

Educational Excellence Committee

October 22, 2026 | 8:30-10:30 AM

UNH Memorial Union Building

Strafford Room

Durham NH

Meeting Book - 2026 October 22 Educational Excellence Committee

AGENDA - October 22, 2026 | 8:30-10:30

Zoom: https://zoom.us/j/91271423234?pwd=rqwEsGoUB6oj3K6JRlwaHWpkmUbuyQ.1 --- Meeting ID: 912 7142 3234 --- Passcode: 133786

WiFi Network: UNH-Events / Password: Welcome2UNH!

Committee Membership: Patrick Griffin, chair, Maureen Beauregard, vice chair, Matthew Ash, Ludmilla Cejka, Caitlin Davis, Shawn Jasper, Tessa Lancaster, Jennifer Higgins Pitre, Wayne Semprini, Christiana Thornton, David Westover

USSB Reps: Aidan Bearor, Evan Christiansen, Rosella Rentas-Ubeda, Jozuwe Tunguru

I. Call to Order | 5 min (8:30-8:35)
Chair Griffin

- A. Quorum Sufficient to Conduct Business
- B. Top Jobs and Program Demand

II. Consent Agenda | 5 min (8:35-8:40)
Chair Griffin

MOVED, that the consent agenda be approved.

- A. Action - Approval of Minutes
- B. Information - Academic Program Changes

III. Discussion

- A. University System Student Board (USSB) | 20 min (8:40-9:00)
  USSB
- B. Enrollment Update | 30 min (9:00-9:30)
  Kim DeRego
- C. UNH Dashboard & Academic Portfolio Review | 50 min (9:30-10:20)
  Provost Riley

IV. Other Business | 10 min (10:20-10:30)

V. Adjourn

Top Occupational Demand in NH

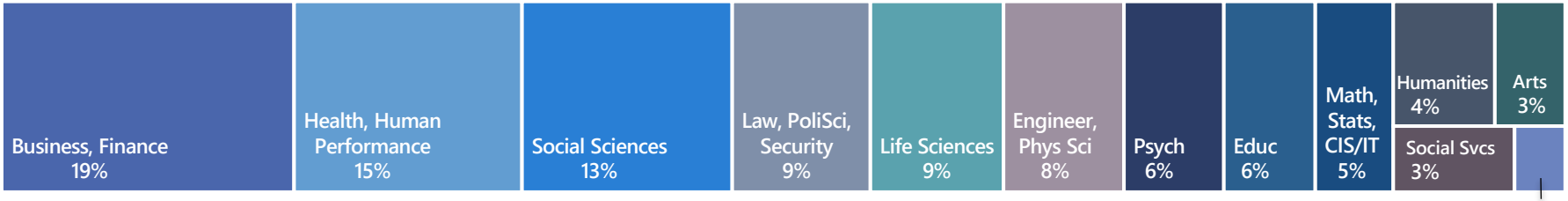
"Very Favorable Outlook" with highest average annual openings requiring postsecondary degree, projected 2024 to 2034

DOCTORATE	MASTER'S	BACHELOR'S	ASSOCIATE
Clinical/Counseling Psychologist	Education Administrator K-12	Accountant/Auditor	Architectural Drafter
Lawyer	Counselor-Guidance/Career	Buyer/Purchasing Agent	Dental Hygienist
Pharmacist	Counselor-Subst Abuse/Ment Health	Financial Manager	Engineering Technician
Physical Therapist	Librarian/Media Collection Specialist	General/Operations Mgr	Medical Equip Repairer
Physician	Nurse Practitioner	HR Specialist	Physical Therapy Asst
Teacher-Health Specialties Postsec	Occupational Therapist	Management Analyst	Radiologic Technician
	Physician Assistant	Marketing/Research Analyst	Registered Nurse
	Speech-Language Pathologist	Project Mgmt Specialist	Respiratory Therapist
	Social Worker-Health Care	Software Developer	Teacher-Preschool
	Social Wkr-Subst Abuse/Ment Health	Teacher-Elem/Mid/Sec	Veterinary Technician

Occupations listed in alphabetical order.
Shading indicates alignment with USNH related programming.

Top Program Demand at USNH

Discipline share of total program completions, academic year 2024-25, N=6,680



Projected job openings, outlook, and minimum education requirement data from NH Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau. "Very favorable outlook" describes a combined growth rate of at least 5.6% and at least 23 annual job openings. These occupations are expected to provide the best employment opportunities through 2034. Average annual openings include exits and transfers. Academic program completions from U.S. Dept. of Education, IPEDS, provisional data.

University System of New Hampshire

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
JUNE 25, 2026

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DURHAM, NH

MEETING MINUTES
Draft for Approval

Attendance

Committee members present: Patrick Griffin, chair; Wayne Semprini, vice chair; Matthew Ash; Ludmilla Cejka; Jennifer Higgins Pitre; Christiana Thornton; David Westover

Other trustees present: Kassandra Ardinger; Maureen Beauregard; Donald Birx; James Burnett, III; Elizabeth Chilton; Brendan Finn; James Gray, designee for the president of the NH Senate; George Hansel (remote); Kevin Knarr (remote); Brian McCabe; Joel Nkounkou; Peter Paul; Michael Pilot; Catherine Provencher

Other participants: Jess Bacon, Nathaniel Bowditch; Kirsten Corazzini, Marguerite Corvini, Kimberly DeRego, Jennifer Frye, Anne Meginnis, Keri Miloro, Gabby Petruccelli, Jeanette Riley, Kirsti Sandy

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Call to Order

Committee Chair Griffin called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and identified changes to the order of agenda items due to the delayed start.

Rural Health Transformation Program

Kirsten Corazzini, dean of the UNH College of Health and Human Services, presented information about the state's Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program that seeks to expand access to affordable and innovative health care in rural areas across the state. The program is supported by an award of $200 million per year for five years from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), with program oversight conducted by GO-NORTH, an independent unit authorized for the purpose by the Governor's Office. Dean Corazzini described USNH's role, in partnership with CCSNH and other organizations, in building NH's health care workforce pipeline by creating a both fixed and mobile clinical education simulation network, participating in the Governor's Health Scholars Award Program, and creating education-to-career pathways that align curricula with rural workforce needs. In March 2026, the NH Executive Council approved the first cycle of $15.6 million RHT funds to UNH on behalf of USNH, with potential allocation of $97 million over the five years.

