

STANDARD 11

INTEGRITY

DESCRIPTION

Ethical Management and Operations

The University of Maine at Fort Kent acting under the authority of the University of Maine System (UMS) and its Board of Trustees (BOT), subscribes to, exemplifies, and advocates high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in all of its dealings with students, faculty, staff, external agencies and organizations, and the with general public.

As an accredited institution, we meet or exceed criteria for the assessment of instructional quality periodically validated through a peer review process (Appendix 1.03: *Institutional Performance Scorecard*; KPI 11.1-11.5). UMFK has the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate education programs. The *Academic Program Inventory* is maintained by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Each summer all UMS institutions update their portions of the inventory. The completed document is submitted to the BOT each September (Exhibit 4.01, Exhibit 3.01).

Academic Program Inventory Website
<http://www.maine.edu/acadinventory.html>

Board of Trustees Policy and Procedures Website
<http://www.maine.edu/policy.html>

UMFK manages its administrative operations with honesty and integrity and



maintains and communicates these ethical standards across the campus.

All institutional policies, procedures, rules, and regulations provide the foundation for ethical conduct and integrity. Although each University within UMS develops specific implementation practices and procedures for many academic and administrative actions, a standard definition of terms exists to facilitate cross-institutional enrollments and transfer within UMS, and production of UMS student transcripts. Each university includes the definitions in catalogs and other appropriate institutional publications. To communicate these policies, procedures, rules, and regulations, the institution provides the *Faculty Handbook*, *New Employee Guidebook*, the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*, *UMFK 2004-2005 Academic Catalog* and the University website (Exhibit 5.25: Human Resources Policies and Procedures). A complete overview is provided during mandatory new employee orientation sessions. Additionally, the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) abides by the *UMS Administrative Procedures Manual for Academic Affairs* (Exhibit 11.01).

UMFK Academic Policies Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/academics/policies/>

Human Resources Policy and Procedures Website
<http://www.maine.edu/p&p.html>

UMS Administrative Procedures Manual Website
<http://www.maine.edu/acadaff.html>

Maintaining Ethical Standards with Internal and External Consistencies

Administration, faculty, and staff comply with federal and state regulatory guidelines to assure that truthfulness, clarity, and fairness characterize the institution's relations with all internal and external constituencies. These include, but are not limited to, the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, the *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*, the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)*, the *Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1998, Title IX*, the *Civil Rights Act*, the *Maine Human Rights Act*, the *Federal Student Right- to-Know Law*, *Immigration and Naturalization Service*, *Human Subjects Protection*, and the Veterans Administration requirement for financial aid (Exhibit 11.02: Federal and State Regulatory Guidelines).

The University also meets the standards of various accrediting and licensing boards, which perform external audits to ensure compliance with the standards (Appendix 11.01: Accreditations). Furthermore, UMFK is directed by the UMS Department of Internal Audit *Charter Statement*, which is an independent appraisal function established to examine and evaluate University activities such as reliability and integrity of information and compliance with policies, plans, procedures, laws, and regulations (Exhibit 3.02: UMS Charter Statement).

UMFK Accreditation Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/academics/accrediting/>

UMS Charter Statement Website
<http://www.maine.edu/chrsta.html>

In April 2003 our faculty adopted the *Student Academic Integrity Guidelines*, published in our *Student Handbook/ Academic Planner 2004-2005* (Exhibit 2.10). In compliance with the *Drug Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug Free Workplace Act*, the University

publishes and mails annually a booklet, which informs all students and employees of the *Substance Abuse Policy*, sanctions for violation of the policy, and state and federal alcohol and drug laws, offenses, and sanctions (Exhibit 11.03: Substance Abuse Policy). Additionally, UMFK adheres to the *UMS Student Conduct Code* which details sanctions and procedures to ensure fairness for all students (Exhibit 11.04). Relationships between the faculty/staff and the University are guided by collective bargaining documents as well as state and federal law. UMS provides detailed policies regarding conflict of interest, equal opportunity and affirmative action, sexual harassment, drug and alcohol, intellectual property rights, including a *Statement of Policy Governing Patents and Copyrights* (Exhibit 11.05).

Statement of Policy Governing Patents and Copyrights Website
<http://www.maine.edu/pdf/intprop.pdf>

Academic Freedom and Nondiscrimination

Article 2 of the *Agreement between UMS and Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM) System, MEA/NEA July 2004-June 2005* focuses on academic freedom. "The Board and the Association agree that academic freedom is essential to the fulfillment of the purposes of the University. The parties acknowledge and encourage the continuation of an atmosphere of confidence and freedom while recognizing that the concept of academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding concept of responsibility to the University and its students. Unit members shall be free from any censorship, threat, restraint, or discipline by the University with regard to the pursuit of truth in the performance of their teaching, research, publishing or service obligation" (Exhibit 4.20: Academic Freedom Policy) and is also available via website.

Labor Relations Website
<http://www.maine.edu/labrel.html>

UMS is committed to maintaining a respectful, fair education, and work environment, free from discrimination or harassment that violates non-discriminatory policy (Appendix 1.03: *Institutional Performance Scorecard*, KPI 11.1-11.5). As indicated in the *UMFK 2005-2007 Catalog* (Exhibit 11.06: Non-Discrimination Policy), in complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and in pursuing its own goals for diversity, UMFK shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or citizenship status, age, disability, or veterans status in employment, education, and all other areas of the University. UMFK promotes diversity by observing the principles of *Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action* (Exhibit 11.07: Equal Opportunity Complaints Procedure) in hiring and student recruiting practices. UMFK's core values include the desire to promote diversity and social awareness (Appendix 1.04).

Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Website
<http://www.maine.edu/eo.html>

UMFK Core Values Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/aboutumfk/stratplan/core/>

Public Policy and Procedures/Fair Resolution of Grievances

UMFK promotes “mutual respect, integrity, and reason” among students in well defined policies and procedures governing student conduct and grievances. These are written in clear and unmistakable language in the *UMS Student Conduct Code* (Exhibit 11.04: UMSSCC). The institution protects the privacy of its students through well defined and published policies and procedures in the UMSSCC. Copies are readily available in the Student Services Office, in the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005* (SHAP) pp. 48-49, and via the website.

UMS Student Conduct Code Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/pdfs/studserv/studhndbk.pdf>

The institution protects students from crimes including sexual assault and harassment with a well defined *Sexual Harassment Assault Policy* (SHAP), and provisions for *Reporting Services* of the SHAP (Exhibit 8.09). The *Student Senate Constitution and By-Laws* (Exhibit 3.14) provide an avenue for students to bring issues, concerns, and provide “input” before the Student Senate (S. 111, A). The Senate can investigate student complaints and make recommendations to the administration (S. IV, V, VI, VII). Clubs must comply with local, state, and federal laws (S. II, C), and discrimination is strictly forbidden for any reason whatsoever (S. II, C & S; see also Non Discrimination Notice”, SHAP, p. 2).

UMFK guarantees faculty the fair and speedy resolution of employment conflicts through its labor relations agreement (Exhibit 3.12: *Agreement between UMS and Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM) System, MEA/NEA July 2004-June 2005*) and discrimination complaints through the *Equal Opportunity Complaints Procedure* (Exhibit 11.07), which is also available on-line. The same is true for professional staff through the agreement between *UMS and Universities of Maine Professional Staff Association – Professional and Administrative Unit July 2002 – June 2005* (UMPSA) and other staff through relevant agreements. The President's Office secures faculty and professional personnel files and Human Resources maintains classified personnel files.

Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedure Website
<http://www.umfk.maine.edu/pdfs/hr/eoe.pdf>

Institutional integrity is governed by the “affirmative action” and “equal opportunity” provisions of the *Agreement between UMS and Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM) System, MEA/NEA July*

2004-June 2005 (Article 7.1) and other pertinent contracts for professional, classified, and other staff. Faculty reappointment and termination is governed by the schedule defined under Article 7, C-D. Moreover, UMFK respects and abides by the contract procedures regarding *Promotion, Tenure, and Continuing Contract* (Art. 9, A-B). The terms and conditions of appointments are well defined in the unit member's appointment letter and respective bargaining agreement (Appendix 5.02: Sample Faculty Appointment Letter).

UMFK complies with state and federal statutes against discrimination in all its forms and in all areas of the University (Art. 7). Complaints and grievances may be filed with the University or UMS Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer. UMFK is also committed to respecting the intellectual property of its faculty (Exhibit 11.08: Grievance Procedures; Intellectual Property, *Agreement between UMS and Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM) System, MEA/NEA July 2004-June 2005*, Article 15; Appendix I).

Additionally, UMFK has a review procedure for tenure appointments, and the VPAA consults with the EEO Officer and Human Resources on all matters of equity (Appendix G).

The faculty, professional, classified, and other staff grievance procedures at UMFK are defined by contract. The institution encourages the prompt and informal resolution of conflicts and disputes. When this becomes impossible, however, the grievance procedure described in Article 15 of the *Agreement between UMS and Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM) System, MEA/NEA July 2004-June 2005* is activated. A joint University and AFUM committee has been established to examine data and review gender equity issues and report to the concerned parties (Article 20-H).

Admissions policies are defined on page 6 of the *UMFK 2005-2007 Catalog*. Institutional policy governing student deposits, refunds, and waivers are defined in the same source (pp. 18-19, 20-22). Academic honesty is also defined in the catalog (p. 66), and the institution defines and respects family education rights and privacy and including the Buckley Amendment (*UMFK 2005-2007 Catalog*, p. 56-57).

Assessment of ethical policies and procedures are ongoing and the assessment mechanisms maintained above are on file in the divisional files or on file in the VPAA Office.

APPRAISAL

Ethical Management and Operations

As a state-regulated public institution of higher education, UMFK has sufficient internal and external administrative controls to ensure integrity, accountability, and ongoing evaluation of its operations.

The University complies with state and federal regulations regarding dissemination of information to employees. Employees are informed by a variety of mechanisms as detailed in the preceding pages.

In July 2003, PeopleSoft®'s Human Resources module was implemented on campus. PeopleSoft® replaces administrative systems that had become inadequate to support UMS. Online ability to access, update, and perform self-service functions related to the employee's record has greatly enhanced the quality of service to employees. Ongoing communication between Human Resources and employees regarding updates and reminders are sent directly to each employee by electronic mail.

All newly hired full-time faculty must attend a mandatory orientation, where policies and procedures as they pertain to faculty are conveyed. The *Faculty Handbook*, which was updated in 2004, is provided to all new full-time faculty at this time, and all employees receive sexual harassment and sensitivity training within one month of hire. The *Faculty Handbook* covers policies such as non-discrimination, grievance, opposition to harassment, and reappointment and promotion procedures. Part-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff are not required to attend a formalized orientation, and as a result, may experience a lack of professional mentoring or inconsistencies in certain written policies.

Maintaining Ethical Standards with Internal and External Constituencies

The University operates within its legal authority in conducting its activities and granting degrees. It publishes appropriate policies and procedures for the fair resolution of grievances brought by faculty, staff, and students. These policies address ethical resolutions of issues regarding disability, affirmative action, sexual harassment, and maintenance of student records. Advocacy and accommodations are provided to students with disabilities.

In order to ensure that students are well-informed, clear and specific policies and procedures guiding a student's academic and social conduct are included in the *Student Handbook/Academic Planner 2004-2005*. Communication of policies and procedures has improved for students through the use of the Student Orientation Program and technology, including the University's web page and electronic mail. The Student Academic Integrity Committee, formed in 2003, meets on a regular basis to ensure academic honesty and integrity issues are dealt with immediately.

Effective communication is critical in maintaining an environment that is

respectful and productive. Increased communication has taken place over the years with the use of electronic mail and the use of the institution's web page. Despite this fact, faculty and staff welcome more institutional forums and campus-wide dialogues with administration, related to the capital plan and the strategic plan, to be better informed and provided an opportunity for input. Our small size makes it relatively easy to gather the entire campus community together. At the same time, small size means that people are extraordinarily busy and we need to seek a sensitive balance to avoid making unnecessary demands on time.

Academic Freedom and Nondiscrimination

UMFK encourages and promotes students of all ethnic and racial heritages. In support of this commitment, policies and procedures are in place exercising affirmative action to remove all discriminatory barriers to equal employment opportunity and student recruitment practices. Complaints of discrimination are taken seriously by the administration and handled promptly in accordance with its published policies and procedures.

Public Policy and Procedures/Fair Resolution of Grievances

Institutional documents (described above) provide a strong basis for governing student, faculty, and staff grievances. The campus typically deals with three to four grievances per year. All grievances have been resolved internally to the satisfaction of all involved.

Adherence to Integrity in all Standards and Relationship with CIHE

UMFK consistently demonstrates "honesty and integrity" in its relations with the "Commission on Institutions of Higher Learning", and complies willingly and fully with the standards, policies, and requests of the Commission, and other Commission Standards.

Effectiveness of Ethical Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are readily available through the University website and the UMS website. In addition, many public documents regarding financing and staffing are readily available in the library special collections room. The new *Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Plan* (IEAP) will provide a data-driven knowledge base of the effectiveness of UMFK's ethical policies and procedures.

PROJECTION

We will ensure that high ethical standards are maintained in the management of our affairs and in all of our dealings with students, faculty, staff, external agencies and organizations, and the general public.

The implementation of PeopleSoft®'s financials and student records modules over the next several years will enhance our ability to benchmark our performance against other institutions, as will ongoing participation in NSSE.

The institution will strengthen its orientation process to include all new employees to include staff, and part-time or adjunct faculty, to make certain there are no inconsistencies in policies and procedures.

It is important that as the University grows, internal communication networks also grow. The institution will promote more open, inclusive, and collaborative communication among employees, departments and administrative levels to promote greater communication, input, and accountability. And we will seek to codify procedures and standards in order to lessen the number of "ad hoc" decisions occurring on campus.

New information technologies have enabled us to publish, update, and disseminate information more widely. Information on our Web pages is increasingly accessed by people throughout the world who are interested in applying to UMFK for employment or admission.

As distance education becomes more prevalent and more programs are offered asynchronously, we will assess the effectiveness of the programs and assure that they adhere to academic standards set forth by accrediting agencies.

Operating through the governance structures described in the self study, and making increased use of data generated through the IEAP, the University will monitor ever more closely our success in delivering high quality academic programs that relate to the needs of this region. This emphasis is not in itself new, but the growing use of data will enable us to more accurately validate and document our assessment. In turn, this will enable us to constantly and consistently improve the delivery of educational services to our students.

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