NHCUC 2016 – 2018 Strategic Priorities and Directions

For fifty (50) years New Hampshire’s public and private, nonprofit colleges and universities have joined together through the New Hampshire College & University Council (NHCUC) to advance the broad interests of higher education in the Granite State. We are now at a particularly important moment for reflecting on the future direction of the organization and there is a healthy desire among member institutions to assess the NHCUC’s work and focus on its future direction. In recent years there has been, and likely will continue to be, significant leadership changes at the higher education institutions throughout New Hampshire, which provides a unique challenge to sustaining a statewide consortium of public and private colleges and universities. Additionally, the NHCUC’s president and ceo will be stepping down in the spring of 2017 after nearly a quarter century of successful service.

New Hampshire’s colleges and universities have a long history of making a critical commitment to meeting the needs of students and society. Our member institutions serve their students well individually and serve the greater public good collectively by producing graduates well-prepared for a new global era: Graduates of NHCUC institutions are thoughtful, well-rounded, articulate, able to think critically and creatively, able to understand and appreciate diverse cultures, and are grounded in the importance of ethical behavior. They are poised for career success, graduate or professional education, lifelong learning, community service and civic engagement.

Mission Statement

The mission of the NHCUC is the advancement of public and private higher education in New Hampshire. This simple mission has remained unchanged since the organization’s founding in 1966 and remains the broad umbrella under which the consortium measures the appropriateness of its activities and priorities.

This commitment to collective advancement is the glue - the common sense of purpose, potential, and promise - that brings together our member institutions in a single consortial arrangement. And, it is the advancement of this common collaborative
purpose, and this common educational, economic and civic perspective, that defines the mission and drives the NHCUC’s focus and work.

The NHCUC has a strong record of inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration and now has a unique opportunity to both revisit and re-examine its organizational structural, governance, financial strength and strategic and operational priorities.

Utilizing a series of reflective and prospective activities throughout the 2015-2016 academic year the board of the NHCUC engaged in a strategic review of the organization that included:

**Part One/ December 15, 2015 Board Meeting:** A strategic conversation with board members conducted relative to the mission of the organization. This included a map of current NHCUC initiatives and priorities. A review of a draft Board survey was presented and refined with the assistance of Dr. Andy Smith, Director of the UNH Survey Center. The survey was distributed and compiled during December and January.

**Part Two/ February 16, 2016 Board Meeting:** Results of the board survey were reviewed and discussed at the February Board meeting. This conversation helped assess how effective the NHCUC is in meeting its mission and if the important stakeholders wanted to modify the mission and priorities of the organization in any way.

**Part Three/Spring 2016:** A survey of various campus based stakeholder communities was conducted concerning the interests and priorities of the various committees staffed by the NHCUC. Results were shared with the Board and considered during the board retreat.

**Part Four/ May 23, 2016:** The NHCUC board devoted a full day to a retreat discussing the strategic review of the organization, confirmed the direction of the organization moving forward, addressed questions of resources and membership to meet the Board identified objectives and outlined a process for the transition of leadership for the organization.

At the conclusion of this discussion the Board confirmed what it values through participation in the NHCUC, refined areas of focus and discussed possible modifications in direction to be more fully considered.

The NHCUC is now positioned to give guidance to the next phase of the organization’s strategic direction in service to New Hampshire and its member institutions.

**History and Membership**

In July of 1966 the NHCUC was founded by seven (7) founding institutions with support from a Title III federal grant to “…enhance the quality of our educational enterprise; offer
our institutions an opportunity for enriched experience, and provide a center for communication among the colleges” (Founding presidents’ statement, 1966). Today, the NHCUC supports collaborative work in academic affairs, admissions, career services, libraries, and finances. Additionally, the NHCUC is actively engaged in advocacy on behalf of the higher education sector and member institutions, along with engagement with a large number of partner and community organizations including: the Business and Industry Association of New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Forum on the Future, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation – along with a wide array of other organizations and initiatives.

The New Hampshire College & University Council is fortunate to have a distinguished list of institutions of higher learning in its membership base. NHCUC members are a diverse group of postsecondary institutions – with unique cultures, complexities and academic missions. As New Hampshire based institutions they have much in common and a great deal to gain from their mutual association.

