

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

NO.: BHE 24-28

BOARD DATE: February 6, 2024

**APPROVAL OF LETTER OF INTENT OF NORTHERN ESSEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
TO AWARD THE ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE IN MARKETING AND AUTHORIZATION
FOR FAST TRACK REVIEW**

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education (BHE) has evaluated the Letter of Intent of **Northern Essex Community College** to award the **Associate in Science in Marketing** and has determined that the proposal aligns with BHE criteria. Accordingly, the BHE authorizes the Commissioner to review the program and to make a final determination on degree granting authority pursuant to the Fast-Track review protocol.

VOTED: Motion approved and advanced to the full BHE by the Executive Committee on 1/29/2024; and adopted by the BHE on 2/6/2024.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b); AAC 18-40

Contact: Richard Riccardi, Sc.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
February 6, 2024
Northern Essex Community College
Letter of Intent
Associate in Science in Marketing**

DEGREE TITLE ABSTRACT ON INTENT AND MISSION OF PROGRAM

The purpose of Northern Essex Community College’s (NECC) proposed Associate in Science in Marketing is to provide students with a core of business courses, that focus on traditional and digital marketing. It is designed to provide students with the general marketing skills needed for entry-level positions as digital marketers.

The proposed Associate in Science in Marketing was approved by the Northern Essex Community College Board of Trustees on February 1, 2023. The LOI was circulated on October 11, 2023. No comments were received.

A. ALIGNMENT WITH MASSACHUSETTS GOALS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Address Gaps in Opportunity and Achievement in Alignment with Campus-Wide Goals

NECC reports that Business is its second largest academic department, serving more than 500 students each semester. The Business department serves most students in Business Transfer and Business Management. Strong student interest in Entrepreneurial Business led NECC to work with *Lightcast*¹ where it was determined that the proposed major had significant potential and demand in the region. NECC noted that the proposed program aligns closely with its campus strategic goal of Community Impact because it will leverage partnerships with local businesses to address industry and workforce needs.

The program is also expected to be responsive to student demand for internship placement in social media marketing, copy, and video content creation. NECC reports that students have worked on campus to develop student-focused content that brings

¹ Lightcast is a merger of Emsi and Burning Glass Technologies. Retrieved 11/18/23 <https://lightcase.io>

attention to campus life and resources and that this has also led NECC to develop the proposed Marketing program with a focus on social media marketing and branding. NECC reports that Business is one of the most popular tracks for NECC's Early College program with 133 students in the Early College Business concentration in the Fall 2023 term. Of these students, forty-four are from NECC's Lawrence campus and attend Lawrence High School, which is majority Hispanic. Additional outreach and recruitment by NECC's Early College and Business & Professional Studies teams is planned for the demographically diverse population on the Lawrence campus. In Fall 2023, NECC offered an Introduction to Marketing course for the first time to Early College students, which was popular and will be offered again in the spring term.

NECC noted that it is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) with a current enrollments average of 47-49% Hispanic Students. The college is committed to increasing access to all Business programs for our Hispanic students, especially in Lawrence. This aligns both with the BHE's Equity Agenda and NECC pledge to increase the number of Hispanic residents in the city of Lawrence with college degrees. It is also expected to help NECC close equity gaps. In addition, NECC has been scheduling existing Business Transfer and Business Management programs as day and evening (hybrid) options on the Lawrence campus. Approximately 200 MASSRECONNECT scholars enrolled in NECC in Fall 2023, increased the number of evening sections on the Lawrence campus. The proposed program is expected to do the same. Once approved, the courses needed to complete the proposed Marketing degree are expected to be scheduled (day and evening) in Haverhill, Lawrence and online.

Program or Department Supports to Ensure Student Retention and Completion

NECC's Business and Professional Studies academic center is designed to provide students with on campus resources, advising, access to faculty, space to study, and computer access intended to build community of support and a sense of belonging. The Center provides students with a platform to exchange and collaborate on business

ideas through the BIZTalks Speaker Series where students can attend, ask questions, and share their own ideas.

