

July 28, 2017

CIHE

New England Association of Schools and Colleges

3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100

Burlington, MA 01803-4514

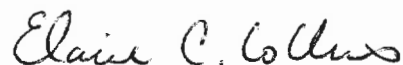
Dear Commissioners:

With pleasure and eager anticipation, we submit our substantive change proposal to unify Lyndon State College and Johnson State College as Northern Vermont University with two campuses: NVU-Lyndon and NVU-Johnson.

This past year has been an exciting one. Many planning efforts and fruitful discussions have taken place, which we hope are reflected in our report. 2017-2018 will also be a busy year, as we move toward what we hope will be the formal start of NVU operations in July 2018. Our next task, already begun, will be to create clear lines of responsibility, timelines for the to-do items cited in the report, and metrics to assess them.

In advance I—and we, at both Lyndon and Johnson—thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Elaine Collins, Ph.D.

President

Johnson State College

Lyndon State College



**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**  
**COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

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**COVER PAGE FOR SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REQUESTS**

Name of Institution	Johnson State College and Lyndon State College
Type of proposed change (See <a href="http://cihe.neasc.org/downloads/POLICIES/Pp72_Substantive_Change.pdf">http://cihe.neasc.org/downloads/POLICIES/Pp72_Substantive_Change.pdf</a> )	Join separate institutions into a single accreditable institution
Effective date of implementation	July 1, 2018
Date of institutional governing board approval	September 29, 2016
Is state approval required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, approved (date) _____ (Attach verification.)
Contact Person:	Name: Daniel Regan Title: ALO Phone: 802-635-1321 or 802-730-3359 Fax: 802-635-1238 e-mail: Daniel.Regan@jsc.edu
Please summarize the proposed change	Johnson State College and Lyndon State College, members of the Vermont State Colleges System, seek Commission approval to unite the institutions in a new Northern Vermont University with campuses at both locations: NVU-Lyndon and NVU-Johnson.
Signature of CEO:	<i>Elaine C. Collins</i>
Date:	July 28, 2017

**SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REQUEST**  
**for the**  
**Unification of Lyndon State College and Johnson State College**  
**as**  
**Northern Vermont University**

Introduction

Lyndon State College and Johnson State College, members of the Vermont State Colleges System, seek Commission approval to unite the institutions in a new Northern Vermont University with campuses at both locations: NVU-Lyndon and NVU-Johnson. This is a highly intentional plan for a strategic alliance through unification. As such, it is born of an opportunity to secure a sustainable future rather than of desperation or dire necessity. The opportunities to be gained are in three key areas, according to the Vermont State Colleges Chancellor: administrative cost-savings and an increase in efficiency; the expenditure of scarce resources on the student experience; and heightened competitiveness from marketing and recruitment perspectives. Unification promises to formalize and strengthen an institutional partnership that already exists between Lyndon and Johnson and, especially, to increase classroom and co-curricular opportunities for NVU students. Students can look forward to more chances to participate in shared classes and clubs, new academic programs, as well as enhanced advising support, among other benefits.

Johnson's Dr. Elaine C. Collins will preside over both campuses starting July 2017, and over Northern Vermont University as of July 2018. NVU's first provost in July 2018 will be Dr. Nolan Atkins, during 2016-2017 interim president at Lyndon and as of July 2017 provost for both Johnson and Lyndon. His provost appointment successfully concluded a national search that brought four finalists, Dr. Atkins the last among them, to Lyndon and Johnson in March. A Unification Advisory Committee, under the former Vermont State Colleges chancellor Tim Donovan, presented its final report in December 2016 and has given way to an 18-person NVU Transition Team, composed of members from each campus. Its biweekly meetings are structured around NEASC standards, so as to insure continued compliance. The conclusions arrived at by this body, as well as by several sub-groups and cross-department groupings, have informed this substantive change proposal for Unification. Members of the Transition Team are:

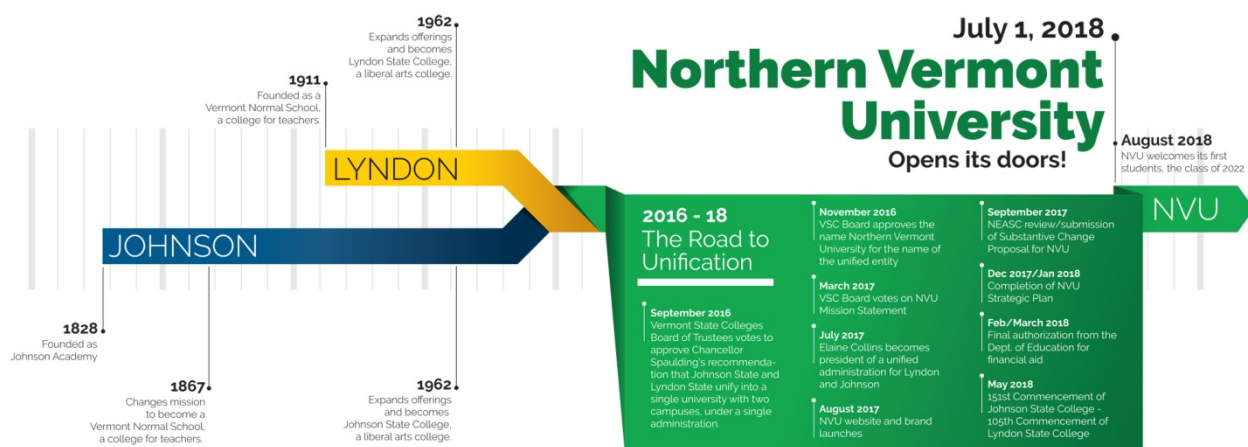
Nolan Atkins, Interim President, Lyndon State College  
Tanya Bradley, Director of Financial Aid, Lyndon State College  
Bobbi Jo Carter, Associate Dean of Distance Education, Johnson State College  
Elaine Collins, President, Johnson State College

Jonathan Davis, Dean of Students, Lyndon State College  
Mike Dente, Chief Technology Officer, Lyndon State College  
Doug Eastman, Registrar, Johnson State College  
Sandy Franz, Director of Human Resources, Lyndon State College  
Jenny Harris, Executive Director of Development & Alumni Affairs,  
Lyndon State College  
Hans Haverkamp, Associate Professor and Faculty Assembly Chair,  
Johnson State College  
Penny Howrigan, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services, Johnson State  
College  
Vinnie Maloney, Director of Admissions, Lyndon State College  
Lauren Philie, Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Johnson State  
College  
Sylvia Plumb, Executive Director of Communications, Lyndon State  
College  
Sharron Scott, Dean of Administration, Johnson State College  
Toby Stewart, Controller, Johnson State College  
Barclay Tucker, Professor and Faculty Assembly Chair, Lyndon State  
College  
Sharon Twigg, Interim Academic Dean, Johnson State College  
Melissa Weinstein, Web and Digital Communications Manager, Johnson  
State College

Pending CIHE approval, Northern Vermont University will commence its operations on July 1, 2018. It will have a single budget and a single accreditation status. The new university will accept students for fall 2018. NVU already possesses an overall mission and a guiding vision, both approved by the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees. That guiding vision, among its assertions, envisages a university of innovation and creativity that “build[s] on the historical strengths of each campus...” Beneath the umbrella mission and overall vision, each campus will retain its own distinctive but complementary mission.

### Timeline

This graphic provides an overview of the transition, slated to begin in July 2018, from two colleges to one university with two campuses:



## Context

Innovations in higher education rarely occur in a vacuum. Although the current plan for unification is largely a response to local and state circumstances, including continuing but modest state support, it is also part of a wider trend. Many institutions, both public and private, have faced serious fiscal and enrollment challenges. Not all have succeeded in their responses; some have even closed. But mutually beneficial partnerships, which can take a variety of forms, have become an important trend in US higher education, as documented in Martin, James and James E. Samels et al., *Consolidating Colleges and Merging Universities: New Strategies for Higher Education Leaders* (Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2017). Indeed, 27 New England colleges and universities, which appear on the current CIHE list of “Merged, Closed, or Previously Accredited Institutions,” have engaged in some form of merger. And in Vermont specifically, the 2015 passage of Act 46 (“An act relating to making amendments to education funding, education spending, and education governance”) turned public discourse at K-12 levels to the theme of operational efficiencies, cost-savings and improved quality/equity through consolidation in governance. Act 46’s goal for elementary, middle and secondary public education in Vermont—a sustainable model of education governance—is also a key goal of the new Northern Vermont University.

