approach would reduce the cost of commercial development by providing a clear functional specification embodied in the prototype. It is unlikely that this development will be once-and-done, and ongoing expense to maintain and extend the initial functionality must be planned and considered in the cost of ownership. The principal advantage of this approach is that it can give functionality tuned to USM’s particular evolving needs for planning support.

USM could evaluate and purchase commercial software to support the strategic planning function. One example is TracDat from Nuventive Systems (Exhibit C-6), and there are other providers for this type of tool. This software is purpose-designed to support strategic planning and assessment in the university environment and customizable to the planning lexicon and processes of a single institution or a system. It stores the plan itself, metrics, activities and status and can capture supporting documentation as well as link to external web-based documents. It can capture or link to resource information (budget, cost, people) as well. It can be installed on the university IT resources or provided and maintained by the supplier on their own computing resources. This approach requires commitment to the cost of licensing and maintaining the software as well as the effort to customize it and deploy it throughout the university. It can be deployed more rapidly and support greater, proven functionality from day one vs. an internally developed solution. A thoughtful implementation would maximize the use of its built-in functions across the university or the UMS system.
## Exhibit C-1 Matrix Spreadsheet

### Activity Matrix

**University of Southern Maine**  
**Strategic Planning Steering Committee**  
**Activity Matrix**  
2011 December 06  
Revision 5  
Submitted by Task Team 7: Feb 02, 2012  
Updated: 17 May 2102 TMWatson

#### Strategic Plan Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Measure of Success (link)</th>
<th>SPSC or Task Team Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. **GOAL 7:** To Strengthen Community on and across USM’s Three Campuses

   **STRATEGY:** Adopt a more news-oriented approach to content provided on the USM website.

2. **ACTION:** Implement a content management system for the USM website and train the faculty and/or staff in its use where appropriate.

3. **ACTION:** Expand website coverage of faculty, staff, and student accomplishments and honors.

4. **ACTION:** Improve and expand the USM online calendar of events.

5. **ACTION:** Create a virtual university commons within the USM website which provides a central, easily accessible place for locating information, news, and interactive support services for students, faculty, and staff.

6. **ACTION:** Provide additional IT support for developing and maintaining the virtual commons.

7. **ACTION:** Move, wherever possible and cost-effective, the provision of student, faculty, and staff support services to the virtual commons.

8. **ACTION:** Provide students, faculty, and staff who find themselves on any campus with a full range of support services at centralized service locations, including work/study and conference spaces that provide welcoming and useful places to conduct university-related activities.

9. **ACTION:** Consolidate and centralize student, faculty, and staff support services.
# USM Strategic Plan Task Team - Activity Information

* = Required  
Revised 2012 January 23 TMW

## Your contact information and date you completed this form *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date you completed this form:</th>
<th>mm/dd/yyyy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Link (URL) to your web page with contact info:

- http://
  - OR Your Name:  
  - AND Your Phone:  
  - AND Your email:  

## Name or Title for the Activity *

This title will appear at the top of the column for this action in the SPP Matrix.

## Brief description of the Activity *

A 2-6 sentence description of what the Activity is and what outcomes are expected.

## Link (URL) to full description of this Activity


## Name of larger activity or collection that includes this Activity

- e.g. "Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity". Can be "None".

## Name or position and Contact information for person who leads this Activity *

Person doing or coordinating the action, usually not an SPSC or Task Team member.

- Contact web page STRONGLY preferred - e.g. "http://www.usm.maine.edu/spp/monique-larocque"

### Here’s a good place to find these links – http://usm.maine.edu/facultystaff

## Name of organization sponsoring this Activity

- e.g. "USM Provost", "USM Faculty Senate" or "USM Athletic Department"

## Strategic Plan Elements that this Activity supports *

Copy from the Row titles in the SPP Matrix, or from Section 6 of "Preparing USM for the Future". Can be more than one element. If so, please put one per line.

## Activity Status *

- N = Needs to be considered, P = Planned, not started, I = In progress, X = Completed,  
- O = Ongoing or repeated, R = Redirected (changed), S = Stopped

### Activity Completion Date *

Planned or Needed date to complete this action or Actual date for completed actions.

| / | / | mm/dd/yyyy |

## Additional information.

If someone else confirmed the information in this form, be sure to put their name, date and contact info here!!!

Questions, Comments, Suggestions, Help Needed? Contact SPP Staff at: http://usm.maine.edu/spp/people
Exhibit C-3 Database Design

- USM Standard CMS
- Strategic Plan Database
- Query and Report Window
- Restricted Access
- Limited Access
- Public Access

USM Web Content

- USM Standard DB engine, server, query language.
- USM Standard GUI Interface (Java?)
- Hosted on USM servers, integrated with USM web site.

SPP Element Maintenance Window

- Name or position and Contact information for person who leads this Activity *
- Contact web page STRONGLY preferred - e.g. "http://www.usm.maine.edu/spp/monique-larocque"
- Link (URL) to Contact web page:

A 2-6 sentence description of what the Activity is and what outcomes are expected.

Name of larger activity or collection that includes this Activity
e.g. "Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity". Can be "None"

Your contact information and date you completed this form *
Date you completed this form:

Here's a good place to find these links -  http://usm.maine.edu/facultystaff
Link (URL) to your web page with contact info:
Exhibit C-4 MS Access Database Information Entry Interfaces.
Exhibit C-5 MS Access Activity Query Interface and Result
Exhibit C-6 Nuventive Vision

See http://www.nuventive.com/products_tracdat.html
EXHIBIT C-7 Example of Potential Usage of Database:

Nancy, an enterprising recreational therapy student, decides to organize a children’s horse-riding event as a class project. She uses the Strategic Database to see how this event fits into the strategic plan, what resources might exist to support this activity, and to determine if there are other similar activities. She finds the answers on the database, which also helps her class to determine the ways to promote this event and to interconnect it with other university activities. She learns, for example, that Prof. Jo William’s students do a similar thing with their 5K Mud Race, and she gets insider organizational tips for that event. USM Admissions learns of the event, which has become posted to the database, and it provides some organizational support and staffs an outdoor booth at the event. Her event runs more smoothly as a result and enhances the community connection of USM while providing a service and enhancing USM student skills.
Introduction

Strategic planning can occur in two formats. One is when a corporate board of directors or similar group of senior management convenes, writes a strategic plan, then implements it, seeking (or mandating) organizational buy-in from the rank-and-file. The second format is when a group, not necessarily the senior leadership, convenes, creates a plan, and then seeks organizational buy-in that results in implementation. In the latter case the plan is vetted by the senior leadership. There may be a combination of this as in the case where a plan is written by senior leadership, and is steered by a different committee of committed organizational representatives. Buy-in is needed at the level of senior management and also among all other members of the organization. This case is particularly appropriate for self-governing public organizations and is how it is being done at the University of Southern Maine.

