
Joint Statement
**New England Commission of Higher Education and
Hampshire College**

On March 5, 2026, the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) took action to require Hampshire College to show cause at the Commission’s June 2026 meeting why the institution should not be placed on probation or why its accreditation should not be withdrawn because it had reason to believe that Hampshire College may no longer meet its standard on *Institutional Resources*. The Commission’s decision was based on (1) the institution not successfully sustaining its enrollment growth momentum that dropped from 842 in Fall 2024 to 747 in Fall 2025; (2) the sale of the Atkins parcel falling through; (3) the College’s inability to refinance its \$21 million bond debt with an upcoming tender date of September 2026; and (4) its declining unrestricted endowment that has been used to support operations.

Hampshire College remains accredited and eligible for federal funding, including student financial aid, while on show cause.

In response to the Commission’s decision, Hampshire College’s President, Jennifer Chrisler, said, “throughout Hampshire’s history, leadership has worked productively with our accreditors to plan for, provide, and assess our distinctive, student-driven educational model. I look forward to working with NECHE to ensure the success of our sustainability plan and preserve the remarkable experience of our students, a group of iconoclastic, bold, and creative people who believe passionately in making our motto, *To Know Is Not Enough*, a reality.”

The Chair of Hampshire College’s Board of Trustees, Jose Fuentes, added, “Hampshire’s ongoing financial viability is the board’s top priority. To that end, we are focused on refinancing the College’s debt, working to continue fundraising efforts, realizing land development, and supporting the work to increase enrollment. We’re buoyed by the community’s ongoing response as we work together toward strategic realignment so that we can continue graduating people capable of responding to the most important challenges of the 21st century.”

The New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The Commission accredits 218 degree-granting institutions and one system in the U.S. and internationally.

Hampshire College was first accredited by NECHE in 1974. It is a private non-profit college known for empowering its students to “address urgent issues” by contributing to knowledge, justice, and positive change in the world.

Further information may be found at:

New England Commission of Higher Education: <https://www.neche.org>
Hampshire College: <https://www.hampshire.edu>

March 24, 2026