As NVU planning continues, many operational issues big and small remain to be resolved. Nevertheless, both campuses find great promise in the prospect of unification. That optimism springs from a sense that Johnson and Lyndon are well poised to be successful partners in the new Northern Vermont University. Of 15 criteria for a successful institutional partnership, laid out by Martin and Samels (in Martin and Samels et al., 2017: 6-9), NVU-Lyndon and NUV-Johnson can realistically claim or at least aspire to nearly all of them. Noteworthy among these are: enriched student life; enhanced academic reputation and brand; strengthened preexisting institutional partnerships; mission complementarity; [positive] impact on primary stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff); as well as scaling

of operational efficiencies. For the remaining yardsticks, primarily the criterion of “upgraded educational technologies,” Lyndon and Johnson are currently seeking additional funding from external sources. Two sources have been identified and solicited. Thus far, \$630,000 for technology has been received.

### Institutional Overviews

Each of the two distinct but complementary campuses that will comprise Northern Vermont University has its own rich history and tradition.

Founded in 1827 as Johnson Academy and, since 1974, accredited as Johnson State College by NEASC, today JSC is a liberal arts college serving over 1,300 mostly undergraduate, degree-seeking students from Vermont and the surrounding states. JSC offers its students countless opportunities through 31 programs in the arts, the sciences, education and a range of professions. These prepare students to advance their careers and serve as responsible citizens in their communities. Working alongside accomplished faculty mentors, students apply their knowledge and develop the critical thinking skills sought by employers. Learning at JSC takes many forms—in the classroom and in the field, through exhibitions and performances, internships, scientific research and presentations at professional conferences, and engagement in service projects and participation in study-abroad and National Student Exchange programs. In these and many other ways, the educational experience at Johnson State College lives up to its mission of “transform[ing] lives.” In 2016, Johnson State College was designated as Vermont’s premier public liberal arts college—a designation from the board of the Council for Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), which voted unanimously during its annual meeting to approve JSC’s application for membership in the organization.

Forty-three miles from Johnson, Lyndon State College (LSC) serves approximately 1,200 mostly undergraduate students from Vermont and New England; about five percent come from other US states and five percent from other countries. The college is located in Lyndonville (pop, 6,000), in the northeastern corner of VT. The surrounding three-county area has the lowest population density and the lowest socioeconomic indices in VT. The college is the fifth largest employer in the area and contributes about \$20M annually to the local economy. Town and campus relationships are very good. LSC became a comprehensive four-year college that is part of the Vermont State Colleges system in 1961 and celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. Degree offerings evolved from a single major, to several liberal arts majors, to 44 majors at associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s levels in 15 academic departments. (Lyndon has about 7% graduate students, Johnson about 9%.) The disciplines taught at LSC include BA/BS programs in the traditional liberal arts and focused professional programs. Several newer BA/BS areas (e.g., exercise science, music business and industry, and graphic design/visual communications) now enroll about 80% of Lyndon’s students and several (e.g., atmospheric sciences, mountain recreation

management, and electronic journalism arts) have gained long-standing regional and national reputations for the College. The College is well-regarded in the region for success in achieving its mission “to prepare every student for personal and professional success through experience-based, high-quality programs in the liberal arts and professional studies.”

Despite many successes, Lyndon as well as Johnson continue to confront challenges such as bracing demographic trends, evolving technological needs, tight budgets, and less than ample staffing.

The remaining sections of this substantive change proposal address each of the *Standards for Accreditation* and, following the Policy on Substantive Change, will “provide evidence of how, through the proposed change, the institution will continue to fulfill the Standards.” For each standard we also include a “Projection” section, indicating items that will be addressed between now and July 1, 2018 and, in some cases, some that will remain outstanding even after the proposed formal launch of Northern Vermont University.

### **Standard 1: Mission and Purposes**

As noted previously, the Northern Vermont University mission was approved by the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees at their March 23-24 meeting at Johnson State College. Before then it received extensive discussion by the Transition Team. In early February, the NVU Transition Team shared a draft of the Northern Vermont University mission statement with community members from Lyndon and Johnson. Based on thoughtful feedback from students, faculty, staff, and alumni, the Transition Team crafted the final version:

Northern Vermont University (NVU) fosters the intellectual, creative, and personal growth of every student in a community committed to diversity and inclusion. We provide innovative professional and liberal arts educational experiences that prepare students to be critical thinkers and engaged global citizens.

Johnson is a liberal arts institution that values experiential learning and career readiness, while Lyndon foregrounds its professional programs alongside liberal arts offerings; all have strong liberal arts underpinnings. The missions of the two campuses, then, are not identical, but are complementary, each well connected to the overall NVU charge:

The NVU Lyndon campus prepares every student for personal and professional success through experience-based, high quality programs in the liberal arts and professional studies. Experience is the hallmark of a Lyndon education, linking theory and practice in and out of the classroom for students of varying ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Our academic experience develops creative and critical thinking for success in today's global society. We encourage personal, social and civic responsibility, honesty, collaboration, and respect for diversity in a supportive environment.

The NVU Johnson campus believes in the power of a liberal arts education to transform lives. We express this belief by providing high-impact interdisciplinary learning experiences that cross academic and experiential boundaries; by creating opportunities for students to extend their classroom learning to the field, the laboratory, the studio, the community and the local and wider world; by recognizing and supporting the diverse starting points, backgrounds and goals of students; and by sustaining high standards, active participation, vigorous debate and mutual respect.

These mission statements also fit with NVU's expansive vision:

Northern Vermont University will be recognized for its innovation and creativity, preparing students for success in a global economy. Our students will advance knowledge and positive change in a wide range of liberal arts disciplines and professional programs. As a public, regional university, Northern Vermont University will be the preferred choice for students who seek transformative professional and liberal arts education.

Building on the historical strengths of each campus, our faculty and staff will collaborate to facilitate conversations across disciplines, not only across like disciplines such as the social sciences but across disparate disciplines such as sciences and the humanities, arts and business, social sciences and health sciences, liberal arts and professional disciplines. It is only within this context that students will experience the necessary openness and curiosity for experimentation and inquiry needed to solve today's complex problems.

Students will have the opportunity to learn on our campuses through experiential methods, high impact practices and innovative uses of technology. Extracurricular activities will support growth of the "whole person" including athletic programs that will capitalize on our unique position as a university and eclectic center for learning in the northern tier.

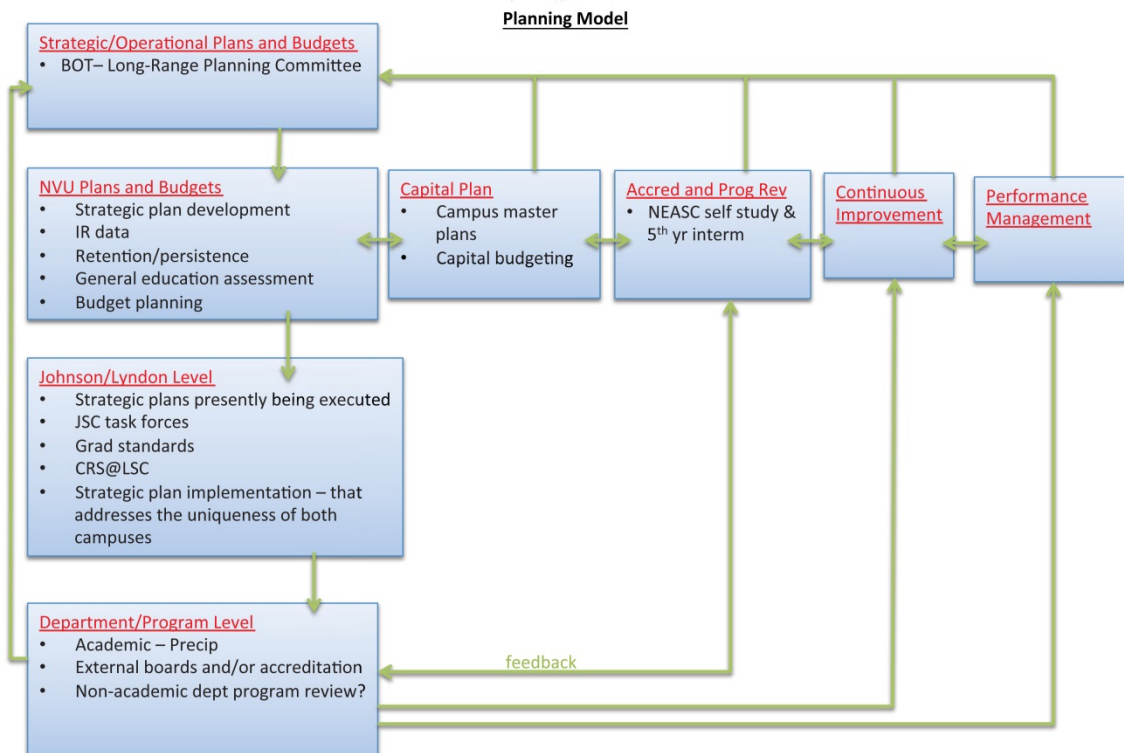
Our graduates will continue to be sought after by employers as accomplished experts in their professions and leaders of their local, state, regional, national, and global communities.