UNH faculty joining Dean Corazzini to present clinical simulation demonstrations were Marguerite Corvini (nursing, director of SIM core), Keri Miloro (speech-language pathology), Anne Meginnis (nursing), Jess Bacon (nursing), Gabby Petruccelli (occupational therapy), and Jennifer Frye (recreational therapy, director of clinical placements).

Consent Agenda

Approval of the consent agenda containing the following items was duly moved, seconded, and approved.

Approved action:

- Minutes March 19, 2026

- Promotion & Tenure Awards

University of New Hampshire

Promotion: Professor

Orly Buchbinder
Karen Collins
Sherine Elsawa
Jeffrey Garnas
Jessica Lepler
Mark Lyon
Mihail Miletkov
Weiwei Mo
Wendy Pothier
Samantha Seal

Award of Tenure

Sophia Min
Adam Wymore

Promotion: Associate Professor with Tenure

Marcy Ainslie
Thomas Alsip
Mike Alvarez
Analena Bruce
Aleksey Charapkov
Cain Edie-Michell
Pei Geng
Crystal Hendricks
Trish Kelshaw
Amy Kotsonis
Karolina Kwasek
Linqing Li
Tracy Mandel
Amy Michael
Bridget Nolan
Nate Oldenhuis
Justin Pomerance
Jen Spindel
Jill Thorson
Nikhil Tomar
Jing Wang
Easton White
Ermira Zifla

Keene State College

Promotion: Professor

Harlan Fichtenholtz
Ashley Greene
Cynthia McLaughlin

Award of Tenure

Lito Amit
Paul Fowler

Plymouth State University

Promotion: Professor

Elisabeth Johnston
Mike Son

Promotion: Associate Professor with Tenure

Sara Scribner
Melissa Paiva-Salisbury
Alison Mitchell
Vincent Nocera

- Appointment: Professor with Tenure

University of New Hampshire

Christopher Parrish
Alexei Tulin

Information:

- Campus Behavioral Health Update
- Annual Academic Reports
  - Academic Plan and Program Review
  - Academic Quality Metrics
- Academic Program Changes

University System Student Board (USSB)

Student trustees and USSB representatives reported on the second USSB-led forum that brought student leaders together to collaborate on shared issues systemwide and to test a repeatable feedback model for providing student insights to the Board of Trustees, a noted key role of the USSB. Building on the first forum outcomes that prioritized student communications, the second forum delved further into the topic, finding high satisfaction in the volume and accuracy of information received, but with a desire for more proactive outreach and deeper rationale for decisions being made. Actions to address the identified gaps were proposed. Chair Griffin thanked the students for their contributions, congratulated the newly graduated students, and welcomed incoming USSB representatives.

Enrollment Management Strategy

At the chair's request due to time constraints, Kim DeRego, vice provost for UNH enrollment management, focused attention on the institutions' anti-melt strategies that included direct parent engagement; individualized, multi-modal communications and outreach; sustained campus events spanning the summer; application process

milestone monitoring and high-risk melt interventions; and structured coordination, with formal anti-melt committees at UNH and PSU and campuswide assignments involving numerous functional areas at KSC.

UNH Online

Provost Riley provided an overview of plans to restructure UNH online program delivery, noting that the merger with Granite State College in 2023 did not operationally consolidate online programming offered across the university. The new UNH Online model is designed to unify undergraduate online program delivery; integrate online delivery for the Graduate School and School of Law, with active oversight of graduate program development by the relevant UNH colleges; centralize instructional design and faculty development; serve as a shared services hub for online program recruitment, marketing, and student support; and eventually expand support to KSC and PSU. In response to a question about cost-benefit analysis, President Chilton stated that information from UCEA's recent assessment of UNH's online structure, along with estimated cost reductions and projected impact on enrollment, would be provided to trustees.

Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Educational Excellence Committee

Information

October 22, 2026

Keene State College

To: Educational Excellence Committee

Re: Academic Program Changes

Supporting Materials

The attached information identifies major and ancillary program changes and administrative holds under consideration, including the degree program change below.

KSC Addition: 96-credit Applied Bachelor's in Health Sciences

Summary / Rationale for Submission

This information is presented to the Educational Excellence Committee pursuant to USNH Board of Trustees Academic Program Planning and Review policy, BOT.II.G.4:

> "Prior to taking action, a President shall inform the Educational Excellence Committee of his or her plans to add or delete degree programs (i.e., degrees and majors)."

Approved by: President Birx

Submitted by: USNH System Office

Keene State College
229 Main Street
Keene, NH 03435
(603) 358-1909
keene.edu

DT: October 7, 2026

TO: Patrick W. Griffin, Chair
Educational Excellence Committee
USNH Board of Trustees

FR: Kirsti Sandy
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Keene State College Academic Program Changes

The following academic program changes are being implemented during the 26-27 Academic Year. Programs that have been place on "Administrative Hold" are not currently accepting new Majors or Minors.

Administrative Hold	Minor	Campaigns and Elections
Administrative Hold	Minor	Early Childhood Education
Administrative Hold	Minor	Geography
Administrative Hold	Minor	Human Resource Management
Administrative Hold	Minor	Medieval Early Modern Studies
Administrative Hold	Minor	Political Science
Administrative Hold	Graduate Program	Holocaust and Genocide Studies

KSC is completing its curriculum review process for the following proposed academic program additions:

Adding	Minor	Accounting
Adding	Minor	Health Sciences
Adding	Minor	Musical Theatre
Adding	96-credit Applied Bachelor's (AB)	Health Sciences

Approved by:

