

STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

Description

The University of New Hampshire's [mission](#) and institutional identity read as follows:

The University of New Hampshire is the state's public research university, providing comprehensive, high-quality undergraduate programs and graduate programs of distinction. Its primary purpose is learning: students collaborating with faculty in teaching, research, creative expression, and service. The University of New Hampshire has a national and international agenda and holds land-grant, sea-grant and space-grant charters. From its main Durham campus to its campuses in Manchester and Concord, the University serves New Hampshire and the region through continuing education, cooperative extension, cultural outreach, economic development activities, and applied research.

The University of New Hampshire is distinguished by its commitment to high quality undergraduate instruction, select excellence in graduate education, relatively small size, a location in a beautiful and culturally rich part of the seacoast of New England and a strong sense of responsibility for this special place, a commitment to serving the public good, and our emergence over the past decade as a significant research institution. The dedication of our faculty to the highest academic standards infuses all we do with the excitement of discovery.

University of New Hampshire Mission



Appropriately, the mission statement references UNH's multiple missions: [teaching](#), [research](#), and [engagement and outreach](#). The mission stresses the importance of the strong academic programs for both [undergraduates](#) and [graduate](#) students, signals our commitment to serving the public good, and highlights our emergence over the past decade as a significant research institution. In addition, in concert with our land-grant mission, the mission statement emphasizes the importance of place—the Seacoast, New Hampshire, and the region. The Mission has been officially affirmed by the [Board of Trustees](#) and is easily found on both the UNH and the USNH homepages.

In 2003, UNH President Anne Weaver Hart used the Mission to guide the development of the [Academic Plan](#), which focused on operationalizing the university's teaching and research. In 2010, President Mark W. Huddleston led a planning process to contextualize and expand the Academic Plan to include public service and engagement, and to develop better ways to engage external partners, marshal institutional resources, and develop new interdisciplinary research, teaching, and service. The result is the current Strategic Plan, [The University of New Hampshire in 2020: Breaking Silos, Transforming Lives, Reimagining UNH](#).

By design, both the Academic Plan and the Strategic Plan operationalize the Mission, using it as the foundation for deciding UNH's priorities, as a guide for planning, and as a prompt for evaluation. For example, the Mission calls for students and faculty to collaborate on research, the Academic Plan emphasizes opportunities for undergraduate research, the Strategic Plan provides a vision of the context and areas where that will occur, and the re-energizing of the [UNH Foundation](#) identifies the [Hamel Center for Undergraduate Research](#) and the many UROP activities located in the colleges as priorities for fundraising.

Additionally, the Strategic Plan has provided a framework for subsequent strategic planning activities in many departments, colleges, and administrative units. See, for example, [Cooperative Extension](#) and [Campus Planning](#). The Strategic Plan guides new initiatives on campus ([eUNH](#), for example) and energizes efforts to reinvigorate projects that have waned (e.g., the collection of interdisciplinary minors that focuses on domestic and global identities). Throughout the self-study, we recognize that the Strategic Plan is robust and comprehensive, and that it has guided much of our work over the last three years.

While the Mission provides an overview of the university's activities, it also serves as a basis for compliance with each of the eleven NEASC Standards and Commission requirements. For example, academic programs (Standard 4) and the work that faculty and students do together (Standards 5 and 6) are explicitly referenced.

UNH's mission is widely accepted and understood, and the planning processes it inspires have been explicitly devised to invest the community in the mission. For example, in the Strategic Planning process, over 135 administrators, faculty, staff, students and external partners were engaged over the course of a year, and hundreds more were involved in open and on-line fora, town-hall style conversations, and review. The [Faculty Senate](#), [Staff Councils](#), [Student Senate](#), and [Graduate Student Organization](#) were well represented and followed the process throughout. At the end, each of these organizations formally endorsed the Plan, and the Agenda Committee of the Faculty Senate endorsed the process as a "model of shared governance." We recognize how challenging it can be to achieve effective shared governance in a large and complex institution; nonetheless, we aspire to it always, and are pleased that such a central process for animating our university's mission achieved that outcome.

Following from the Mission and the Plan, all the institution's programs (academic, research, outreach) are designed and evaluated in the context of how they serve their respective constituencies. UNH's responses to the other NEASC standards reveal this in more detail. For example, Cooperative Extension's role in serving the citizens of the State of New Hampshire directly flows from the Mission, is addressed in the Plan, and has weathered state and county budget cuts through the university's commitment

Units responsible for curricula, associated activities, and expectations for student learning each have their own individual mission statements derived from the UNH mission statement, and each carries out elements of the strategic plan within its own purview by establishing objectives and related policies and procedures. We see this most extensively in Standard 2, where all

colleges, and most departments, have individual mission statements; in Standard 6, where many branches of Student Services have such statements; and in Standards 7, 8, and 9, where units involved with the [Library](#) and [technology](#), campus planning, and finance and operations all work from clear mission statements in support of the institutional mission.

Appraisal

Our mission is consistent with our charter, and unique to our institution. It underlies both our 2003 Academic Plan and our 2010 Strategic Plan. Those documents, in turn, guide unit-level strategic planning, resource allocation, and assessment. Across the institution, unit plans give shape to the institution and establish structures and procedures for implementing the mission. UNH's overall institutional effectiveness, its assessment and enhancement, therefore, start with its mission and move through an analysis of overall planning for mission implementation to a thorough review of policies, procedures, and actions that make the mission come alive while adhering to standards established by NEASC and other professional accreditors.

Projections

During AY '14-'15 the [President's Cabinet](#) will determine whether or not the full mission statement should be subject to regular, cyclical review rather than periodic review.

During AY '14-'15 the College Deans, Program Directors, and chief administrative officers will ensure that units which have not refreshed their mission statements since 2010 will do so in light of UNH's recent Strategic Plan.

Institutional Effectiveness

UNH has a strong, well-founded mission that provides for overall planning as the university moves forward. The academic and strategic plans flow directly from the mission and lead the way for all units to enhance institutional effectiveness through their own planning. See also Standard 2, which includes a recommendation for reviewing the current strategic plan.

[STANDARD ONE DATA FIRST FORMS](#)