**NHCUC MEMBERS**

Antioch University New England*

Colby-Sawyer College

Community College System of New Hampshire**

  - Great Bay Community College
  - Lakes Region Community College
  - Manchester Community College
  - Nashua Community College
  - New Hampshire Technical Institute - Concord
  - River Valley Community College
  - White Mountains Community College

Franklin Pierce University

Granite State College

Keene State College

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences – Manchester*

New England College

New Hampshire Institute of Art

Plymouth State University

Rivier University
Competitive Analysis

New Hampshire is fortunate to have such a diverse group of higher education institutions that have a significant and important impact on New Hampshire, its business community and its citizenry that makes the Granite State such a special place to live, work and play.

New Hampshire’s Higher Education Sector at a glance:

• $5.8 billion Industry
• $1.2 billion in salaries, wages & benefits
• 26,600 jobs (direct and indirect)
• $278 million on R&D
• 15,200 degrees conferred
• 73,700 students served
• $231 million on capital expending
• 5 million community service hours for a total impact of $95 million
• $55,275 million spent by students and families
• $912 million spent by employees on local economy
• $441 million of institutional financial aid received by 51,700 students
• $13 million tax payment from institutions

Key higher education issues

While New Hampshire’s higher education institutions provide critical services and benefits to the state and its citizens it is also facing several daunting challenges. New Hampshire recently received a failing report card from Young Invincibles (“YI”) because we spend the least amount of money per student than any other state in the country. The report cites that New Hampshire provides zero financial aid to students and our higher education spending makes up only 2% of the state budget.

*NH ranks 1st in the nation on student debt with $31,048, 23% more than the national average.*

In 2011, severe cuts were made to the operating budgets of our public higher education institutions and nearly all general funds for scholarships were eliminated. For many years the state recognized the need to provide general funds for public higher education
institutions and scholarship support to needy New Hampshire students. Historically, higher education institutions in New Hampshire have granted scholarship funds that far exceeded those provided by the state. While substantial funding has been restored in recent years New Hampshire’s departure from its important role as a funder of higher education endangers the future of our state by reducing access to a postsecondary degree for our citizens and development of a highly skilled and talented workforce.

**College Bound Students Are Leaving the State for Higher Education**

Of the 10,015 high school graduates who attended college in 2014, only 5,204 stayed in New Hampshire for college (52%). This means that 4,811 high school graduates left New Hampshire for college (48%). *Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity, 2014*

With the obvious importance of an educated workforce, New Hampshire’s number one industry cluster is arguably its higher education sector. Other industry clusters (high tech, finance, health care, advanced manufacturing, energy, others) all depend on access to a talented and high skilled workforce.

Effectively capitalizing on New Hampshire’s clusters will require new partnerships in dynamic ways to ensure that our state is prepared to respond to emerging demands and needs, and to develop a clear plan for bringing new businesses to the state and retaining those businesses already here. The NHCUC can play an important role in advancing greater awareness and appreciation for our state’s higher education sector.

**Strategic Initiatives**

The NHCUC Board/Presidents have affirmed their commitment to providing governance over the mission and vision of the NHCUC, with consensus that the NHCUC’s purpose must focus primarily on **Advocacy**, with continued engagement in **Collaborative Programs** and support of **Consortia Initiatives** on behalf of member institutions, students and the wider community.

**Prioritize Advocacy**

**Advocacy**

- A voice for higher education in NH
- Media relations/communications
- State legislation
- Congressional relationship development
- White Papers, Economic Impact Report
- Would like to move away from defending higher education
- Promote a positive image/perception of higher education
• Broader focus than legislative
• Better inform members re: national issues
• Promotion of NH as a destination for higher education
• Importance of public commitment to all higher education
• Imperative of human capital/workforce development for economic success
• Improved partnerships among and between both public and private higher education institutions
• Benefit of civic engagement and community service from a well-educated citizenry
• Advocating for NHCUC’s institutions:
  • Advancement of the essential role of higher education to the future of the state
  • Collaborative marketing/positioning of our member institutions
  • Strategic nurturing of business support for public and private higher education
  • Effective service for members’ collective and individual research and programmatic need
• Advocating for students:
  • Importance of keeping college affordable for low and middle-income students through publicly funded need-based financial aid, principally through protecting the UNIQUE College Savings Plan
  • Value of maintaining student access to a full range of college choices by ensuring that New Hampshire’s colleges and universities are seen as a key partner in sustaining the New Hampshire Advantage

**Serving the Shared Needs of Members**

The NHCUC will serve the shared needs of its members, as defined by the board of directors, when collaboration through the NHCUC efficiently and effectively meets important common needs in areas that are impractical or too costly for institutions to undertake individually. This work will include collaborative positioning of colleges and universities in the higher education marketplace, research that meets the collective needs of members, and the advancement of programs in admissions, library services, career services and professional development.

