



Founded in 1885

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS & COLLEGES, INC.
COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair of the Commission
TERRENCE J. MacTAGGART
Research Professor
University of Maine System

Vice Chair of the Commission
HELEN OUELLETTE
Vice President for Administration and Treasurer
Williams College

Director of the Commission
CHARLES M. COOK
E-Mail: ccook@neasc.org

Deputy Director of the Commission
BARBARA E. BRITTINGHAM
E-Mail: bbrittingham@neasc.org

Associate Director of the Commission
PATRICIA M. O'BRIEN, SND
E-Mail: pobrien@neasc.org

Associate Director for Assessment
ROBERT C. FROH
E-Mail: rfroh@neasc.org

May 18, 2004

Ann Weaver Hart
President
University of New Hampshire
105 Main Street
Thompson Hall
Durham, NH 03824-3529

Dear President Hart:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on April 22, 2004, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education took the following action with respect to the University of New Hampshire:

that the University of New Hampshire be continued in accreditation;

that the University submit a fifth-year interim report for consideration in Fall, 2008;

that in addition to providing information included in all interim reports, the University of New Hampshire give emphasis to its continued progress in the three areas identified for special focus in its comprehensive evaluation: The Undergraduate Experience, Engagement through Research and Scholarship, and Institutional Effectiveness;

that the next comprehensive evaluation be scheduled for Fall, 2013.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its actions.

The continuation of the University of New Hampshire in accreditation is based on the Commission's finding that the University substantially meets the *Standards for Accreditation*. The Commission commends the University for its initiative and creativity in its special focus self-study. Through this process, the University was able to demonstrate that it meets the Commission's standards and also focus a significant amount of its time and energy in the self-study on three areas central to implementing the Academic Plan for the future of the University of New Hampshire. The Commission takes favorable note that issues identified and pursued by the University of New Hampshire demonstrate

its commitment to fulfilling its mission, ensuring quality in its academic programs, and enhancing its institutional effectiveness. A candid and energetic self-appraisal of the areas chosen for special focus also reflects the institution's quality and demonstrates its capacity for improvement. The University of New Hampshire is to be congratulated on its efforts to intensify the educational experience of its students, to focus the research efforts of its faculty, and to emphasize and enhance overall institutional effectiveness. To be sure, quantitative improvements are worth seeking, but this energetic effort to enhance the quality of the institution is especially admirable.

Commission policy requires a fifth-year interim report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution's current status in keeping with the policy on Periodic Review; we encourage the University of New Hampshire to use the opportunity for the fifth-year interim report as it used the opportunity of the comprehensive evaluation to advance the priorities of the University. The items specified for review are related to our standards on *Mission and Purposes, Planning and Evaluation*, and *Programs and Instruction*. By the time of the interim report, the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation* will have been revised; it is the Commission's goal to ensure that the revised standards provide the basis for quality improvements of the type being pursued by the University of New Hampshire as well as the basis for quality assurance, consistent with the Commission's mission.

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Fall, 2013 is consistent with the Commission's policy of requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation every ten years.

You will note the Commission has specified no length or term of accreditation. Accreditation is a continuing relationship that is reconsidered when necessary. Thus, while the Commission has indicated the timing of the next comprehensive evaluation, the schedule should not be unduly emphasized, because it is subject to change.

The Commission expressed its appreciation for the self-study prepared by the institution and for the evaluation report submitted by the visiting team. The Commission also welcomed the opportunity to meet with you and with Dr. Bruce Mallory, Provost; Stephen Hardy, Chair UNH Steering Committee; as well as Dr. M. Beverly Swan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Rhode Island, representing the team.

You are encouraged to share this letter and the team's complete report with all of the institution's constituencies. It is the Commission's policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accrediting status. In a few days, we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. John Lynch. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with Commission policy.

The Commission hopes that the evaluation process has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation in the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

Ann Weaver Hart
May 18, 2004
Page 3

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Charles M. Cook,
Director of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terrence J. MacTaggart". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Terrence J. MacTaggart

TJM/slo

Enclosure

cc: Mr. John Lynch
Visiting Team