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Report of the Task Force on Land-Grant Mission and Statewide Role of the University of Maine at Orono

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REPORT
of the
TASK FORCE on LAND-GRANT
MISSION
and
STATEWIDE ROLE
of the UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
at ORONO

FEBRUARY 27, 1986



UNIVERSITY OF MAINE *at Orono*

Bureau of Labor Education
A Division of The
Office of Research
& Public Services

128 College Avenue
Orono, Maine 04469
207-581-4124

February 28, 1986

Dr. Arthur M. Johnson, President
University of Maine
Office of the President
Alumni Hall
Campus

Dear Mr. President:

In response to your request of December 16, 1986 establishing a TASK FORCE ON LAND-GRANT MISSION AND STATEWIDE ROLE and setting forth specific items to be considered, I am pleased to transmit for your review the attached Report. The urgency of getting this to you precluded the Committee having more than one meeting. Never-the-less, many contributed to this document either by phone or by memo.

In addition to my colleagues on the Task Force I want to acknowledge the contributions made by Harold McNeill and David Dow. Their comments and suggestions were very helpful in preparing the report.

I hope our findings and recommendations may be helpful. If I can respond to any questions, please do not hesitate to call on me. Thank you for the opportunity to serve our university in this way.

Sincerely,

John R. Hanson
Director

Enclosure

TASK FORCE ON LAND-GRANT MISSION AND STATEWIDE ROLE

Mr. John Hanson, Chair
Director, Bureau of Labor Education
128 College Avenue, CAMPUS
581-4124

Dr. Kenneth Allen
Acting Vice President for External Affairs
Alumni Hall, CAMPUS
581-1451

Dr. Gregory Brown
Dean, College of Forest Resources
Nutting Hall, CAMPUS
581-2844

Mr. Clinton Winne
Assistant Dean, College of Engineering
& Science
Barrows Hall, CAMPUS
581-2216

Dr. Paul Uttormark
Director, Sponsored Programs
Coburn Hall, CAMPUS
581-1476

Dr. John Vetelino
Chairman, Department of Electrical Engineering
Barrows Hall, CAMPUS
581-2223

Ms. Elaine Albright
Director of Libraries
Fogler Library
581-1660

Dr. David Smith
Professor of History
Stevens Hall, CAMPUS
581-1915

Mr. Ronald Beard
Extension Agent
Hancock County Extension Office
RFD #5, Boggy Brook Road
Ellsworth, ME 04605
667-8212

SECTION I

Statement of issues raised by the Trustees' Goals and strategies statement.

1. Despite a projected decline in "traditional" students, the clientele of the formal and informal public service efforts of UMO are growing. To serve the needs of this growing segment of the state's population, UMO must possess high quality undergraduate and graduate teaching and research capabilities, coupled with an effective and efficient means of making the knowledge, resources and expertise of the University available to the public. All three of the land grant missions must be geared toward improved access to the process by Maine citizens. In some cases, improved access is provided through better financial support, in others it is improved by projecting a clear vision of what UMO can offer the people of Maine, and a pragmatic coordination of combined efforts.

2. There is evidence of great confusion over the historic and primary role of UMO as a land grant institution leading to wrongful comparisons of UMO to other units within the University system instead of with land grant institutions in other states. Just as the people of Maine show some signs of confusion on this point, some faculty of UMO show little awareness of their tripartite responsibility as envisioned by the Morrill, Hatch and Smith-Lever Acts. Part of this situation may be, no doubt, due to the promotion and tenure considerations which tend to reward only high quality teaching and research (pure, scholarly or applied). There may also be organizational barriers which impede Maine people, other than students, from interacting with faculty and inhibits faculty identifying with Maine people and their needs. A formalized faculty orientation on the three-fold mission of UMO may be but one way to address this problem. The University of Georgia has such a program and perhaps others do as well.

3. There is every indication of the clear need to clarify for faculty and administration the range of public service roles as distinct from the consulting role in which some faculty are appropriately engaged and the civic role of individuals in their communities. There is also need to document the hundreds of informal public service efforts which faculty now conduct but tend not to "document" since little, if any, recognition is given to these activities for tenure or promotional considerations.

4. UMO academic departments need uniform policies with regard to public service efforts, including an understanding that clients, public and private, can, and generally should, be asked to cover incidental expenses including travel, meals and lodging.

5. The linkages between public service efforts by individual faculty and the ongoing work by organized public service units need to be strengthened. In some cases, it will be

possible for the organized public service units (CES, BLE, etc.) to fund time and/or expenses of academic and research faculty. In others, the organized units will be able to help create the audience and setting for departmental or individual faculty public service efforts.

6. Society is undergoing dramatic change. There are significant transitions taking place in employment, resource utilization, technology and social institutions. These changes place an especially difficult burden on the land grant university. Without appearing to be turning our backs on traditional client groups, we must always be looking forward to the needs of tomorrow. We need to develop the best "future vision" possible to foresee problems and work with the people of Maine toward their resolution. Creative academic and research faculty need to be engaged in meaningful dialogue with the people of Maine. The organized public service units play a key role in this process.

7. For a great many Maine citizens, public service extension-type programs are their principal windows on the University. The support and involvement of community leaders can be readily seen as support for UMO particularly, and the University System in general.

8. As the central role of UMO as a research and doctoral University is reestablished and the public service mission viewed as completely consistent with its land grant status, there may be a possible coordinating function which UMO might exercise in public service throughout the system. Consolidating dollars for public service at UMO and then contracting with the various other campuses for specific tasks, commensurate with faculty interest and expertise, might be explored and considered. In this way, as specific problem or challenge oriented projects are completed, funds would return to UMO and be redirected at new needs as identified through the organized public service units.

Section II

Assessment of UMO's current status as a statewide institution; the Land-Grant University and Sea-Grant College of the State of Maine.

The University of Maine at Orono has long had as its mission to serve the education and information needs of off-campus adults and young people. Life-long learning for adults is a recognized and accepted premise to which public service efforts and resources are committed. As social and economic conditions change, people need updated information in order to properly relate to new situations. The institutional objectives for serving the lifelong needs of clientele might therefore be to:

1. Apply available knowledge and technical expertise to aid the solution of lifelong educational concerns.
2. Provide adequate resources to help solve community problems.

3. Foster and maintain an institutional and clientele relationship which stimulates the desire for continual learning and growth.

Continuing education for adults, community assistance, specialized problem-solving programming and cooperative extension efforts carried out by the land-grant institutions all fit under the public service umbrella. All activities have one thing in common. They bring the two other major functions of colleges and universities - teaching and research - to bear in serving all the nation.¹ It can be seen that an emerging expansion of service to the public acquired additional significance. Land-Grant institutions and the public began to realize that the benefits of earlier successes with information extension to rural America could be beneficial in other population sectors. As additional functions and units came into being they expanded the educational resource capabilities of the university, and "public service" came to be a more accepted reference.

RESEARCH AND PUBLIC SERVICE AT UMO

Research and Public Service (RAPS) was organized as a unit at UMO in 1971. In 1970 Winthrop Libby submitted a proposal to establish such a unit. The proposal stated that:

Research and public service are accepted as essential functions of a public, post-secondary educational institution. As an over-simplified proposition, the academic mind needs the stimulation of scholarly research opportunity and the society which supports the public University has a reasonable expectation that the intelligence and knowledge of scholars should be used to help resolve societal problems. To achieve relevancy, a formally structured mechanism is necessary for translating and reporting research findings to the concerned publics.

The proposal was approved and Research and Public Service was formalized. Twelve units comprised RAPS which more specifically involved the directors of MAES, T.E.S., Darling Center, D.I.C., Environmental Study Center, Water Resources Center, C.E.S., Technical Services, Bureau of Labor Education, Public Administration, Title 1 of H.E.A., and Office of Grant Support.

However by 1983 significant changes had taken place in RAPS. RAPS members at that time were Balanced Growth Project, Labor Education, Public Administration, Marine Studies, Conferences and Institutes, CES, D.I.C., Land and Water Resources, MAES, Migratory Fish Research Institute, Pulp and Paper Foundation, Quaternary Studies, S.S.R.I., and Sponsored Programs.

In 1984 RAPS was dissolved as a unit. For a time there was no existing administrative framework. However there was a change in the administration which established a Vice President for

External Affairs and an Assistant Vice President for Public Service. Public service directors, though few in number, began to meet again as a group. At present, organized public service includes the Bureau of Labor Education, Bureau of Public Administration, Conferences and Institutes, Cooperative Extension Service, Department of Industrial Cooperation, Maine Council on Economic Growth, Project on Balanced Growth, U.M. Technical Services Program and the Marine Advisory Service.

More recently, the College of Engineering and Science re-instituted the old technology Experiment Station as the University of Maine Technology Center. This public service thrust is intended to promote and expand connections between the faculty and students of the College and Maine businesses. This effort is expected to promote technology transfer from the campus to the private sector in the state; a task recommended and supported by the Governor's Science and Technology Board.

KEY PURPOSES

The key and leading objective of each formalized public service unit is embodied in the following brief descriptive statements:

Bureau of Labor Education

Provides Maine workers with knowledge and skills designed to help them assess their own situations in relation to changing economic, political and social conditions and thereby be able to solve their own job-related problems.

Bureau of Public Administration

Provide research, management training, and development and consultation services to public officials in Maine.

Conferences and Institutes

Promote greater efficiency of University facilities throughout the year, and to bring together groups and resource people to seek solutions to current problems.

Cooperative Extension Service

Enable clientele to acquire the knowledge and necessary skills to be self-directing, manage their resources, and cooperate with others to influence social and economic conditions in desirable ways.

Department of Industrial Cooperation

Manages the extending of scientific resources to the business and industrial community.

Maine Council on Economic Development

Provides a collaborative means for the university, business, and labor interests to combine their resource people in offering statewide teacher training in economics.

Project on Balanced Growth

Focuses upon the problems and opportunities in the Maine economy in order to promote a balanced economic growth.

Maine Technical Services

Relates the technical needs of Maine manufacturing firms with resources available at UMO.

Marine Advisory Service

Provides advice and counsel to the marine industry and assist with industry development, research information, dissemination and problem solving.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE MISSION

Land-Grant universities have long had as their mission extending the benefits of research and academic expertise to people beyond the campus classroom. Presidents at UMO have continuously expressed their supporting views as have the Trustees. In 1969 the President's Committee on University Planning stated:

The Goal for Public Service is to: Make the resources of the University of Maine at Orono available to individuals, agencies, and organizations and to the broader domestic and international community to aid in improving economic, environmental and social conditions.

In 1977, President Neville pointed out that:

First and foremost, a land-grant university is the people's university. . . Our institution is supported in part by the tax dollars of the citizens of Maine, many of whom are unable to come to Orono and to participate in the learning community which they support. Consequently, the land-grant university accepts the responsibility to share the knowledge, skills, and expertise which it has amassed, not only with its students but with those other citizens who are not privileged to be its full-time resident students.

Also in 1977, the Trustees' ad hoc Committee on Academic Planning reported that:

Public service is a significant component of public higher education responsibility. The range of activities has

brought the University into closer contact with Maine residents through the use of campus facilities, research capabilities and faculty talent in direct support of community and individual needs throughout the State.

President Silverman, in his remarks to the Council of Colleges in April 1982, reaffirmed UMO's institutional commitment to the land-grant tradition:

The central academic enterprise of UMO--(that is, teaching research and public service)--must be strongly asserted and must be reflected in its budgetary priorities, its activities and its structural organization.

Each of these statements emphasizes the need for UMO to pursue a strong program of educational assistance to the people throughout the state. While the congress has mandated certain public service programs and so has the legislature for others, the state-wide nature of the land-grant university and the public good demand educational support for clientele external to the campus.

ON A DEFINITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Numerous attempts have been made at defining public service in higher education. Interpretations are plentiful and wide ranging. For that reason at UMO we would submit that it is more important to focus upon the similarities in unit purposes than it is to become overly concerned about a precise definition. What is of paramount importance is that common thread embodied in the purpose of public service units at UMO. A review of unit purpose reveals a general goal providing clientele, external to the classroom setting, information and educational opportunities which increase their knowledge and skills, and develop positive attitudes which enable them to manage their lives satisfactorily in a changing social, economic and political environment. It is this thread that welds public service units into a powerful force for extending the educational benefits of the university to the people across the state.

At the beginning of this year, public service directors reviewed the goals of organized public service at UMO. In a draft statement they defined public service as, "One of the three responsibilities of the University of Maine at Orono. Public Service is the external delivery of the research, teaching, or other expertise of faculty and staff for the benefit of the people of Maine and the larger society. Generally directed to non-University audiences, it is normally, but not necessarily, uncompensated, although cost recovery may be appropriate."

The statement goes on to suggest:

The University of Maine at Orono is the Land Grant Campus of the University of Maine System. This designation carries the responsibilities of providing

excellence in teaching, research and public service for the citizens of Maine. The Public Service responsibilities demand that we make available the resources of the University to individuals, agencies and organizations in order to improve the economic, environmental and social conditions of Maine citizens. These three areas of concern are the basis of all public service activities and constitute the unifying theme of the division.

Research and public service are inextricably interrelated. One cannot exist in isolation from the other if the products of scholarly research are to be effectively delivered to the appropriate publics. Research activities at a public university are conducted to advance specific bodies of knowledge and to apply new knowledge to appropriate areas, as well as to identify and attempt to resolve problems for the benefit of various clientele and the general citizenry.

It is primarily through the Public Service units that we learn of problems in Maine which need the expertise of researchers/scholars. Constant communication is mandatory for the success of both research and public service as they direct their expertise to their individual publics.

Clearly, economic and social conditions in Maine and the nation are changing at an unprecedented rate, requiring the building of an ever expanding knowledge base and the effective dissemination of that knowledge.

In order to accurately identify where new areas of knowledge are needed, to address societal challenges or opportunities and to determine how existing knowledge may be best applied to those challenges or opportunities, research and public service efforts need to be highly interactive.

Section III

Recommendations toward fulfilling the traditional land-grant mandate of research, public service, and knowledge transfer, as well as meeting the challenges of an increasingly technological society and service oriented economy.

1. There should be greater integration of the research activities and the organized public service units. (note: several years have lapsed since the breakup of the Office of Research and Public Service. During this period there has been a growing consensus that this organizational arrangement served the University well, served the people of Maine effectively, and provided for greater interaction between the research and public service functions.)

* There needs to be continued strong institutional support and commitment to public service demonstrated by recognition in the setting of administrative and funding priorities.

* Budgetary flexibility for research and public service should be maintained so that the needs of Maine people throughout the state can be assessed, prioritized and addressed in a timely and responsive fashion by the appropriate unit or combination of units within the university community.

* The public service function should be an equal partner with the research units. Operating separately, the opportunities for success in identifying research and programming needs and forming appropriate linkages for meeting the challenges confronting the state and the nation is seriously inhibited.

2. UMO should strengthen its efforts to assist and cooperate with other campuses in public service ventures in order to maximize the resource base and to better serve all the people of Maine. (note: of all the campuses in the university system, only UMO has both federal and state mandates to provide statewide services, specialized programming and educational opportunities for the benefit of the citizens of the State.)

* The Report of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine (12/18/69) set forth the framework for a broad mission of leadership whereby UMO would utilize its resources to assist other system units. The Report said:

We resolve that the strengths of the Orono campus in all areas--instruction, research and public service--be further developed; that current curricula be buttressed at the graduate, as well as the undergraduate levels; that new programs be developed as needs are defined and resources available.... Because of its resources in faculty and equipment, experience and tradition, the Orono campus is in a position of example and leadership calling for a continuing emphasis on the improvement of quality at all levels of activity. It is recommended that assistance to other units in the system, when timely, be recognized as an important function of the Orono campus, necessitating, perhaps, the inclusion of certain activities in the faculty members' workload.

The recent Visiting Committee Report reinforces this view of Orono being a "lead" campus and urges strengthening programs in all areas of instruction, research and public service.

3. The UMO budget should be sufficiently increased to more appropriately, and accurately, account for the unique and extensive statewide public service responsibilities designated and assigned to the Orono campus. Presently, approximately \$3.5 million is earmarked for formalized public service, the greatest portion of which, nearly \$2.2 million is for the Cooperative Extension Service. It is not unrealistic to suggest

this public service allocation be doubled to \$7 million. Clearly, it would represent an investment by the state in itself and could easily generate multiple returns in a short period. The Self Review cited earlier revealed that public service units generated about \$3. for every \$1. of E & G monies budgeted.

* Although UMO's public service role is a statewide responsibility, funding for these activities through the formal public service units is carried within the campus budget. Presently, appropriated funds are allocated among campuses on a "per student basis." Therefore little, if any, weight or consideration is given to this added role of UMO effectively imposing a "penalty" since the impact of public service clearly extends beyond classroom instruction.

4. Each UMO department should develop a practical definition of public service which encompasses those activities which are to be recognized, evaluated and rewarded.

* Rewards and recognition for public service should be equal to those for research and teaching.