

Diversity Plan

2003 - 2005

"A Diverse Education is a Quality Education"

Richard L. Pattenaude, President
University of Southern Maine

VISION / VALUES STATEMENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE

The University of Southern Maine (USM) is a university where changes happen in the lives of people, in the community and in the world. These changes occur because USM strives to be a genuinely inclusive community in which differences in background, points of view, and life choices are valued and respected. USM encourages the active examination and exchange of diverse ideas, perspectives and provides the opportunity for all persons to achieve their full potential so they are able to offer their unique contributions to the community and to the world. USM recognizes the complexity of our identities, and is moving as an institution from simply tolerating these identities to integrating these complexities into its organizational and cultural fabric. As a result, it is a community that is willing to investigate and implement strategies that create and sustain innovative and intercultural structures and practices.

USM is committed to the following:

- Shaping the curriculum to reflect our multicultural society;
- Achieving continued and sustained success in recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff and student body;
- Sustaining a climate that encourages and integrates differences;
- Inspiring its members to find their authentic voices; and becoming civically engaged and
- Recognizing the interdependence, and dignity of all participants.

In order to fulfill these commitments, USM will undertake:

1. A broad systemic analysis of its structures, policies and practices through the lenses of power and privilege, recognizing the importance of understanding how privilege can sustain inequity and segregation. (See Provost's memo dated March 18, 2003.)
2. The creation of new collaborations and alignments between academic and nonacademic areas to provide students with scholarly and practical opportunities to experience first hand issues surrounding diversity.
3. The review and revitalization of general education, which will include development of interdisciplinary modules on diversity and multiculturalism.

These are courageous steps. As these steps are realized, USM graduates will become enlightened, civically engaged and caring leaders of Maine's future.