

October 21, 2015

Dr. Barbara E. Brittingham  
President of the Commission  
New England Association of Schools and Colleges  
Commission on Institutes of Higher Education  
3 Burlington Woods Dr., Suite 100  
Burlington, MA 01803-4512

Dear Dr. Brittingham and Members of the NEASC-CIHE Board:

The Vermont Library Association College & Special Libraries Section appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the August 2015 Draft NEASC Standards for Accreditation. We support the October 20, 2015 letter from David Bretthauer, Association of College and Research Libraries President, addressing the NEASC-CIHE draft.

Additionally the Vermont section of College & Special Libraries would like to provide input and voice our concerns regarding the significant reduction of the Library's role in the draft. The draft eliminates the standard devoted to libraries and therefore fails to recognize the vital role of librarians and library services in student outcomes. While the draft acknowledges the importance of research and information literacy, it does not account for the services and skills provided by librarians and libraries necessary to reach those standards.

In addition to mentioning the library more implicitly throughout the standards, we make the following suggestions:

*Standard 4.19, The Academic Program: The Major or Concentration*

(Line 40) Add "**Through the use of library or information services,**"

graduates demonstrate an in-depth understanding of an area of knowledge or practice, its principal information resources, and its interrelatedness with other areas."

*Standard 6, Support for Teaching and Learning*

Specifically include **librarians** with faculty and academic staff. Specifically indicate **library/libraries** receive support along with scholarship, research and creative activities.

*Standard 7.22, Institutional Resources: Information, Physical, and Technological Resources*

Add an additional standard (7.23) to focus on libraries. While facilities and information technology are important to the functioning of the institution, libraries are critical to research and scholarship and should not be combined into the same standard.

Thank you very much for your fine work in the revision of these standards. We acknowledge that the Library is but one piece of an institution, and we appreciate your consideration in this matter. We look forward to reading the next revision.

Sincerely,

Laura Crain  
President, Vermont Library Association College & Special Libraries Section

Bethany Dietrich  
Vice-President, Vermont Library Association College & Special Libraries Section

Virgil Fuller  
President, Vermont Library Association