

Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

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Noe Ortega
Commissioner
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Board Chair

NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD

Notice is hereby given pursuant to [M.G.L. c. 69, § 30](#) and [610 CMR 16.08\(4\)](#), and consistent with the procedures outlined in the [Massachusetts Board of Higher Education's Policy Establishing a Process for Public Comment](#) on program approval applications, that the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (Department) will open a comment period relative to **Merrimack College's proposed initiative to offer, pursuant to 610 CMR 16.00, the following four 96-credit applied baccalaureate degree programs: Applied Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Applied Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Applied Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, and Applied Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.**

Merrimack College is a New England Commission of Higher Education accredited independent institution located in North Andover, Massachusetts with the authority to "grant and confer degrees such as are usually conferred by colleges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, except degrees in medicine and law other than honorary doctorates."

Merrimack College's application to offer a **96-credit Applied Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Applied Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Applied Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, and Applied Bachelor of Science in Business Administration** was submitted to the Department on February 13, 2026, pursuant to the Board of Higher Education's Degree Granting Regulations for Pilot Proposals on Innovation, 610 CMR 16.00.

An executive summary of Merrimack's proposed initiative is attached. Department Staff have determined that Merrimack College's proposal has reached a stage of readiness for public comment such that notice of the proposed initiative must be posted for public comment before a recommendation is made to the Board. See 610 CMR 16.08(4). At the end of the comment period, Department staff will review and take into consideration any and all comments received.

The public comment period on Merrimack College's notice of its proposed initiative to offer a **96-credit Applied Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Applied Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Applied Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice, and Applied Bachelor of Science in Business Administration** begins on May 29, 2026, and will close 21 days thereafter, on June 19, 2026. Written comments on the proposed amendments may be submitted at any time prior to 5:00 pm on June 19, 2026, directing the same to the following:

Email:

PublicComment@dhe.mass.edu

Postal Mail:

Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
One Ashburton Place
Room 1401
Boston, MA 02108
Attn: Richard Riccardi, Sc.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

Please submit electronic comments as an attached Word document and type "Merrimack College Public Comment" in the subject line. All submissions must include the sender's full name and address. For special accommodations for submission of public comments or information regarding submission of public comments in an alternative format, please contact Department Staff at PublicComment@dhe.mass.edu.