The faculty and academic advisors use a case management approach to advising, providing direct and targeted assistance when students plan their academic journey. Advisors use Navigate to create campaigns, build academic plans, and use the scheduling feature of the software to facilitate virtual and in-person advising meetings. Navigate is also used for the early alert systems periodically during the semester. Case workers follow up on signaled alerts to help students overcome academic challenges. In addition to having a dedicated Professional Advisor for Business students, a full-time faculty member has reassigned time each semester to provide support and ensure consistency in the advising process of all Business students.

Additionally, peer accounting tutoring is provided at the Center for Business and Professional Studies. Referrals are made for writing and math tutoring, and academic coaching to help students to work closely with an advisor on time management, communication, and clarifications on course work.

It is also planned that the NECC Success Online team will provide online students with resources and skills to augment their success and connection to the college. The team provides resources and skills to augment online student success as well as ensure they have a connection to the college. NECC underscored that students are encouraged to participate in a free Prep for Success Online facilitated training course, designed to ensure students have the tools they need be successful in their online and hybrid courses. Students can also participate in FAQ workshops (offered day, night, and online) with the NECC Library's Technology Assistance team. The online website run by the NECC Success Online team shares a variety of resources for online students, including links to Technology Assistance, the Service Desk, online tutoring, and online coaching services. NECC online students also have access to the same advising resources and technology outlined above. It is planned that all students in the proposed program will have this same variety of opportunities,

As well, experiential learning opportunities, including a recommended internship course and opportunities to support marketing initiatives at NECC as well as within communities are planned for the proposed Marketing program.

Alliances and Partnerships with PK-12, Other IHE's, Community Employers

NECC's Business Advisory Board provided input on this new program as part of the development process of the program and has provided insight as to how they can be of assistance to the program and students. The complete list of advisors and their affiliations was provided in the full Letter of Intent submitted by NECC.

As well, the proposed program is planning for internships for students through NECC's partnerships with local businesses and its own Career Services. The program utilizes its partnerships and embeds internships within current business programs. Recruitment for internships occurs throughout the semester. The Business department works closely with the Career Services department to inform and recruit students by providing in-class presentations and online recruitment. NECC uses the HandShake system for employers to list openings and for students to explore internship opportunities. The business department has created a process to ensure that student goals are considered during the internship selection process as well as developing clear learning objectives which are communicated with the employers so that students are provided with an authentic learning experience.

As mentioned previously the Business Department has an existing pathway within its Early College program at NECC. It is planned that students enrolled in the existing Early College Business Pathway will be able to complete core courses in the proposed Marketing program.

Relationship to MassHire Regional Blueprints

NECC finds that advertising, promotions, and marketing management require a college degree and industry experience. They are full-time office jobs focused on strategic campaigns to increase product/service awareness and sales. The career outlook is

strong and pay exceeds national averages. Turnover contributes to steady openings for new entrants to the field. Though many positions are in an office setting, some travel may be required to meet clients (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022²).

Nationally, the median wage for advertising/promotions managers was \$127,830 in 2022. The median wage for marketing managers was \$140,040 in 2022. The expected 6% growth from 2022 to 2032 is faster than average, with about 34,000 job openings per year on average. Compensation for marketing managers may vary in different industries. In May 2021, the median annual wages for marketing managers in the top industries in which they worked are indicated in the table below (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022³).

Professional, scientific, and technical services	\$155,470
Management of companies and enterprises	\$155,030
Finance and insurance	\$151,870
Manufacturing	\$136,150
Wholesale trade	\$132,450

NECC also found that Massachusetts is one of the states with the highest concentration of jobs and location quotients (number of jobs (employment) in the given occupation per 1,000 jobs in the given area) in Marketing Managers of 3.8 compared to number one Illinois at 4.09. However, the hourly wage in Massachusetts exceeds Illinois by \$11.28 with an annual mean wage also exceeding by \$23,470.

The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average--Massachusetts has a location quotient of 1.71 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022, March 31)..

²U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022, March 31). *Occupational employment and wages: marketing managers*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved December 19, 2023, from <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes112021.htm>

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). *Occupational outlook handbook, advertising, promotions, and marketing managers*. U.S. Department of Labor. Retrieved October 22, 2022, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/advertising-promotions-and-marketing-managers.htm>

Emsi Burning Glass (now called Lightcast) is a third-party consultant company which prepared a report for potential on new programs and certificates for NECC to consider. They found that 66% of job openings in Massachusetts stem from this industry as of the date of this report (August 2022⁴).

CIP Code	CIP Title	Annual Regional Job Openings	% of Job Openings in MA	Annual Regional Program Completions	Annual NECC Program Completions	Gap or (Surplus)	Median Hourly Wage
52.0201	Business Administration & Management, General	717	66%	29	29	688	\$29.32

Finally, according to a 2020 report on regional workforce needs in Massachusetts, NECC underscored that the top regional industry and occupational priorities in the northeast include Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance and Professional, Scientific & Technical/IT (Farkas, 2020⁵). NECC noted that while Marketing will be a Business program, it is a unique area in that almost every other industry requires support from marketing, including the high need and priority areas outlined in the Northeast Regional Labor Market Blueprint Update report from 2020.

Duplication

North Shore Community College offers a Digital and Social Media associate degree with a focus on advertising, storytelling in the digital era, and social media. Manchester Community College in New Hampshire offers a Marketing associate degree that focuses on social media, advertising, and international marketing. Both programs have digital marketing perspective with a social media emphasis. NECC's program will additionally

⁴ Emsi Burning Glass. (2022, July). *Northern Essex Community College: program demand gap analysis: economic overview and review of academic programs.*

⁵ Farkas, P. (2020). *Northeast regional labor market blueprint update.* <https://www.mass.gov/doc/northeast-regional-final-report/download>

provide brand marketing through which students will develop a broad and holistic approach to marketing.

Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning

As noted, NECC plans that the proposed program will provide students with an internship as an optional program elective; and that courses will be offered in multiple modalities including a 7-week online format. In addition, it is planned that several required business courses will provide students with an International Virtual Exchange⁶ experience.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH CAMPUS STRATEGIC PLAN AND MISSION

NECC expects that offerings an AS in Marketing is aligned with both industry needs and student interests. Developing new degree programs, expanding course offerings, and ensuring that these align with workforce demand, student interest, and community needs are exactly on-point with NECC's current strategic plan.

LOI Program Goals and Objectives (Form B)

NECC goals for the proposed program are to create an associate degree program that allows students to explore the specialized field of marketing and digital marketing; to create a degree program with transfer opportunities for students to enter as juniors at a 4-year institution; to be responsive to the demand in the marketing field in the surrounding communities of Merrimack Valley; and to provide students with opportunities of professional experiences working within the marketing field.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES OF INSTITUTION

⁶ Virtual exchange (VE), including one of its most comprehensive forms, collaborative online international learning (COIL), provides students with affordable opportunities to gain global competencies within their coursework wherever they are. It links together students and classrooms around the world through co-taught multicultural and blended online course work, bridging the physical distance between students through technological means. Retrieved 11/18/23 <https://www.aacu.org/initiatives.virtual-exchange-collaborative-online-international-learning>

Enrollment Projections (Form C)

NECC expects that some students may switch from other Business programs initially, it is anticipated that the Marketing degree will draw a new population of students from within several local communities.

Resources and Financial Statement of Estimated Net Impact on Institution (Form D, Appendices)

The most significant resources NECC plans include a full-time faculty position in Business (serving two programs and marketing resources for the new program. The new faculty position is already budgeted in NECC's FY24 budget, although the position is not expected to be filled until Fall, 2024.

STAFF REVIEW AND VALIDATION

Staff thoroughly reviewed the **LOI** proposing full degree granting authority for the **Associate in Science in Marketing** submitted by **Northern Essex Community College**. Staff validate that the **LOI** includes all data required by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Staff recommendation is for BHE authorization for the Commissioner to review the program pursuant to the Fast-Track review protocol.