Donald L. Birx, Interim President, Keene State College

Keene STATE COLLEGE

Plymouth State UNIVERSITY

University of New Hampshire

University System of New Hampshire

Supporting Student Retention Across USNH

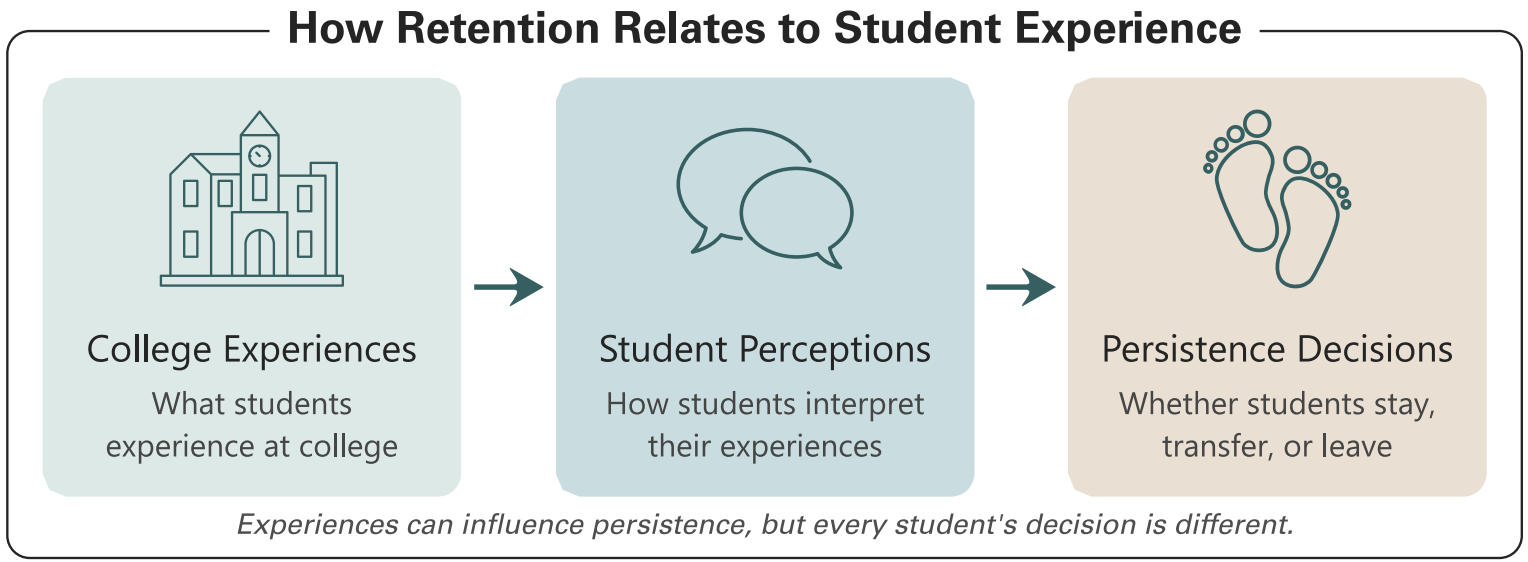
University System Student Board (USSB)

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Retention Reflects the Student Experience

Student persistence is shaped in part by how students experience and interpret their time at college.

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Simplified visual summary of Tinto (2025).

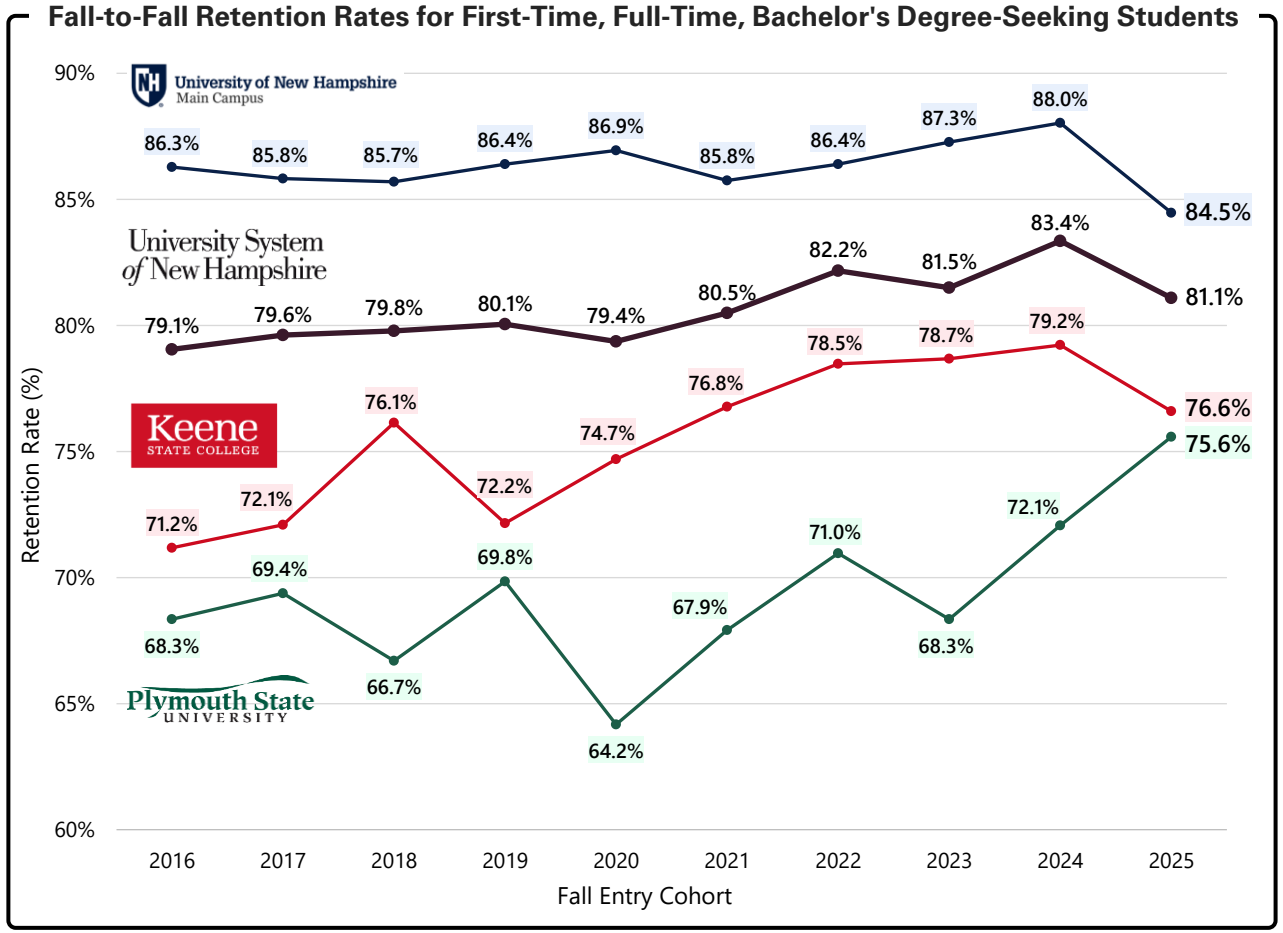
Why Student Experience Matters

- Students' experiences and perceptions are relevant to their decisions about continuing their education (Tinto, 2025).
- Retention data shows what happens, but do not by themselves explain why students stay or leave.
- Understanding students' experiences is an important starting point for identifying opportunities to improve persistence.

