



February 25, 2021

Dr. Lucille A. Jordan
President
Nashua Community College
505 Amherst Street
Nashua, NH 03063

Dear President Jordan:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on January 21, 2021, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the distance education expedited review report submitted by Nashua Community College and took the following action:

that the report submitted by Nashua Community College be accepted, and the institution be granted general approval to offer distance education programs within the scope of its mission;

that the Spring 2023 interim report be confirmed and, in addition to the information included in all interim reports and the matters specified in our letter dated December 5, 2018, the report provide an update on the institution's success in offering and assessing its distance education courses and programs.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The distance education expedited review report submitted by Nashua Community College (NCC) was accepted and the institution granted general approval to offer distance education programs within the scope of its mission because the College has demonstrated its capacity to offer high-quality academic programs in a distance education format.

The Commission commends Nashua Community College for its well-written, thorough distance education expedited review report. We are gratified to learn that NCC works to ensure that “online courses are delivered with the same academic rigor” as traditional courses, reviewing the “success metrics of students across all modalities.” An Online Learning Coordinator provides “formal and informal training sessions to faculty.” The Commission notes with favor that professors teaching online must complete the “NCC eTeach course” which focuses on online methodologies and instructional best practices; to date, “nearly 200 faculty members” have completed the course. A range of support services including orientation, advising, and tutoring are available to distance education students. We concur with NCC’s assessment that the “college continued to fulfill its institutional mission and deliver high-quality educational services to students” when it transitioned to distance education in Spring 2020.

The Commission confirms the interim report scheduled for Spring 2023 and asks that, in addition to the information in all interim reports and the matters specified in our letter of December 5, 2018, the report provide an update on the institution's success in offering and assessing its distance education courses and academic programs. We understand that "some of the changes made as a result of the pandemic may become permanent" and Nashua Community College may offer an increased number of distance education courses. The Commission looks forward to an update on NCC's "success in implementing the results of its planning" (2.5) in this regard. We are further guided here by our standards on *The Academic Program* and *Educational Effectiveness*:

The institution offering programs and courses for abbreviated or concentrated time periods or via distance or correspondence learning demonstrates that students completing these programs or courses acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies equivalent to those achieved in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods and modalities. Programs and courses are designed to ensure an opportunity for reflection and for analysis of the subject matter (4.45).

The institution defines measures of student success and levels of achievement appropriate to its mission, modalities and locations of instruction, and student body, including any specifically recruited populations. These measures include rates of progression, retention, transfer, and graduation; default and loan repayment rates; licensure passage rates; and employment. The institution ensures that information about student success is easily accessible on its website (8.6).

The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by Nashua Community College and hopes that its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education.

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 and the head of the system of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Jeremy Hitchcock and Dr. Susan D. Huard. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation 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 Lawrence M. Schall, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



George W. Tetler

GWT/jm

cc: Mr. Jeremy Hitchcock
Dr. Susan D. Huard

Enclosure: Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions