



TOPIC: Establishment of the University System of Maryland Center for Academic Transformation

COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: November 2, 2012

SUMMARY: At its recent retreat, the Board of Regents heard presentations and engaged in robust conversation about academic transformation, including course redesign, MOOCs, and a variety of other innovative teaching and learning models. While individual USM campuses have been and will continue to be engaged in institutionally supported teaching and learning innovations, the creation of a Center for Academic Transformation at USM will enable an expansion of existing system led efforts for collaboration, enhance opportunities for funding of new initiatives, provide a resource for research in determining effective redesign models and enable the USM to secure and expand its leadership position for the benefit of its students.

As with other System office based initiatives, a primary focus will be on campus action and system coordination of those activities. Through research, analysis, and dissemination of “best practices,” the Center will also become a valued resource for system institutions and the higher education community more generally. USM presidents and provosts have indicated their support for this concept.

Housed in the USM Office of Academic Affairs and headed by an Executive Director to be hired after a national search, the Center will have a small permanent staff.

ALTERNATIVE(S): The Board may suggest alterations to the proposal and/or the budget.

FISCAL IMPACT: The budget for the proposed center is attached. For the remainder of FY 2013 (12/1/12 through 6/30/13) costs are projected to be approximately \$520,000; fund sources include fund balance and private grants.

CHANCELLOR’S RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Regents, acting as a Committee of the Whole, approve the establishment of the University System of Maryland Center for Academic Transformation, as described in the attached proposal and tentative budget.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

DATE:

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

SUBMITTED BY: Joann A. Boughman 301-445-1992

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**Proposal to the Board of Regents
11/2/12**

**Center for Academic Transformation
University System of Maryland**

By recognizing and taking advantage of the disruptive impact of new approaches to teaching and learning and evolving technologies, the University System of Maryland has become a national leader in the implementation of a variety of innovative teaching and learning models. Our success is not simply measured by the number of students enrolled in such courses, but also by the improved outcomes in student learning. In addition, we have been able to capture significant savings from our efforts through faculty time redistribution and the reduced cost of course delivery.

As the first university system in the nation to implement and sustain course redesign in a coordinated manner across a diverse set of institutions, the USM is recognized as a leader in this movement. As a result, we have been invited to be a partner by ITHAKA S+R, Carnegie Mellon University, Coursera, and others to test new approaches to teaching and learning, especially in core curriculum and gateway courses. Now, we have the potential to cement the USM's position as THE national leader in higher education academic transformation.

Initial analysis of the course redesign efforts, which incorporate active and collaborative learning, greater use of technology and online tutorials, and immediate feedback to students, shows improved student learning and higher retention rates. In virtually every redesigned course, students generally perform as well as, if not better than, students in corresponding traditional courses. There is also evidence of cost savings for institutions stemming from the ability to restructure faculty time. This cost-savings benefit is especially strong in developmental courses as increased student success reduces the need to repeat courses. The

USM is preparing additional longitudinal analysis of both student success and cost savings as we assess student progression through these programs and into subsequent courses.

Massive change is occurring in the way technology and online learning will transform the nature of many classrooms at colleges and universities. Established universities, non-profit entities, for-profit publishers, and technology companies alike are developing a wide range of new approaches for delivering education and supporting learning. The many new alternative models are welcomed, but institutions of higher education need to determine the actual value of these models. We also must develop investment strategies for successful adoption and sustained implementation of the best models. And we must assess the models through the lens of the varied learning environments and diverse student populations across the USM.

For these reasons, we propose the establishment of a Center for Academic Transformation that will enable the USM to secure and expand its leadership position for the benefit of its students. As with other System office based initiatives, the focus will be on campus action and system coordination of those activities. While USM campuses will continue to be engaged in institutionally supported teaching and learning innovations, through research, analysis, and dissemination of “best practices,” the Center will become a valued resource for system institutions and the higher education community more generally. USM presidents and provosts have indicated their support for this concept.

Housed in the USM Office of Academic Affairs and headed by an Executive Director to be hired after a national search, the Center will have a small permanent staff and it will:

- support, coordinate and assess academic innovation activities on the campuses;
- incentivize faculty, through a Fellows program, to initiate these innovations;
- apply for and raise external funds for system wide transformation activities; and
- disseminate best practices among USM institutions and to the broader higher education community.

The Center will bring greater focus, visibility and fund raising potential to USM's academic transformation efforts. This Center will also solidify USM's position of leadership in this important new dynamic in teaching and learning activities being incorporated by the higher education community.

Center for Academic Transformation
12/1/12 - 6/30/13

Expenditure Budget		
I. Center Staffing	<i>Positions</i>	<i>FY13 Budget</i>
	Center Director	\$100,000
	Gates/ITHAKA Project Director	To be filled in FY2014
	Support Staff Position	\$45,000
	Office Operations	\$10,000
	Benefits @ 24%	\$34,800
II. Faculty Fellows Program	Faculty (4 @ \$3,500)	\$14,000
	Course Redesigns (6 @ \$6,000)	\$36,000
	In-res fellow @\$30k	\$30,000
III. Academic Transformation Incentive Programs	Campus RFP 20@\$10k	\$200,000
IV. Conferences	Conferences	\$25,000
	Fac Dev'l Workshops	\$25,200
Total		\$520,000

Revenue Budget	Grant Funds*	\$355,000
	Use of Fund Balance	\$165,000
Total		\$520,000

*Grant funding includes: Gates, Lumina & Carnegie