



February 1, 2019

Dr. James W. Dean  
President  
University of New Hampshire  
105 Main Street  
Thompson Hall  
Durham, NH 03824-3529

Dear President Dean:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on November 16, 2018, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the reports submitted by University of New Hampshire and voted to take the following action:

that the interim (fifth-year) report submitted by University of New Hampshire be accepted;

that the information submitted by University of New Hampshire regarding the accreditation status of its Master of Public Health program with the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) be accepted;

that the University provide an update on the accreditation status of its Master of Public Health program when CEPH next takes action, prior to December 31, 2019, on the program's accreditation status;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Fall 2023 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the information included in all self-studies, the self-study prepared in advance of the Fall 2023 evaluation give continued emphasis to three of the items specified for attention in the Fall 2018 interim report and to its success in an additional matter:

1. continuing to implement a comprehensive approach to assessing student learning and using the results for improvement, including a regular review of all of the University's academic programs;
2. updating the strategic plan and developing metrics to measure success in achieving its goals;
3. continuing to give attention to meeting its goal to increase the diversity of its undergraduate class and to close the gap in success rates between majority students and students of color;

DAVID OUGLEY, Chair (2021)  
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College of Our Lady of the Elms

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Berkshire Community College

ABDALLAH A. SFEIR (2021)  
Lebanese American University

JOHN M. SWENEY (2021)  
Providence College

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4. meeting its financial challenges.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The interim (fifth-year) report submitted by University of New Hampshire was accepted because it responded to the concerns raised by the Commission in its letter of January 16, 2015 and addressed each of the nine standards, including a reflective essay for Standard 8: *Educational Effectiveness* on student learning and success.

We commend University of New Hampshire (UNH) for its comprehensive and informative interim report that documented its many accomplishments over the past five years to advance the institution's mission as the state's public research university in a climate of enrollment and financial challenges. From the report, we are assured that UNH students are well served by the institution's "creative curricular development" including high-impact educational opportunities such as the Discovery Program, Residential Learning Communities, and the FIRE Program, with 78% of students completing at least one internship experience and over 20% studying abroad each year. UNH's annual undergraduate research conference at which close to 2,000 students present their scholarly work is noteworthy, as is the University's receiving \$100 million annually in competitive research funding. UNH's focus on interdisciplinary programs and partnerships is demonstrated by its establishment of the Carsey School of Public Policy (2013), the Center for Integrated Biomedical and Bioengineering Research (2017), and the John Olsen Advanced Manufacturing Center "dedicated to modernizing manufacturing technology" (2018). We are also pleased to learn that the institution's strategic plan was updated in 2013 – *UNH in 2020, Version 2.0* – and that "measurable performance markers" were created, with the expectation that the new president will review the plan and decide next steps for the institution. We appreciate, too, that the implementation of a Responsibility Center Management budget model has been effective in achieving the University's strategic goals through a process of decentralized decision-making, and we view positively that the Faculty Senate has been broadened to include non-tenure track faculty and that the Research Faculty Council and the Clinical Faculty Council have been recognized to represent their respective constituencies. UNH has also innovatively used technology, "a key enabler of its mission," to enhance student services to include applications for resume building, career management, and alumni mentoring, and the addition of technology-enhanced classrooms as part of the recent renovation of Hamilton Smith Hall will help to encourage new pedagogical approaches. While supporting the institution's position that more work is needed, we acknowledge the University's continued attention to improving community inclusion and diversity by creating a Presidential Task Force on Campus Climate and its plans to administer a comprehensive campus climate survey that will include the faculty, staff, and students on all three of UNH's campuses. Of particular mention is the Granite Guarantee program designed to increase college access that, in its first year, covered the cost of tuition for four years for 400 in-state, Pell-eligible students.

From UNH's reflective essay, we note with favor that the institution's program review process was revised in 2016 to ensure all programs regularly engage in self-study and that the process includes "evidence of student learning assessment and curricular growth;" we also concur that the move to a completely online course evaluation system was a "huge" accomplishment. Student Learning Outcomes have been completed for nearly all programs offered at UNH – undergraduate and graduate – with 100% participation anticipated by Fall 2018. The workshops and other approaches used by the Center for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CEITL), along with the UNH Writing Program, have helped faculty develop valid assessment measures, and we understand that, going forward, CEITL will have a coordinating role to "facilitate university-wide dialogue and planning" on issues related to student achievement and assessment. The success of UNH students is apparent from the impressive array of measures tracked by the University for its different student populations including retention and graduation rates, licensure exam passage rates, and job placement rates, most of which exceed national

averages. In addition, Resident Life survey results find high satisfaction with the quality of programming available, and NSSE results confirm that 90% of responding seniors are satisfied with their overall education experience at UNH.

The information submitted by University of New Hampshire regarding the accreditation status of its Master of Public Health program was also accepted because it was generally responsive to the request made by the Commission in its letter of August 28, 2018.

The Commission was recently informed by the Council on Education for Public Health that it had placed UNH's Master of Public Health program on "probationary accreditation" status. We understand at issue is compliance with CEPH's criterion related to program evaluation and operating deficits due to enrollment declines that, in part, stemmed from the three-semester gap in program leadership. We are therefore pleased to learn that UNH has filled both the Program Director and Coordinator positions who will share responsibility for addressing the deficiencies noted. In addition, a full curriculum review that involves employers and alumni is underway using CEPH's new criteria, and marketing initiatives were prioritized with enrollment increasing from two new students in Fall 2017 to eight new students in Fall 2018.

In keeping with our Policy on Consideration Given to the Decisions of Other Accrediting Agencies and State Agencies, the Commission will continue to monitor University of New Hampshire's implementation of its plans for its Master of Public Health by requesting an update on the accreditation status of the program following CEPH's action on its probationary accreditation status that will take place prior to December 31, 2019.

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Fall 2023 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years. In addition to the information included in all self-studies, University of New Hampshire is asked to give continued emphasis to three areas specified for the Fall 2018 interim report, namely, continuing to implement a comprehensive approach to assessing student learning and using the results for improvement, including a regular review of all of the University's academic programs; updating the strategic plan and developing metrics to measure success in achieving its goals; and continuing to give attention to meeting its goal to increase the diversity of its undergraduate class and to close the gap in success rates between majority students and students of color. The Commission understands that these issues do not lend themselves to rapid resolution and will require the institution's continued attention over time; hence, we ask that evidence of further progress be provided in the Fall 2023 self-study. The additional item the institution is asked to report on in its Fall 2023 self-study is related to our standard on *Institutional Resources*.

Even though UNH has experienced stable undergraduate and graduate enrollment over the past four years, from a total of 13,554 FTE to 13,736 FTE, we understand from the report that the institution's financial health "remains a continual challenge" as a result of New England's declining population of college-eligible students, increased competition from the region's colleges for New Hampshire students, and limited state support. With the growth of operating expenses exceeding that of operating revenues, a structural deficit now exists that necessitates expense reductions across all units. We therefore note with approval the University's efforts to diversify its revenue streams by targeting new enrollment markets and recruiting more international students, developing programs in emerging fields along with new business partnerships, and improving the institution's retention and graduation rates. We are also encouraged to learn of the University's efforts to "hold expense growth to reasonable levels," including its collaboration with the University System of New Hampshire to explore shared services, and its elimination of financially unsustainable programs. UNH's "highly successful" fundraising campaign that exceeded its goal of \$275 million by raising more than \$300 million is commendable. In keeping with our standard on *Institutional Resources*, we welcome further

information, in the Fall 2023 self-study, on the institution's continued success in meeting its financial challenges:

The institution preserves and enhances available financial resources sufficient to support its mission. It manages its financial resources and allocates them in a way that reflects its mission and purposes. It demonstrates the ability to respond to financial emergencies and unforeseen circumstances (7.4).

The institution is financially stable. Ostensible financial stability is not achieved at the expense of educational quality. Its stability and viability are not unduly dependent upon vulnerable financial resources or an historically narrow base of support (7.5).

The institution's financial planning, including contingency planning, is integrated with overall planning and evaluation processes. The institution demonstrates its ability to analyze its financial condition and understand the opportunities and constraints that will influence its financial condition and acts accordingly. It reallocates resources as necessary to achieve its purposes and objectives (7.14).

The Commission expressed appreciation for the reports submitted by University of New Hampshire and hopes their preparation 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.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action and the head of the state system on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Dr. Todd J. Leach, Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire, and Mr. John W. Small. The institution is free to release information about the report and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



David Quigley

DQ/jm

Enclosure

cc: Mr. John W. Small  
Dr. Todd J. Leach

**RECEIVED**

FEB 05 2019

**Office of the President**



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## **Public Disclosure of Information About Affiliated Institutions**

The following policy governs the release of information regarding the status of affiliated colleges and universities by institutions and by the Commission.

### **1. Release of Information by Institutions Regarding Their Accreditation Following Commission Action**

At the conclusion of the evaluation process institutions are encouraged to make publicly available information about their accreditation status including the findings of team reports and any obligations or requirements established by Commission action, as well as any plans to address stated concerns. Because of the potential to be misleading, institutions are asked not to publish or otherwise disseminate excerpts from these materials.

While the Commission does not ordinarily release copies of self-studies, progress reports, evaluation reports, or other documents related to the accreditation of individual institutions, it believes it to be good practice for institutions to make these materials available, in their entirety, after notification of Commission action.

The Commission will release information on actions of show cause or deferral. If such information is also released by the institution in question or is otherwise made public, the Commission will respond to related inquiries and may issue a revised public statement.

If an institution releases or otherwise disseminates information which misrepresents or distorts its accreditation status, the institution will be notified and asked to take corrective action publicly correcting any misleading information it may have disseminated, including but not limited to the accreditation status of the institution, the contents of evaluation reports, and the Commission actions with respect to the institution. Should it fail to do so in an immediate and timely way, the Commission, acting through its President, will release a public statement in such form and content as it deems desirable providing correct information. This may include release of notification letters sent by the Commission to the institution, and/or a press release.



## 2. Published Statement on Accredited Status

The Commission asks that one of the following statements be used for disclosing on its website and in catalogues, brochures, advertisements, etc., that the institution is accredited.

An institution may wish to include within its website, catalogue or other material a statement which will give the consuming public a better idea of the meaning of regional accreditation. When that is the case, the Commission requests that the following statement be used in its entirety:

\_\_\_\_\_ College (University) is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (formerly the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.).

Accreditation of an institution of higher education by the Commission indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer review process. An accredited college or university is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the Commission is not partial but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of every course or program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding the accreditation status by the Commission should be directed to the administrative staff of the institution. Individuals may also contact:

**New England Commission of Higher Education**  
**3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100, Burlington, MA 01803-4514**  
**(781) 425 7785**  
**E-Mail: [info@neche.org](mailto:info@neche.org)**

The shorter statement that an institution may choose for announcing its accredited status follows:

\_\_\_\_\_ College (University) is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (formerly the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.).

Inquiries regarding the accreditation status by the Commission should be directed to the administrative staff of the institution. Individuals may also contact:

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Accreditation by the New England Commission of Higher Education has reference to the institution as a whole. Therefore, statements like “fully accredited” or “this program is accredited by the Commission” or “this degree is accredited by the Commission” are incorrect and should not be used.

**3. Published Statement on Candidate Status**

An institution granted Candidate for Accreditation (Candidacy) status must use the following statement whenever it makes reference to its affiliation with the New England Commission of Higher Education:

\_\_\_\_\_ College (University) has been granted Candidate for Accreditation status by the New England Commission of Higher Education (formerly the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc.). Candidacy for Accreditation is a status of affiliation with the Commission which indicates that the institution has achieved initial recognition and is progressing toward accreditation.

Candidacy is not accreditation nor does it assure eventual accreditation.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution affiliated with the Commission should be directed to the administrative staff of the college or university. Individuals may also contact:

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**3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100, Burlington, MA 01803-4514**  
**(781) 425 7785**  
**E-Mail: [info@neche.org](mailto:info@neche.org)**

#### **4. Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions by the Commission**

The Commission publishes the following information about member and candidate institutions on its website:

- Name of the institution
- The date of initial accreditation and/or when candidacy was granted
- Accreditation status (member or candidate)
- Address
- Phone and fax numbers
- CEO name and title
- Degree levels awarded
- Dates of initial accreditation (or candidacy), last review and next review
- Locations of off-campus instructional sites
- The basis for Commission action affecting candidacy or accreditation status
- The date and nature (comprehensive or focused) of the most recent on-site evaluation and subsequent Commission action on the institution's accredited status
- The date and nature (comprehensive or focused) of the next scheduled on-site evaluation
- Submission date and action taken on the most recent written report required by the Commission
- The date and nature of any show-cause for denial of candidacy or accreditation, probation, or withdrawal of candidacy or accreditation status
- The extent of, or limitations on, the status of affiliation
- In cases of adverse action (denial or withdrawal of candidacy or accreditation, placing an institution on probation), the Commission's reasons for that status and, in the case of probation, its plans to monitor the institution. The Commission, in consultation with the institution, will prepare a written statement incorporating the above information. The Commission reserves the right to make the final determination of the nature and content of the statement. The institution will also be offered the opportunity to make its official comment; if the institution does make



an official comment, the comment will be made available by the Commission

- For institutions whose candidacy or accreditation has been withdrawn, the date of, and reasons for, withdrawal.

The Commission recognizes that, to be fully understood, information about the accredited status of institutions must be placed within the context of the policies and procedures of the New England Commission of Higher Education. In responding to inquiries, the Commission will endeavor to do so.

The Commission may also publish on its website a public statement about an action taken regarding a member or candidate institution when further information about the action and the Commission's reasons for taking the action would be helpful to members of the public.

Adverse actions (placement of an institution on probation, denial of candidacy or accreditation, and withdrawal of candidacy or accreditation) are communicated when the decision becomes final (i.e., when the institution does not appeal or when the appeals process is completed and the decision is upheld). The Commission, at its discretion, may make the adverse action public before the decision is final or the appeal is completed. In so doing, the Commission will provide information about the appeal process.

## **5. Public Disclosure of Institutional Actions**

Within 30 days after the action on accreditation status is taken, the Commission will notify the Secretary of Education, New England state higher education officers, appropriate accrediting agencies, and the public. The Commission will also make public on its website the basis for these decisions. Such actions include:

A final decision to:

Grant candidacy or accreditation

Continue an institution in accreditation

Deny or withdraw the candidacy or accreditation of an institution

Place an institution on probation

Approve substantive change (e.g., moving to a higher degree level)

A decision by an accredited or candidate institution to voluntarily withdraw from affiliation with the Commission.

Per federal regulation, within 60 days of a final decision to take an adverse action (probation, denial of candidacy or accreditation, or withdrawal of candidacy or accreditation), the Commission will submit a copy of the final decision letter to the Secretary of Education. The Secretary will make the letter public.

*November 1998*

*September 2001*

*April 2010*

*September 2011*

*Editorial Changes, March 2014*

*April 2015*

*April 2017*

*Editorial Changes, September 2018*