

**COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ACTIVITY**

**In-State Colleges and Universities:**

**Saint Joseph School of Nursing:**

SJSN launched their newly approved AS in Medical Assisting in the fall of 2020, but due to Covid-19 only attracted a single student. A second cohort is being formed for January, 2021.

The AS in Nursing program has a strong enrollment of 104 enrolled and 73 graduated in 2020. The school has added an evening option and added faculty for the additional enrollment. NCLEX scores have improved with the most recent first-time pass rate at 93% vs a national average of 88%. The nursing program is ACEN accredited through 2025. It is also approved by the NH Board of Nursing.

The School of Nursing is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC). The first accreditation was in 2009.

On October 20-22, 2020 a three-person team and an ACCSC observer conducted a virtual on-site evaluation for continued accreditation. The team identified several areas needing attention, mostly technical processes in admissions, tuition refunds, procedures leaves of absence, etc. SJSN responded to these findings on January 11, 2021. The ACCSC will consider the evaluation report and the institution's response at its Commission meeting in February 2021. SJSN will share this response from ACCSC with the NH Commission when it is available.

**Signum University:**

Signum University filed its Annual Report to the NH Higher Education Commission on December 29, 2020. This was a comprehensive report (92 pages) which highlighted changes since the University's most recent report to the Commission.

Operations at Signum were not significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and all instruction is online and the University's operations are cloud based. There were some staffing challenges due to family disruptions of normal work and schooling routines. Course enrollments increased significantly resulting in a strong fiscal year end surplus (August 31, 2020). The fiscal 2021 budget reflects strong fall enrollments and projects revenue of \$380,000, expenses of \$360,000, and a surplus of \$20,000.

The Master of Arts program enrollment remains strong, but the Covid-19 environment curtailed enrollment in a newly launched Signum Path program, a Humanities based professional development program. Strategic plans are to move the University more into the Humanities, with planning for a bachelor's degree in the Humanities, which could be launched in the fall of 2022. This would require approval from the NH Higher Education Commission. A new grant writing initiative has been launched, as well as a Signum Academy Clubs program for younger learners. The Academy Clubs would be a part of New Hampshire's Learn Everywhere program. Several grant applications are pending.

The report updated progress on prior NH Commission recommendations, with special notes as follows.

- A new University librarian was hired.
- Legislation to provide degree granting authority to Signum has been refiled in the NH Senate. Both the House and Senate Education Committees have held hearings on the legislation.
- Accreditation by the Distance Education Accreditation Commission (DEAC) is progressing as planned. The University was able to negotiate a resolution with DEAC regarding Signum's online program offerings in states that do not require SARA membership. This "catch-22" will be resolved once DEAC accreditation is achieved and Signum becomes a SARA member.

The achievement of degree granting authority and accreditation by DEAC remain the most important strategic goals for the University.

**Southern New Hampshire University:**

SNHU's Bachelor's Degree in Nursing and Master's Degree in Nursing programs are accredited by The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). In their last review in October, 2019 CCNE identified two areas that needed to be addressed. In their December, 2020 Compliance Report SNHU reported that the Chief Nurse Educator had completed her doctoral degree, and that the completion rate of 83% for recent classes exceeded the benchmark of 70%. The CCNE Report Review Committee will review the Compliance Report and respond to the University. SNHU will share this response with the NH Commission.

**New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) Activity:**

**American University of Madaba (Jordan):** A NECHE virtual on-site visit is scheduled for March 22, 2021 to evaluate the University's Eligibility Report and readiness for Candidacy status. Dr. Michael James of Boston College, a consultant to the University will participate and keep the Commission posted on progress. A report on the visit will be given to the Commission at its May 2021 meeting.

**Antioch University New England:** Antioch University, Yellow Springs, OH, is authorized by the NH Higher Education Commission to offer an array of graduate programs and certificates at its Antioch University New England (AUNE) site in Keene, NH. The Keene instructional site has been in operation for many years and currently serves 1166 students. All of its programs are at the graduate level, and the University is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. AUNE offers certificates, masters and doctoral degrees in Applied Psychology (11), Clinical Psychology (2), Education (16), Environmental Studies (9), Interdisciplinary Studies (1), and Organization & Management (2).

