



**HAMP SHIRE COLLEGE**  
Amherst, Massachusetts

## **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FAQ**

### **What process led to the decision to find a potential long-term strategic partner for Hampshire?**

Since her appointment last summer, President Miriam Nelson and Hampshire’s Board of Trustees have been exploring ways to bring about a thriving future for Hampshire, both as we approach and then look beyond our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. During staff-faculty assemblies convened in the fall semester, communications to students, and outreach to alums, President Nelson described the importance of “evolving education” at the College, envisioning our future based on our values, greatest strengths, and highest potential.

Throughout these conversations, we’ve been guided by these core principles:

- Preserve our reputation and what is best about Hampshire
- Advance our educational model
- Keep the interests of students, staff, and faculty at the forefront
- Recognize the potential for long-term positive impact
- Have the fortitude to make difficult decisions
- Keep the interests of the greater community in our planning, including the Town of Amherst and the rest of the Pioneer Valley

President Nelson has conferred with higher education and industry leaders about various approaches. It has become increasingly clear that a long-term partnership is the most compelling and viable strategic option for Hampshire. One of the great advantages we have, and the reason we’re seeking a partnership now, is *time*. We have the time to imagine what Hampshire’s future can look like, and bring it about.

### **How is today different from other times that Hampshire has had financial hardships?**

Small colleges face stiff headwinds today, and the pressures on campuses with limited endowments are enormous. There is intense competition from peers around financial aid awards, as well as demographic trends showing steep declines in the college-age population. We must be proactive and deliberate about securing Hampshire’s future.

### **Will Hampshire close?**

Hampshire will not close.

### **Will Hampshire be able to keep its distinctive educational model?**

Hampshire’s inquiry based, interdisciplinary, “graduate school model of undergraduate education” is our greatest strength and differentiator in the higher education marketplace. We’ve always believed it’s the most potent approach to learning. Now more than ever, our track record fostering problem-solving skills and imagination in young people—a product of our distinctive curriculum—is sorely needed in the world. We want to continue to advance the College’s singular educational model while making it more accessible to a broader range of students.

**Why are we considering not admitting a class in fall 2019?**

As we look out to the years ahead, we can't be certain that we could guarantee an incoming class the same educational experience we offer today through all four years. We'll make a final decision by the February 1 admissions notification date.

**How will a partnership affect faculty and staff employment?**

It's possible that a new partnership and changes in enrollment will affect our current staffing model. But it's too early for us to determine that. We understand how unsettling this can be. It's our intention to keep staff and faculty continually updated as the process unfolds. We care deeply for all our employees and are committed to a process where all decisions are predicated on respect, dignity, and appreciation for people's wellbeing.

**Are there support services available to help process this news?**

*For Employees:* We encourage employees to utilize the employee assistance program. This confidential, free service is available to all employees around-the-clock, and provides access to counseling, health, and wellness resources, as well as financial consultation and referrals. Call toll-free at 800.828.6025.

*For Students:* Students are encouraged to work with mentors and advisors and, as needed, to share their concerns and seek guidance about additional resources. We'll work with students to support and guide their academic paths and outcomes.

**What do you anticipate for the timeline?**

Ideally we'll identify a long-term strategic partner by the end of this semester. That will allow us to have a full year to work with our community and prospective partner on a transition plan. We would progress into the "new Hampshire College entity" in July 2020, following our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

**What does this mean for Hampshire's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in June 2020?**

This announcement is being made in the context of Hampshire's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2020. This is a huge milestone for the College—a time to celebrate our history as we embark on our next 50 years. Plans are under way to develop intellectual, cultural, artistic, truly *Hampshire* events and programming for the occasion.

January 15, 2019