**Form A1: LOI Undergraduate Program Curriculum Outline
AS Marketing**

<i>Required (Core) Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 13)</i>		
<i>Course Number</i>	Course Title	Credit Hours
ACC101	Introduction to Accounting I	3
ACC102	Introduction to Accounting II	3
BUS101	Introduction to Business	3
BUS105	Managerial Business Communication	3
CIS110	Computer Application	3
COM111	Public Speaking	3
ECO201	Microeconomics I	3
ENG101	English Composition I	3
ENG102	English Composition II	3
MKT210	Principles of Marketing	3
MKT215	Social Media Marketing	3
MKT216	Brand Marketing	3
PSY105	Organizational Behavior	3
	<i>Sub Total Required Credits</i>	39
<i>Elective Courses (Total # courses required = 7) (attach list of choices if needed)</i>		
BUS elective/COP110 internship	Business Elective and/or Internship	3
Humanities		3
Humanities		3
Mathematics		3-4
Mathematics		4
Science		4
Science		4

	Sub Total Elective Credits	24-25
Distribution of General Education Requirements		# of Gen Ed Credits
Attach List of General Education Offerings (Course Numbers, Titles, and Credits)		
Arts and Humanities, including Literature and Foreign Languages		6
Mathematics and the Natural and Physical Sciences		7-8
Social Sciences		8
Sub Total General Education Credits		21-22
Curriculum Summary		
Total number of courses required for the degree		20
Total credit hours required for degree		63
Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:		

Form B: LOI Goals and Objectives

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
Create an associate degree program that allows students to explore more specialized and in demand field of marketing and digital marketing	Matriculated students will be able to navigate easily between the different business programs.	The pathways amongst the business programs will allow for clear pathways that combine general education courses and specific entry-level marketing courses giving students a glimpse of the different specializations in the digital marketing field.	Ongoing: The specialized advising at the Academic Center will provide students with focused attention. The periodic review of the program and course level objectives will allow for the program to grow with the advancement in the discipline.
Create a degree program with transfer opportunities allowing students to enter at junior level at a 4-year institution	Students will fulfill all the requirements of the program specified in the program pathway.	The program was developed to ensure alignment to the Mass Transfer General Education Foundation courses.	Ongoing: The business faculty and business advisors ensure that students follow pathways and benefit from transfer articulations.
Contribute to the growing demand for marketing in the surrounding communities of the Merrimack Valley	Students will transfer to corresponding Business Administration programs with a Marketing concentration or begin entry level Marketing positions upon graduation.	Creating educational programming outside coursework to familiarize students with the field in form of presentations, experiential learning, and exposure to career pathways of the field	Ongoing: This programming will occur in the Academic Center with support of the Business faculty and community members.

Form C: LOI Program Enrollment

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
New Full-Time	10	10	15	15	30
Continuing Full-Time	N/A	10	10	15	15
New Part-Time	10	15	20	25	25
Continuing Part-Time	N/A	10	25	45	60
Totals	20	45	70	100	120

Form D: LOI Program Budget

<i>One Time/ Start Up Costs</i>						
		Annual Enrollment				
	<i>Cost Categories</i>	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	Full Time Faculty <i>(Salary & Fringe)</i> <i>*Position will be split between two new business programs</i>	\$37,000*	\$37,740	\$38,495	\$39,264	\$40,500
	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty <i>(Salary & Fringe)</i>					
	Staff					
	General Administrative Costs					
	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions					
	Facilities/Space/Equipment					
	Field & Clinical Resources					
	Marketing	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$750	\$750
	Other (Specify)					

<i>One Time/Start-Up Support</i>		<i>Annual Income</i>				
		<i>Revenue Sources</i>	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	Grants					
	Tuition	11,250	24,375	35,625	48,750	58,125
	Fees	102,550	225,450	334,625	464,600	561,075
	Departmental					
	Reallocated Funds					
	Other (specify)					
	TOTALS	113,800	249,825	370,250	469,475	619,200