Source: Tinto, V. (2025). "Student Persistence Through a Different Lens." *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*. https://doi.org/10.1177/15210251241249158

Understanding Retention Across USNH

- **Systemwide retention has generally improved.** Retention increased from 79.1% for the 2016 entry cohort to 81.1% for the 2025 entry cohort, although the rate declined from 83.3% for the 2024 cohort.
- **Retention varies across institutions.** UNH Main Campus has consistently recorded the highest rates (peaking at 88.0% for the 2024 cohort and standing at 84.5% for the 2025 cohort), while Plymouth State and Keene State have shown notable long-term recovery and improvement over the period.
- **Retention remains an opportunity for improvement.** Approximately 19% of students in the 2025 systemwide entry cohort did not return to their original institution the following fall.



Calculation Note: USNH overall retention is calculated by aggregating initial cohort sizes and retained second-fall counts from UNH Main Campus, Plymouth State University (PSU), and Keene State College (KSC), with the aggregate rate derived from these combined totals.
Exclusions: UNH Manchester and UNH CPS Online are excluded due to small cohort sizes (2025 initial cohorts: Manchester $n = 131$; CPS Online $n = 77$).
Sources: UNH Retention and Graduation Rate Dashboard; KSC Retention Rates for First-Time, First-Year Students Dashboard; PSU Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Dashboard.

Our Approach to Supporting Student Retention

Combining data, student perspectives, and professional expertise to identify informed opportunities for action

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University System of New Hampshire



1. Establish the Evidence

Review retention trends and relevant institutional data.



2A. Hear from Students

Explore surveys, forums, and other ways for students to share their experiences and concerns.



2B. Consult Professionals

Engage relevant offices, officials, and advisors to understand data, context, and existing efforts.



3. Identify & Refine Opportunities

Use findings and feedback to evaluate potential improvements and develop informed recommendations and actions.

POTENTIAL AREA FOR INVESTIGATION

Student Housing & Infrastructure

Could the quality and condition of campus environments be affecting students' experiences and decisions to remain enrolled?

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Why investigate this?

Students' anecdotal concerns raise questions about the condition and quality of campus facilities. Research suggests that physical campus environments are associated with student satisfaction and retention outcomes.

Questions to explore

- How do students perceive the condition, cleanliness, maintenance, safety, and functionality of residence halls and other campus facilities?
- Which concerns appear most significant to students' daily experiences?
- What evidence, if any, link these conditions to students' decisions to remain enrolled?

Relevant USNH Enterprise Risks

Facilities & Infrastructure | **Student Life & Wellbeing** | **Enrollment & Retention**

USNH, Enterprise Risk Management Annual Report to the Board of Trustees' Audit Committee, GY2027 (May 2026).

What Research Suggests

Residential conditions & persistance

A multi-institutional study examined how campus housing conditions relate to student engagement and persistence across 76 U.S. residential institutions.

Gonyea et al. (2021)

Residence-hall experience matters

Research has examined links between residence-hall characteristics, students' sense of community, college satisfaction, and intent to persist.

Bronkema & Bowman (2017)

Maintenance affects learning experiences

3 in 10

U.S. undergraduates surveyed said poor maintenance, cleaning, or general building conditions had affected their ability to focus and learn at least somewhat.

Ezarik (2022)

These findings support further investigation; they do not establish that poor facility conditions cause students to leave college.

Sources: Graham et al. (2021), *The Case for Campus Housing*, https://www.acuho-i.org/resources/research/case-for-campus-housing/; Bronkema & Bowman (2017), *J. College Student Development, 58*(4), 624–630, https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2017.0047; Ezarik (2022), "Campus Spaces Lay the Foundation for Students' Success—or Struggle," *Inside Higher Ed*, https://insidehighered.com/news/students/free-speech/2022/11/21/survey-campus-facilities-impact-student-success.

POTENTIAL AREA FOR INVESTIGATION

Cross-Campus Opportunities

Could broader access to academic, research, and professional opportunities strengthen students' reasons to remain enrolled at USNH?

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University System of New Hampshire

Why investigate this?

USNH's three institutions offer distinct academic programs, expertise, and student experiences. Better access to opportunities across institutions may help students pursue interests and career goals that are not fully met by their home campus.

Questions to explore

- What academic, research, internship, and professional opportunities are available across USNH?
- What barriers limit students' awareness of or access to opportunities at other institutions?
- Could improved access, coordination, or flexibility help students achieve their goals and support persistence?

Relevant USNH Enterprise Risks

Shared Services | **Enrollment & Retention**

USNH, Enterprise Risk Management Annual Report to the Board of Trustees' Audit Committee, GY2027 (May 2026).

What Research Suggests

Academic Autonomy & Persistence

Autonomy-supportive environments may strengthen motivation and academic adjustment, factors associated with students' intentions to remain enrolled.

Girelli et al. (2018)

Undergraduate Research & Persistence

Research participants were more likely to persist and graduate within six years than nonparticipants in the study

Bhattacharyya & Chan (2021)

Professional Development & Retention

Internships, faculty mentoring, and career-development activities were associated with improved retention and graduation among engineering and computing students.

Robinson et al. (2020)

These findings support exploring opportunities for growth; they do not establish that expanded cross-campus access would increase retention at USNH.

Sources: Girelli et al. (2018), "Autonomy Supportive Contexts, Autonomous Motivation, and Self-Efficacy Predict Academic Adjustment of First-Year University Students," *Frontiers in Education, 3*, 95, https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2018.00095; Bhattacharyya & Chan (2021), *J. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 21*(1), https://doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v21i1.30462; Robinson et al. (2020), "Activities Used in Improving College Retention and Graduation," *J. Education, Society and Behavioural Science, 33*(11), 63–77, https://doi.org/10.9734/jesbs/2020/v33i1130273.

Next Steps

Moving from preliminary areas of interest toward evidence-informed recommendations to support student retention across USNH.

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University System of New Hampshire



1. Gather Institutional Data

Work with Institutional Research and relevant offices to identify existing data, retention trends, and information related to our focus areas.



2. Consult Campus Partners

Coordinate with the Student Affairs Executive Council (SAEC), institutional leadership, and relevant campus offices to understand existing efforts and opportunities.



3. Gather Student Perspectives

Explore appropriate ways to hear from students across UNH, Plymouth State, and Keene State through surveys, forums, or other feedback opportunities.



4. Develop Recommendations

Combine institutional evidence, professional expertise, and student perspectives to refine priorities and identify actionable opportunities for improvement.



Objective

Develop a clearer understanding of student experiences and identify evidence-informed opportunities to support retention across USNH.

