



# NECHE

New England Commission  
of Higher Education

DAVID QUIGLEY, Chair (2021)  
Boston College

GEORGE W. TETLER, Vice Chair (2019)  
Worcester, MA

HARRY E. DUMAY (2019)  
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Groton, CT

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GREGORY W. FOWLER (2021)  
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ELLEN L. KENNEDY (2021)  
Berkshire Community College

ABDALLAH A. SPEIR (2021)  
Lebanese American University

JOHN M. SWEENEY (2021)  
Providence College

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March 21, 2019

Mr. James R. Erwin  
Board Chair  
University of Maine System  
251 Estabrooke Hall  
15 Estabrooke Drive  
Orono, ME 04469

Dear Mr. Erwin:

Enclosed for you is a copy of the New England Commission of Higher Education's letter of March 13, 2019 to Chancellor James H. Page notifying him of the action taken by the Commission at its February 2019 meeting. It is being sent to you in keeping with the Commission's policy to routinely inform board chairs of such actions.

Sincerely,

  
Barbara E. Brittingham

BEB/jm

Enclosure

cc: Dr. James H. Page



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March 13, 2019

Dr. James H. Page  
Chancellor  
University of Maine System  
267 Estabrooke Hall  
15 Estabrooke Drive  
Orono, ME 04469

Dear Chancellor Page:

At its meeting on February 28, 2019, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the potential request by the University of Maine System to accredit the System as a single institution and took the following action:

that upon request of the University of Maine System, the Commission will consider the System for accreditation as a single institution;

that in making such a request, the University of Maine System would submit a substantive change report:

1. demonstrating how the System meets the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation*;
2. outlining how and under what timeline it will further integrate to fulfill its mission;

that the Commission will consider the substantive change request, and if it is approved, determine further monitoring;

that the report scheduled for consideration at the Commission's April 2019 meeting be confirmed.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The Commission understands that if the University of Maine System (System) is to make a request that the System be accredited it will follow the determination by the U.S. Department of Education that the System meets the definition of an institution of higher education as specified in the Higher Education Act and an action by the System's Board of Trustees. The Commission further understands that the Trustees may decide to combine the six institutions under the umbrella of the University of Maine, likely requiring

legislative action or it may take neither action for the foreseeable future. Without a request for a single accreditation of either the system or the combined institutions, the Commission will continue to monitor the actions of the System's One University initiative in order to ensure that the six separately accredited institutions continue to meet the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation*.

To be accredited as a single institution, the University of Maine System would need to demonstrate that it meets the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation*. The Commission notes that the One University initiative has resulted in significant advances in integrating administrative functions in the System and made progress in policies and practices that can support additional integration of academic programs. The Commission notes that further integration to meet the Commission's Standards will be needed, including matters regarding Internal Governance in our standard on *Organization and Governance*.

Upon approving the substantive change request, the Commission will determine further monitoring of the System, which may include, for example, a confirming visit within six months and a comprehensive evaluation within two years.


The Commission confirms the report the University of Maine System is scheduled to submit for consideration at our April 2019 meeting. We refer you to our letter of May 18, 2018 that specifies matters to receive attention in that report.

If the Board of Trustees decides to pursue accreditation of the System, you are encouraged to work closely with Commission staff. The Commission noted the potential for lack of continuity with the anticipated turnover in the Chancellorship.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the System's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chair of the governing board of relevant Commission action. Soon we will send a copy of this letter to Mr. James R. Erwin. The System is free to release information about 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 decision, please contact Barbara Brittingham, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



David Quigley

DQ/jm

Enclosure

cc: Mr. James R. Erwin