**Colby Sawyer College:** The College received correspondence from NECHE to add the Master of Business Administration (MBA) to be encompassed within the institution's accreditation. Offering additional Master's level degree program beyond the MBA and MSN would trigger a Substantive Change review. NECHE has scheduled an on-site evaluation for the fall of 2021 to assess implementation of the AS in Health Science, the two MSN nursing concentrations and the MBA.

A three-person NECHE team conducted NECHE virtual site visit to the College on October 26-28, 2020 as a follow-up to the College's 5<sup>th</sup> Year Interim Report. The Interim Report was focused on five (5) recommendations from the comprehensive evaluation in 2015. The focus was on strategic planning, financial performance, enrollment characteristics, attention to deferred maintenance, the launch of the MSN program and the College's partnership with the Dartmouth Hitchcock Health System.

The report was quite positive on the progress made on a number of fronts. The College has experienced positive operating results over the past three years and has elevated its fund raising results substantially. The work done to consolidate academic programs and personnel resources to align with available resources has been successful. The pivot of program focus toward nursing and the health sciences in partnership with Dartmouth Hitchcock is showing good results. The College has directed considerable resources to deferred maintenance projects and has accomplished several facility improvements.

The team noted the need to "refresh" the College's strategic plan in light of changes in the enrollment mix, its operational partnership with Dartmouth Hitchcock, its pivot to the health sciences, and the demographic realities of the region. The updated plan should address a continued high discount rate, and more integration of enrollment, finances, and facilities.

The College's response took notice of the evaluation team's observations and reported that work is already underway on these matters.

The NECHE Commission will meet in March to consider the team's report and recommendations, and the College will share NECHE's letter when received later in the spring of 2021.

**Hellenic American University:** A NECHE focused virtual site visit to the Nashua instructional site was conducted on November 8-10, 2020. Strengths noted were the hiring of strong leadership for the Nashua site and improvement in the array of academic and personal support services for students. The team made positive remarks on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementation of the new Blackboard Collaborate LMS, and associated faculty training.

Observations regarding international and domestic enrollment challenges, planning beyond the pandemic horizon, and better communication better with students regarding the array of services available were also noted. The NECHE Commission will meet on March 4, 2021 to consider the team's recommendations and the University will share NECHE's letter when received later in the spring of 2021.

**Magdalen College:** A NECHE virtual site visit to evaluate progress as documented in the institution's 5<sup>th</sup> Year Interim Evaluation Report was conducted October 18-21, 2020. Dr. Richard A. Gustafson observed for the Commission. While all nine NECHE standards were reviewed, the focus was on governance, organization, enrollment and finances. The NECHE team commended the College for the strength and integrity of its academic program, for its student support services and for the commitment and dedication of its faculty, staff, and trustees. The team also noted concerns in governance following the departure of several key Board members, the need to move forward on the recruitment of a new president, to strengthen enrollment, and financial resources.

The College prepared a comprehensive response detailing its efforts to build Board membership, to retain a new president, progress in admissions for the fall of 2021, fund raising successes, and improvements in operational finances.

The NECHE Commission will consider the Team's report and recommendations, as well as the College's progress, at its spring 2021 meetings. The College will share NECHE's correspondence with the Commission. The College has already been informed of an intended NECHE visit in the spring of 2023.

**New England College:** A combined NECHE virtual site visit on October 29-30, 2020 evaluated the progress of the Bachelor of Fine Arts program and the NEC/NHIA merger, as well as the NEC collaboration with Dallas College (formerly the Dallas Community Colleges in Dallas, TX). A separate report on each matter will be filed with NECHE, and will be considered by the Commission at its March 2021 meeting. The College will share NECHE's letter when received later in the spring of 2021.

NECHE has been monitoring progress on its approval of a Substantive Change for New England College regarding its merger with the New Hampshire Institute of Art and its establishment of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program in conjunction with the merger. This is likely the last NECHE visit on this matter as the progress reports to NECHE and to the NH Higher Education Commission over the past two years have been very positive.

The three-person NECHE team was chaired by Dr. Coleen Pantalone, associate professor of finance, emeritus, Northeastern University. The team reviewed the NHIA merger and the BFA program in the framework of all of NECHE's nine accreditation standards in its 12 page report filed on December 16, 2020.

The report was quite positive on the College meeting all of the standards. Particular attention was paid to the alignment of common elements of mission, to governance, with the successful merger of the two Boards of Trustees, to curricular and faculty integration, and the provision of student support services on the Manchester and Henniker campuses. The team noted moderate enrollment challenges due to Covid-19, but the institution had prepared a conservative balanced budget in anticipation of the enrollment shortfall. The merger plan included the divesting of five real estate holdings. One has been achieved with the proceeds used to reduce debt and make significant improvements in the main facility in Manchester. The others remain to be sold.

The merger is now complete and has been a smooth transition. The mutual benefits to personnel and institutional operations have been achieved.

The NECHE team commended the College on its program assessment model, its manner of open communication in “listening and learning”, the provision of services and facilities improvements in Manchester, and the positive feedback received on the merger process and outcomes. The team noted the need for full website integration, and the continued attention to enrollment recovery once the Covid-19 pandemic has been subdued.

The NECHE Commission will take up this report at its spring, 2021 meeting and then provide the College with its decision regarding the merger and the BFA program. The NH Higher Education Commission will receive a copy of the NECHE correspondence.

NECHE is considering approval of a Substantive Change request from New England College regarding the offering of bachelor degree completion programs in cybersecurity, forensic accounting and RN to BSN at three Dallas College (formerly the Dallas Community College District) campuses, and the ability to add other programs at other Dallas College sites without prior approval from NECHE.

The three-person NECHE team was chaired by Dr. Coleen Pantalone, associate professor of finance, emerita, Northeastern University. The team reviewed curricula, academic resources and program delivery/assessment in the framework of all of NECHE’s nine accreditation standards in its 12 page report filed on December 16, 2020. The report was quite positive on the College meeting all of the standards. The programs are in harmony with the mission of the College and are representative of a series of strategic initiatives noted in the College’s 2021 – 2026 strategic plan, “rethink everything”. Particular attention was paid to the hybrid approach to program delivery using Blackboard, and having directors and local adjunct faculty onboard to provide direct instruction and support to students. The cybersecurity and forensic accounting programs launched in fall 2019, and the RN to BSN is scheduled to launch in spring 2021. The team noted initial enrollment and financial goals were not met, in part because of Covid-19 challenges. Retention of enrolled student is strong and faculty and students are very positive regarding their experiences with the program.

The NECHE team commended the College on its launch of the cybersecurity and forensic programs, its program assessment model, course design, the support of faculty and students, and strong student retention. The team noted the need to meet enrollment and financial goal as Covid-19 challenges abate, and to enhance the communications plan and the integration and utility of the website with respect to these programs. The NECHE Commission will take up this report at its spring, 2021 meeting and then provide the College with its decision regarding the request for this substantive change and the College’s request to bring additional programs to other Dallas College campuses without prior approval from NECHE. The NH Higher Education Commission will receive a copy of the NECHE correspondence.

**Saint Anselm College:** The NH Commission awaits a copy of NECHE correspondence regarding the final outcome of its campus visit of July, 2020.

**Upper Valley Educators Institute (UVEI):** On October 18-21, 2020 a NECHE evaluation team conducted a virtual visit to the Upper Valley Educators Institute (UVEI) to assess the institution’s self-study for Candidacy status. Dr. James F. Birge, president of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and formerly president of Franklin Pierce University, chaired the four-person evaluation team. Mr. Stephen Appleby served as an observer for the NH Higher Education Commission. This was a comprehensive evaluation visit to assess progress on all nine NECHE standards. UVEI founded in 1969, provides professional development and teacher/administrator certification programs at the Master’s degree level to meet educators needs in the upper valley of New Hampshire and Vermont. The Institute enrolls 40 full-time and 39 part-time students, and has an operational budget in the \$1,500,000 range. The evaluation team complimented the Institute for its comprehensive self-study, and for a productive, well-organized, collegial visit.

Areas of strength included the provision for continuous planning, evaluation, and improvement, its distributed leadership model, the prioritization of having full-time faculty, its strong budget management, and its use of student outcome data using many measures.

The evaluation team urged clarification of the time allocation for the responsibilities of the CFO, consideration of a longer than 2-year appointments for the academic dean, a 5-year financial plan to include operating results, and the desirability of a coordinator to ensure ADA accommodations.

The NECHE Commission will consider the evaluation team's recommendation regarding candidacy at its spring 2021 meeting. The NH Higher Education Commission should have formal notification of NECHE's decision in April or May 2021.

### **Out-of-State Colleges and Universities:**

**Cornell University (NY):** Cornell University continues to offer its Executive MBA program in Salem, NH. This is a cohort-based program taught by Cornell and Queens University faculty. Four students are in the 2021 cohort, and eight students in the 2022 cohort. Recruitment is underway for the 2023 cohort. There have been no changes in the curriculum or faculty. Cornell University is regionally accredited by the Middle States Commission.

**Lesley University (MA):** Lesley University is 'authorized to operate in New Hampshire offering education programs to teachers at any site, with prior approval of the Director.

The University has offered its M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, with a specialization in Integrated Teaching Through the Arts. Eight students were enrolled in the 18 month program and all eight graduated in late November 2019. Classes were conducted at the Walnut Hill Seminar House in Raymond, NH. Qualified faculty delivered the curriculum as described in the University catalogue. Lesley is regionally accredited by NECHE and its teacher education programs are also accredited.

**Vermont Technical College, Glenciff Home:** Vermont Technical College entered into an agreement with the Glenciff Home in NH to deliver its Associate of Science in Practical Nursing for a small cohort of students. The fall 2020 start has been postponed until April 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Commission will communicate with VTC/Glenciff later in the spring to see if the program has started, and will update the Commissioners at the May 2021 meeting.

**Walden University, Minneapolis (MN):** The NH Commission has been informed of a planned change of ownership. We await the formal report in order to conduct an Administrative Review of the plan.

**MCPHS:** MCPHS University filed its annual report on December 21, 2020. The University has its main campus in Boston, MA, with instructional centers in Worcester, MA and Manchester, NH. The University is regionally accredited by NECHE, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit scheduled for 2027. Long-time president, Mr. Charles F. Monahan Jr., retired in 2019 and executive vice president, Mr. Richard J. Lessard, was appointed president in October, 2020.

The New Hampshire Campus is located in downtown Manchester. The University is approved by the NH Higher Education Commission and the NH Board of Nursing to offer five (5) degree programs in the health sciences, all of which are accredited by their related professional accreditation association. Total enrollment in 2020 was 452 students and 229 students earned their degrees.

**Administrative Approvals for Online Programs:** *Administrative approval is granted to institutions within states that are not members of the NC-SARA or have elected to not participate through NC-SARA to operate in New Hampshire and offer online degrees that require a practicum/internship/clinical.*

**Pacific College of Health and Science (CA):** PCHS was approved to offer the clinical/practicum/internship components of its online programs in RN to BSN in Holistic Nursing and Holistic Nursing Certificate through

December 31, 2022. In addition, correspondence from ACEN regarding the continuing accreditation of the nursing programs are to be transmitted to the Commission upon the completion of the 2020 program evaluation.

**Post-Master's Certificates:**

**International Colleges and Universities:**

Commission activities with the American University of Madaba in Jordan, and the Hellenic American University in Greece are covered above under NECHE activities.

**CLOSED SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS**

**Submitted by Patricia Moquin**

From July 1, 2020 until September 30, 2020 (FY 2021), 790 college/university transcripts and 42 career school transcripts were processed. During the same period in the prior year (FY 2020), a total of 619 college/university transcripts and 25 career school transcripts were processed.

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the transcript request fee is waived for 12 months from 7/1/20 to 6/30/21.*

**RESEARCH AND STUDIES**

**Submitted by Jan Fiderio**

Research and Studies related activities completed this quarter include:

- Compiled the UNIQUE Annual Allocation Program (UAAP) and UNIQUE Endowment Allocation Program (UEAP) data regarding funds received and distributed to students at participating institutions for the State of New Hampshire Treasury.
- Fulfillment of miscellaneous research requests, including legislator requests and support.
- Completed SHEEO State Higher Education Finance (SHEF) and Grapevine surveys.

Please review “Director’s Report: Winter 2020-2021 Research and News” for a recap of newsworthy articles and reports (attachment).

**Top issues noted in the report this quarter:**

- Covid-19
- Local College news
- Debt and Financial Issues

**Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Program Support**

The Division is providing continued support for all NH institutions that submit IPEDS data. The current IPEDS collection cycle closes on February 10. The surveys to be completed include: Student Financial Aid, Graduation Rates, 200% Graduation Rates, Admissions and Outcome Measures. Steady progress is being made by the institutions.

**OFFICE OF CAREER SCHOOLS LICENSING (OCSL)**

**Submitted by Katelyn Komisarek**

Correspondence between the Office of Career School Licensing and career schools has improved and most correspondence is virtual through online meetings, phone call and email. All on-site visits continue to be conducted and approved remotely until travel restrictions are further eased. Some schools are returning to in-person learning while others remain online learning or hybrid models being both online and in-person learning. In order to assist NH career schools in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic

the NH DOE has waived certain career school related fees effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. To date, a total of \$106,500 in fees have been waived for new and existing career school.

This fall, the OCSL will also seek to review the revised statutes, forms, and guidelines now that most have been in effect for two years with provided feedback from existing career schools.

On December 15, 2020, the Higher Education Commission voted to revoke the career school license of the American School of Nursing and Medical Careers for lack to meet RSA 188-G:3 and hold surety indemnification. The school's financial stability remains in question and the school has not held classes since October 9, 2020. The school has officially been deemed closed by the OCSL and their previous surety bond has been triggered to reimburse the 71 outstanding students their paid tuition to the school. The surety bond does not cover students who took loans to attend the program. However, through the US Department of Education, there is a school closed loan forgiveness program. We continue to work with them on this matter as well. During this process we communicated with other state agencies as well, including the Board of Nursing, the Department of Labor and the Attorney General's Office, improving on our operating model for inter-departmental cooperation during a closure event.

Below are some of the other activities that were conducted by the OCSL team since the last Commission meeting in October 2020.

*Completed site visits to the following schools:*

Site visits have been completed virtually through the COVID-19 Pandemic.

*Renewed the licenses of the following schools:*

- All Dogs Academy
- The New Hampshire School of Mechanical Trades
- HRFoodSafe
- ONLC Training Centers
- Med Pro Educational Services
- PESI, Inc.
- Visible Edge Institute
- MedTalk Training

*Currently reviewing license renewal/annual filing applications for the following schools:*

- TENET
- Misty Meadows
- Northeast Collaborative School of Dental Assisting
- The Prelude Institute
- Unique System Skills

*New School Applications:*

- Sharing Yoga Community Yoga School (Approved)
- 3 Bridges Yoga (Approved)
- Ohana Yoga (Approved)
- YogaLife Institute (Pending)
- Strength and Soul Yoga and Fitness (Pending)
- Delta Gardens (Herbal Practitioner Certification) (Pending)
- Yoga Balance 1, LLC (Pending)

- East Coast Line School (Lineman Pre-Apprenticeship) (Pending)

*Processing/Completed the closure of the following schools:*

- American School of Nursing and Medical Careers (Revoked by HEC on 12/15/2020)

Please direct any questions regarding these activities to Katelyn Komisarek at (603) 271-6443 or by e-mail at [Katelyn.Komisarek@doe.nh.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Komisarek@doe.nh.gov)

**VETERANS EDUCATION SERVICES (VES)**

**Submitted by Jeffrey S. Newman**

Veterans Education Services (VES) is New Hampshire’s State Approving Agency that approves all facilities and programs that are subject to funding under the GI Bill®. This includes institutions of higher learning, high schools, non-college degree programs, and certificates, on-the-job training and apprenticeships. This includes both traditional college study and workforce development programs. Currently, there are approximately 11,099 veterans and dependents in New Hampshire involved in various programs and courses of study subject to the GI Bill®.

