

STANDARD 6

STUDENT SERVICES

DESCRIPTION

Student Services and Student Leadership

The Student Services Division is an integral component in the education and growth of students at the University of Maine at Fort Kent. Student Services personnel strive to foster and enhance the academic and social development of all students in a safe, supportive, and intellectually stimulating campus environment. Philosophies guiding student services are found in the Student Services Mission Statement and Core Values (Appendix 6.01: Student Success and Advising Plan). The statement and core values guide all members of the Student Services staff in their work with students.

UMFK maintains convenient campus services and programs that support students' basic needs in all areas of University life while encouraging students to take personal responsibility for their academic and social behavior. Personnel in the Student Services Office are available for consultation about any question or problem a student may have. Student Services foster student enrichment through co-curricular activities, extra-curricular activities, diversity programming, wellness programming, and student clubs and organizations (Exhibit 6.01: Student Services Information).

Student Services Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/studserv/>

The Student Senate is the student government organization at UMFK. The Senate is an elected group of students comprised of 17 seats. Student senators are



elected from the student body and are generally a mix of both traditional and nontraditional students. The Director of Student Services is the advisor for the Student Senate. Funding for extra- and co-curricular activities on campus is derived from student activity fees paid by individual students. The Student Senate constitution and bylaws are comprehensive and complete (Exhibit 3.14: Student Senate Constitution, Bylaws, and Minutes).

Student Senate Website
<http://students.umfk.maine.edu/localuser/senate/>

Students have opportunities to create their own organizations and clubs according to their own interests. Examples of UMFK clubs and organizations from the past and present are: Earth Club, Non-Traditional Students Club, Diversity Club, Kappa Delta Phi and Kappa Rho, Newman Club, Student Nurses Organization (SNO), and Student Teachers Educational Professional Society (STEPS). Details of each of these organizations and clubs are available on the student services website.

Student Equal Opportunity, Diversity, Learning, and Physical Needs

UMFK does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, or veterans' status in employment, admissions, education, and all other areas of University of Maine System (UMS). UMFK encourages diversity through the recruitment of American and international students as well as through

recruitment of faculty with diverse backgrounds.

Students with a documented disability, who need academic accommodations, are strongly encouraged to meet with an Academic and Counseling Services (ACS) representative to develop a plan for their accommodations. ACS also includes tutoring, career development, counseling, placement testing, and remedial courses. These services are disseminated on the Internet as well as in the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, page 22, and reviewed on a regular basis with students to facilitate a shared learning community and responsible citizenry (Exhibit 6.02: Academic & Counseling Services, *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*).

Academic and Counseling Services Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/acserv/>

The UMFK Diversity Committee consists of a minimum of one member from each of the educational divisions of the University, professional staff in the areas of Residential Life and Diversity programming, Library and Information Services, and Human Resources.

All of the academic divisions have incorporated classes into their curriculum that have a diversity component (Appendix 1.03: *Institutional Performance Scorecard*; KPI 1.1-1.4).

UMFK is small and students have one-on-one interaction with Student Services staff. The staff makes qualitative assessments including student needs, student trends, and overall student population characteristics. The staff then uses this information to make provisions to ensure academic and social success.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office provides information and counseling in the area of

financing higher education at UMFK. Financial assistance is provided by institutional, federal, and state funds in the form of grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, loans, and work opportunities. Approximately 80% of students receive financial assistance each year and over \$4.1 million was administered by this office in AY 2004-2005. Awards are determined in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education Federal Methodology and subject to federal and state regulations, which provide for a fair and equitable analysis and monitoring of academic progress, among other requirements.

Most awards are based on financial need. All eligible students must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid for consideration for federal, state, and institutional funds. UMFK and UMS also provide scholarships from endowed funds. The criteria for these awards are published in several places, including the *UMFK 2005-2007 Catalog* and the Financial Aid Office website. In addition, UMS policies and Maine laws provide for several programs of tuition waivers based on student qualifications. Financial aid services are publicized on the Internet as well as in the *UMFK Student/Academic Planner 2003-2004*, page 25, and the *UMFK 2005-2007 Catalog* (Exhibit 6.03: Financial Aid Reports and Audits; Exhibit 4.42: Scannell and Kurz, Inc. Report).