USM’s Strategic Plan has eight goals

1. Serving the needs and aspirations of 21st century Maine
2. Making student success a core university priority
3. Producing distinctive graduate and professional education
4. Supporting faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity
5. Ensuring the university’s fiscal sustainability
6. Furthering the university’s commitment to diversity
7. Strengthening community
8. Deploying USM’s physical plant in support of the university’s mission

The Steering Committee

A Steering Committee oversees the activities that implement the strategic plan, including the actions or strategies associated with the goals and objectives. The committee is comprised of a dozen faculty, staff and a student, selected for their dedication and interest in the University and its mission. Dr. Robert Sanford and Dr. Monique LaRocque co-chair the Steering Committee. Mike Watson, an MBA student, is the graduate assistant.

Task Teams

USM has eight Task Teams engaged in strategic planning, one for each goal. Each Task Team is populated by members selected by the co-chairs of the team. A member of the Steering Committee serves as mentor to each of the Task Teams.
The database and the Task Teams: a 3-step approach

In every planning process, one has a mission and a vision, and one begins by gathering data. This descriptive stage is the first step. It is necessary to know what is being done before one can decide what needs to be done; making recommendations is the second step. Once we know what needs to be done, the third step is implementation. Since we are at different stages in terms of awareness and in terms of the critical nature of necessary actions, we need not totally complete step 1 and inventory everything before commencing with steps 2 and 3. Sooner or later, though, we should progress through the steps to support the strategic nature of effective planning. This progression provides a context for management and the implementation of decisions.

The Task Teams assemble activities currently underway or recently completed, and prepare them for listing in a database. The activities are coded on the basis of descriptive variables that will allow analysis. These variables include:

- **What is the activity**
- **Who carries out the activity**
- **Who has oversight of the responsibility**
- **Who does the activity serve**
- **Is the activity one or more discrete events/actions, or continuous**
- **Has the activity been completed, is it underway, or is it just envisioned**
- **What goals and objectives are linked to the activity**
- **What is the priority of the activity**

**Step 1: The Inventory**

Each Task Team has the discretion to decide how detailed to get in documenting activities for the database. For example, an activity might be a small, discrete event, such as *Hold an annual high school science bowl* as a means to serve the needs and aspirations of 21st century Maine (goal 1) and strengthen community (goal 7) by attracting potential STEM high school students and by involving current faculty, staff, students and guests in the contest. Another activity might be quite broad, and general, as in the *Creation and use of a strategic plan for research*, undertaken by the Associate Vice President for Research, Scholarship, & Creative Activity, her staff, and the research council. This latter activity could have been described in much greater detail and even broken down as a series of smaller discrete activities. But essentially by listing a single large activity a place is held for this concept in implementing the overall strategic plan, and the details on the activity—in this case the research plan—can be seen on file.

The graduate assistant works with the Task Teams, and helps with questions concerning data base development and questions about activities. The Steering Committee has oversight because some activities may be catalogued by more than one Task Team and may involve more than one goal.

**Step 2: Task Team recommendations**

After the existing activities and recommendations are entered in the database, the Task Teams may move into selecting new activities to implement the strategic plan. The characteristic descriptive variables used to populate the database can be used to enumerate the new activities. It is not the job of the Task Team to put the new activities into effect but rather to bring them to the attention of the Steering Committee with recommendations for how, and when to have them be carried out. The goal is for the activities to be done by the appropriate units, and to support the current work of the units by providing strategic context and efficiencies.
The Steering Committee will coordinate the overall pallet of activity recommendations and explore efficient ways of engaging the entire university in implementing the strategic plan through these recommendations. The Steering Committee can help sort out recommendations that the Task Team is unclear about or that engage multiple Task Teams or strategic plan goals. A “gaps analysis” can be done to see if there are logical recommendations that should exist to remedy areas where thus far the actions are not sufficient to meet goals and objectives. This is of particular importance in dealing with things like budget or enrollment crises where new efficiencies must be gained and tough decisions must be made. The recommendations and analysis should be used to support strategic and tactical planning though implementation.

**Step 3: Implementation**

Implementation depends on the emphasis or critical nature of the recommendations. Some things need to be done right away, some things are on-going actions that continuously unfold, and some are for the future. By having an interactive database as initiated in step 1, we prepare the way to provide updating of the action steps and the recommendations. This will help keep the context of planning analysis current. A strong implementation phase is necessary to keep faith with the strategic planning initiative, demonstrating that the process works. There are existing structures to operationalize the results of institutional planning--various offices and departments have their mandates and missions. The implementation stage can be used to improve connections among different offices and departments, and supply context to various decisions and efforts. This coordination and context becomes even more important as an organization responds to external changes and pressures.
1) **Vice President** (or Associate or Assistant Vice President). This approach is for either planning as a stand-alone function, or more commonly is linked with another responsibility title such as “Development.” Such titles reflect a commitment to planning as a university-wide function and value. This is one of the most common structures found. University of Oklahoma has a Vice President for Strategic Planning and Economic Development, but this position does not deal directly with curricula. Duke University houses its Associate Vice President for Strategic Planning under its Vice President for Alumni Affairs and Development. SUNY Upstate Medical University has an Assistant Vice President for Strategic Planning and Management.

2) **Special Assistant to the President for Planning.** This position has direct authority under the president, and works as “utility” player to coordinate planning in conjunction with a committee or faculty-staff group. This format may also be linked to the first format above. For example, Lipscomb University uses a special Assistant to the President who is also an Associate Provost for Academic Administration and Strategic Initiatives. West Virginia State University’s Special Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning and Special Projects oversees the Campus Master Plan and the University’s Strategic Plan. As exemplified by Memphis University, the Special Assistant position often chairs the institution’s strategic planning committee or task force.

3) **Committee on University Planning.** This approach can be a temporary or strategic alliance approach for special projects or it can be a standing committee. Dickinson College has a Committee for Planning and Budget. Committees work best in an advisory and evaluative role at institutions where the implementation of the strategic plan is seen as the business of everyone. SUNY Albany is a good example of this approach.

4) **Provost or President.** This approach is done in conjunction with a committee or council on strategic planning. The approach reflects an attitude that strategic planning is essentially a curricular issue with fiscal, physical and student support services in support to the academy, which in turn owns the curriculum. UVM, with its University Planning Council, is an example.
In reviewing all Task Team summary reports (see Appendix G), the Steering Committee recommends the following actions be taken in 2012-2013 (represented as a continuation of the primary recommendations [p. 4]):

**Recommendation #4:** That individual metrics be assigned for each strategy and action item within the Strategic Plan.

**Recommendation #5:** That there be a clear communication plan around strategic planning to the USM community and that there be a well-articulated strategy to begin making Strategic Planning a core guide to the work we all do. SP must be integral to the work we all do, so that we are all moving towards prioritized goals.

**Recommendation #6:** That the focus of next year's work be on enrollment, recruitment and retention in the context of a 21st century university.

**Recommendation #7:** That there be an Admission Office on the Portland campus. This action is critical to the efforts of recruitment, especially as a growing target student population is the student who does not live in the residence halls, and who will likely have most of their courses on the Portland campus or will be enrolled in online programs.

**Recommendation #8:** That the Graduate Admission Office be funded approximately $25K to implement a fully electronic admission process. This action is important to support the important graduate population and is necessary for a 21st century university.

**Recommendation #9:** That work begin this summer and next fall on a Master Plan for Facilities that will build on the work of the Utilities Plan that was achieved this year.

**Recommendation #10:** That the forthcoming recommendations of the Foundations of Excellence Initiative: *First Year Matters* be implemented.

**Recommendation #11:** That the University consider implementation of a formal system to organize and input annual budget allocations at the account (line-item) level.

**Recommendation #12:** That there be a full-time leadership position (Dean, Associate Dean, or Coordinator) focused solely on graduate studies and admissions.

**Recommendation #13:** That the Provost commission a process for assessing the Core Curriculum (General Education) by the end of the Spring 13 semester with significant progress on the plan by Fall 2013 semester (to be reported in NEASC 2 year update in Fall 13). [Utilizing the Davis Grant funds].

**Recommendation #14:** That we re-institutionalize the annual academic Convocation.

**Recommendation #15:** That the Provost be asked to work with the Faculty Senate to devise a clear reward structure that recognizes faculty effort, involvement, and leadership in the area of teaching (in-class and online) and service.
Recommendation #16: That we redesign and revitalize the Early Alert System through a work group comprised of faculty and academic advising staff.

Recommendation #17: That we ask the Colleges and the Gorham Task Force to evaluate and implement the Class Schedule Initiative work begun in 2007.

Recommendation #18: That we complete implementation of the Student Success Center Advising Model to incorporate in each College. [Requires additional resources.]

Recommendation #19: That action be taken on the recommendations of the Research Council (see Task Team #4 Summary in Appendix G)

Recommendation #20: That a study be funded to examine ways to better coordinate all student service functions: e.g., financial aid, tuition and fee payment plans, student loans, and scholarship processing, both within the financial services group, and with other student services, e.g., admissions, assessment, and registration.

Recommendation #21: That two additional focus groups be held around diversity, and a “Diversity Summit” be organized as a public presentation of the findings from the focus groups.

Recommendation #22: That a common faculty space be identified on both the Portland and Gorham campuses (one already exists at LAC).

Recommendation #23: That a committee be charged with implementing a USM University Hour.

Recommendation #24: That the USM Public Affairs office take uniform headshot pictures of all USM faculty and staff and post these pictures on each respective contact page on the USM website.

Recommendation #25: That administration support the Polycom Room Scheduling Recommendation as outlined by USM’s CIO.
APPENDIX G: TASK TEAM SUMMARIES

Task Team #1: Serving the Needs and Aspirations of 21st-Century Maine
Glenn Wilson, Monroe Duboise, Co-chairs

USM Strategic Planning Activated...

“USM is the center and driver of the educational ecosystem in the region.”

Strategic Planning Group #1, in attempting to create concrete suggestions to meet Goal No. 1, asked for guidance and a model from USM’s existing strategic planning team within the management and leadership structure of the University. We realized then that there is no existing strategic planning structure to the ongoing curricular, physical plant, research, and recruiting decision-making at USM. In other words, there is no team – representative of faculty, administration, finance, local industry, local government, other university campuses, and students – who can commit significant amounts of time and bring expertise to driving the future direction and opportunities for USM as a public institution of higher education in Southern Maine. We recommend that a strategic planning team be formed, funded and supported with institutional marketing, demographic, economic, financial and other relevant data to inform its recommendations.

We recommend this group be pulled from internal and external experts in: organizational management; strategic planning; marketing; admissions; finance; economic development; academic affairs; public higher education; and distance learning. The chairperson or leader of this group must be someone with experience in strategic decision-making and specifically with using data to make informed strategic decisions. Service on this committee should not be purely voluntary and the time commitment should be on the order of a part-time job, with appropriate course release and/or compensation.

The items that should be addressed by this team are along the lines of the following:

1. What degrees will students need to find meaningful employment in Southern Maine and in the region in the next 5 years? The next 10?
2. What features of USM would attract Maine students to USM as opposed to other universities in Maine? From outside Maine?
3. How can USM better differentiate itself from other campuses in the U. Maine System other than by geography?
4. How can USM collaborate with other campuses of the U. Maine System to avoid unnecessary overlapping degree programs, focus on areas of unique excellence for which there are workforce demands, and maximize support from the legislature as well as meet student interest?
5. Can USM sustain three campuses and if not what are practical and achievable alternative models?
6. Are there any universal recruiting standards for new faculty that should be instituted campus-wide to meet our 5-year and 10-year vision for USM?
7. Is there additional faculty training in which USM should invest to meet the learning demand of the next generation of students?
8. How should USM respond to demographic trends in terms of declining numbers of traditional age students and increasing numbers of degree completing adults? What role does/should online education play in this response and what are the implications of this role in terms of finance, administration, technology, space, academics, faculty, etc?

USM provides significant resources to the Southern Maine region as well as the state of Maine as a whole. It has the potential to be a centerpiece of Southern Maine’s economic and cultural identity, to attract young intellectual talent to the state, and to set an example for affordable excellence in public higher education that will ripple throughout the secondary schools of the region. The strategic planning team will help USM fully achieve its academic and cultural potential, in an already radically altered and dynamic economic time.

**Strategic Planning Model**

*For the 21st Century, USM must be attentive to and interact with its local and global constituencies and simultaneously inform and be informed by broader issues in science, technology, society, and the arts.*
Distillation of Major Points from SP1 Committee
Review and Discussion

1. Ongoing, institutionalized, funded, strategic planning addressing:
   - Need for transparency, communication and engagement of key constituencies.
   - Informed and accountable to student and community needs.
   - Demonstrates results through appropriate metrics, i.e. resource management, enrollment, recruitment, retention, and finance.
   - Communicates the plan, metrics and actions and builds support within the university.
   - Reports to and interacts frequently with USM leadership.

   NOTE: The Office of Academic Affairs/Provost should be the permanent home for this initiative.

2. Suggest no more than three major long term goals or targets to make USM a household name that are data informed and driven by the needs and wishes of the community and exemplify (are informed by and inform) the aspects of item 1 above.

3. Frame a positive and intensive agenda, with metrics for change in keeping with the assets of USM, around location, business and economic, workforce, arts, center, and the depth and breadth of the intellectual capital and goodwill of the region.
Task Team #2: Making Student Success a Core University Priority

As can be seen in the Strategic Planning Matrix for SP Goal 2 there are more than 55 unique programs, activities, and initiatives currently underway, planned, or recently completed. No significant “gaps” or areas of no action were identified within Goal 2; however Task Team 2 would like to take this opportunity to provide the following recommendations for 2012-2014 for furthering the work of Goal 2 Making Student Success a Core University Priority (presented within the 5 strategies of Goal 2):

#1. Increase persistence and progress to degree of both first-time freshmen and transfer students to levels comparable to USM’s peer institutions, and extend that effort to retention and graduation of graduate students

#4. Increase rate of student progress to degree

These two strategies continue to be urgent University priorities given current enrollment trends. There are many actions and initiatives aimed at impacting persistence and progress to degree being approached, largely, through implementation of the USM Enrollment Plan.

Recommendation for Next Step:
Implement the recommendations of the Foundations of Excellence Initiative: First Year Matters

#2. Continue enactment of the new core curriculum

This strategy has the least number of activities identified in the Matrix, however, implementation of the Core is well underway and the task team believes that the University has committed the resources necessary to continue ongoing implementation.

Recommendation for Next Step:
Ask the Provost to commission a process for assessing the Core Curriculum (General Education) by the end of the Spring 13 semester with significant progress on the plan by Fall 2013 semester (to be reported in NEASC 2 year update in Fall 13). [Utilizing the Davis Grant funds]

#3. .....Celebrate engaged teaching and learning as USM’s signature approach to undergraduate and graduate education

This strategy needs to be deconstructed, and articulated to the entire community in an understandable, clear, and consistent manner. Stakeholders will then understand their possible contribution to the success of this strategy.

Recommendations for Next Steps:
   a. Re-institutionalize the annual academic Convocation.
b. Ask the Provost, working with the Faculty Senate, to devise a clear reward structure that recognizes faculty effort, involvement, and leadership in the area of teaching and service.

c. Create a working group (with faculty and staff membership) drawing from Task Team 2 and Task Team 7 (Community, etc.) focused on furthering the work on *Celebrating engaged teaching and learning* and *Articulating the identity of each campus within USM*.

#5. Ensure the availability of appropriate and effective student academic support services

Of the five strategies, this is the strategy within Goal 2 that has the greatest number of completed activities/projects/initiatives.

Recommendations for Next Steps:

a. Redesign and revitalize the *Early Alert System* through a work group comprised of faculty and academic advising staff.

b. Ask the Colleges and the Gorham Task Force to evaluate and implement the *Class Schedule Initiative* work begun 2007.

c. Complete implementation of the Student Success Center Advising Model to incorporate each College. This would require additional resources.

Overall Recommendation from Task Team 2 for Advancing the Strategic Plan:

Data that should be guiding our collective work must be deconstructed, analyzed, interpreted, summarized, and disseminated in a structured way in a format that the whole community can understand. Most importantly, data and self-study must be the basis of institutional reform.

Task Team 2 recommends that the President’s Senior Staff and the Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee establish key metrics of University and Student Success. This would form the basis of a *State of the University Address* at the annual *Opening Breakfast* that includes (among other things) an update on the Strategic Plan Implementation, student learning and success, recruitment, retention, and academic reform, etc.
Goal 3: To Provide the Distinctive Graduate and Professional Training Critical to the Needs of the 21st Century Maine.

Summary of work.
The Office of Graduate Studies and Graduate Admissions continues to work diligently to recognize and promote USM graduate programs through campus information sessions, visits to USM and non-USM campuses, visits/contacts with local businesses and other activities. They are also working closely with the new marketing firm to advertise new certificate programs and highlight individual graduate programs. Additionally, they are refining administrative and support services, including moving admissions to an electronic system, running skills workshops for staff, and extending their hours to support students. Please see matrix for list of activities.

Gap Analysis.
Strategy #1, Recognize and promote the complex range of graduate programs at USM, and Strategy #3, Develop new graduate and professional programs that address emerging needs of the state of Maine both require consistent leadership to direct, support, guide, and facilitate the visibility and growth of graduate programs at USM. At this point, graduate programs no longer have a dean with focused responsibilities on graduate needs, and the steering committee agrees that a leadership position is necessary. Additionally, moving the admissions process to a totally electronic system would increase effectiveness and efficiencies for students and for the office of graduate studies, which is already short-staffed.

Recommendations for Goal 3.

1. To move the graduate admissions process to a totally electronic admission system. Cost: $1500.00 annually to have the process centralized at the UMS.

2. There must be a full-time leadership position (Dean, Associate Dean, or Coordinator) focused solely on graduate studies and admissions. This position should be a leader who could re-envision the role of graduate studies at USM, based on current needs and trends. We see this position as boundaries-spanning, rather than silo-building, leading graduate programs to consider multiple access routes that would strengthen both graduate and selected undergraduate programs. This person would not only facilitate growth of graduate programs that would meet community needs and environmental trends, but would also increase the visibility of graduate programs within the University of Southern Maine and the University of Maine System. Cost dependent upon the position and commensurate with other like positions at USM.


**Task Team #4: Supporting Faculty Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity**

**Executive Summary**

In the spring of 2011, the Provost of the University of Southern Maine (USM) requested the Associate Vice President for Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (RSCA) to develop a research strategic plan for the institution. The document is intended to be the first step in creating a road map for USM to support and strengthen the research and scholarship endeavor of the University, and includes a snapshot of current data and recommendations on how to proceed. The next steps will include an action plan, with additional data gathered as needed. The work on this plan was based on the premise that USM values: (a) Innovative basic and applied research, scholarship and creative activity to expand knowledge and to support social, environmental, and economic development; (b) Engagement of students in the research enterprise; (c) The engagement of community stakeholders in research endeavors whenever and wherever possible; (d) The dissemination and translation of findings in the traditional academic media (e.g., peer-reviewed publications) and also in non-academic outlets to expand impact; and (e) The transfer of technological innovations through commercial ventures and partnerships with industry. This document sets the blueprint for RSCA into the future in full alignment with the University’s Strategic Plan.

In order to develop the research strategic plan, the Office of Research Administration and Development, in collaboration with the Research Council, the Office of Sponsored Programs, and the Muskie School’s Survey Research Center conducted a survey of faculty and research staff in the fall of 2011 to gauge the culture of RSCA on campus, faculty perception of RSCA support, barriers to RSCA, faculty morale, as well as areas of RSCA strengths. This was the first systematic internal input from the faculty and research staff about the state of RSCA at USM. Response rate was 58%. The results of this survey provide information to better support USM faculty and research staff in their RSCA pursuits and for the administration to more aggressively seek resources to carry out such efforts. In addition, we also completed a review of existing data sources from OSP grant records, ORIO applications, faculty senate grant topics, and dean’s publication records, President’s book cover events, Thinking Matters topics, and UROP topics.

A summary of the findings is provided below. Detailed information on methodology, data collection and analysis is provided in the accompanying appendices.

*Perceptions about RSCA Support* – Faculty are highly committed, passionate, full of energy and flexible in pursuit of RSCA. They expressed their belief that RSCA is very important, both in terms of personal and professional growth, student education, and in tenure and promotion. Faculty perceive their community of scholarship to be external to USM but they are willing to collaborate with other USM faculty, if there was a formal mechanism, Faculty regularly incorporate their research and scholarly activities into their teaching, and they are confident in their ability to develop and write research proposals, and conduct the research.

*Perceptions of Barriers* – Faculty believe there is very little support for RSCA from the Administration, and there is a lack of standardization of expectations for scholarly activity. Faculty are not interested in collaboration and interdisciplinary research because these activities are not valued in tenure and promotion, and they do not see their community of scholarship as internal to USM. When asked about disincentives for RSCA, most expressed lack of time due to excess service responsibilities, lack of institutional support, lack of administrative support, unwillingness of the institution to provide cost share in proposals, lack of indirect return, and a lack in confidence in sustaining their work beyond the grant period. The
humanities and social sciences faculty cited a perceived lack of funding opportunities as one of their top disincentive for RSCA.

**Research Themes** - The survey identified three major research themes at USM that capture the institution’s high activity areas, support a balance between local and global issues, and broaden student perspective. The themes are: (a) Environment builds on USM’s strengths in sustainability; environment and health; energy; environmental rights; ecological principles, practices and policies; environmental values and public participation; traditional knowledge; urban and suburban sustainability, Casco Bay watershed, environmental sciences, technology and education. (b) Health builds on USM’s approach to multidisciplinary health research drawing on the expertise of researchers in Muskie/Cutler, CAHS and CMHS to study the impact of health determinants on various populations, including aging, ethics, long-term care, pain assessment and management, environment health, occupational therapy, cancer, holistic health, rural and northern health, and studies on the overall health and wellness of our communities, and equitable access to health services. (c) STEM Education builds on USM’s leadership in several collaborative STEM-focused programs, including the long term NSF funded projects of ScienceCorps and the Eastern Alliance in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (EAST); Pioneer’s Program; our involvement with First Robotics, Science Education for New Civic Engagement and Responsibility (SENCER), the Department of Energy’s Science Bowl, and NASA’s GLOBE Program; our success with science focused earmarks, and the new state STEM bond initiative. These existing programs, will allow USM to elevate the priority, visibility, scope and effectiveness of STEM research, STEM education research, and STEM teaching and learning at all levels – K-12 through graduate education.

No major research themes were identified that were exclusive to the Arts, Humanities or Social Sciences, although much of the scholarship conducted in those areas falls under one of the themes identified above. There may be themes in scholarship in these areas that we do not yet have data to support, or it may be that the nature of the work in these areas is individualized.

**Key Performance Indicators for Measures of RSCA Success** - Success should be measured based on: change in research income, change in commercialization income, establishment for strategic research programs/centers – areas of strategic investment in research, and research outputs (publications, presentations, creative works produced). Baseline data should be collected and specific targets for each of the metric below need to be established. Metrics should include: number and amount of external and internal grants, number of conference presentations, book chapters, books, refereed journal articles, patents, trade reports, other research awards, creative works produced, training and mentorship, impact on broader community, and start-up companies

**Recommendations**

The results of the survey point to two major themes. There is the presence of an undercurrent that the institution administration does not value research and scholarship, and there are limited opportunities for, and administrative support for interdisciplinary or collaborative research efforts. To create a positive culture at USM for increasing RSCA activities, to improve faculty moral and to re-earn their trust, the Office of Research Administration and Development and the Research Council propose the following recommendations:

1. The Colleges need to engage in a dialog to articulate their research objectives and goals. Five-year goals and objectives should be established, along with appropriate metrics.
2. Decrease research disincentives, and increase incentives (see Appendix F).
3. Develop a culture of research that can be supported by our physical infrastructure and resources. A current assessment of our active research structural needs and costs should be completed.
4. Commit to interdisciplinarity as a core value for research, and support proposals & programs of research that support this value.

5. Develop recommendations to incorporate the value of interdisciplinary and collaborative research and scholarship into tenure and promotion policies and procedures.

6. Interdisciplinary Research Centers should be established to support research that is relevant to Maine citizens; have demonstrable community benefits; be supported, in part, by partial indirect recovery, support for equipment maintenance, appropriate space allocation; assistance in grant management, as appropriate; and release time; have an outreach coordinator to establish and maintain links between the centers and business and industry; adopt research performance standards; be expected to develop partnerships with other institutions; and should not be static. In other words, there should be mechanisms for introducing new initiatives, and retiring existing initiatives, as circumstances arise.

7. Continue to regularly monitor and assess faculty and staff perceptions, values and attitudes regarding RSCA at USM.

Caveats:

- We have done due diligence to base the findings in this report on all available data. Some data, like publication lists, were not provided, despite numerous requests. Thus, we had to move forward without that information.
- We recognize the limitations of the survey. Although we feel that 58% is an excellent response rate, we acknowledge that many faculty chose not to participate.

But, given these constraints we have applied appropriate rigor in the analyses of the information available.
Task Team #5: Ensuring the University’s Fiscal Sustainability

Divisions and Units represented by the members of Task Team #5 include Academic Affairs with University Outreach, University Advancement, Finance and Administration, and Institutional Research and Assessment.

1. Academic Affairs: There are several ongoing initiatives in Academic Affairs that contribute to ensuring USM’s fiscal sustainability. These include increasing online course offerings, increasing graduate certificates, conducting program reviews, providing training, evaluating programs, and assessing the need for new programs.

In FY2013, the priorities for Academic Affairs in keeping with the strategic goal include focus on:

- Enrollment
- Retention
- On-line Course Offerings

The advent of Provost Stevenson may result in a re-evaluation of priorities and action items.

2. University Advancement: Prior to her departure in March, VP Meg Weston reviewed the 27 initiatives and actions outlined in the Matrix and noted each has realized significant progress, is completed, or is ongoing. Until a new VP is hired, department directors Karen Pelletier, Vicki LaQuerre, David Hughes, and consultant Kelly Frost, endorse the existing plan and have agreed to focus on the items outlined in the Matrix until a new vice president has had the opportunity to review, reorder, and suggest new initiatives.

3. Finance and Administration:

- Enrollment, enrollment, enrollment! In conjunction with all other divisions of the University, the units reporting to Finance and Administration are focused on and in the process of developing and implementing initiatives to attract and retain students. Actions run the gamut from installing improved directional signage to assist newcomers, to renovating space used primarily by students on the Gorham and Portland campuses. Additional resources have been allocated to support scholarship strategies and for the ongoing development of student academic-support areas and more inviting on-campus living conditions.

- Student Financial and Other Administrative Services: A growing recognition is emerging of the need to integrate student financial services, e.g., financial aid, tuition and fee payment plans, student loans, scholarship processing, both within this financial services group, and along with other student services, e.g., admissions, assessment, and registration. Funding a study to examine ways to better coordinate all of these student service functions could result in improved student service, gains in administrative efficiencies, and improved communication among inter-dependent operations. Ideally, this initiative would include input from, or be coordinated by, the pending hire of a Chief Enrollment Officer.

- Budget Preparation Tool and Procedures Development: With the major components of reorganization in place, and with identification of financial support staff reporting to VP’s, Chiefs, and Deans, the University is ready to consider implementation of a formal system to organize and input annual budget allocations at the account (line-item) level. Such a tool would NOT identify priorities and would NOT determine allocations to USM divisions or colleges. Those functions would reside with University leaders. It WOULD greatly increase the opportunity for university-wide financial managers, at the division and college levels, to participate in building department-level budgets under guidelines, standards, and time-frames coordinated by Finance and Administration.

If there are general questions about information in this report, please contact Task Team #5 Leader, Janet Warnert, at 780-4899. Team Members noted at the top of the report can be contacted for specific information related to the areas they represent.
Task Team #6: Furthering the University’s Commitment to Diversity
(written by Co-Chair Wendy Chapkis)

The Task Team met once each semester. In the fall, our focus was on completing “Activity Forms” for the Matrix project (as requested by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee). We worked closely with Gabe Demaine (the CDIP: Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusivity Programming) on identifying key diversity units and programs on campus. In late fall, she completed over 20 separate forms describing the diversity work of those units and submitted them to the Steering Committee. In the spring, our focus shifted to reviewing the work the CDIP did on implementing last year’s Strategic Planning Task Team #6 proposal for a series of student focus groups.

Throughout this academic year, the CDIP organized five student focus facilitated by Steve Wessler (the former Director of the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence) focusing on the provision and delivery of diversity services. Focus groups targeted such populations as multicultural and ESOL students, LGBT students, students as parents, low income students, and disabled students. Two of those groups were held on the LAC campus, and three were held in Portland. In the spring semester, the CDIP informed the committee that the final report on the focus group participants’ assessment of USM’s existing strengths, weaknesses, and challenges in the area of diversity will be filed by Steve Wessler with the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Dahlia Lynn, by the end of the term and will be posted on the website for that office.

One aspect of the original proposal for the focus groups that will not be completed this year is a public presentation of the findings at a university-wide “diversity summit.” Originally the intention was to hold such an event in the spring of this year; but two considerations make it necessary to postpone the summit until fall of next academic year: first, the 2011-2012 academic year is rapidly coming to an end and is already extremely full of programming events and other university activity; secondly, the committee would like to request two additional focus groups be held before the public presentation to round out the representation of student participants. Those two additional groups would focus on veterans and USM graduate students.

The Strategic Planning Task Team #6 on Diversity proposes that in academic year 2012-2013, those two additional focus groups be held and that a “Diversity Summit” be organized by the Task Team in collaboration with the Coordinator for Diversity and Inclusivity Programming. In addition to a public presentation on the findings from the student focus groups, the summit would provide an opportunity for the campus community to speak out on issues raised by focus group participants (we envision a moderated “open mike” where students, faculty, and staff each have a few minutes to make comments, as well as an opportunity for written comment by those wishing anonymity or uncomfortable speaking in public). We also envision the summit concluding with a reception and cultural performances by individuals and groups representing the diverse communities of USM. All relevant stakeholders – including senior administrators, faculty, students and staff – would be invited to the summit. In order to ensure maximum participation, we would request of the President that staff be released for the late afternoon event.
Task Team #7: Strengthening Community

Group Members: Ross Hickey, Amy Gieseke, Peter Gillis, Chris O’Connor, Casey Webster, Rebecca Silverman
Date: 4/30/12

Group members of Strategic Plan Goal #7: Strengthening Community make the following recommendations:

1. That a common faculty space be identified on both the Portland and Gorham campuses (it is our understanding that one already exists at LAC). Currently the Gorham Task force is working on creating a faculty space in Gorham; this initiative should be supported by administration. A similar group should be created to consider a faculty space on the Portland campus. We recommend that the USM Space Committee be charged with convening a group of Portland based faculty to determine next steps for moving forward with a common faculty space on the Portland campus.

2. That a committee be charged with implementing a USM University Hour. This committee should be comprised of representatives from the four senates, the registrar, and the LAC, Portland, and Gorham campuses. We suggest that one goal of this committee should be to plan at least one event, discrete in size and scale, for next fall semester (a small fund, perhaps $1,000, may be required for speakers and/or catering). This group should also discuss the feasibility of making additional regularly scheduled events at a time and location that allows the maximum amount of USM community members to attend.

3. That the USM Public Affairs office take uniform headshot pictures of all USM faculty and staff and post these pictures on each respective contact page on the USM website. Students have expressed frustration with the lack of staff and faculty photos on the USM website. The USM community needs to be able to identify each other, and this would be one very concrete step we could take to improve community through our website.

4. That administration support the Polycom Room Scheduling Recommendation as outlined by USM’s CIO. The recommendation takes place over the span of 3 years. The recommendation for year one has been implemented and is in place. The recommendation for year two is slated to start in Spring 2013. The improvement of the polycom room scheduling system would greatly improve the ability of faculty and staff to book polycom rooms, thus reducing commuting between campuses.

5. That a more official and permanent Portland Admission office be established on the USM Portland campus. This task should be assigned to the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Admission, who will need to come up with a space and staffing plan.

6. That individual metrics be assigned for each strategy and action item within the Strategic Plan. We cannot determine if progress is being made toward the goals as outlined in the Strategic Plan if there is no way to measure our progress. Furthermore, we recommend that specific people and departments be identified as the primary entity responsible for implementing each item outlined in the strategic plan.
Task Team #8: Deploying USM’s Physical Plant in Support of the University’s Mission

The fiscal year 2011-12 has seen significant work towards the two overall strategies identified in the USM Strategic Plan: Complete a Comprehensive Master Plan and to Contain Energy Expenditures. To achieve these ends we have further divided these down to five Action Items:

- Classroom Improvements
- Energy Efficiency
- Improvements and Upgrades (not classroom)
- Renovation and Construction
- Planning.

There have been numerous projects and activities completed in each area. A few examples follow:

**Classroom Improvements** - Luther Bonney Classrooms; Payson Smith Classrooms; video conference scheduling change; upgrading of classroom wiring and technology; and Glickman Learning Commons.

**Energy Efficiency** – Conversion of the Portland Central Heat Plant from #6 Fuel oil to Natural Gas; conversion of four “white houses” from #2 Fuel oil to natural gas; Bailey Hall Energy Bond; and Efficiency upgrades to CEC HVAC System.

**Improvements and Upgrades** – Bailey Hall Renovation and moves; ResNet Move and Renovation; upgrading network connectivity as resomurces allow; and Artificial Turf field installation in Gorham.

**Renovations** – Replacement of the Law Chiller; window replacement in Upton, Hastings and Anderson Halls; and Luther Bonney roof replacement.

**Planning** – completion of Utility Master Plan and Gorham Central Heat Plant Upgrade Study.

In addition to these examples of completed projects there are numerous projects and actions in planning stages or in progress. Just a few are upgrade of the UMS/USM data center; lighting upgrades in Portland and Gorham; Comprehensive plan for Portland and Gorham campuses; EPSCOR high bandwidth internet connectivity project; HVAC replacement in Luther Bonney (this is scheduled for this summer )and Hill gym HVAC replacement.

The challenge is to keep moving forward without becoming discouraged. There are several hundred million dollars of deferred maintenance that needs to be addressed as well as upgrading old classrooms to the needs of the 21st Century. We are approaching these as resources are available and if other more immediate priorities do not arise.
President Botman’s Strategic Vision for USM, September, 2011

The University of Southern Maine is justly proud of its concerted efforts to become a stronger, leaner and more fiscally sound institution that is focused on playing a pivotal role in its region’s cultural, academic, and economic development. In keeping with USM’s goal to be recognized as the intellectual center of southern and central Maine, we will apply our intellectual capital to the challenges facing our community and our state. We affirm our commitment to embracing student access, student success, and rigorous, state-of-the-art learning and to creating academic programs that serve the needs of our region and this century. We also pledge conscientious stewardship of our physical plant in order to foster a safe and congenial environment conducive to teaching, learning, and working.

While recognizing the quality of USM’s many departments and programs, the university seeks to gain special recognition of programs that address specific areas of broader public interest. To that end, USM will cultivate greater academic distinction in:

- **Environmental health**, drawing together the sciences, technology, the Muskie School, the Cutler Institute, and the School of Nursing
- **Entrepreneurship**, with emphasis on the nexus between technology, business, the humanities, the social sciences, and computer science
- **Innovation**, exploring the intersection of music, art, and the sciences in areas such as performance, the digital arts and innovation engineering.

USM will create Centers of Excellence in the areas of toxicology, the Cutler Institute, and innovation science. Furthermore, the university will return to its historic roots in teacher preparation, reviving undergraduate teacher education to compliment existing graduate programs, especially in math and science; these programs will strategically link USM to the K-12 sector in order to align curricula and attend to student success throughout the K-20 continuum.

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee will work to advance the strategic plan, *Preparing USM for the Future, 2009-2014*, as it approaches its mid-way point, deepening the work it has begun while making appropriate mid-point course corrections.

Committee members will use data to inform and assess the direction of the work. In addition, they will reach out to other members of the USM community to advance the activities associated with the original document or developed in accordance with more recent thinking on the 21st-century university.

Committee members include:

- College of Science, Technology, Health
- College of Management and Human Service
- College of Art, Humanities and Social Science
- Finance
- Library
- Facilities
- Student Affairs
- Student Success
- Advancement
Charge to the Task Teams, November 2, 2011

General communication to Task Team (co) chairs:

1) Overall vision—we are aiming for the participatory, public notion of strategic planning implementation. Idea of an on-line matrix, why we have task teams

2) Task team has discretion to form, size, schedule, determine function. We provide support.

3) Continuity with the past—check with past co-chairs, lists & inventories, action items undertaken/requested.

4) SP provides oversight and overlap, not excessive redundancies—seek efficiencies and checks & balances.

The mission and process for task teams:

Mission: Accomplish action items for its assigned goal/objectives. At any time, the task team can initiate action items it deems appropriate and for which its members have the authority to accomplish. Towards this end, the process is:

1) Collect/inventory the units, actions, and responsibilities at USM who already work on the task team’s goals & objectives, whether knowingly or not. Depending on the task team history, much or all of this may be already done.

2) Organize the action items and responsible entities. Is there any one structure that overlays the objectives? Ex.: Research Council and Goal 4. Any one or more offices or positions that have overall coordination/organizational responsibility?

3) Correlate action items, responsibilities and authorities—how do they match up? Do they allow the organizational structure to do its job? Are they assigned to the appropriate units? Any questions?

4) Recommend Connection. What does the task team recommend to improve correlation, organization, and inventory? What changes might be a good idea? These recommendations will be to accomplish action items and will be brought to the steering committee and passed along to the appropriate entities, including the President and her cabinet. At the same time, the task team may also carry out action items that are logically and directly within the purview of its members. The task team can consider a time line for the action items and recommendations, and key them into the goals and objectives.
To implement your vision for Strategic Planning (SP) we have reconstituted the Steering Committee (SC) and an implementation Task Team (TT) for each goal. We are enthused about the quality and depth of the membership in these groups, and have charged the SC to provide context for the various planning activities and initiatives that are currently underway in service to the strategic plan goals. Through an inventory process we are identifying what is being done, and we are creating a matrix of documentation and support. We will use this matrix to discover any threats and opportunities for making a more cohesive implementation strategy. For example, an activity might be currently underway but could benefit from becoming more widely known, more widely supported, and linked to other activities. The matrix might also suggest some clear gaps that could be addressed. We expect the result of this analysis to provide new efficiencies in implementation, and to support recruitment and retention by making university processes more clear and purposeful. Thus we hope to engage the larger university community.

We have a two-phased approach to Strategic Planning Implementation. Each phase involves 1) collecting and analyzing information and 2) the creation of a tool to support this work—first a matrix spreadsheet (phase I), and then a more sophisticated and interactive database (phase II).

**Phase I** (through end of this semester): The TTs and SC liaisons are inventorying all work currently being done in service of each of the 8 goals. This inventory process is important to understand the working landscape of USM; much work is being done at USM that has hitherto not been supplied in relation to each other and within the larger strategic context. The information is being captured in a comprehensive matrix. The matrix will reveal where our energy and strength are, as well as where there are gaps in SPP implementation.

**Phase II** (spring semester): We look at overall coordination and efficiency in our organization and the work that is being done to meet the various strategic efforts. The TTs and their SP liaisons will begin to correlate action items with responsibilities and authorities—do they match up? Do they allow the organizational structure to do its job? What is recommended to improve processes to accomplish the action items? TTs may initiate action items that are directly within the purview of their members, and will result in improved communication and efficiencies; these will require no new financial resources. The TTs and SC will meet regularly in the spring to analyze all data, and to recommend actions that may require additional approvals and investment. All recommendations brought forward to the President and senior decision-makers will be the result of thorough and systematic review and analysis of the data. Also in Phase II, will we be converting the data from the matrix into a sophisticated and interactive database. Many higher education institutions have strategic plans and matrices—it is now the norm; but very few have them publicly available on the internet, and fewer still have them interactive. Here is where we are poised to create something innovative and effective as a management tool.

The SC meets every other week on Monday mornings from 8:30-10:30am. The TTs are responsible for organizing themselves this semester to complete the work of populating the matrix. In the spring,
the SC and TTs will meet together on a regular basis. The SP website is current and updated regularly: http://www.usm.maine.edu/spp. It includes agendas and minutes for the SC meetings. It also connects the user to relevant links at USM.

We deeply appreciate your faith and support in us expressed this past summer, and we are working hard to create something that we think will be exciting and useful for the university. When fully operational, Phase II will pave the way for an active, engaged university community, which understands and uses the power of strategic and tactical planning to serve the overall mission and goals of the university.
Spring Progress Report, March 2012

Strategic Planning 2011-2012
Co-chairs’ Summary Report on Work Accomplished through 3/14/12

The co-chairs’ goal for the 2011-12 academic year was to get down to basics with our approach to implementing the strategic plan. For us, the basics meant knowing fully what progress is being made towards implementing the 8 goals of the plan and finding a way to make this information easily accessible. With better management of this information, we would know such things as where the university has put its resources and its energy so far, and if we needed to continue with current activities or make mid-cycle corrections to re-align with the universities goals and priorities.

Our focus this year, then, has been on inventorying the many areas of activity at the university that are in support of the Strategic Plan, and developing an instrument that will better manage this information to be used for current and future strategic planning.

Over the course of the fall and spring semester to date, the 8 Task Teams responsible for the 8 goals, have been gathering information and populating a database that serves as a central repository for the activities that are being done in support of the strategic plan. This information now resides within a simple database as a first iteration. We hope to move this data into a more sophisticated database that will be searchable based on each of the goal areas, as well as based on subject areas (e.g. “retention”, “diversity”). So, for example, with just a few clicks, management can see what progress is being made in all the areas of activity, and can respond efficiently to this information. We believe this database should be a central tool for tracking our actions, managing our resources, and for overall planning and decision-making to help us move more efficiently to the strategic goals of the university.

Creating this important instrument will serve the university community well and will serve as an important instrument for future planning. As a tool in future strategic planning, it will drive us to establish measurable outcomes by which we can trace our progress. By having data easily accessible, we can make quicker adjustments to actions that respond better to market changes.

We recommend that the management of this database be assigned to an appropriate office (e.g. Institutional Research?) and that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee turn its attention to making recommendations on strategies to address the university’s most pressing issues (e.g. enrollments, retention) and to longer term planning for the future. The efforts of the strategic planning process need to be central to the university’s business and be fully aligned with and in support of the decision-making from top administration.
Reflections from a 2011-2012 Strategic Plan Steering Committee Member

What we have learned after a year of strategic planning is that University of Southern Maine is a mission-driven institution, but that adherence to Strategic Planning is haphazard and accidental. The matrix that we compiled documented the vast array of initiatives throughout the university that support the university’s Strategic Plan, but few of those initiatives were initiated or coordinated by the planning process. Localized decision-making is a strength of the institution. Individual units have a strong sense of identity and mission, and most are systemic in advancing plans and programs to achieve it.

University of Southern Maine lacks two basic things that relate to planning. First, it has long been without a clear sense of identity and mission. Is USM predominately a teaching or a research institution? A graduate or undergraduate institution? Should it have a liberal arts or a professional emphasis? Is it a residential college serving traditional-aged students or an institution that focuses upon adult-learners and transfer students? That USM strives to be all things to all people can be a strength for students and the community in that it serves a variety of needs and populations, but it makes prioritization nearly impossible. University planning and the crafting of mission statements has largely played a role of conservation; we articulate who we already are rather than what we want and need to be. Planning has yet to help us make choices. We suspect, as a group, that the “un-pruned” nature of the university has become its identity and is unlikely to focus the institution.

Strategic planning has opened up other possibilities that do show promise. As is reflected in the matrix, localized decision-making and planning have initiative an array of activities designed to advance unit and university goals. What we lack is systemic spiral from assessment of activity within units to institutional change. We propose, then, that Strategic Planning be institutionalized and made adjacent to Institutional Research so that planning not only catalogue activity already being done, but systematically study the effectiveness of that activity, and then monitor the way in which localized units respond to assessment.