**Operational initiatives**

In addition, the NHCUC Executive Committee will work to clarify how the board and its committees lead and guide the organization. The goal will be to better support strategic board member involvement in advancing the NHCUC mission, allowing board members to serve as generative leaders for the organization and effective public advocates for higher education, for students and for our members.
**Governance:** In addition to its role as an advocacy organization the NHCUC also manages several operational initiatives under the direction of the Board of Directors consisting of the presidents and chancellors of the member institutions. A full examination of staffing requirements will be conducted by the next President and CEO, with recommendations to the board.

**Staffing:** Current NHCUC staffing is supported with a full time President & CEO and contract staff from Campus Compact for New Hampshire and a grant funded position for New Hampshire Scholars. An examination of this staffing structure will be undertaken and organizationally clarified.

**Assessments:** Institutional member assessments are the primary funding source for the operational initiatives of the NHCUC. Assessments are established annually by the Board of Directors and additional financial resources are received through grant funds and corporate sponsorships. The next president & CEO will review the current level of institutional assessments and make recommendations for the proper balance between assessments and other funding sources (grants/ sponsorships/alternative revenue)

**SWOT Analysis**

At the 2016 Board retreat the board provided focused direction to the identification of the strategic and directional priorities confronting the NHCUC.

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<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<td>• Strong and competent staff</td>
<td>• New Hampshire’s paltry funding of higher education initiatives, including low funding of public higher education</td>
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<td>• President and CEO who balances interests of publics and privates.</td>
<td>• NHCUC must identify and call attention to its tangible achievements</td>
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<td>Ability to represent 17 institutions</td>
<td>• Not appreciated by some members</td>
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<td>• Collegiality and information sharing among institutions</td>
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<td>• Advocacy for importance of higher education to economic and quality of life in New Hampshire</td>
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<td>• Monitoring NH legislation as it may impact NHCUC institutions</td>
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<td>• Promoting legislation for the common good of higher education in NH</td>
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The professional and personal characteristics of the next NHCUC President and CEO

Although no one person will embody all of the qualities needed to serve as the next President and CEO of the NHCUC the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal characteristics:

Demonstrated success in a senior-level role of comparable complexity in academe, government, or the private sector

Ability to embrace and articulate the values that make the NHCUC distinctive, familiarity with and experience in promoting higher education, and community development and service

Experience in advocacy, marketing and media relations

Knowledge and experience in communicating and advocating creatively and effectively

Outstanding strategic management and planning skills, including the ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously within a decentralized and highly collaborative environment

Excellent oral and written communication skills and a lively and creative intellect
Ability to establish credibility and cultivate relationships with NHCUC board members, campus and community stakeholders, public policy officials and media professionals

A willingness to invest considerable time and to build confidence and credibility among diverse, constituencies

A style with colleagues and staff that is appropriately decisive as well as collegial and approachable.

The agility and inclination to advance complex projects and solve problems collaboratively, coupled with the willingness to act resourcefully, authoritatively, and resolutely.

Patience, resilience, and tenacity along with an abundance of energy, common sense and outstanding judgment

An advanced degree preferred

**Strategic Recommendations**

The NHCUC is well positioned to undertake a renewed focus on a refined list of priorities and initiatives going forward including:

- A stronger and re-engaged commitment to enhanced advocacy on behalf of higher education in New Hampshire, the NHCUC member institutions and the students served by the member institutions

- Greater refinement and examination of the committees currently served and other activities of the NHCUC to ensure quality, valued services to the member institutions and their various constituencies

- Sustaining and expanding strong board engagement by the member presidents and chancellors to ensure the NHCUC continues to serve the needs of the member institutions

- Management of NHCUC resources, both financial and personnel, to ensure the highest level of performance and quality on behalf of the member institutions