The current circumstances of the pandemic have restricted in-person visits and outreach as institutions shift modalities from in-person training to distance learning. We have adapted by conducting remote visits within VA guidelines.

Below are some of the activities the VES team accomplished from October 1, 2020, through February 1, 2021:

- Worked with New Hampshire Military Leadership Team and Justice-Involved Task Force to work to improve the status of statewide veterans programs, initiatives, and dispersal of funds;
- Conducted compliance survey visits to 1 facility, the New England School of Barbering.
- Conducted a technical support visit to Cote Electric, Manchester, NH;
- Conducted technical support for the Epsom Police Department;
- Provided 114 program approvals and withdrawals at the request of school certifying officials; and
- Disapproved the American School of Nursing and Medical Careers for VA benefits use. For more details, see the above reporting by Office of Career School Licensing.

**Students Receiving VA Educational Benefits within New Hampshire:**

IHLs (Institutions of Higher Learning):

- Antioch University of New England: 13
- Colby-Sawyer College: 11
- Dartmouth College: 70
- Tuck School: 25
- Geisel School: 6
- Franklin Pierce University (all campuses): 26
- Granite State College (all campuses): 242
- Great Bay Community College (both campuses): 86
- Keene State College: 63
- Lakes Region Community College: 34
- Manchester Community College: 118
- Manchester School of Technology: 1
- Magdalen College (formerly Northeast Catholic College): 3
- MCPHS University (formerly Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences): 10
- Nashua Community College: 54

New England College: 103  
NHTI – Concord’s Community College: 109  
Plymouth State University: 110  
River Valley Community College: 28  
Rivier University: 35  
Saint Anselm College: 24  
St. Joseph School of Nursing: 3  
Southern New Hampshire University (all campuses and online): 9,403  
Thomas More College of Liberal Arts: 1  
UNH (all campuses): 470  
White Mountains Community College: 41

NCDs (Non-College Degree schools):

American School of Nursing and Medical Careers (ex-Salter): 8  
Commercial Driving School: 8  
Continental Academie of Hair Design: 1  
Dover School of Technology: 1  
Empire Beauty School (all campuses): 4  
Granite State Emergency Medical Services: 3  
Heavy Construction Academy: 233  
Michaels School of Hair Design: 2  
NH EMS Institute: 8  
NH School of Barbering: 6  
NH Department of Safety - Fire Standards and Training: 4  
New Hampshire Police Standards and Training: 27  
NH School of Mechanical Trades: 9  
Paul Mitchell: 3  
SOLO/Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities: 16  
Whole Pet Grooming Academy: 0

Apprenticeships:

All apprenticeships: 26

On the Job Training:

All OJTs: 40

Flight Schools:

All Flight Schools: 2

**Total: 7,170**

*Note: This information is based on the Veterans Benefits Administration Facilities Count Report for New Hampshire, November 2019. This tally will be revised in April, 2021 to November 2020 status. Current numbers may vary.*

Please direct any questions regarding these activities to Jeffrey Newman at (603) 271-8508 or by e-mail at [Jeffrey.Newman@doe.nh.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Newman@doe.nh.gov).

**REPORT OF OUT-OF-STATE MEETINGS**

No attendance at out-of-state meetings.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT/OFFICE ISSUES/OTHER**

Nothing new to report.

**LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY**

The Department is tracking numerous bills with potential implications for the postsecondary education community. The following lists the most relevant bills:

HB 255	Relative to limited liability for IHEs and businesses
HB 319	Relative to students of CCSNH/USNH passing the US Citizenship Civics test.
SB 19	Relative to degree granting authority of Signum University.
HB 513	Relative to degree granting authority of Signum University & the HEC.
SB 44	Relative to establishing the NH Workforce Pathway program and Commission.
LSR 813	Relative to establishing a student loan ombudsman.
LSR 987	Relative to definition of private postsecondary career school.

*For further information on any bill, the link to NH. General Court is as follows:*

[http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill\\_status/quick\\_search.html](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/quick_search.html)