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Metropolitan University Steering Group - Meeting Notes CMHS Discussion Meeting – June 19

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University of Southern Maine

Meeting Notes

CMHS Discussion Meeting – June 19, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Lee Community Hall, Wishcamper Center

<u>Present:</u> Richard Barringer (Chair), Jack Kartez (Facilitator), Emma Gelsinger (Recorder), David Swardlick, Glenn Cummings, Cathy Fallona

<u>Guests:</u> Adele Baruch, Bert Smoluck, Bob Blackwood, Bob Martin, Charlie Bernacchio, Charlie Colgan, Chris Beerits, Curtis Bohlen, Dan Demeritt, Danielle Vayenas, Dean Joe McDonnell, Ed Palmer, Elise Bolda, Elizabeth Morin, Fred Heimann, Greg Sanborn, Helen Ward, Jack Sutton, Jean Whitney, Jeanne Whynot-Vickers, Jill Blackwood, Joan Klayman, Kent Peterson, Kim Warren, Kreg Ettenger, Kris Sahonchik, Kyle Radke, Laurie Davie, Maureen Wissman, Mike Wing, Nancy Artz, Nicholas Curlew, Pat Red, Paula Gerstenblatt, Peter Twatchtman, Peter Watson, Ron Cantor, Sondra Bogdonoff, Susan Fineran, Tammy Blair, Tom Lafavore, Tracy Michaud-Stutzman

Part I: Welcome, Charge to MUSG, Introductions

- Welcome and Comment – Joe McDonnell, Cathy Fallona, Glenn Cummings, David Swardlick
    - o *Public higher education is going through some serious issues nation-wide and in Maine; Maine faces particular challenges with demographics and out of state tuition*
    - o *As part of this transformation a recommendation has been made for USM to align itself with the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities*
- Charge to MUSG - What the MUSG is doing and is not doing: Dick Barringer, Chair MUSG *(see attached powerpoint). Q&A, comments:*
    - o *Are there going to be forums for all USM colleges and campuses to discuss how we can proceed together?*
    - o *The best way to add value to what we're already doing is to increase communication and collaboration*
    - o *We need to build on the collaborations we already have*
    - o *We are not doing a good enough job educating the public about what we're now doing in the community*
    - o *Does the MUSG have any official affiliation with the Title III grant?*

- - - ▪ *Not officially but through committee members*
- Introduction of Facilitator - Jack Kartez, Professor, Muskie School of Public Service
- Self-Introductions - Identify most important hope or stake today
  - See *Appendix I* for notes

Part II: Key Indicators of Success for the MU in 5 years for LAC Community, Students and/or College (See *Appendix II* for notes)

Major themes that came out of the Key Indicators discussion

- *This truly needs to be a paradigm shift in the culture of USM and we need to change our behavior as a university. If this turns out to simply be a rebranding of USM, it will fail.*
- *An emphasis needs to be placed on communicating with the community about their needs and being able to respond to these quickly*
- *People want to do things but the university does not support them*
- *USM and its graduates are recognized as important to the region's economic life by stakeholders outside the university but the relationship is undeveloped.*
- *Overall, people seem to echo things we have heard in previous meetings and provided good insights:*
  - *There are engaged things being done or that could be done, but the university does not support or recognize it*
  - *We need a comprehensive structure for measuring and evaluating the community engagement of the university*
  - *USM needs to structure itself for innovation and to co-discover community needs*

Part III: Next Steps and Accountability

- Emma, Dick and Jack will send meeting notes out to MUSG and those at the CMHS Outreach meeting asap
- MUSG will work over the summer with other MU institutions on best practices
- The MUSG will consider a university-wide convocation to discuss the MU concept at USM
- We will publish all working papers and drafts on the website, and invite comments, at www.usm.maine.edu/musteeringgroup
- Our goal is to finish laying out these implementation steps by the end of the summer so we can work on getting this going in fall

Appendix I: Notes on Introductions

- I hope that the university can stabilize so concepts like this can move forward; but it seems like there needs to be a solid fiscal foundation first
- I believe we can do a much better job of integrating campuses, especially LAC
- I hope the university will become the lead learner for the educators in the area, and make the necessary changes that is required in the field right now
- Strengthening community partnerships - this has to be dynamic where we respond to needs and community members know more about USM
- Creating a linkage between the university and the schools – I'm very hopeful about the systematic approach
- Mutual benefit to the community members and USM
- There's a lot of great work already being done and I would love to see the same amount of work internally building our own community here at USM
- Establish more connectivity with the programs offered at USM - our business thrives on an educated workforce
- Systematically extend our programs to other communities in the state
- The content and types of problems that should be solved by an urban university - I'd like to see us thinking about how we can be solving those problems
- We rely greatly on the UMS for educated graduates and interns, and the university needs to stabilize for the long term
- Creating this systematic view and positive cultures is very exciting for me
- Our program has had long standing relationships with the community and our students fill an important need in the state in regards to mental health services
- The lack of cohesion among faculty is a problem; when there is communication between faculty we are able to do some really important things. Faculty are going to have to think and behave differently
- I hope to learn more about these ideas and what it means to be a MU
- We're uniquely situated to build on the relationships that we already have
- Our job is helping everybody around us – I think we do this and we run into all sorts of challenges finding relationships with faculty and administration; I'm here looking for partnerships
- I was thrilled to see that part of the MU is college access and grants – the health of USM and SMCC is vital to rebuild and work on our partnerships; USM is well positioned to help us and meet our needs
- We need to remember that students from an entire region come here, we need to support the entire region
- Everybody here has things that they're doing that are relative to this and *all of us will have to give something up to accomplish this* – we have to remember that
- I hear potential students talking about USM as a fallback instead of a first choice

- It would be great to see stories and profiles of what we're already doing come together in a positive way and coming up with themes or clusters of activities to do
- Hoping we will be able to get out of our own way of being a traditional university and turn to how we can work together; we have an incredible creative community around us
- I don't think the USM story is being told, we are not engaging with alumni enough – there is a lot of potential here
- I would like to take all the things I'm hearing today and get that directly to the community and to students
- *We're a house divided, I hope we can have a shared vision in the future*
- It's really difficult to find peers in our age group because most professionals our age are leaving
- I'm very invested in USM – I'd like to see it become dynamic and student's first choice
- We're in a great position to do joint degrees, professional development and attract people to the area
- My area of scholarship revolves around community engagement – understanding the challenges is just as important as understanding the successes; *it takes a lot of muscle and resources to shift a paradigm and this can't just be a rebranding*
- *Community is the real name of my college – it's all about community, trust, respect, and communication both externally and internally*
- The business school mission says that we are all about research, teaching and service; I hope to see how to systematically incorporate that into our program
- To break down barriers between colleges and campuses and figure out how to have speed and agility so that we can keep up with the changes happening
- I'm looking for us to be less bound by process and less averse to risk and recognize that this is a place where we teach and explore ideas – in order to be innovative we have to give up some tools that hold us back
- We are metropolitan by place, but we should compare ourselves against the best in MU's
- I'm looking forward to finding ways to make the successes here relatable to the community in Maine so that everyone understands we all have a stake in public higher education
- I get frustrated when my workforce comes from UNH and not USM – I'm very happy to hear what's going on and I want to be sure not to lose the regional emphasis
- I left the state after I started at USM because I wasn't connected to USM or the community – we haven't had a lot of flow from USM into our workforce
- It's really easy for me to see how to do community engagement with my business school students but how do we do that with younger students and honor students?
- I'm very invested and interested and have a lot of experience building systems of change

- I agree with people who say that USM does not brand itself well, it seems strange that we don't sell the experience you can have here in this region
- I look forward to getting out of this room and finding out more from other people in the community about their needs
- I've contracted with 4 of the universities on the CUMU list because we either didn't have the capacity here or I didn't know about the capacity
- *We've been doing our work a long time with little recognition and support from USM*
- *We all acknowledge that USM does the work of the MU but I don't think we understand what it's really going to take to make this change*
- It's important to get people to buy that we are a MU and that MU is a good thing for Maine
- My biggest concern is how we interact with people who we consider "diverse" – we don't support students like that enough
- *USM has struggled with its identity since it began – we should sell MU in that we are embracing the region and each of us is responsible for telling the story*

Appendix II: Notes on Key Indicators provided by Attendees

- I worked with 2 of the CUMU and they were very responsive to the needs of the community, where the community defined what they needed; they were important partners in relationships that have real economic and development impacts
- If this is going to be developed for self-improvement for USM only, it is going to fail – we have health problems and economic development problems they desperately need us to step up as a university
- Harvard business school case study about Austin, TX – points to critical role that the university has in the community
- Austin still has a huge divide between the community and the university; created one of the more segregated communities
- *Community engagement requires a certain investment of time and how we define the community; we need to look at pedagogy and tenure and promotion standards*
- What does community mean? What does it mean to allow failure?
- *I hope that a series of metrics are created so that we can actually measure progress so that we're all driving to same goals from different angles*
- We need to recognize that there are national and global standards that are driving professional disciplines – even if students don't stay here they need to be able to address professional challenges anywhere they go
- I'm cautions as we tread those waters of community engagement - the time commitment on the part of faculty is immense and you can do a lot of damage with relationships by sending out floods of untrained students
- We need to have guidelines for service learning for both faculty and students

- We need to recognize the boundaries: the university's job is to learn new things and share what we've learned with others - there is a distinction between a university with a mission and a large consulting company with untrained staff
- *The real engagement is in the mutual learning*
- There's lots of different ways to engage (e.x. faculty and students sitting on committee) – just being a part of the community is a huge value
- Expertise and resources that already exist in the community especially with early field experiences – collaborate with them to help students shape and define their learning
- If you are a collaborative group, decisions are going to be messy – the university cannot control all of the decisions being made; we need to know what the standards are because structures have not been clarified yet
- Community partners are often on the front lines and their time is at a premium and their time is not always valued – *I wonder how we can promote those partners for their leadership to emphasize their value?*
- We need to recognize our partners and what they do
- Students in USM in the high school pipeline all have very different aspirations; we need to recognize the diversity of our students
- When working with low income students, just being there and giving that access and exposure is crucial – we need to personalize our education – fit is what attracts students
- We do have a high impact education grant looking at retention etc.
- We need a very participatory model that builds credibility; we can't just be sending students out to agencies to say we are engaging
- Metrics being used at other universities are being looked at by MUSG
- Part of the problem is that we don't understand the specific needs – once we do, we can understand the capacity and then we can develop the measures
- The measures have to be responsive to the needs of the community
- *Asking broadly about community needs can raise expectations and overwhelm the university – we need to adopt a focus and form platform partnerships*
- Creating a sense of expectation for the community can be dangerous especially in the financial state we are in
- Some don't know what you can offer when you ask what the need is, and so they don't even know where that conversation begins
- Maybe it's about asking where the opportunities for growth are and what they see as opportunities for USM to help
- We have all these needs we want to address and the mental capacity but remember that these activities are also meant to make the university sustainable (return on investment)
- *We need to build an enterprise that can sustain itself*
- Community members also enjoy helping us – the human component of giving is very powerful
- If you sit with groups of excited young people what you hear is "we can do this, we can do that" – you don't have to be quite so careful with big ideas

- The existing processes of this university are detrimental to creative people here