Northern Vermont University will contribute to the economic, educational, environmental and cultural well-being of Vermont. Widely known as a leader in multi-disciplinary approaches to solve social, technical, environmental, and health-related challenges, Northern Vermont University will receive strong public and private support, earning a loyal following of its alumni (March 1, 2017).

Projection: We feel confident, as we embark on this new institutional journey, that we have well- articulated and fully vetted mission and vision statements to guide us. At the same time we are mindful of the need to make these documents fully live in ways that bear meaning for NVU students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members. We will also need to check our progress on advancing the mission and gauge the extent to which we can say we “live” it. This determination will be a significant focus of the Transition Team, when it transitions into President Collins’s Leadership Team starting July 1, 2017.

## **Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation**

Planning: At each campus to date, planning as well as evaluation has taken place at executive, divisional, and departmental levels. The Transition Team quickly realized that, with the unification of the two campuses as NVU, a more cohesive institutional model would be needed to supplant more fragmented approaches. Indeed, a key recommendation from the team was to “reduce redundancies in the evaluation and planning/assessment processes.” To that end, team members discussed and adopted a model from the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP), adapted from the University of Rhode Island. The model, particularized to NVU, integrates planning across all levels (institutional, campus, departmental, programmatic), thus helping to unify goals and initiatives across the university; and across all functions, including strategic planning, budget planning, accreditation and program review, continuous improvement and performance management:



At its mid-February 2017 meeting at which the Transition Team approved this model, the group also advanced two other recommendations related to planning: that NVU strategic plan development would take place during the first six months of FY18; and that planning and evaluation efforts would be executed with equal representation from both campuses.

Evaluation: Transition Team members sought to insure that NVU would have the capacity to evaluate and improve upon the achievement of its mission and purposes. That emphasis seems apt in light of team reports that stress the importance of data-driven planning and decision making in ways that are useful to continuous improvement and institutional effectiveness. To that end team members surfaced questions concerning a plan to devote resources to support institutional research; the identification of high priority questions to which resources must be devoted; and the production of meaningful assessment tools/procedures to examine the effectiveness of the strategic planning process, the general education program, and the academic program review process (PReCIP), among others. The team also recommended creating an NVU Office of Institutional Research; maintaining IR expertise at the Chancellor's Office; examining the alignment of academic department assessment efforts with NEASC and PReCIP requirements; and systematizing assessment strategies across the two campuses.

Projection: As noted previously, strategic planning for NVU is to begin during FY18. The future will also demand a clear answer to the question of resources, both fiscal and human,

to support IR. As for reportage, following the Unification Advisory Committee's firm stance, "NVU will be one institution with the associated regional accreditation, federal identification, and reporting requirements (IPEDS, Clearinghouse, Common data sets)." [Lyndon and Johnson will continue to maintain individually program-specific state and national accreditations.] The UAC's final submission (December 2016) emphasized that, wherever possible, "the default answer to any question," including that of reportage, "beginning with 'how many' should be 'one.'" Near the top of any to-do list, as the Transition Team recognizes, is a database to collect assessment data. The challenges of merging heretofore separate datasets, so as to reap the benefits of longitudinal tracking and reporting of data, will have to be tackled and overcome. Data, having been gathered, will need to be used in ways that support continuous improvement and institutional effectiveness. While work is ongoing, at Lyndon much progress has been made in building a campus culture of assessment, and new pilot efforts at Johnson have been successful. With support of the Davis grant, assessment protocols will be built into the new general education program. Overall, evaluation efforts, while according primary focus to NVU's academic programs, will also need to engage and involve the non-academic departments on both campuses.

### **Standard 3: Organization and Governance**

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees has been involved both actively and appropriately in multiple steps of the Unification planning process. Vermont State Colleges System Chancellor Jeb Spaulding recommended unification to the VSC Long Range Planning Committee and Board of Trustees in July 2016. On July 22 the Board of Trustees approved, in concept, the Chancellor's proposal to unify Johnson and Lyndon under one administration into a single, larger, and stronger institution with two distinctive campuses. In order for the Board to be fully prepared to make a final decision to proceed, the BOT directed the Chancellor, among other steps, to prepare a detailed report and outline a transition plan. That report, besides presaging a strengthened financial position for the new institution, gave special emphasis to the expanded opportunities for students in both academic and student life through new academic programs, access to more courses and faculty, shared extra-curricular events, organizations, and other opportunities. Also as part of the report, a comprehensive review conducted by the Chancellor and his staff concluded, among other assertions, that the VSC Board of Trustees has the statutory authority to proceed with the unification of Johnson and Lyndon. On September 29, 2016 the Board of Trustees gave final and unanimous approval to the Chancellor's recommendation to unify Lyndon State College and Johnson State College.

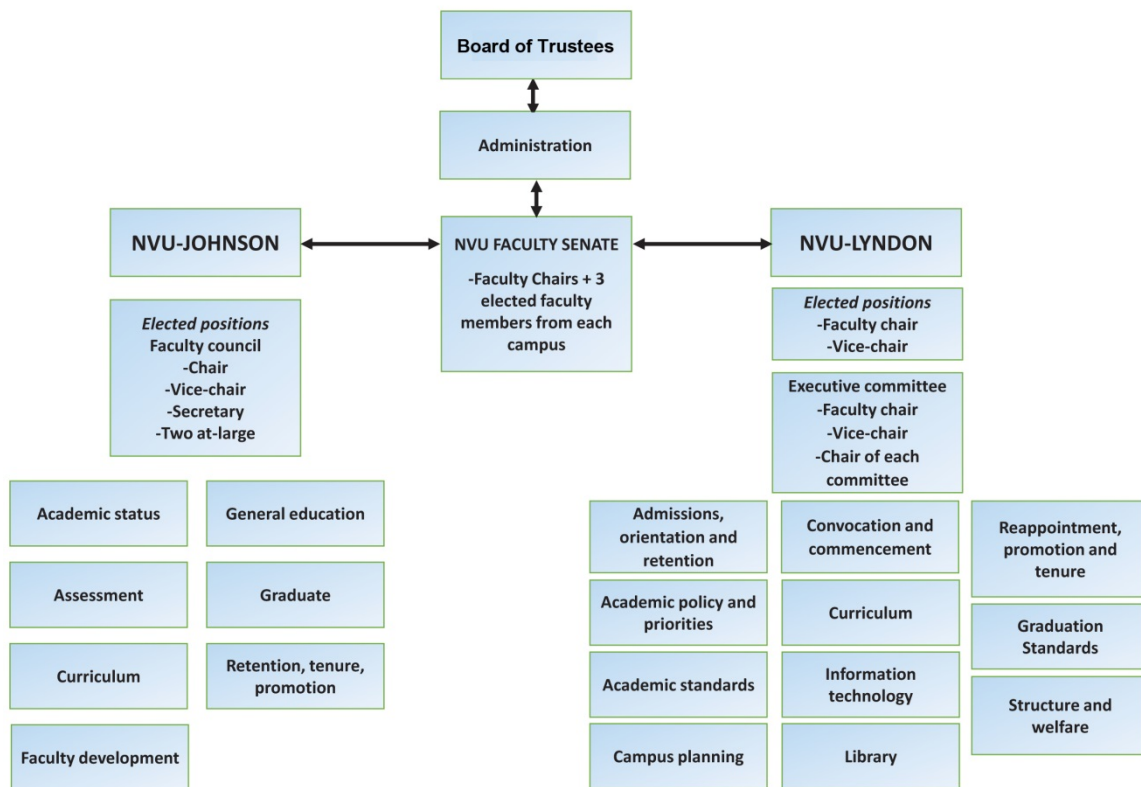
As part of their approval, the Board asked the Chancellor, with advice from Dr. Collins's unified leadership team and the Unification Advisory Committee, to recommend a name

for the new entity, for Board consideration at or before its November 30, 2016 meeting. A great deal of discussion ensued at both Lyndon and Johnson, involving students, staff, faculty, alumni, community members and the press. The Chancellor, President Collins, and Interim President Atkins conducted numerous community forums and a dialogue with the Unification Advisory Committee; solicited community input via email, surveys, and via facilitated and individual conversations; consulted experts in marketing and higher education; and conducted relevant research on the possibilities. On November 22 the Chancellor recommended naming the unified Johnson State College and Lyndon State College “Northern Vermont University” with campuses at both Johnson and Lyndon. At its November 30 meeting the Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees unanimously approved a naming resolution containing that recommendation. Pending Commission approval, the two colleges will officially unify and adopt the new name July 1, 2018. At that point each campus will be known as either “Northern Vermont University-Lyndon” or “Northern Vermont University-Johnson.”

In the new circumstance presented by Northern Vermont University, a multi-campus institution organized under a single governing board, Vermont State Colleges System By-Laws contain several provisions that meet NEASC Standard 3.6, which mandates a clear division of responsibility and authority between the system office and the institution. At the level of day-to-day operations, the relationship between the Chancellor and NVU’s chief executive officer continues to evolve over time. Clearly the Chancellor views his role as more than merely “assisting” the President to fulfill NVU’s mission. The Chancellor sees himself as responsible for both the system and the institutional missions. In fulfilling that sense of responsibility, his general stance is to support a strong leader. Continued open communications between him and President Collins will be a critical factor in sustaining this supportive role.

Internally, Transition Team members, in consultation with colleagues on both campuses, worked to describe an NVU governance model, most elements of which were already in place. The major questions raised, and recommendations brought forward, related to faculty governance. Of particular interest was a model that retained separate faculty assemblies at each campus, with an overarching faculty senate for the new university. After much exploration and discussion, the Transition Team voted to approve a faculty governance model, which had been endorsed by the Faculty Assemblies at both Johnson and Lyndon:

## NVU Faculty Governance Model



This model provides an interim answer to the question of how Lyndon and Johnson faculties will work together. It is to become effective in August 2017 for the upcoming academic year. As it is a working model, the goal is to have a final governance model in place by the time NVU is established.

The interim Faculty Senate will serve as a conduit for communication among NVU-Johnson and NVU-Lyndon faculty and the administration; will supervise and manage the possible reformulation of faculty governance structures at both campuses; and will deliberate on issues related to faculty governance that affect both campuses as they arise throughout the academic year. It will consist of eight members, including the Faculty Chairs of Lyndon and Johnson and three elected full-time faculty members from each campus. At their May 2017 meetings, the assemblies at Lyndon and Johnson voted to choose their three at-large members for the new Faculty Senate.

Projection: Externally, it will be important to insure that the mutually supportive pattern of communications with the trustees and system office continues. With respect to internal governance, a priority will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the interim Faculty Senate, with the result written into governance bylaws. Progress on that priority will be in accord

with 3.19: “The effectiveness of the institution’s organizational structure and system of governance is improved through periodic and systematic review.”

#### **Standard 4: The Academic Program**

In Marten and Samels et al. (2017), contributors invoke numerous justifications for the strategic partnerships they describe; but curricular gains, although mentioned now and again, are rarely a primary factor among the rationales for merger. The proposed unification between Lyndon and Johnson, on the other hand, made explicit from the outset that enhanced opportunities for students, both academic and co-curricular, would be at or near the top of our list of expectations. Even before citing the goal of strengthening finances, the final resolution to the system Board of Trustees (September 29, 2016) asserted that “Unification will expand opportunities for students through new academic programs, access to more courses and faculty, shared extra-curricular events, organizations, and opportunities...” And a widely circulated flyer from fall 2016 promised that Unification would mean “expanded learning opportunities, a larger and more diverse faculty, more research opportunities, shared resources, increased graduation rates, and more course offerings.” Among the anticipated benefits that this communication (“Unification Questions JSC/LSC”) cites are that “Unification will preserve access, combine the best resources of two institutions into one, and allow resources to be focused on students and learning” and provide “access to more faculty, courses, majors and minors, and resources (career services, research and internship opportunities, facilities).”

Already progress has been made in some academic areas:

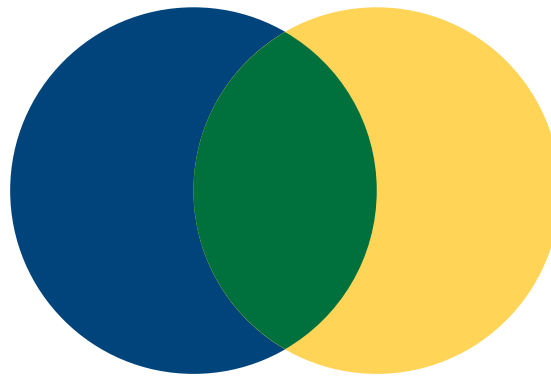
- This spring Professors Lori Werdenschlag (Lyndon) and Gina Mireault (Johnson) designed a psychology course on British Influences on American Psychology that culminated with a May trip to London, Paris, and Amsterdam. Students from both campuses deepened their academic coursework with visits to the Freud Museum, Bedlam Hospital, the first psychiatric hospital in London, the Van Gogh Museum, the Anne Frank House, as well as to other sites.
- The Johnson and Lyndon Business Departments have already begun to offer upper-level classes jointly through telepresence, connecting two classrooms remotely through audio and video feeds. This model enriches the breadth and depth of students’ educations by offering upper-level elective courses that might not be viable with enrollments from just one campus.
- Lyndon’s Atmospheric and Natural Sciences departments recently created an innovative major in Climate Change Science. This multidisciplinary program includes meteorology, climate science, communications, biology, chemistry, environmental science, weather risk, and global business. It has the potential to include policy courses offered at Johnson that will make it a truly collaborative

degree program—one that is stronger than what could be offered by one campus alone.

- Faculty members in Johnson’s Hospitality and Tourism Management concentration and Lyndon’s Mountain Recreation Management major have begun to discuss and explore ways to connect their programs.
- The Davis Educational Foundation recently awarded \$224,646 over the next three years in support of an initiative to design a common General Education Program for both NVU campuses. Developing a new, vibrant general education program with a shared set of learning outcomes, in a design that will best serve all of our undergraduate students, is one of our immediate and most exciting tasks. Recognizing the immediacy of the work, Davis Foundation Trustees have provided \$100,000 for first-year activities.
- NVU Provost Nolan Atkins invited faculty to meet over the summer to discuss program similarities and differences and identify opportunities for enhanced collaboration. This curricular work in several disciplines has generated excitement and will be funded out of monies obtained from Vermont’s legislature in support of unification.

Most of the academic work so far has focused on identifying complementary programs, as well as those unique to Lyndon and Johnson. “Complementary” programs are those which, on the surface, provide the most promising opportunities for collaboration, even while partnerships among some heretofore unique programs are anticipated as well.

**JOHNSON  
STATE COLLEGE**



**LYNDON  
STATE COLLEGE**

# **NORTHERN VERMONT UNIVERSITY**

**JSC & LSC COMPLEMENTARY MAJORS/PROGRAMS OF STUDY** (Draft 5/17/17)

## **UNDERGRADUATE BACHELOR'S AND ASSOCIATE'S PROGRAMS**

● Accounting (BS)

● Animation/Illustration (BFA)

● Media Arts (BA + BFA)

● Anthropology/Sociology (BA)

● Global Studies (BA)

● Business Administration (BS)

● Business Administration (AS)

● Business (BA)

● Business Management (AS)

● Childhood Education

● Early Education (BS)

● Secondary Education program:

English Education

Mathematics Education

Social Studies

Science Education

● Secondary Education in:

English (BA)

Mathematics (BA)

Natural Sciences (BS)

Social Studies

● Communications + Community Media (BA)

● Electronic Journalism Arts (BS+AS)

● Criminal Justice (BS)

● English (BA)

● Creative Writing (BFA)

● English (BA)

● Environmental Science (BS)

● Environmental Science (BS)

● General Studies (AA)

● General Studies (AA)

● Graphic Design (BA & BFA)

● Media Arts (BA & BFA)

● Health Science (BS)

● Exercise Science (BS)

● History (BA)

● Interdisciplinary Studies (BA)

● Liberal Studies (BA)

● Natural Sciences (BS)

● General Biology (BS)

● Mathematics (BS)

● Mathematics (BA)

● Music (BA)

● Music Business & Industry (BS)

● Music Business & Industry (AS)

● Psychology (BA)

● Psychology Applied & Human Services (BS)

● Outdoor Education (BA)

● Mountain Recreation Management (BS)

● Sport Management (BS)

● Sustainability Studies (BS)

## **GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

● Education: Curriculum & Instruction (MA)

● Education: Curriculum & Instruction (MA)





## PROGRAMS UNIQUE TO JOHNSON

### UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Art (BA)  
 Biology: Field Naturalist (BA)  
 Biology (BS)  
 Business (BA)  
 Communications & Community Media (BA)  
**Creative Writing (BFA)**  
 Health Sciences (BS)  
 Media Arts (BA & BFA)  
 Music Performance & Music Education (BA)  
     w/licensure  
 Music (BA)  
 Musical Theater (BA)  
 Outdoor Education (BA)  
 Political Science (BA)  
 Professional Studies (BA)  
     [currently available only through EDP]  
 Psychology (BA)  
 Studio Arts (BFA)  
 Technical Theater (AA)  
 Theater & Drama (BA)  
 Unified Arts licensure in:  
     Art Education Program  
     Dance Education Program  
     Music Education (BA)  
     Physical Education (BS)  
     Theater Arts Education Program  
 Wellness & Alternative Medicine (BS)  
 Woodworking and Furniture Making (AA & BFA)

### GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Counseling (MA)  
 Education: Applied Behavioral Analysis (MA)  
 Education: Curriculum & Instruction, Middle Level (5-9) (MA)  
 Education: Curriculum & Instruction, Unified  
     Arts (art, dance, music, theater arts) (MA)  
 Education: Foundations of Education (MA)  
 Certificate of Advance Graduate Studies  
 Studio Arts (MFA) (low residency or campus-based)

### DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Wellness and Alternative Medicine (BS)  
 Professional Studies (BA)  
 Interdisciplinary Studies (BA)  
 Psychology (BA)  
 Business (BA)  
 Childhood Education (BA-Hybrid)



## PROGRAMS UNIQUE TO LYNDON

### UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Animation/Illustration (BFA)  
 Atmospheric Sciences (BS)  
 Cinema Production (BA & AA)  
 Climate Change Science (BS)  
 Computer Information Systems (BS)  
 Computing (AS)  
 Early Education (BS)  
 Special Education (AS)  
 Criminal Justice (BS)  
 Electronic Journalism Arts (BS & AS)  
 Exercise Science (BS)  
 Graphic Design (BFA & BA)  
 Mountain Recreation Management (BS & AS)  
 Music Business and Industry (BS & AS)  
 Photography (AS)  
 Pre-Nursing (AS)  
 Psychology: 4 + 1 to a Master's in Mental Health  
     Counseling {Also listed on shared document.}  
 Global Studies (BA)  
 Visual Arts (AS)  
 Visual Communications (AS)

### GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Education: K-12 Reading/English Language Arts Specialist (MA)  
 Education: Educational Technology (MA)  
 Liberal Studies: Content Area (MA)  
 Liberal Studies: Interdisciplinary (MA)  
 Liberal Studies: Multidisciplinary (MA)  
 Liberal Studies: Secondary Education (MA)  
 Mental Health Counseling (MS)

### DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Early Childhood Education



It is true that, among separate institutions of the Vermont State Colleges System, academic collaborations could occur now or at any time. They will not, however, at least to any significant degree, except in the atmosphere of formal unification and in the climate of intensive communications that unification planning encourages as a priority.

Preliminary discussions on curricular collaboration have begun. Their venues have included the 2017 faculty retreat, which took place on May 16 on the Lyndon campus. More than 60 Johnson and Lyndon faculty participated, discussing general education, graduate programs, and guiding principles, goals, and questions for creating the NVU curriculum. Faculty in similar disciplines spent the afternoon discussing ideas for collaboration, efficiency, and innovation. Overall, the conversations, facilitated by Provost Atkins, revolved around questions such as: What programs are unique to each campus (in terms of curriculum and student learning outcomes)? Which are similar or nearly duplicated? Which programs should share courses through alternative delivery methods? Are there programs that can be made available to students residing on the other campus? Where should programs offer complementary courses? Where should programs align similar course offerings? What creative and innovative programs can be developed? Questions such as these will continue to frame discussions in the upcoming year. Where feasible, departments are meeting this summer to consider these questions, including the Business and English departments. All programs will continue their discussions in the upcoming academic year.

Faculty members have already shared, and have begun discussions of, the protocols each campus uses in its assessment of student learning and program outcomes. These ongoing conversations should further each campus's efforts to develop a strong culture of assessment. In fact we anticipate that assessment will be one of the major areas for which unification will prove mutually beneficial. That sense of anticipation and optimism is heightened by the sizable Davis Foundation award for developing a common General Education program as well as a complete assessment plan for both campuses of Northern Vermont University.

Apart from the innovations in academic programming and assessment, as the result of collaboration between Lyndon and Johnson, most other aspects of compliance with Standard Four will remain the same. These two longstanding members of the Vermont State Colleges have long participated in system-wide policies and procedures, which will continue. These include processes for approving new programs (Policy 102), for reviewing academic programs on a regular basis (Policies 101 and 109), for determining appropriate institutional sources of transfer credit (Policy 108), and for evaluating faculty (Article 20 of the full-time faculty Contract and Article 15 of the part-time faculty Contract). These ongoing processes will help provide continued assurance of academic quality as well as integrity in the award of academic credit. Lyndon and Johnson individually maintain

program-specific state and national accreditations such as teacher licensure and exercise science. Assuming no immediate changes to these specific programs take place as a result of unification, there are no anticipated impacts to their current accreditation status.

Projection: The program-by-program to-do list for Standard Four is lengthy, but its many entries may be grouped into two major areas of upcoming endeavor: assessment and academic programming. When it comes to assessment, an urgent need is to develop a database for assessment data. A plan for its creation will have to be developed shortly. In realizing such a plan, as noted previously (for Standard Two), “the challenges of merging heretofore separate datasets, so as to reap the benefits of longitudinal tracking and reporting of data, will have to be tackled and overcome.” Also related to assessment is the need to develop, with Davis Foundation support, an assessment model for a new, shared general education program. The commitment is to articulate such a model in 2017-2018, to conduct the assessment(s) and gather/analyze the first set of data during 2018-2019, and to make and begin to enact recommendations for program and course improvements in 2019-2020, the third year of the grant award.

Efforts to effect strategic partnerships among academic departments and programs must continue energetically. NVU leaders, both among the administration and the faculty, are strongly committed to pursuing this project, which sits at the core of unification planning. Early indications are that support for it will continue to grow in faculty ranks, especially at the urging of NVU students. All we can say now is that the eventual collaborations will take multiple forms; also, that elements of this academic project will continue to evolve well after the formal start of Northern Vermont University operations in July 2018. Undoubtedly, professional programs on one campus will connect with professionally-oriented programs on the other. There will be admixtures of professional with liberal arts programs. Some programs will combine, merging into a single major across the two campuses. Others will maintain separate identities, but share resources with their sister campus. Finally, the three-year timetable and budget of the Davis Foundation award should keep us on track to develop a new program of general education.

### **Standard 5: Students**

Not surprisingly, Enrollment Management and Student Services have recorded more operational decisions than any other areas. Early on, President Collins expressed concern over inaccurate media coverage that threatened to compromise our ability to recruit Vermont students. As a result of assistance provided by a public relations firm, more positive, accurate messaging began to appear, and a related goal was articulated: to address major departmental issues, in admissions, marketing and alumni relations, that needed to be resolved quickly. Also helpful was the Unification Advisory Committee’s final report,

which affirmed “an urgent priority for transition in admissions...to inform decisions that flow from approach[es] to admissions and financial [aid] and that are needed soon in order for marketing materials, recruiting information etc. to be ready.” Writing in December 2016, the UAC recognized that “Even as recruiting is underway for the last classes entering Johnson State College and Lyndon State College in Fall 2017, the design of marketing, recruiting, and admissions for NVU class entering in Fall 2018 must occur in the coming months. Additionally, current recruiting efforts must be conducted with messaging regarding NVU that is consistent within and across the two colleges.” An overall sense of urgency, coupled with a recognition that much had to be figured out, was shared across Admissions, Student Academic Records (Registrar), Financial Aid, and Student Accounts: “While Northern Vermont University won’t officially ‘open’ until July 1, 2018, the university will begin admitting students as early as October 2017...[I]t is critical that we identify and address the operational and technical considerations that unification presents right now. If departments are delayed in thinking through these processes, and/or are able to unilaterally make changes to policy, procedures, coding, we run a great risk of unintentionally impacting other departments and/or processes, and not being able to successfully implement NVU expectations” (Transition Team minutes, 3/31/17).

Admissions: The Johnson and Lyndon Admissions offices, joined by other offices whose work and processes affect and are affected by admitting and enrolling students, have continued to examine the pros and cons of a single admissions application. The subcommittee is looking at best practices, technological and workflow considerations and user experience to determine the best course of action. In this effort to standardize admissions practices, other items have come up for discussion (though not necessarily immediate resolution), including placement tests and transcript evaluations. Identical academic year calendars have also received consideration and are within fairly easy reach after AY 17-18. In the area of standardized testing, an examination of institutional data from both campuses as well as national studies on the topic indicated that the SAT (or ACT) is not a reliable predictor of college success. After much discussion the Transition Team determined that Northern Vermont University would be a test-optional school. For the time being, Admissions and Marketing groups have recommended to the Transition Team that the respective admissions staffs operate at nearby fairs and with high school guidance counselors much as they have operated in the past; but perhaps at more distant fairs by a single counselor representing both campuses.

Student Services and Co-Curricular Experiences: Outside the classroom, already some connections have been made, most notably by students. In late March students and staff from Lyndon took part in the annual Johnson tradition of Casino Night. Also in March, at a meeting of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees, a cross-college panel of students offered their perspectives on the opportunities that unification will bring.

Extensive staff discussions on financial aid and scholarships have taken place. These started from several premises, including the desirability of the same pricing structure for both campuses (and for out-of-state as well as Vermont students) for tuition, room and board; of the same awarding structure for scholarships; and of the same policies for residency and dependency. The task of hammering out details fell mostly to a Marketing and Admissions Working Group that recommends to the Transition Team and NVU leadership. Their deliberations have covered multiple areas, including NEBHE discounts, tuition, room and board, scholarship award policies, and policies governing residency and dependency. Although the work of aligning policies, pricing and structures continues, substantial progress has been made, with much input from the admissions and financial aid departments of both campuses. The work is hard and time-consuming though because, when one digs into the “weeds,” subtle differences between LSC and JSC reveal themselves. For instance, when looking at the award process, task force members and the Dean of Administration discovered that LSC goes out with “stronger” initial offers of financial aid that are, on the average, \$1,500 higher than the JSC package. A related consideration is the question of supplemental offers before the May 1 deposit date; to date Johnson does not make them, while Lyndon does.

