

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT FORT KENT**

**FORT KENT, ME**

**FIFTH YEAR INTERIM REPORT**

**AUGUST 15, 2000**

### **Report Preparation**

The UMFK Fifth Year Report was prepared by the Office of Academic Affairs with assistance from the Registrar, Administrative Services, Admissions, Student Services and the Library. Information was gathered from appropriate offices for incorporation into the report. People who contributed to this report are:

Carol S. Browne, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty

John D. Murphy, Vice President for Administration

Sharon Johnson, Dean for Information Services

Jerry Nadeau, Director of Admissions

Don Raymond, Registrar and Institutional Research

Scott Voisine, Director of Student Services

### **Institutional Overview**

The University of Maine at Fort Kent (UMFK) provides a liberal studies education and limited professional degrees to a student body of approximately 1000 students. Located in the far northern region of the state, its history stems from the late 1800's as a teacher preparation college preparing bilingual teachers to serve the French-speaking people of Northern Aroostook County. The French heritage is still a strong factor in the University's mission but today a substantial number of students attend from other states and countries, especially Canada.

UMFK prides itself on providing individual attention to students by having small classes and personal advisors for each student. The University is beginning to rebuild from a period of low enrollments several years ago. New program and licensing areas are being investigated to serve the needs of the St. John Valley and surrounding region. Also, through collaborative arrangements with the University of Maine System's Tri-Campus Consortium, distance baccalaureate programs are delivered state-wide. Public service and providing a center for cultural events are important missions for this University. For example, the Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes are located on the campus and serve as a center and repository for the Acadian history of the region.

During the past three years, the University has seen an increase in its student body primarily due to an influx of Canadian students who wish to be certified to teach in their province of Nova Scotia. The increase has been a boon to the University but has also put stress on the infrastructure and personnel who provide instruction and services to students. The growth in enrollments has led to an energized capital plan, which will add two new buildings and a residence hall to the campus over the next five years. One of these new buildings is the Northern Maine Center for Rural Health and the Aroostook Technology Center slated to provide health education through electronic media to rural areas throughout Maine. The other building will come from renovation of an older residence hall to become an addition to our library allowing an increase in the numbers of volumes, emphasis on instructional technology and added space for the Acadian Archives.



## **Response to Areas Identified for Special Emphasis**

### **Action of March 9, 1996:**

"that the University give emphasis to ensuring the provision of library services and collections which support the academic and research needs of the institution's students and faculty;"

### **Library - Collections**

The 1994/1995 self-study recommended that smaller libraries on campus be integrated into the regular library collection. Both the Curriculum Center and the Environmental Studies Library have been assimilated into the Blake Library Collection. In addition, the resources from the Second Language Lab are in the process of being added to the collection. These resources include books, audio tapes, videos, one laserdisk, software and appropriate hardware. The Nursing Resource Lab has been left intact in order to better serve students in that program. Donations from former and current staff members resulted in a larger than normal increase in the number of video cassettes in the library's collection.

### ***Education***

The George H. Reavis Reading Area providing educational materials has been added courtesy of the Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. Professor Bruno Hicks made this acquisition possible. It is housed in the Curriculum Center. A collection development policy is in draft stage, and the library is actively collecting to support the education program, which serves approximately 1/3 of UMFK students. A secondary education program has been approved, and a secondary certification program is being developed. The library has begun to acquire materials to support these programs.

The Juvenile collection has been moved to be in proximity to the Curriculum Collection, and the library has established a Young Adult collection. Each year STEPS provides money to purchase or books to add to these collections.

In FY 1996, the library began to subscribe to 3 subsets of ERIC documents in fiche-Assessment and Evaluation, Elementary and Early Childhood Education, and Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education. In FY2000 the fiche subscription was cancelled in order to release funds to subscribe to the entire ERIC document collection online. Other educational materials-videos, books, journals-have been added to the collection both through regular library funding and additional gifts (see Finances).

### ***Natural and Behavioral Sciences***

In FY 1999 the library began subscribing to Wilson's Biological and Agricultural Index, an electronic index to support the Forest Technology, Environmental Studies, and Biology majors. This index was cancelled in FY2001. Biosis is replacing this resource along with Agricola. Other science materials-videos, books, journals-have been added to the collection both through regular library funding and additional gifts (see Finances). PsychInfo was added to Mariner in FY99. Mariner is the UM System's Digital Library. It provides

access to URSUS, Indexes and Databases, Additional Library Catalogs, a Virtual Reference Desk, and Subject Guides to resources on the Internet. In FY2001 Blake Library will be subscribing to a small college package for full text access to journals published by the American Psychological Association. Collections in sociology, anthropology, sciences, and psychology were added when the library received large donations of books and videos from the families of two past professors.

#### *Nursing*

In addition to Medline electronic access through Mariner (called only URSUS in the NEAS&C report), CINAHL became available for nursing. The library also joined Health Science Library Information Consortium (HSLIC), increasing our access to medical journals and materials and received access to DOCLINE, which is an interlibrary loan module that allows transmission of requests electronically and provides access to medical materials throughout the country. The collection, which supports nursing, has been weeded of out-of-date materials, as suggested by the review committee. Other nursing materials-videos, books, journals-have been added to the collection both through regular library funding and additional gifts (see Finances).

#### *Arts & Humanities*

A large collection of Canadian studies books was added. University of Maine received these books as gifts from Alice R. Stewart, a retired University of Maine professor. They, in mm, donated the duplicates to Blake Library. The Inez Day Richards Fund provides funds for materials in music and American poetry. (See finances.)

At the end of the summer, 2000, the INNReach system, in which we participate, will be in place. This system will connect most libraries in the state of Maine, including privates, publics, schools, health science, universities increasing access to materials for faculty, staff and students.

#### *The Collection*

To demonstrate the growth of the collection, see the following:

| Item  | FY1995 | FY2000 |
|---|--------|--------|
| Books   | 56078  | 64898  |
| Current Periodical Subscriptions <sup>1</sup> | 367    | 382    |
| Current Microfilm Subscriptions <sup>2</sup>  | 84     | 79     |

---

<sup>1</sup> Current periodical subscriptions do not indicate the same rifles. Cancellations and new subscriptions are ongoing to meet the changing curriculum needs and to reflect the needs of new professors.

<sup>2</sup> The use of microfilm in the age of digital libraries is declining.

|                 |      |      |
|-----------------|------|------|
| Videocassettes  | 400  | 2703 |
| Audiocassettes  | 60   | 138  |
| Maine Documents | 2595 | 4717 |

## Services

### *Digital Library Bond*

The system's Digital Library Bond is a very important asset to UMFK. Through the system, it provides remote access to CD-Roms, a portable projection unit, an Interlibrary Loan workstation, a multimedia digital production workstation, and an assisted learning workstation. The assisted learning station has voice recognition capabilities, magnification equipment, scanning equipment, and software to assist persons with disabilities with course work. The multimedia digital production work station comes equipped with slide scanners, a color laser printer, and two digital cameras, providing services not only to students, but to faculty and staff. For example, two professors have used the slide scanners to enhance classroom instruction. Staff have used the color printer to enhance publications. The digital cameras are essential for web development for which the library is responsible.

The Interlibrary Loan system, Ariel, enables the library to deliver information resources more efficiently and rapidly than in the past. Not only can requests be submitted electronically, but also the requested article is transmitted electronically. In many instances this means same day receipt of materials. The digital library bond also provided better staff equipment and public patron equipment. Patrons access the library system on computers. Full text journal articles are more abundant. It is planned that this same bond will provide funds to purchase the first electronic books for the system and some backfiles of important indexes.

### *All-Night Study Computer Classroom*

The conference room was converted to a computer classroom which remains open all night. This room has facilitated better bibliographic instruction sessions, and provides increased access to computers for students.

### *Education Classroom*

Through storage of some little used books, the Curriculum Center was enlarged to provide space for classroom instruction. The education faculty primarily uses this classroom.

### *Library Web Services*

The library provides web pages that link reference resources, policy information, and staff. Interactive forms enable patrons to submit requests for interlibrary loan materials and materials to purchase.

### Reference and Bibliographic Instruction

These services have increased because of the increase in staff and students. Bibliographic instruction is also being done over ITV and compressed video for professors who are delivering courses through those media.

### *Other Services*

The library makes available a digital camera, color printing, a camcorder, lamination, faxing, and binding. Staff offer instruction in scanning, graphic manipulation, creation of html documents, and other computer applications.

### Staff

Since 1996 the number professional librarians have increased from 1.5 to 2.5. They consist of an Assistant Director of the Library, a Reference Librarian, and the Librarian (.5), who is also Dean of Information Services and supervises other information departments. Support staff has decreased from 3.5 to 2.75. Circulation in the library is not as great as it used to be. Among the possible reasons for this are greater access to electronic materials, greater use of online interlibrary loan and professors making fewer assignments that require onsite use of materials.

Besides traditional library services, the library staff supports 26 computer stations and are responsible for the entire campus web page, plus technical and nontechnical support of WebCT and CourseInfo.

### Space

Space continues to be a problem for Blake Library as our collections continue to grow. In order to manage the finite amount of space, the library has stored books and reduced shelving, discarded back issues of periodicals, moved equipment and cabinets to better locations, and removed furniture. However, the increase in technology use has made an impact in every area. Therefore, equipment has been added, including all the campus servers, to the library space. This problem should be alleviated with the planned renovation of an existing residence hall for library and technology use and the proposed addition to the library and Acadian Archives slated for bonding in 2001.

### Finances

There is an ongoing commitment to library development from both the system and the UMFK campus. There were substantial increases in the library's budget for books, periodicals and microfilm. Increases in the new library budget are for periodicals (762) from \$25,000 to \$32,000 and microfilm (763) from \$7,000 to \$10,250. These additions will help balance inflation in these areas but may not be sufficient to cover all increases.

In FY1995 the library budget was 5.8% of the university's E & G budget. In FY2000 the library budget was 4.3%. For FY2001 the library budget will reflect

removal of the Dean's and administrative assistant's salaries to better reflect the fact that these two positions serve more departments than the library.

In addition to the Library E&G budget, the library has been the recipient of a number of gifts.

The Katharine O'Brien fund was \$8900 and was used to purchase materials in **nursing** (\$1,000), education (\$1,000), and forestry and environmental studies (\$6900).

The Inez Day Richards Fund was established by the will of an alumnus. It amounted to \$45,000 and generates about \$3,000 annually for purchase of books in music and American poetry.

Strategic Planning funds have been used to purchase nursing materials (\$2,500), education materials (\$5,656.20).

#### Other funds

The library was given \$1,000 when the secondary education major was approved to help with collection development in this area.

The James Hoyt Chapter of the Maine State Employees Association of Retirees donated \$300 for purchase of library materials (non-restricted).

The President of UMFK provides funds for books purchased in memory of family members of the staff and faculty.

The Library also has a gift fund that people contribute to from time to time. It is nearing \$10,000 at which time we want to set up the fund to be able to expend a portion of the interest, allowing the fund to continue to grow.

#### **Action of April 17, 1998:**

"that in addition to responding to the issue raised by the Commission in its March 22, 1996 letter, the College also give emphasis in its interim report to its success in addressing the results of the planned activities described in the progress report, especially the general education outcomes assessment, the new recruitment approach and the effects of the enhanced student life activities."

#### **General Education Outcomes Assessment**

In response to the recommendations of the visiting NEASC team, Faculty Assembly approved a standardized test for students to complete at the end of their sophomore year when students typically complete their general education requirements. The plan was to pilot the test with a small number of students before using it with the

entire population. For various reasons, the test was not piloted as planned and a different philosophical approach has been adopted.

Subsequent discussion among faculty confirmed continued commitment to assessment of general education as the most important starting place for assessment at UMFK. In 1999 a faculty Assessment Committee was formed to initiate and govern the process of assessment. The Committee is comprised of faculty from each academic division. Committee members attended two conferences during the year focusing on ways to assess student learning. As a result faculty agreed to use actual student performance in classes as the thermometer for student learning. The Committee developed a proposal for assessing student writing by reporting on courses in which writing is emphasized. This proposal was voted upon and accepted by the faculty for implementation in Fall 2000. The Committee has also agreed to conduct a series of teaching luncheons on various assessment/teaching techniques to assist faculty in collection of course embedded assessment data. See attachment.

Assessment at UMFK is also beginning on two other tiers. One is in response to the recommendation in the March report on improving evaluation of faculty. Since the last report, faculty evaluations have been modified to include a report on research and scholarship activities. Starting next year, faculty will be asked to report on their teaching improvements and innovations and the results it had on student learning. A third tier of assessment is focused on program assessment. UMFK currently participates in an external review process every five years for each academic program. Under the new structure, an *entire* Academic Division would be reviewed every five years. The review will report on all academic programs within the Division, faculty, student progress and resources of the Division. This change is designed to emphasize relationships between academic programs and disciplines. We are currently working on the format for the review.

#### New Recruitment Approach

Over the past three year the university developed a comprehensive enrollment management program. Staff training, software upgrades, data analysis plus monitoring retention and implementing a telecounseling program were all part of an inclusive plan. In the fall of 1996 enrollment at UMFK was 767 students. By October of 1999, enrollments had increased to 926 and just over 10,000 credit hours. This was a 20.7% increase in headcount and a 44 % increase in credit hours. The main reason for the increase is that the institution is doing a better job of telling its story and targeting its messages and resources where they will be most effective. The admissions staff identify students most likely to enroll from an inquiry pool. The pool is managed by the Noel-Levitz admissions software product, EMAS-Plus. Specific messages tailored to each student were sent. The software also provided comparative data which allowed UMFK to track by date and year to analyze our ability to meet target goals and to determine if the right mix of students (major, age, diversity) were being accept.

A second strategy helped the institution identify some marketable strengths that we had not been using to our advantage. For example, turning our remote and snowy location into a positive attribute. At the same time, we began analyzing programming

and marketing sport opportunities that would capitalize on our resources to attract students who are interested in environmental programs and outdoor winter sports.

A third strategy has been to concentrate on recruiting high school juniors rather than seniors. The immediate result has been a slight decline in new freshman but that trend is turning around and we hope will turn into long-term increases. UMFK continues to have a strong response among Canadian students who wish to become certified to teach through our education program. The large number of these students and the success of our recruitment have resulted in a strain on our infrastructure. We are currently working hard to increase staff and faculty to meet the demand for more classes and services. Student housing continues to be a problem but we hope to have a new classroom/technology building, residence hall and additional library facilities within the next few years. We also made a decision to hold our enrollments flat for 2000 - 2001 to ensure the personal service and infrastructure students expect from us.

### **Effects of Student Life Initiatives**

The University of Maine at Fort Kent has continually strived to keep student life issues and activities at par with student expectations and needs. In order to do this, the Office of Student Services and all departments under the umbrella of this office set in motion a comprehensive plan of student life initiatives, which are beneficial to all students. The following is an explanation of these plans.

#### *Orientation*

Students at UMFK are welcomed to their university experience in a unique format. Students attend a two day "conference" at the beginning of the semester structured to allow students to take a variety of workshops and attend numerous enriching activities that introduce them to campus life, academics, and the community of UMFK. Workshops are presented by faculty and staff, allowing new students the opportunity to have genuine experiences with the faculty and staff of the institution. Students are also given a good deal of opportunity to meet each other and spend time together in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. The university has received acclaim for its orientation program and many other institutions have asked for information about its structure for use on their campuses.

***Effect:*** Students start off their experience at UMFK on the right foot and with the information, in hand, that they need to be successful at UMFK.

#### *Student Activities*

Students at UMFK get to see their student activity fees at work. Student activities are organized by the **Office of Student Services** and by the **Student Senate**. Both groups provide a roster of activities intended to provide social, cultural, and educational benefits to students. In addition, there are numerous **student clubs and organizations** that bring students of similar interests together for a common purpose. These organizations sponsor many social and co-curricular events. An example of

some of the extra-curricular events sponsored by the offices or organizations mentioned above are:

|                   |                      |                    |        |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Movie Nights      | Halloween Activities | Free Campus Feasts | Dances |
| Road Trips        | Theme Parties        | Spring Meltdown    |        |
| Comedians         | Concerts             | Talent Shows       |        |
| Hypnotists        | Coffee Houses        | Readings           |        |
| Spring SemiFormal | Winter Ball          | Benny Awards       |        |

Programming for special observances is also available. These are often co-curricular in nature and include such things as guest lectures, movies, readings, performances, and the like for such observances as:

|                            |                       |                        |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Women's History Month      | Black History Month   | Alcohol Awareness Week |
| Martin Luther King Jr. Day | Native American Month |                        |

*Effect:* Students enthusiastically participate in these activities in great numbers. The university has a strong retention rate and students are generally happy with the atmosphere of the university. In addition, co-curricular programming enhances a student's academic life in that much of what takes place outside the classroom can benefit what's taking place in it. UMFK is in a geographically isolated area, so activities on campus are important. *Residential Life*

Students living in the two residence halls at UMFK are given opportunities to participate in a number of activities within the residence halls. These activities are generally sponsored by the Dorm Council, and organization of volunteer resident students who develop activities. These activities include such things as:

|                 |                        |                          |               |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Winter Carnival | Board Game Tournaments | Hall Decorating Contests | Pizza Parties |
| Movie Nights    | Pool Tournaments       | Scavenger Hunts          |               |

The Assistant Director of Residential Life & Student Activities is currently implementing a new program of Student Issue Awareness Programming. This program will provide passive and active programming to be proactive in providing awareness of issues concerning university students. These issues include, but are not limited to:

|                  |                             |                |              |
|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Stress           | Substance Abuse             | Sexual Health  | Health       |
| Mental Health    | Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Issues | Diversity      | Spirituality |
| Academic Honesty | Crime                       | Women's Issues | Men's Issues |

In addition, a new position, Wellness Director, was adopted by the campus. The Director plans and implements various and ongoing programs targeted at keeping faculty, staff and students healthy.

*Effect:* There is a very high retention rate in the residence halls. Students return year after year. There is also a good sense of community in the halls and it is very possible to make lasting friendships

in this atmosphere. Students are generally respectful of each other, the hall staff, and of each other's property. Discipline problems are rare in the residence halls.

### *Athletics*

Students at UMFK are able to participate in a good number of varsity, club and intramural sports. In addition, students have access to state of the art fitness equipment (cardiovascular and weight training) and the staff to help them use it properly. A number of intramural sports are offered regularly. Students can also participate in the club sports of Hockey and Dance Squad as well as the following varsity sports:

|                  |                    |              |                |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Men's Basketball | Women's Basketball | Men's Soccer | Women's Soccer |
| Golf             | Skiing             | Cross-County |                |

*Effect:* Athletics provides students with a means of fitness, team play, comradery, and provides students with an understanding of discipline and sportsmanship. Our students are proud of our athletic accomplishments and our supportive of our teams. School spirit is alive and well at UMFK.

### *Arts Programming*

There are many opportunities for students to experience the arts on campus. Art shows by community members, invited artists and faculty members are often on display in the library. The UMFK Theater Department, the International Performers Series, and the UMFK Music Department produce performances. Arts activities available at UMFK include:

|                   |                 |                    |                |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| One Act Plays     | Three Act Plays | Group Performances | Spring Concert |
| Solo Performances | Winter Concert  | Musical Cabarets   |                |

*Effects:* Students' lives are enriched by their participation in the arts. By participating in these events, students are given the opportunity to learn in a setting that is often social in nature. The arts also encourage students to be creative and critical thinkers; attributes necessary for student success.

### Major Changes

Without undue repetition, the major change at UMFK has been in our enrollments. We are responding administratively and programmatically to retain the landscape of a small personable liberal arts school interested in educating students holistically while responding to the needs of local and foreign students who want to attend college at UMFK.

A comprehensive five-year capital plan is our map for the future. The building currently being built will be a facility to house our nursing program and to add

technology facilities that are not available anywhere else in our region. With the addition of ATM lines to our campus, we will be able to broadcast and receive from over 69 sites in Maine. This should have a major impact on our instructional and public service mission. The impact on professional development and research is less well known but we will be taking advantage of opportunities in those areas as well.

The bookstore has been redesigned and moved to a new location accessible to all students. Student Services has a well-defined orientation program for all students and services for at-risk Students have been enhanced. New buildings will provide much needed space for new resident housing and programming, classrooms, office space and library facilities.

### Efforts to Enhance Institutional Effectiveness

In response to the recommendations of the NEASC visitation team, UMFK evaluated and subsequently eliminated nearly twelve degree programs from its menu of offerings. Other degree offerings have been consolidated and objectives for each program are now stated in the catalogue. Already mentioned in previous portions of this report are specific responses to institutional assessment with regard to student learning, faculty evaluation and external review of programs. Additionally, two professional programs, nursing and education are making substantive changes in their curriculum and admission criteria to clarify their expectations of students and create a baseline against which student learning can be measured in an effort to improve.

Education faculty has rewritten the curriculum for both traditional four-year students and certification students to meet the learning objectives for the state of Maine Learning Results. The overall program and each course have specific objectives designed to produce a well-rounded student in elementary education. These objectives ensure that all students complete an appropriate proportion of general education courses as well as professional studies before they are certified to teach. Additionally, education faculty has introduced a set of criteria that each student must meet before they can proceed in the program. These criteria were developed after analysis of what helps a student be successful not only in the program but in the classroom.

Nursing faculty have been working on curricular and admission improvements as well. In consultation with national organizations, a private consultant and local employers, they have redesigned their curriculum to include additional clinical exposure and an earlier introduction to nursing coursework. Faculty has also redesigned admission requirements again based on analysis of what helps a student be successful in the program and in the profession. Faculty will be assessing the impact of these changes on students over the next four years. The environmental studies faculty and English faculty are also engaged in similar activities but are not far enough along to comment.

To ensure consistent coordination of offerings outside designated degree programs, an office of Academic Outreach has been added to Academic Affairs. The Coordinator works with appropriate academic Divisions to ensure consistency and standards appropriate to each offering.

To improve service to students and to ensure a good beginning for new employees, faculty and staff at UMFK are assigned mentors when they join the institution. They also receive an orientation about the importance of appreciating diversity and responding to student needs.

A "bridging course" was designed by faculty and taught to incoming freshman for four semesters. We are in the process of analyzing the effectiveness of this course and making appropriate modifications. One of the suggestions is to link it more strongly to faculty and staff advising. Although UMFK is a very student oriented campus, this is an area we continue to work on to increase our effectiveness.

#### Summary Appraisal and Plans

UMFK is a much healthier institution than it was during the 1995 team visit. Increases in enrollment and major strategy changes in programming, recruiting, student services and assessment have resulted in positive growth for the institution. Two "Intent to Plans" have been approved through the system. These new programs in the planning stages are in public safety and electronic commerce. We are also looking at the possibility of adding licensure and certification programs in other areas of high demand as well.

Our plans are to conservatively and cautiously add new programs and student services that seem to be needed by students in our region. After a great deal of discussion throughout the campus community, there is an agreed upon commitment to maintain personal service while offering a wide enough array of programming to meet the needs of students. There is also a commitment to maintain our growth in programming and enrollments in proportion to the infrastructure needed to support our students, faculty and staff.