Private scholarships donated to the UMFK Foundation are invested through UMS Offices. The spending policy for these funds is determined by the Board of Trustees (BOT) and currently calls for a spending level of 5% of a three year rolling average. This is consistent with national norms. The earned return on these endowed funds during FY 2005 was 19%.

Financial Aid Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/financialaid/>

Federal work-study funds are supplemented by institutionally supported work

opportunities. Guideline manuals for student work-study employees and supervisors are published and distributed every year and are available on the UMFK website (Exhibit 6.04: Work Study Guideline Manuals).

Work Study Employer Guide for Supervisors
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/pdfs/financialaid/empgd.pdf>

Work Study Employment Guide for Students
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/pdfs/financialaid/studgd.pdf>

Student Orientation, Advisement, Career Planning, Health Services, and Residential Life

The University provides new students with an array of programs to prepare them for a positive experience at this institution. This includes an early academic scheduling process for all in-coming students that focuses on the individual needs of each student. Students are provided the opportunity to learn more about the campus, its people, and its programs at an extensive fall (and a briefer program for spring admits) orientation program (Exhibit 6.05: Orientation Program Schedule), which is also described in the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, page 47.

Orientation Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/studserv/orientation/>

All first year freshmen are required to complete a three-credit First Year Experience (FYE) program titled “Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes for Success.” This three credit course is designed to introduce students to effective academic and social strategies for use in their development as students and as citizens. The course focuses on crucial knowledge and skill areas that are necessary for the success of all students in their academic and social experiences (Exhibit 4.25: HUM 102: Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes for Success Syllabus).

Academic advisement on campus is a multi-faceted process that includes the cooperation of individual faculty and staff members and academic divisions. The purpose of the advising program is to guide students through their academic progression, campus socialization, and career exploration (Appendix 6.01). Faculty and student roles in academic advising are also described in the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, page 11 and are available online.

Academic Advising Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/academics/affairs/advising/>

The Office of Student Services and the Office of Academic and Counseling Services are the two entities most involved in career planning and placement on campus. Basic services such as resume preparation, interviewing skills, and job placement are shared by the personnel in these offices. The new Student Success Coordinator is the position that will bring both of these areas into focus on student needs.

Career Center Resources Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/acserv/career/>

Student Services provides for basic health and dining needs as well as orientation and services related to off-campus housing and residential life. Students who choose to live on campus can opt to reside in one of three residence halls with a total capacity of 300. Residential Life professional and student staff enforce residence halls policies, provide counsel, and generate extensive hall-related programming including extra-curricular, diversity, and wellness programming.

Students have access to a state of the art primary health care clinic on campus. The clinic, which is a contracted service with local health care providers, provides a wide-range of physical and psychological health care services on a walk-in clinical basis. In

addition, the Office of Academic and Counseling Services counselors, Student Services staff, and Residential Life staff provide basic personal counseling to students in need.

Residential Life Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/studserv/reslife/>

Health Clinic Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/studserv/health/>

Athletics

Intramural and Intercollegiate Athletics are a part of the recreational program available at UMFK. The campus is affiliated with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and is a member of the Sunrise Conference. UMFK offers men's and women's soccer and basketball. Athletes are considered to be students first and athletes second, and no athletic scholarships are awarded. UMFK follows NAIA rules of eligibility. Student data is reviewed each semester and reported through the Register's Office to the NAIA National Office. Student athletes must meet minimum requirements in both GPA and credit hours. Further information about athletics is available online and in print (Exhibit 6.06: UMFK Athletics).

UMFK Athletics Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/athletics/>

Students who choose not to participate in the intercollegiate options are given many other alternatives. Co-curricular activities are developed for both traditional and non-traditional students through the Athletics Department, Student Life, and the Distance Education and Academic Outreach Office. UMFK offers intramural sports of all kinds as well as free access to the Gold Standard Weight Room, Cardiovascular Room, racquetball and basketball courts, and the soccer field. Fort Kent's rural setting also gives students the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities such as canoeing, climbing, snow shoeing, and skiing (Exhibit

6.07: *NSSE 2004 Mean Comparison Report*; Sections 6 & 7).

Student Services Training, Facilities, and Funding

The University makes a special effort to hire experienced personnel to work in the Division of Student Services. These employees receive a great deal of their student service training on the job. Student Services staff are also active participants in system-wide training and conferences, and many are members of professional associations.

Student Services facilities include three residence halls; one of which is brand new, a dining facility, a full service sports complex, a bookstore/mailroom/ switchboard, a student health clinic, and numerous staff offices.

Student Ethical Standards, Rights, and Privacy

UMFK is in compliance with the *UMS Student Conduct Code*. The *UMS Student Conduct Code* seeks to promote the pursuit of activities that contribute to the intellectual, ethical, and physical development of all students. It is expected that all students will act with proper regard for the rights of all members of the UMFK family. All policies relating to students are published annually in the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, (Exhibit: 6.02) and are available online. The handbook also includes pertinent information on campus and community activities and resources.

The institution is in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This act governs the security of a student's permanent academic record and personal information. UMFK is also in compliance with the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which governs safety and security

of the student health information; specifically, information attained at the Student Health Clinic and by the University's Athletic Trainer; and the Gramm, Leach, Bliley Act of the Federal Trade Commission (GLB-FTC), which governs the safety and security of all pertinent student financial information; specifically, information attained in the University's Financial Aid and Business Offices. The HIPAA policy is available online.

HIPAA Policy Website

<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/studserv/hipaa/>

Student Services Evaluation

The Office of Student Services maintains and publishes an annual report of campus crime activity as required by the Cleary Act of the Federal Government and manages all documentation regarding international students entering the United States (US) for study at UMFK through the use of the Department of Homeland Security's SEVIS System. This information is available online at the Student Services website above and in the exhibit file (Exhibit 6.08: *Campus Crime and Security Report*).

Recently the UMFK enrolled in the *National Survey for Student Engagement* (Exhibit 4.29: *NSSE Institutional Report 2004*). This survey is designed to provide information about a student's University experience, views on the quality of the education received, and how time was spent while at UMFK. This program selects a representative sample of UMFK's first year students and graduating seniors to be surveyed for purposes of external benchmarking.

The Office of Student Services uses a number of other assessment tools to provide information about student satisfaction with specific programs. On a semester basis, ARAMark Dining Services surveys meal plan students (Exhibit 6.09: ARAMark Survey) and the UMFK Health Clinic surveys students on an annual basis (Exhibit

6.10: Student Health Clinic Survey).

Recently, the entire campus has been surveyed with regards to their behaviors and attitudes regarding tobacco use and alcohol and drug use (Exhibit 6.11: Campus Tobacco Use Survey; Exhibit 6.12: CORE Alcohol and Drug Use Survey).

All Student Services staff members provide the Director of Student Services annually with affinity diagrams outlining goals and objectives for their programs.

APPRAISAL

Student Services and Student Leadership

Over the past 10 years, UMFK has made many improvements in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities as students would frequently complain of "nothing to do." This reaction may have reflected a lack of effective communication about what was available. Improvement in that area is an ongoing effort. To that end, the Student Services Office and the Student Senate informs students of student organizations and upcoming activities at their website, and students are also informed of campus events through the University weekly newsletter, *The Valley Vision Currents* (Exhibit 6.13), as well as at the campus website.

Student Equal Opportunity, Diversity, Learning, and Physical Needs

An important goal of the Diversity Committee is to provide workshops for faculty and staff on subjects that relate to diversity topics. Accessibility to all areas of campus for students with disabilities is another goal, which has not been achieved.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office has gone through several changes since 1995. A major catalyst for these changes has been technology and software. The office has worked toward a more personalized service by reducing paper, streamlining the application process, and using Web-based applications for students to receive and download forms. Students are now able to check their financial aid status on-line, as well as check and complete requirements. This past year, Student Personnel staff have conducted a deliberate effort to push electronic mail use among students as a means of official communication. Full use of data communication with lender, federal, and state partners has allowed for timelier and easier processing for students.

Financial Aid Office personnel are currently participating in the UMS conversion to the PeopleSoft® integrated management system. This process is expected to be completed in 2010. At that time, the current financial aid database system, Financier, will be retired. In the meantime, with UMS approval, the Financial Aid Office hopes to upgrade to the on-line version of Financier on a system-wide basis. The new integrated PeopleSoft® data system will eliminate the multiple systems currently used in admissions, financial aid, registration, and billing, as well as communication problems inherent in separate systems.

Financial Aid Office personnel participate in training opportunities offered by federal, state, and professional organizations, as well as UMS PeopleSoft® training, where and when budgets permit. The UMFK Director of Financial Aid currently co-chairs a state-wide committee examining future aid strategies for UMS.

UMFK is currently participating in a review by the firm of Scannell and Kurz to explore whether UMS and individual campuses are

achieving the greatest leverage possible from student aid funds available. A campus visit by the firm occurred in March 2005 and a follow up report was delivered in June. The University's financial aid program is subject to both annual and unscheduled audits from the internal and independent auditors and federal and/or state program reviews. (Exhibit 6.03: Financial Aid Reports and Audits).

Student Orientation, Advisement, Career Planning, Health Services, and Residential Life

A new student Orientation Program is now being offered in January for students beginning in the spring semester, in addition to the September orientation session for those starting in the fall. The new orientation program has been well received by students. The University is currently in the process of reviewing its entire academic advising program with the intent to assess the current program's strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for its improvement. In addition, the career planning and placement services available on campus are being reviewed. Current services are limited and the campus would benefit from a career planning professional.

The student health clinic, which is a new service since the last accreditation visit, is housed in the new state-of-the-art Northern Maine Center for Rural Health in Nadeau Hall. The health clinic provides a comprehensive array of primary health care services free for UMFK students to include physical exams, pap smears, birth control counseling, tobacco cessation, basic nutritional counseling, basic suturing, sexually transmitted disease (STD) checks, and treatment of upper respiratory and urinary tract infections, orthopedic and sports injuries, and headaches.

The Health Clinic has seen increasing demands for psychiatric mental health services (Exhibit 6.10: Student Health Clinic Survey). Providing health and referral information on the website would be beneficial. The educational outreach activities beyond the health services are limited by contract. Use of the American College Health Association's National College Assessment would be helpful to provide a campus population health overview from which to guide services and programs.

The University opened a new 150 bed residence hall in August 2004 which doubles our on-campus student population.

Athletics

Dedicated recruitment of student athletes by both the Admissions Department and athletic staff has built competitive teams as well as added diversity to the overall student body. The athletic program is balanced in both women's and men's sports. The Athletics Department would benefit from a written plan to guide institutional budgetary decisions for programmatic activities and changes over the next several years.

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is currently serving as the Acting Athletic Director (AD). This was occasioned by the departure of the AD in 2003. While straining the demands on this individual, the structure has enabled the institution to address a number of management problems that plagued the program.

The President of UMFK is currently serving as President of the Sunrise Conference of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and has been active in NAIA national activities. The Sunrise Conference is in trouble as a number of institutions have shifted to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Division III. At this writing there are five institutions (the minimum allowed for conference participation) in the conference

and Lyndon State and Machias propose to join NCAA in 2006 and 2007, respectively. Options open to UMFK are explored in the projections section of this chapter.

Student Services Training, Facilities, and Funding

Student Services personnel attend local, state, regional, and national workshops and conferences to keep them current in their particular area of expertise and responsibilities. Local employees provide UMFK with a large contingent of bilingual staff members who work well with St. John Valley residents.

Facilities and funding for student services are appropriate to meet basic student needs. Increased funding is needed to provide better advising and career planning and placement services.

Student Ethical Standards, Rights, and Privacy

Complete student life policies and disciplinary procedures are contained in the current *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, available online, and the *University of Maine System Student Conduct Code*.

Student Services Systematic Evaluation

The campus is currently increasing the use of assessment instruments to provide student services personnel with more quantitative data on which to base decisions. The NSSE survey results were shared with faculty, staff, student leaders, and other important groups who need to know what it is like to be an undergraduate at UMFK.

Local surveys have been conducted on specific issues such as: the CORE Alcohol Survey, ARAMark Dining Survey, Tobacco Use on Campus Survey, and the Health Clinic Survey.

The Office of Student Services is also implementing an on-going program of student satisfaction focus groups for a number of campus cohorts. These include groups representing: Non-Traditional Students, Teacher Certification Students, Transfer Students, FYE Students, Student Athletes, International Students, Commuters, and Residence Hall Students. The information from these focus groups will be collected and used to provide feedback for the improvement of campus programs and services.

PROJECTION

We will continue to provide an environment that fosters intellectual and personal development of students, as well as support opportunities for student leadership and participation in campus organizations and governance.

An ongoing goal of UMFK is to increase the amount of diversity and civility issues discussed in classes and open forums by providing a place conducive to higher learning. UMFK is in the process of developing an international student handbook and increasing the number of links for international and diversity students on the University website.

UMFK, like most other universities, will be challenged with the needs of “millennial generation” students. More emphasis will need to be placed on faculty and staff training in the areas of learning disabilities and academic accommodations. The campus will also need to place a greater emphasis on student mental health services and comprehensive student advisement.

Providing workshops for faculty and staff on subjects that relate to diversity topics is also an important goal of the Diversity Committee (Appendix 1.03: *Institutional Performance Scorecard*, KPI 4.1-4.26).

The Financial Aid Office will make use of technology to improve channels of communication with students, partners, and with other campus personnel, although our place in line for the PeopleSoft® implementation is far in the future. The conversion will require extensive training over the years of implementation, as well as interim patches as other modules become operational before us, to ensure a smooth transition.

A serious problem on the horizon is the proposed Federal redefinition of the Campus Based Funding allocation formula. The “Fair Share” proposal as it now stands would reduce UMFK funding for these programs by approximately 80%. We continue to work with UMS lobbying personnel and our professional organizations (where possible) to mitigate the negative outcome of any changes.

During 2003-04, the Academic Advising Task Force developed a plan for ongoing review and improvement of the advising process. One of the goals of the task force is to implement a faculty development training day on the theme of student advising and mentoring (Appendix Exhibit 6.01: Student Success and Advising Plan). *UMFK 2003-2008 Strategic Plan* highlights the need for the implementation of a career planning and placement professional. These two factors resulted in a decision in December 2004 to move ahead with the hiring of a Student Success Coordinator. The search was successful and that individual joined the staff in July 2005.

Increasing demands for psychiatric mental health services warranted the addition of services provided by the Aroostook Mental Health Center. Initially, the educational outreach activities beyond the health services were limited as the center had only been open for two years; however, these activities are now expanding to include campus health fairs and smoking cessation classes.

As noted, the Sunrise Conference may soon lose the majority of its member campuses thus, requiring us to investigate other possible conference memberships and/or other significant structural changes in the Athletics Department competition schedules.

Options for UMFK include:

1. Shift to NCAA. We believe this would require fielding twelve teams. We are planning the addition of Nordic skiing and volleyball in the fall of 2005.
2. Shift downward to the National Small College Association. UMFK once belonged to this conference but left because the level of competition was not at our level. Most members are community colleges. This is not a desirable alternative.
3. Find new members in the region. We are working with the NAIA staff to contact prospective institutions. Nationally, most NAIA members are small private schools.
4. Create a Maine Conference. We have proposed this to the UMS Chancellor. A conference in Maine including the five non-division one institutions, plus Maine Maritime and small central Maine private institutions has the potential to save a great deal of money currently allocated to transportation. The Chancellor has tasked the President of UMFK to move ahead with a proposal for such a structure. Inquiries and a mailing in the spring of 2005 indicate clearly that this will be possible only if all participants are NCAA.

With the hiring of the Assistant Director of Residential Life and Wellness Programming, a tangible link has been created between Student Services and Athletics in that the wellness component of this position will help in the development and oversight of a more comprehensive intramural sports program. The number of

fitness and wellness activities offered during 2004 expanded dramatically.

The Athletics Department is developing a written plan to guide institutional budgetary decisions for travel and competition as a member of the Sunrise Conference. We need to reduce the amount of money we spend on travel.

The Office of Student Services maintains and annually updates the online Student *Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, which outlines the rights and responsibilities of both on and off campus students.

The information gathered by the NSSE and all other student affairs assessment tools will be useful in determining future directions in student programs and activities. We will use these data to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs and suggest changes in practices necessary for an effective undergraduate experience.

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