Athletics: From the initial press release containing the “Chancellor’s Report and Recommendations on the Unification of Johnson State College and Lyndon State College” (September 26, 2016), there was clarity about athletics: “It is likely there are many intramural and non-varsity collegiate sports at one or the other campuses (snowboarding, ice hockey, rugby, swimming, etc.) that would be enhanced by student participation from both campuses. Further, it is our intention that, under unification, each of the two campuses will continue to operate their own Division III athletics teams without losing their Division III membership. We have received written assurance from the NCAA that with appropriate planning and attention to reasonable requirements, this will not be a problem.” President Collins has been similarly explicit in a variety of settings: that each campus will have its NCAA Division III athletics teams and its own mascot; and that each will compete in the North Atlantic Conference—even against each other. Although most items pertaining to athletics are well along toward resolution—for instance, a common code of conduct, transportation, meal plans, etc.—the biggest outstanding question is defining a student-athlete’s “home campus,” the designation of which is required by the NCAA.

Projection: Moving forward, there are many projects in enrollment management and student services and affairs slated to take place over the next 12 months to ensure a smooth launch for NVU. The Transition Team will review recommendations from the relevant workgroups and advise both campuses on their ongoing efforts to unify systems, policies and procedures.

Important work will continue over summer 2017. A goal will be to align the Student Affairs missions and common values for students at both campuses. In addition, Student Affairs is continuing to work on a common Code of Conduct, which will be a project that goes into next year. Club participation is also an ongoing topic, and the intention is to formalize relationships through the summer. Staffing in residence halls will also receive attention. Many differences exist currently; yet there is agreement on the desirability of a consistent model for each campus.

In general, much progress has already been made and, most importantly, key issues have been identified and questions about them articulated; but resolutions will need to be forthcoming, before NVU gets off to its formal start of operations. Some of the outstanding technical issues revolve around coding. Their resolution will allow the Johnson and Lyndon Admissions teams to continue their work in implementing Slate, our new customer relations management software, and to develop new workflows for NVU. We are also reviewing other shared technology platforms. The upcoming year will be used to evaluate, as well as determine how we can use and afford, them.

Examples of other outstanding questions include: Is System policy under review as it relates to NVU (e.g., current references to LSC and JSC)? Is there an expectation that both campuses will transition to the same student services structure and office titles? Can the campuses successfully move to a common academic calendar? What is the vision for admissions recruitment--campus-specific counselors, shared recruitment territories, or a hybrid solution? Will NVU have a single catalogue? For what purposes (e.g., that of NCAA eligibility) does "home campus" need to be defined, and what is that definition? What activities and programs that are currently college-specific will be available to all NVU students (e.g., National Student Exchange)? What IT solutions would be needed to expand student events to both campuses? What is the full range of transportation options that can take students between campuses? Can we develop a common ID card to smooth access to facilities at both campuses? (For now we will continue to use separate ID systems and cards and will work on an NVU ID for the fall of 2018.) Can we identify and adopt a shared transcript software to track extracurricular activities for students? What are our expectations for developing common forms for shared processes (e.g., scholarships, registration, student appeals)? We expect intensive efforts to resolve these and related questions during the upcoming academic year.

### **Standard 6: Teaching, Learning and Scholarship**

The Transition Team considered Standard 6 at its March 31 and April 14, 2017 meetings. Members concluded that little would change with unification that would affect our compliance. Staffing levels remain for the most part comparable to those detailed in

Johnson's 2016 self-study report and in Lyndon's 2015 fifth-year interim report. Already President Collins and Interim President (and soon-to-be Provost) Atkins have been using the ratio of full-time equivalent students to faculty to determine faculty needs. On that basis Johnson was given the go-ahead to hire five new full-time faculty members for the coming academic year, and Lyndon one. We expect a similar process of determining faculty needs to continue as we move forward--next year and after NVU commences formal operations. Additional needs for faculty may arise, if/as faculty members on both campuses collaborate to design new, innovative programs.

Faculty and staff search processes this past year took into account the eventual transition to Northern Vermont University. During the hiring process, even when positions were advertised and located at Johnson or Lyndon State Colleges, search team members discussed the transition with candidates. Candidates had an opportunity to reflect upon their anticipated role in the new NVU, even though the eventual configuration of duties, including the extent to which they span both campuses, will depend upon the specific position.

Starting July, 2017 a new leadership structure will be in place for student affairs, paralleling the new leadership structure for academic affairs. Jonathan Davis, Dean of Students at Lyndon, will become Dean of Students for both Lyndon and Johnson and, eventually, for Northern Vermont University. Michele Whitmore, during 2016-2017 Interim Dean of Students at Johnson and before then Associate Dean of Students, will serve as Associate Dean of Students for Johnson.

The general air of innovation surrounding unification has also helped to spark change efforts on the individual campuses. At Johnson, for instance, faculty have begun a new lecture series, which has proved very successful. A much-needed release for faculty to supervise undergraduate research has also been added.

Projection: With administrative cost-savings and increases in efficiency from unification, the hope, eventually, is to capitalize upon an improved financial situation to rebuild faculty and staff ranks. More immediately, as noted in the response to the previous standard, NVU leadership and the Transition Team with staff input will need to decide whether both campuses will transition to the same student services structure and office titles.

### **Standard 7: Institutional Resources**

As is the case for other instances of strategic partnership across the country, the creation of Northern Vermont University by unifying Lyndon and Johnson State Colleges is intended to produce operational efficiencies, cost-savings and an improved financial position.

Although predictions have intentionally been kept modest, some cost-savings are said to be imminent. Most immediately, as reported by the Vermont *Digger* (6/23/17), unification will “yield... \$1 million in savings through consolidating administration.” Combined with an additional legislative appropriation of \$880,000 to support unification, and with a base state appropriation for the Vermont State Colleges System increased by \$3 million, the trustees were able to pass a balanced budget for FY18 with no shortfall. This was the first time in several years that the system was able to project a balanced budget. For Johnson and Lyndon, administrative cost-savings and an increased appropriation will significantly reduce though not eliminate the anticipated deficit. From the beginning of the unification discussion, the risk of inaction or, more positively, the beneficial financial impact of unification, was part of Chancellor Spaulding’s thinking: “ If the colleges don’t unify, they will continue to operate in deficit and will be out of reserve money by fiscal 2018, according to Spaulding’s report to the board” (Vermont *Digger*, 9/29/16).

Human Resources: As noted for Standard 6, staffing levels remain for the most part comparable to those detailed in Johnson’s 2016 self-study report and in Lyndon’s 2015 fifth-year interim report. The exception, as discussed previously, is the consolidation of senior administration as of July 2017. A plan to merge library administrations (see below) and an unfilled instructional librarian position provide cost-savings that will allow the restoration of full-time positions to library staff at Johnson’s Willey Library. Their positions had been cut to 0.80 FTE several years ago to avert layoffs. Faculty hiring at both campuses has continued (see response to Standard 6), albeit at modest levels. The activities both of faculty as well as staff are governed and will continue to be governed by readily accessible policies and bargaining unit contracts. Professional development, periodic personnel evaluations, and the adjudication of grievances are among the areas covered by their provisions.

Financial Resources: As of July 2017, long-serving Johnson Dean of Administration Sharron Scott will serve Lyndon in that capacity as well; and a year later, the new NVU. She and others have been hard at work on a multi-year budget (see Appendix) and financial plan for NVU, mindful of the Commission’s articulated concerns in the recent past about the adequacy of financial resources for both institutions.

The budget going forward is based upon several assumptions: a 2.9-3.0% tuition increase; a 1.4% increase in enrollment for next year, 2% the year thereafter, with no change after that; the spike in state appropriations as a one-time increase; and residence hall occupancy tied to enrollment. The budget projects a \$2.1 million combined deficit for this year and \$1.1 million for next year. By 2021 we anticipate a surplus.

Information, Physical, and Technological Resources: Already the two campus libraries share many resources, thus providing access to information and materials for students, faculty and staff, as well as for the general public. Sharing will only increase with unification. Already noted is the co-administration of the two libraries--by Lyndon’s

Library Director Sam Boss, with the retirement of Johnson's long-serving Faculty Librarian, Joseph Farara. Critically important for serving students will be the restoration of full-time positions (from 0.80 FTE) to library staff at Johnson's Willey Library. In addition, the help desk aspect of the learning commons at Lyndon will soon be implemented at Johnson's library as well. Student workers will be trained to offer in-person or over-the-phone assistance for both technological and informational needs.

A search is currently under way for Director of Facilities at Northern Vermont University. His/her basic function would be to plan, implement, evaluate, organize, and direct facilities management activities for both campuses of Northern Vermont University, including the maintenance and operation of all physical assets.

With unification in mind, IT staff members have been meeting for over a year informally, but are now meeting on a more formal basis. This summer all infrastructure work (phone, network, servers unified, help desk, etc.) will begin. A unified phone system will go live this summer, resulting in at least \$36,000 annual savings. Much work will occur behind the scenes (e.g., speed and capacity). A single wireless system came into existence very recently, allowing seamless movement between the two campuses. The new domain name will be [northernvermont.edu](http://northernvermont.edu), which should be available for use as of August 2017. VSC will be the functional name behind it. For one year both [jsc.edu](http://jsc.edu) and [lyndonstate.edu](http://lyndonstate.edu) will remain, after which one will stay. (Educause requires one to take the domain name after a year; so for 18 months, [jsc.edu](http://jsc.edu) will remain and [lyndonstate.edu](http://lyndonstate.edu) will remain in the background as a redirect.)

As many functional workgroups are pursuing assignments across the various standards, the Transition Team/President's Leadership Team is considering a recommendation for project management software as a tool to use in communication with teams and for tracking.

Projection: The strong hope and expectation is to capitalize upon a strengthened financial position, through unification, to rebuild faculty and staff ranks. Indeed, doing so will be especially necessary in light of projected—and much hoped for--enrollment increases in the coming years. Meanwhile, the work of aligning human resources policies will continue to be a priority, as these have developed with some divergences, owing to differing cultural milieus on the two campuses.

The Commission has already requested that Johnson report back on its financial resources by spring 2019. With unification this will become a priority project for the combined campuses. Meanwhile, constant financial monitoring will occur, in light of the road ahead to financial stability. In the coming year we will also need to document the efficiencies to be achieved post-unification, which should enable the same number of people to achieve more. In this, NVU will be helped by steps to consolidate some functions at system level, which frees the member institutions from certain responsibilities. Already the joint work on budgets across the two campuses has uncovered interesting differences: Johnson seems to

have spent more on salaries and benefits, while Lyndon has spent more on other items such as IT and infrastructure. If this pattern is verified, it may surface some salary inequities across the two campuses, which would need to be addressed.

Library and academic administrators along with faculty will continue to explore opportunities to bring electronic information resources together, either for enhanced information access for students and others and/or for the sake of cost-savings. Other opportunities for savings (e.g., shared staff) also need to be discussed in the coming year. The new help desk model at Johnson will need to be evaluated. Finally, there is enthusiasm for the expansion of a full learning commons concept to both campus libraries. If we can figure out a way to provide value to the public and municipalities, funding may prove possible next year through the Northern Borders grant program.

From an IT standpoint, summer 2018 will be the most disruptive period, which will require careful advance communications to those affected on both campuses. That is when we combine domains--one name, one papercut, etc. Everything (computer, server, account) will need to be moved over. Disruptions of service are anticipated; as the process moves forward, each device will be updated on an individual basis—up to 10 minutes for each user/device.

### **Standard 8: Educational Effectiveness**

Lyndon earned kudos from the Commission for “the progress that has been made with respect to the assessment of learning outcomes in the general education unit...”; also for candor, in its fifth-year interim report, in identifying and acknowledging several assessment-related challenges. As for Johnson, though the college has made progress and possesses some rich assessment tools (for instance, in re quantitative reasoning), the 2016 visiting team noted, “JSC still does not have a strong culture of assessment.” In part owing to this finding, Johnson moved forward forcefully on the assessment of student learning and program outcomes, in the months since the team’s November 2016 visit. Those steps, documented in the institution’s response to the team report, are significant, but much work remains. Hence both schools have a great deal to gain from collaboration around assessment.

That collaboration has begun with a shared inventory of current assessment practices at both campuses (see below). As noted in our discussion of Standard 2, “Faculty members have already shared, and have begun discussions of, the protocols each campus uses in its assessment of student learning and program outcomes”:

## **Assessment at Lyndon State College**

**May 2017**

### **1. General Education Program**

Eight outcome categories: Faculty who teach courses that satisfy one of the categories below assess each student in the class using a rubric to determine the extent to which a student has achieved the learning outcome. These data are entered into a database for analysis.

- Students will demonstrate an awareness of fundamental factors influencing human individual and social behaviors.
- Students will practice critical interpretation and analysis of past and present human written expression.
- Students will demonstrate aesthetic appreciation for, understanding of, and/or the creation or performance of original works of art.
- Students will demonstrate basic attitudes and skills that enable them to work productively, profitably, and with sensitivity across a wide range of cultural boundaries.
- Students will identify and analyze change across time, either within their own discipline or across broad human endeavors.
- Students will demonstrate a fundamental awareness of the complexities and interconnectedness of the economic and political realms in which citizens function at both the local and global level.
- Students will apply the concept of sustainability in critically examining social, ethical, environmental, and/or scientific issues related to the use of earth's natural resources.
- Students will practice scientific and empirical reasoning and relate scientific concepts, facts, and theories to problems of wide concern.

INT 2040: The LSC general education program includes a sophomore level seminar course called Critical Thinking and Writing. This course has student learning outcomes as well that are assessed for each student.

### **2. Degree Program Assessment within Academic Departments**

All degree programs at LSC have student learning outcomes. Departments assess these outcomes in courses required for the degree. This assessment is performed annually with each department submitting a report to our Assessment Director (currently a faculty member who receives release time to oversee our assessment work). Many departments close the loop by using the assessment data to make changes and improvements to the degree program and content within individual courses.

### **3. Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process (VSC Policy 101):**

“Faculty involved in delivering VSC academic programs periodically, systematically, and collaboratively review evidence regarding their effectiveness in achieving desired student learning outcomes, and commit to making the changes needed to ensure continuous program improvement.” This is done on a five-year cycle.

#### 4. External Assessment

- a) Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) – Education
- b) Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) – and National Strength and Conditioning Association’s Education Recognition Program (NSCA) recognized - Exercise Science
- c) External Review Boards - Some academic departments have external review boards that are comprised of individuals with expertise within the respective disciplines. These Boards routinely meet with the respective departments to provide input on strategic direction, curriculum, facilities, etc.

#### Johnson State College

#### 2017-2018 Assessment Planning

#### General Education Program and Degree Programs

##### GENERAL EDUCATION

- I. **General Education Program Assessment: Our program consists of two main sections, Foundational Skills and Integrative Perspectives, plus first-year programming that includes the first-year seminar and creative audience. Foundational Skills** includes writing, math, and natural science with a lab. **Integrative Perspectives** consists of four categories: Aesthetic, Social & Historical, Global, and Civic.
  - a. Assessment of the **First-Year Seminar and Foundational Skills** is ongoing in First-Year Seminars (exit surveys); Writing (Writing Proficiency Essay Exam); and Math (Quantitative Reasoning Exam and Rubric). These assessments are conducted every semester during specific points in the relevant course or semester.
    - i. The Foundational writing curriculum and math curriculum have been substantially revised in the last five years to address the data from these assessments.
    - ii. Assessment for the Foundational Skills: Natural Science with Lab is still needed.
  - b. The assessment plan for the **Integrative Perspectives** part of the general education program, which was approved by the Faculty Assembly in May 2016, has been slightly revised and accelerated.
    - i. Indirect assessment is going forward as planned, in the form of focus groups that will complete an exit survey designed by the Program Assessment Task Force (Spring 2017).
    - ii. Direct assessment has been accelerated. AAC&U VALUE rubrics will be used to evaluate a selection 8 courses (2 from each of 4 integrative perspective categories) in May 2017. The Academic Dean's Office is coordinating this work.
  - c. Timeline: Going forward, this process will be repeated (ii) until all 8 learning outcomes have been assessed at least once (over four semesters, Spring 2017-Fall2017-Spring 2018-Fall2019). Immediate data will be shared with faculty. An overall assessment of the data will be reviewed in Spring 2020 to provide an initial overview of the program's strengths and weaknesses.

## DEGREE PROGRAMS

- II. Degree Program Assessment: JSC offers 25 bachelor's programs, and we have focused recent efforts on these degrees. Assessment protocols varied widely among major programs.
  - a. Programs with fully designed and implemented assessments include Art; Education; Math; and Psychology. These are ongoing with regular review and revision of the relevant curriculum
  - b. Programs with no regular and repeatable assessment protocols in place were asked to begin with a backward-design in the form of an instrument that could be immediately used to assess senior /junior level work already in place in the major curriculum, and to develop a timeline for implementing future assessment at the mid- and benchmark levels of their programs. These instruments and plans were completed by March 10 for Anthropology/Sociology, Art, Biology, Business, Communications, Education, English, Environmental Science, Health Science, History, Interdisciplinary Studies, Outdoor Education, Political Science, Professional Studies, Wellness and Alternative Medicine.  
All of these programs will begin their assessment this semester by evaluating a capstone project, or by evaluating selected outcomes for their program in relevant student work products.
  - c. *Programs with assessment plans and instruments still in progress include Creative Writing, Music, and Theatre & Drama.*

*A database to collect assessment data is urgently needed.*

Much of the work assessing what and how students are learning continues, as before, at Lyndon and Johnson and need not be detailed here. The new commitment, articulated early on by President Collins and her Transition Team, is for systematizing assessment strategies across the two campuses. This includes shared learning outcomes and a common assessment for a new general education program. As noted previously, Davis Foundation funding will help support their development. As well, the discussions of curricular redesign, overseen by Provost Atkins and discussed in the response to Standard 4, must necessarily have an assessment component. With any program changes will have to come the re-examination of program learning outcomes as well as of strategies for gauging student progress on them. Initial discussions within the Transition Team also make clear that substantial enthusiasm exists to locate and invest in transcript software that would allow a common method for tracking and recording the co- and extracurricular activities of students.

Projection: 1. The most urgent need is for a database to collect assessment findings. A good first step would be to agree quickly upon a timetable and line of responsibility for accomplishing this. 2. Assessment tools and procedures for a new NVU general education program will be a key priority. Their development--on the heels of articulating a shared set of learning outcomes--should follow the timeline laid out in the successful proposal for Davis Foundation funding (see under "Projection" in the response to Standard 4). 3. The means of tracking, assessing and recording students' co- and extracurricular achievements need to be clarified and resolved. The challenges of data-gathering for this purpose are manageable but will not be minimal. 4. Although Standard 8 focuses primarily on the assessment of student learning, next year is also a good time to take measure of the non-academic support units that contribute importantly to overall student success. Insuring that they, too, provide systematic opportunities for reflection and evaluation should be an important goal in the coming year.

### **Standard 9: Integrity, Transparency, and Public Disclosure**

Both Johnson and Lyndon possess policies and practices that allow them to meet the requirements of Standard 9 with relative ease. The report of the 2016 visiting team noted that, in addition to its adherence to Vermont state policies, "Johnson State College (JSC) has striven to address integrity and behavior on campus through the creation of a range of campus policies and committees..." The report went on to take note of President Collins's efforts at transparency concerning the proposed unification with Lyndon State. Further, the report concluded, "In general, it appears that JSC publicly discloses a complete and accurate picture of the College, its programs, resources, policies and procedures, which is widely available to appropriate internal and external constituents." In its 2015 Fifth-Year Interim Report, Lyndon fully covered the standards on Public Disclosure and Integrity, about which the Commission expressed absolutely no concern. In the Commission's response, the college also earned praise for its candid reflective

essay on retention, assessment, and student success; its inclusion exemplifies the values LSC articulates in its mission and related statements.

Both campuses publish their missions, accreditation information, their college plans, Title IX policies, college catalogs, and course bulletins. Each has and publishes its student handbook, information on academic policies and general institutional policies, as well as a link to the Vermont State Colleges policy manual. Each has an appropriate institutional review board and makes known facilities and services for students with disabilities. Information about tuition and fees as well as a refund policy and net price calculator are all readily available. Data on retention rates as well as on degrees and certificates awarded annually are easily found, as are campus safety policies as well as crime statistics and annual public safety reports. The foregoing is illustrative but far from exhaustive of the kinds of information that are publicly available and readily accessible.

Continued compliance with this important standard should not pose a problem. The challenge, as we move toward unification and post-unification, will be standardizing Lyndon's and Johnson's approaches to integrity, and especially transparency and public disclosure. Understandably, policies and practices have developed over the years at two different institutions with two different campus cultures, though they have been long-time partners in the Vermont State Colleges System. A recent inventory of the two web sites proved revealing. By showing that at present we handle some matters differently, the analysis underlined the need to align and have the same level of information sharing.

Projection: As formal unification approaches, a working group and finally the Leadership Team will need to arrive at decisions as to how much information we want to disclose as member campuses of the new Northern Vermont University. The default in those discussions will be in the direction of greater transparency and public disclosure.

APPENDIX:  
NORTHERN VERMONT UNIVERSITY BUDGET  
FY2018 - FY2021

**Unrestricted Revenues and Expenses**  
**PRELIMINARY FY2018 Budget - FY21**  
**Northern Vermont University**  
**(Amounts rounded to \$1,000)**

	<u>FY2017</u> <u>Projection (Q2)</u>	<u>FY2018</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>FY2019</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>FY2020</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>FY2021</u> <u>Budget</u>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Tuition and Fees	34,225	34,075	35,589	37,389	38,511
State Appropriation	9,830	10,930	11,258	11,596	11,944
Room and Board	10,330	10,588	11,058	11,618	11,966
Sales and Services	1,339	1,334	1,361	1,388	1,416
Gifts	463	363	417	480	552
Other Revenue	<u>584</u>	<u>322</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>355</u>	<u>373</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>56,771</b>	<b>57,612</b>	<b>60,021</b>	<b>62,826</b>	<b>64,761</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Salaries and Benefits	34,349	34,591	35,542	36,520	37,524
Services, Supplies and Travel	10,738	11,353	11,694	12,044	12,406
Scholarships and Fellowships	5,094	5,375	5,670	5,983	6,312
Utilities	2,508	2,798	3,078	3,386	3,724
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Service	3,060	2,393	2,376	2,357	1,997
Chancellor's Office	2,840	2,960	3,049	3,140	3,234
Other Transfers	<u>289</u>	<u>(400)</u>	<u>(412)</u>	<u>(424)</u>	<u>(437)</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>58,878</b>	<b>59,070</b>	<b>60,997</b>	<b>63,005</b>	<b>64,761</b>
<b>NET REVENUES/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b><u>(2,107)</u></b>	<b><u>(1,458)</u></b>	<b><u>(976)</u></b>	<b><u>(180)</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>

**Unrestricted Revenues and Expenses**  
**PRELIMINARY FY2018 Budget**  
**Johnson State College**  
**(Amounts rounded to \$1,000)**

	<u>FY2017</u> <u>Projection</u>	<u>FY2018</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Variance</u>
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Tuition and Fees	17,503	17,907	404
State Appropriation	4,915	5,465	550
Room and Board	4,917	4,996	79
Sales and Services	449	496	47
Gifts	263	224	(39)
Other Revenue	<u>294</u>	<u>178</u>	<u>(116)</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	28,341	29,266	925
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	17,658	18,007	349
Services, Supplies and Travel	4,843	4,999	156
Scholarships and Fellowships	2,828	2,969	141
Utilities	1,358	1,473	115
Other Expenses	-	-	-
Debt Service	1,329	1,059	(270)
Chancellor's Office	1,420	1,480	60
Other Transfers	<u>65</u>	<u>(7)</u>	<u>(72)</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	29,501	29,980	479
<b>NET REVENUES/(DEFICIT)</b>	<u><u>(1,160)</u></u>	<u><u>(714)</u></u>	<u><u>446</u></u>
<b>ONE-TIME FUNDS</b>			
Carry-forward	-	-	-
Strategic Reserve	272	272	-
All Other	<u>888</u>	<u>442</u>	<u>(446)</u>
<b>TOTAL ONE-TIME FUNDS</b>	1,160	714	(446)
<b>TOTAL OPERATING RESULT</b>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>
(must sum to zero; postive net revenue must be absorbed by one or more one-time fund lines)			

**Unrestricted Revenues and Expenses**  
**PRELIMINARY FY2018 Budget**  
**Lyndon State College**  
**(Amounts rounded to \$1,000)**

	<u>FY2017</u> <u>Projection</u>	<u>FY2018</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Variance</u>
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Tuition and Fees	16,722	16,168	(554)
State Appropriation	4,915	5,465	550
Room and Board	5,413	5,592	179
Sales and Services	890	838	(52)
Gifts	200	139	(61)
Other Revenue	<u>290</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>(146)</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	28,430	28,346	(84)
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	16,691	16,584	(107)
Services, Supplies and Travel	5,895	6,354	459
Scholarships and Fellowships	2,266	2,406	140
Utilities	1,150	1,325	175
Other Expenses	-	-	-
Debt Service	1,731	1,334	(397)
Chancellor's Office	1,420	1,480	60
Other Transfers	<u>224</u>	<u>(393)</u>	<u>(617)</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	29,377	29,090	(287)
<b>NET REVENUES/(DEFICIT)</b>	<u>(947)</u>	<u>(744)</u>	<u>203</u>
<b>ONE-TIME FUNDS</b>			
Carry-forward	-	-	-
Strategic Reserve	947	448	(499)
All Other	<u>-</u>	<u>295</u>	<u>295</u>
<b>TOTAL ONE-TIME FUNDS</b>	947	743	(204)
<b>TOTAL OPERATING RESULT</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>(0)</u>	<u>(0)</u>
(must sum to zero; postive net revenue must be absorbed by one or more one-time fund lines)			