



April 16, 2024

Ms. Joyce M. Judy  
President  
Community College of Vermont  
PO Box 489  
Montpelier, VT 05601-0489

Dear President Judy:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on March 1, 2024, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the report submitted by Community College of Vermont regarding its plan to relocate its St. Johnsbury academic center as well as the report about its prison education program and the report of the evaluator and took the following action:

that the report regarding the College's plan to move its St. Johnsbury, Vermont academic center to from 1197 Main Street to 1302 Main Street be accepted and the new location be encompassed within the institution's accreditation;

that the report regarding the College's prison education program be accepted and inclusion within the institution's accreditation of the instructional locations at the six Vermont correctional facilities at which the program operates be confirmed;

that the interim report scheduled for consideration in Spring 2027 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the information included in all interim reports and the matters specified in our letter of January 31, 2023, the Spring 2027 interim report provide an update on the College's continued success in:

- 1) relocating to the new St. Johnsbury academic center site;
- 2) implementing its prison education program, including an update on the College's progress to secure approval from the U.S. Department of Education as a Pell-eligible Prison Education Program.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The Commission accepted the report submitted by Community College of Vermont and encompassed the 1302 Main Street location of the St. Johnsbury academic center within the College's accreditation because the

report provided evidence that in its new location, the St. Johnsbury academic center would continue to be operated in a manner consistent with Commission standards and policies.

The Commission is gratified to learn that the relocation of the St. Johnsbury academic center to “renovated and extended” ADA-compliant space within the Fairbanks Museum building creates a partnership of “two well-respected educational institutions” and will enable students to “benefit from the vibrancy of educational activities that attract over 15,000 visitors per year.” We note with favor that the new location, which is “literally down the street” from the current location, remains “conveniently accessible” to students and will incorporate both classrooms and a STEM laboratory. The relocation will also result in a significant reduction in expenses – a 62% reduction in lease costs and the elimination of electricity and heating costs which are included in the new lease.

The Commission accepted the report submitted by CCV regarding its prison education program and confirmed inclusion within the College’s accreditation of the instructional locations at the six Vermont correctional facilities at which the program operates because the report was responsive to the concerns raised in our letter of October 12, 2022 and provided evidence that the institution is implementing its prison education program in a manner consistent with Commission standards and policies.

The Commission joins the evaluator in congratulating Community College of Vermont on the successful implementation of its “robust” prison education program. We concur that the program is supported by “qualified and enthusiastic” faculty and staff and are gratified to learn that the Vermont Department of Corrections (VDOC) is “fully supportive” of the program. We note with favor the steps taken by the College to enhance the effectiveness of the program, including hiring a program director as well as a part-time program specialist, a formerly incarcerated individual who will advise CCV on how best to engage students during incarceration and during their transition out of the facilities; coordinating with VDOC and other agencies to create a secure wireless network in the six correctional facilities; and publishing a Corrections Education Program Handbook. The students interviewed by the evaluator spoke “passionately and articulately” about the program and its impact on their lives, and the faculty teaching in the program provided assurance that the courses taught in the correctional facilities are “equal” to those taught outside and that CCV had prepared them to be successful with the “unique population” of students served by the program.

Commission policy requires an interim fifth-year report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution’s current status in keeping with the policy on Periodic Review. In addition to the information included in all interim reports and the items specified for attention in the Commission’s letter of January 31, 2023, we look forward, in Spring 2027, to receiving an update on the College’s relocation of the St. Johnsbury academic center, as evidence of the institution’s “demonstrable record of success in implementing the results of its planning” (2.5).

We also look forward, in Spring 2027, to learning of Community College of Vermont’s continued success with its prison education program. We understand that CCV is submitting an application to the U.S. Department of Education for its program, which to date has been funded through a \$4.5 million Congressionally Directed Spending Request, to become a Pell-eligible Prison Education program. In keeping with our standard on *Planning and Evaluation* (cited above), we welcome an update about this matter in the Spring 2027 interim report.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by Community College of Vermont and hopes its preparation contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education.

Ms. Joyce M. Judy  
April 16, 2024  
Page 3

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board and the head of the system of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Lynn Dickinson and Elizabeth Mauch. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Lawrence M. Schall, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russell Carey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Russell Carey

RC/sjp

cc: Lynn Dickinson  
Elizabeth Mauch

Enclosure: Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions