Dear Colleagues,   
   
Welcome to the start of the 2023-2024 academic year. With a revamped orientation program coming out of the efforts of our student success team, we welcomed just over 3,200 new first-year and transfer students to our campuses. While this number is slightly smaller than last year’s group, their energy has been infectious. Interacting with these students has yet again reminded me why the work we do is important and meaningful. This incoming group represents 41 states and 19 countries. They are the highest achieving class in UNH history with an average incoming GPA of 3.67. One-quarter are first-generation college students, a remarkable number that underscores UNH’s important role in equity and access in education. A special thank you to the undergraduate admissions and student financial services teams that helped to land this class and everyone that participated in orientation, move-in and wildcat days.   
  
At the graduate level, we saw growth in many areas. Bright spots include significant growth in both professional and international graduate student numbers in Manchester and Durham, as well as at the Franklin Pierce School of Law in Concord which had its largest, most diverse class since they joined UNH. In Durham we also saw increases in the number of graduate students in research programs. Thank you to the faculty, admissions teams, and office of international students and scholars who were involved in bringing these students to UNH.  
  
We welcomed 63 new faculty colleagues to our ranks. Thank you to the faculty development team, Dean’s offices, Departments and Programs, HR, Faculty Senate, and union leadership teams that all helped to welcome this impressive new group of colleagues.  
  
I’d like to offer my sincere appreciation to the faculty and staff who have worked so hard to prepare for the beginning of a new academic year.    
  
We should all also thank our facilities, cleaning, and grounds teams for their work to prepare our beautiful campuses for the arrival of the semester.

As we welcome everyone back to campus, I ask all of us to dig into our reserves of understanding and kindness. There is a lot going on in the world right now with natural disasters and other destructive events. UNH is a community that is committed to supporting one another in our successes and in our difficulties.  
  
This summer we finalized the merger with Granite State College into UNH’s College of Professional Studies. Because of the merger, UNH has 50 new completely online programs to offer working professionals. We have gained valuable colleagues and knowledge and I look forward to the cross-college collaboration that comes from this. Thank you to all the teams on all our campuses who participated, and continue to participate, in this effort.  More information can be found [here](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fclick.send.unh.edu%2F%3Fqs%3D47cd480ea503bb2977fbd952a62a290dded22f6e5748683d2bd73db9b11ca7346524eb87ebbd67c71f8f9e4bc238719b2cd54bd2391372ed&data=05%7C01%7CRobin.Pelechowicz%40unh.edu%7Ca2d809aa95cb4dbbcc8e08dbaa63527a%7Cd6241893512d46dc8d2bbe47e25f5666%7C0%7C0%7C638291115781276143%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dh2myzHadYGV8W%2F9YVFhTcOmTzaVOrTbfl7NU6IrONA%3D&reserved=0).

This year we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our becoming the University of New Hampshire. As part of that effort, in partnership with the faculty senate, we are planning a fall convocation on **September 26 at 1:00 pm in the Granite State Room**. This year’s talk will focus on High Impact Learning Experiences. Speakers will illustrate how these experiences have expanded at UNH from our liberal arts and sciences core 100 years ago. Today, 75% of students complete at least 1 internship or research experience during their time at UNH. We hope you will be able to join us on September 26 for convocation. Additional details will be forthcoming, including the announcement of keynote speakers and a registration link.  
  
In October we will be reaffirming our New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) accreditation. Thank you for all those who have contributed to our self-study.    
  
Finally, I want to update you on a few senior leadership searches for leaders who departed or announced their upcoming retirements last spring. The Director of the Carsey School search is off and running. The search committee and job description can be found [here](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fclick.send.unh.edu%2F%3Fqs%3D47cd480ea503bb29fd3634e7c1d53c3618c7bc251582f26bde108e063e0947867c6c9a4a738be31fff0531dfd698eaafe1c60636135ab221&data=05%7C01%7CRobin.Pelechowicz%40unh.edu%7Ca2d809aa95cb4dbbcc8e08dbaa63527a%7Cd6241893512d46dc8d2bbe47e25f5666%7C0%7C0%7C638291115781276143%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=OCWchYETsbDba3xDxCNCmnCAHrvBozvvlsJkjlFctDg%3D&reserved=0), and we welcome your help in directing possible candidates to Dean Michele Dillon who is chairing the search. The Dean of the Graduate School search will kick off in September. We are currently building the search committee and it will be posted on the provost’s website as soon as it is available.  
  
The start of the academic year brings with it new opportunities and a fresh start for students, faculty, and staff alike. We have work to do as we continue to address challenges with new technologies and demographic impacts on budgets and revenues. However, I look forward to seeing all that we can accomplish together this year.   
   
Thank you for everything that you do in support of UNH and the success of our students.   
   
Wayne E. Jones Jr.   
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs