

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
of the  
**EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
concerning  
**A PLAN FOR UMASS**

**JUNE 14, 2007**

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# A Plan for UMass

Offered by the students, staff, and faculty of the  
University of Massachusetts

For the past month, the University of Massachusetts has been distracted and divided by the sudden announcement of a plan to reorganize the UMass system. The current turmoil is distracting all key players from what matters most: building an excellent, diverse, accessible and affordable university. Divisive decisions and ongoing instability hurt the university's ability to make the case for greater investment.

We must return the focus to investing in public higher education that serves the Commonwealth; our ability to conduct outstanding teaching, research, and service; and the ability of faculty, students and staff to participate in the decisions that shape the university. UMass students, faculty and staff have a long and outstanding record of innovation and collaboration in teaching, research, and service to the Commonwealth. We are willing partners in any open and honest discussion of changes that would improve the system.

Rather than reacting to each confusing new development, or choosing sides among personalities, the students, staff, and faculty of this university propose to work together to achieve the following two goals.

**1. Process Matters.** Future decisions at every level of UMass must be made more openly and with more decision-making power with the major constituencies on our campuses. This will result in better decisions and help the campuses feel more committed to any changes that are made. We call for these structures to ensure participatory decision-making:

- The creation of an independent commission to study the structure of the UMass system and to look at possibilities for reorganization, including ways to make the President's office and Board of Trustees more accountable to the public
- Full participation of UMass faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders on the Board of Trustees, as well as any commission or task force studying future changes at UMass
- The creation of a committee to develop new procedures for faculty and student governance to ensure that all major decisions require participation by faculty, staff, and students

**2. Resources Matter.** Excellence in teaching, research, and service is achieved when talented individuals are provided the resources required to achieve their goals. We call for the following immediate investments in public higher education:

- Full funding of the higher education bills that have passed the House and Senate (originally crafted by the Senate Task Force on Higher Education)
- Within the University of Massachusetts, full and appropriate funding for the people who work, study and teach here
- A comprehensive capital bond bill to repair and rebuild our campuses
- Full funding for the Governor's proposal for free community college, and increased funding for need-based financial aid for students in Massachusetts' public colleges and universities