Keene STATE COLLEGE

Plymouth State UNIVERSITY

University of New Hampshire

University System of New Hampshire

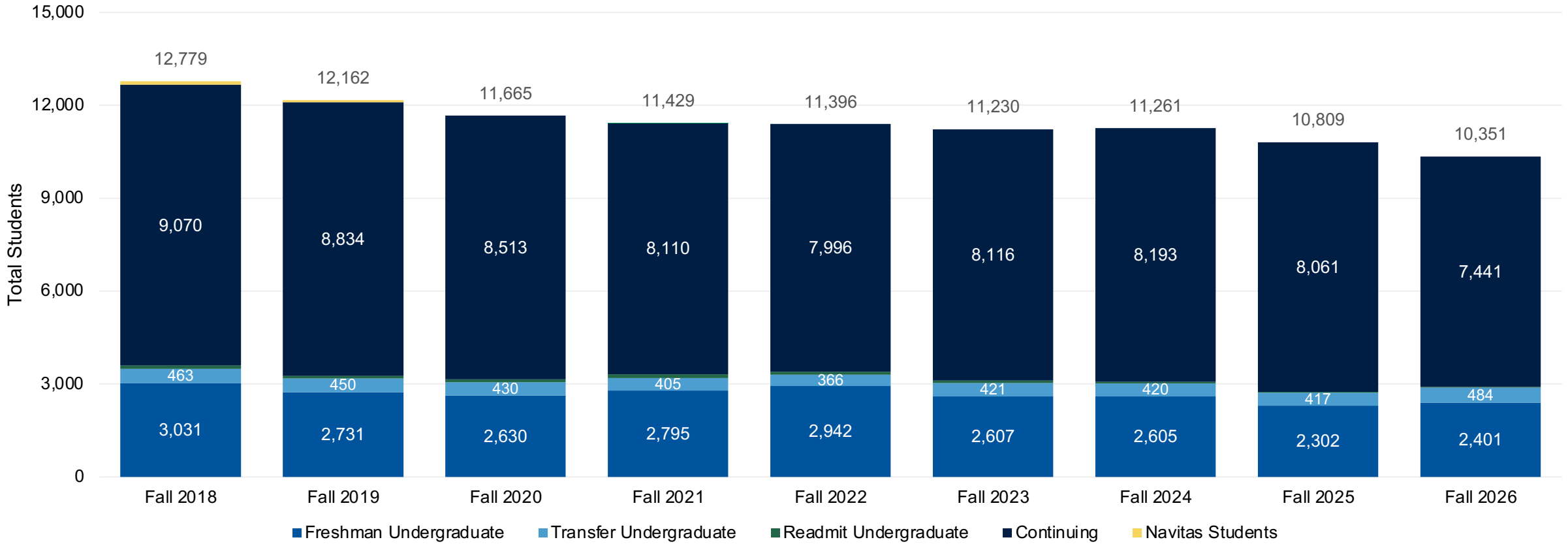
USNH Enrollment Management Update
Board of Trustees Meeting
Educational Excellence Committee

October 2026

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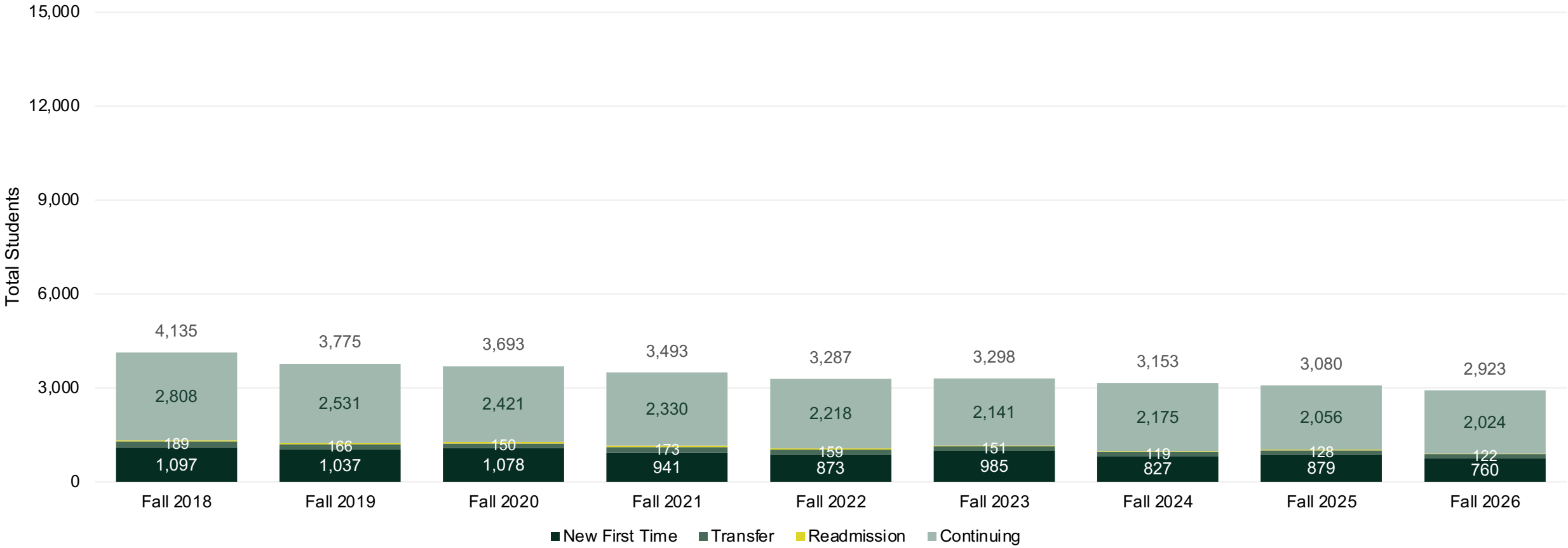
Census numbers: UNH-Durham Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate first-year enrollment increased 4.3% (+99 students), while transfer enrollment rose 16.1% (+67 students). This growth is accompanied by the strongest academic profile of any incoming class in university history. However, UNH's undergrad enrollment is lower than last year due to decreased retention and a large class graduating.



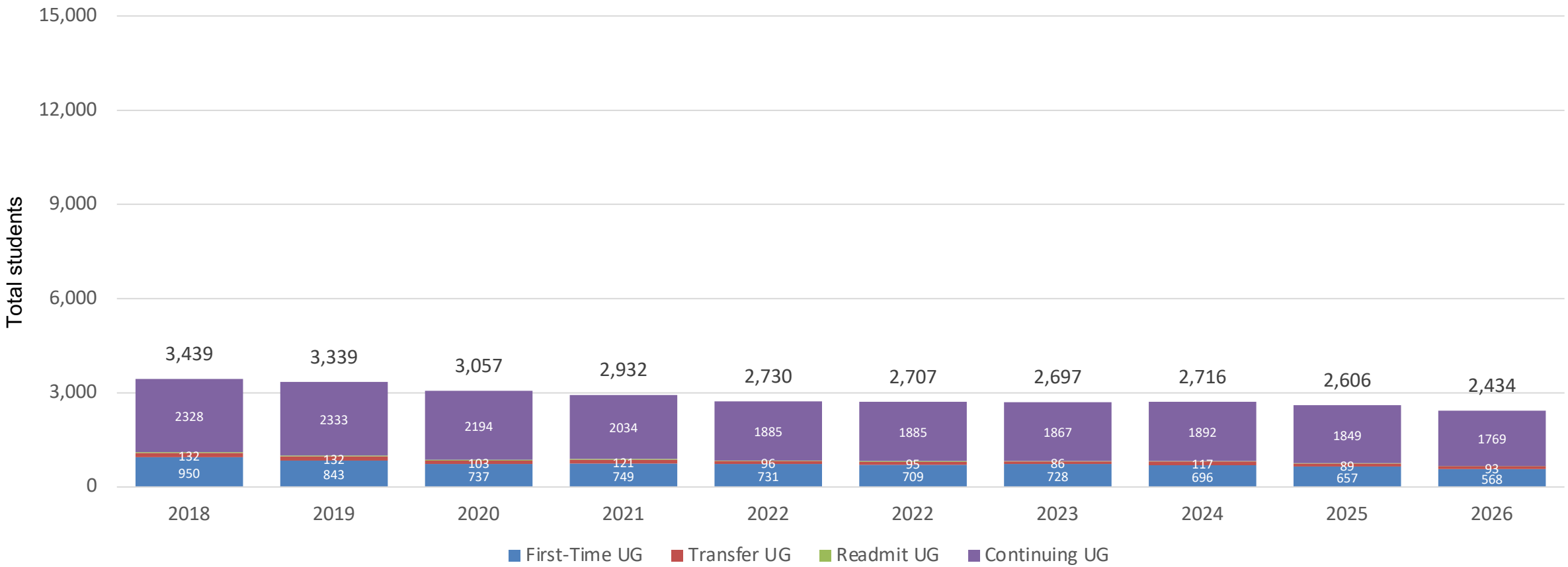
PSU Undergraduate Students

While PSU's first-year enrollment declined 13.5% (-119 students), retention has improved – the Fall 2025 cohort achieving a combined retention rate of 75% for first-year and transfer students, the second-highest rate in the past 10 years and a 3.5% improvement over last year.



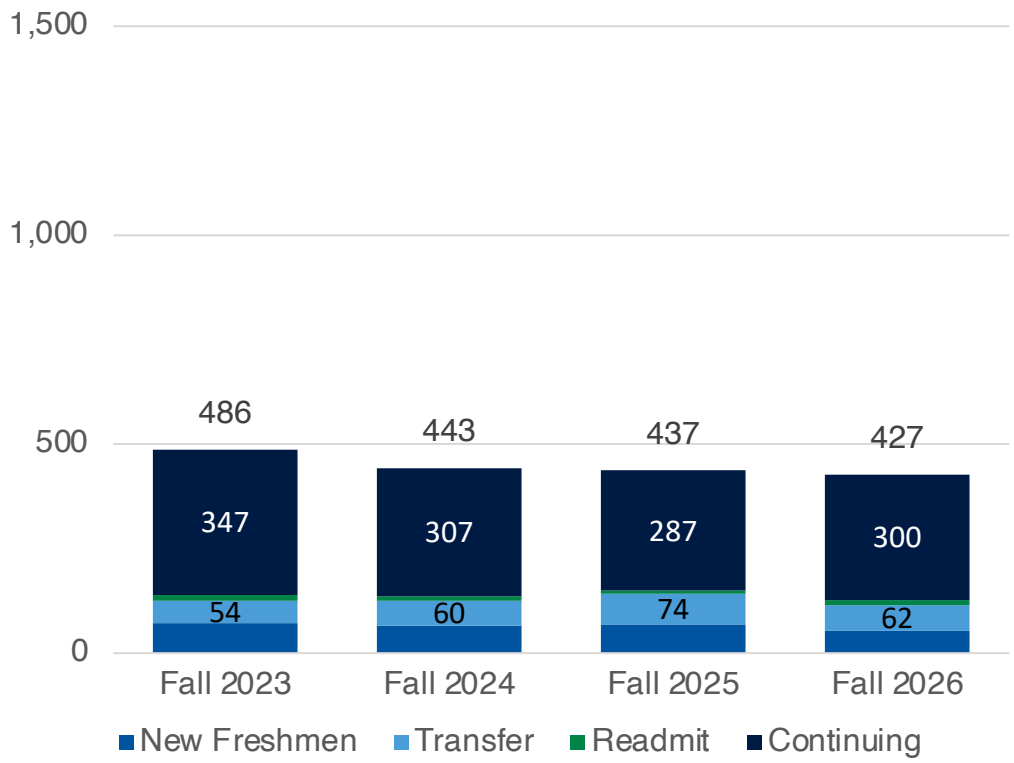
KSC Undergraduate Students

KSC improved its yield of admitted students, but saw a 13.5% (-93) decline in the number of first-year undergraduates due to a lack of upper-funnel (application) volume.

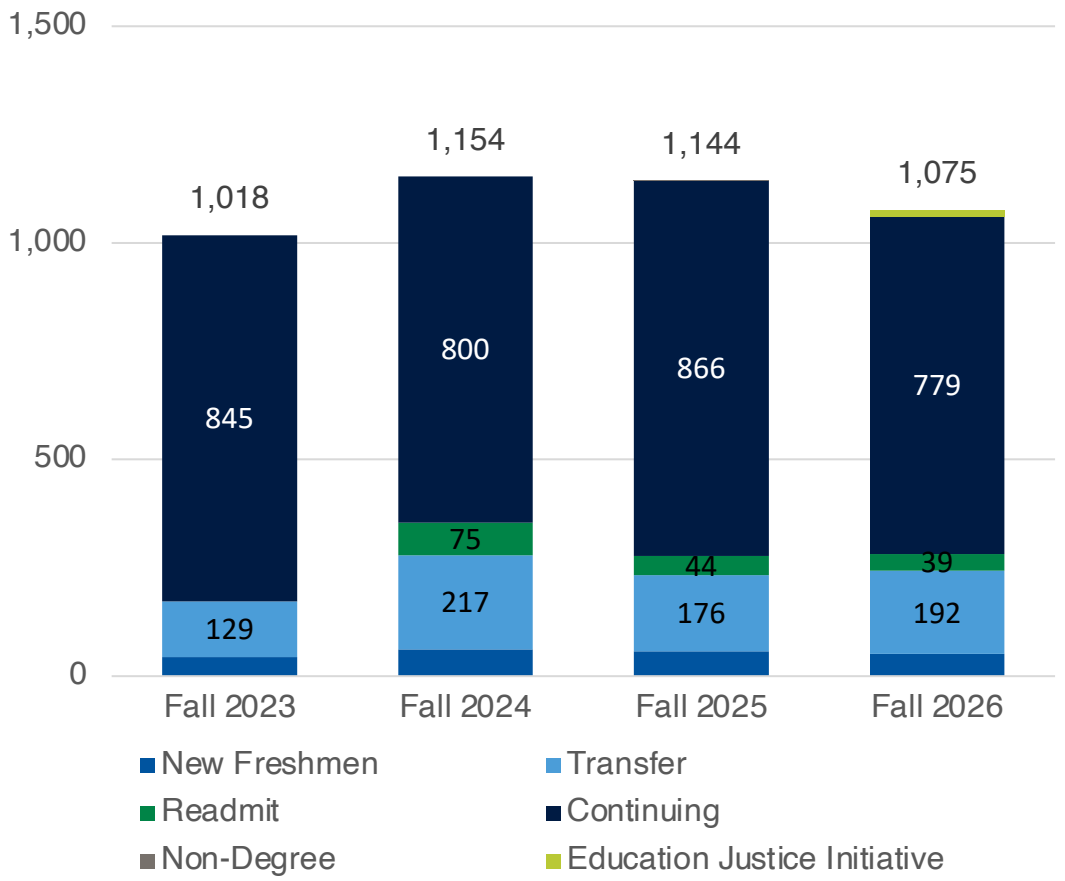


UNH College of Professional Studies Undergraduate Students

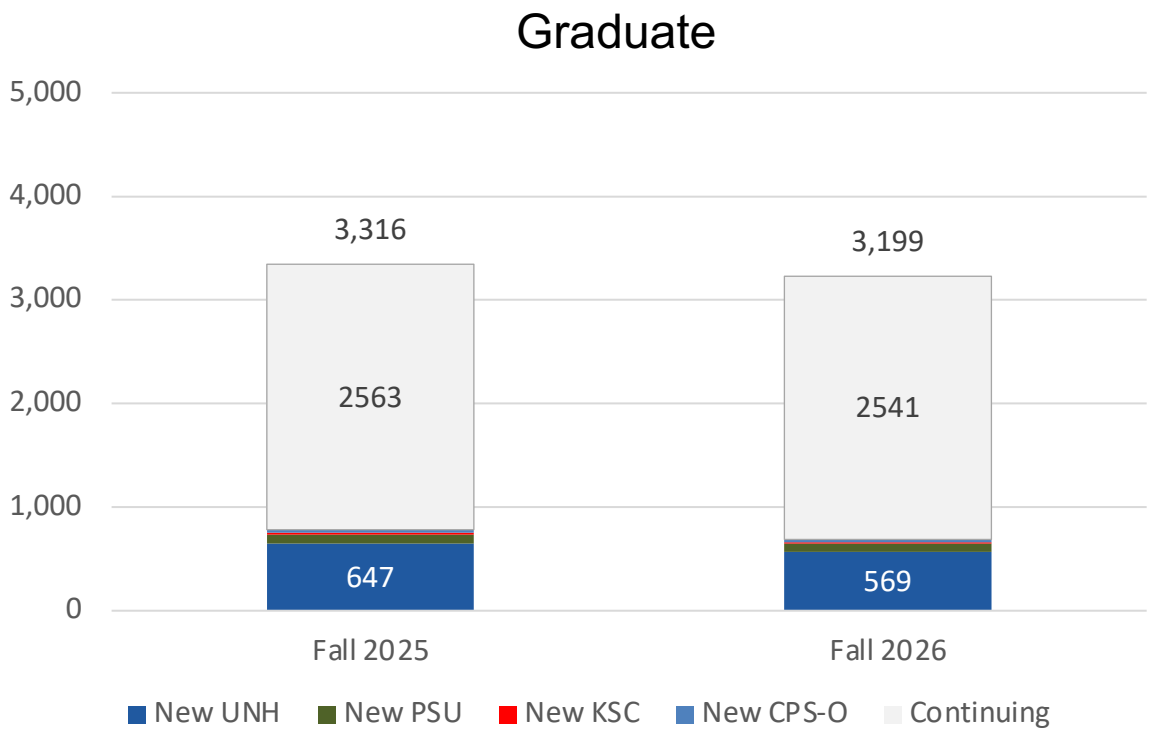
CPS-Manchester

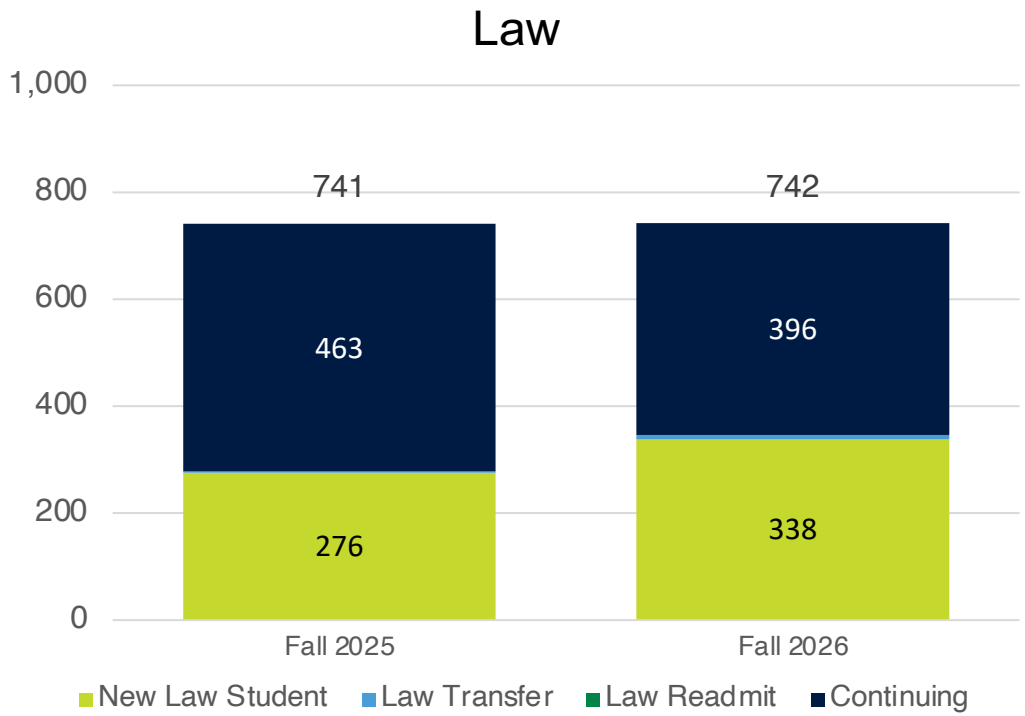


CPS-Online Headcount



USNH Graduate Students





UNH had 64 new international graduate students in Fall 2025 and 52 in Fall 2026.

The Law School saw both overall student growth and new student growth.

New Hampshire Promise Program

Granite Guarantee – Launched in 2017

The predecessor to New Hampshire Promise

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$0 tuition

A final-dollar grant covered remaining tuition for Pell-eligible, in-state students after grants and scholarships.

$9,389 per student

Accounting for outside grants and auxiliaries, these students still invested an average of $9,389 to their education

Granite Guarantee was hard to understand because eligibility became clear too late

Families learned their Pell eligibility late in enrollment. Many low-income families assumed college was out of reach and did not apply.

Less lift than income-based programs

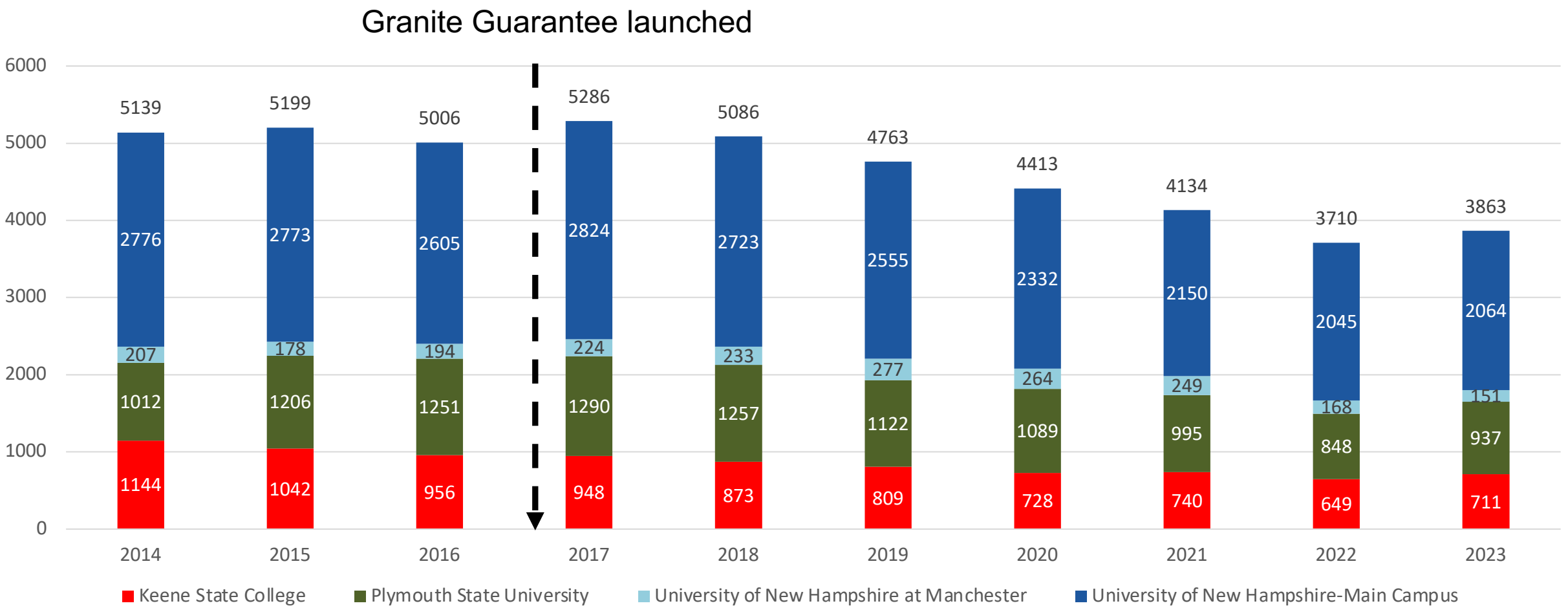
IPEDS-based research found less lift from Pell-based programs than from income-based programs.

Limited public understanding

The launch lacked a large-scale communications push. Granite Staters remained unclear about the program.

Pell Students Enrolled at USNH

While well-intentioned, Granite Guarantee failed to support and increase Pell-eligible NH residents at USNH.



The New Hampshire Promise Will Replace Granite Guarantee

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Exceptional education made more affordable.

With the New Hampshire Promise, a high-quality public university education is now within reach for more New Hampshire students. Beginning in fall 2027, incoming first-year students who are New Hampshire residents and have a total family income of up to $100,000 a year can pay no tuition at any USNH institution, including UNH Durham, UNH Manchester, UNH College of Professional Studies Online, Keene State College, and Plymouth State University. It's an opportunity to get an exceptional education by removing a major financial barrier and giving more students the opportunity to pursue their goals and build their future right here in New Hampshire.

Transfer students who earn an associate degree from the Community College System of New Hampshire are also eligible for the New Hampshire Promise.

$100,000

TOTAL FAMILY INCOME THRESHOLD

100%

TUITION COVERED WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND INSTITUTIONAL GRANT AID

Why It Is Important

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EXPAND ACCESS

More New Hampshire families qualify, widening access across the state for families who question whether they can afford college.

UNDERSTANDABLE

Families know their tax information upfront, so the promise lands early enough to change behavior.

LAUNCH IT RIGHT

Granite Guarantee never got a full launch moment. A coordinated statewide announcement will.

Similar programs are becoming standard at competitor and comparator institutions

University of Vermont · University of Massachusetts Amherst · Saint Anselm College · Tufts University · Rutgers · SUNY

Projections

PROJECTIONS

700–800

Additional applicants

75% already eligible for Granite Guarantee

Most students in the referenced population already qualify for the Granite Guarantee.

+150 Students & $1.2-$3M in net revenue expected

Improved yield among newly eligible applicants expected to bring in +100-150 students & $1.2M in net revenue