What is Employability?

- **noun | em·ploy·a·bi·li·ty | \imˌplɔr-e-bi-ə-tē\**

- *Definition:* A set of achievement skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.
Employability is...

- A combination of knowledge, skills, behaviors, attributes and attitudes enabling success in life and citizenship—not just in employment

- Applicable to all students—across institution types, degree levels, majors, or mode of study

- Aligned and consistent with the aims of liberal education

- Made explicit to students to support their reflection and lifelong learning

- An institution-wide priority and responsibility

- Supported by effective policies, programs and practices—institutional, system and public
Employability is not...

- Just about employment and wages *(e.g., College Scorecard)*
- Quantified by any single measure
- Just skill or workforce training
- A reduction of academic rigor or standards
- Just the responsibility of Career Services
- Relegated to non-academic staff
- Confined to the period just before graduation
Commission Charge

- Identify, review and recommend high-impact policies and practices related to:
  - Clarifying what employability means for New England
  - Promoting the readiness and employability of postsecondary graduates
  - Supporting timely and effective transitions to the workforce

- Represent the needs of key stakeholder groups and work to develop a consensus on potential next steps

- Take a prescriptive leadership and advocacy role by charting an action agenda for participating states and their postsecondary institutions

- Recognize success and excellence, as well as inform and accelerate policy change, the adoption of best practices and innovation
New England’s Higher Education Landscape

Projected High School Graduates by State

- **CT**: 73,335
- **ME**: 67,005
- **MA**: 66,177
- **NH**: 15,447
- **RI**: 12,381
- **VT**: 9,451

Source: NEBHE Analysis of *Knocking at the College Door* data
New England’s Higher Education Landscape

Average net price for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who have been awarded grant or scholarship aid, By State and Region
2008-09 to 2015-16

Source: NEBHE Analysis of IPEDS data
New England’s Higher Education Landscape

Projected Postsecondary Education Gaps in New England by 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Current Share of Population with Postsecondary Credential of Value</th>
<th>Projected Share of Jobs Requiring Some Postsecondary Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>NH</td>
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<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NEBHE analysis of Lumina Foundation’s A Stronger Nation 2017 and Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce’s Recovery 2020
Survey Findings

• While 96% of chief academic officers at higher education institutions say their institution is very or somewhat effective at preparing students for the world of work, only 11% of business leaders strongly agree that today’s college graduates have the skills and competencies that their business needs.

• While 64% of students think college graduates are highly prepared to work well in teams, only 37% of employers agree; similarly, while 62% of students think that graduates have adequate oral communications skills, only 28% of employers concur.

• While 53% of students say they believe their major will lead to a good job, 47% of graduates younger than 24 years old say that if they had to do it all over again, they would change their major. Of graduates aged 24 or over, 40% would select a different major.
The Commission’s Work

11 months

5 meetings

Testimony from 13 experts

1 Summit, attended by 450 people

66-page report

18 action-oriented recommendations
The Commission’s Work

Effective Use of Labor Market Data & Intelligence

Planning, Advising & Career Services

Intensive, Integrated Learning & Internship-Based Work

Targeted Higher Education/Industry Partnerships

Emerging Credentialing Systems

Innovation, Technology and New Economy Skill Bundles

Prioritizing, Defining & Embedding Employability

Increase Graduate Employability

Expand

Success & Equity
5 Critical Employability Experiences

The Commission identified critical employability experiences that all postsecondary students should have access to and complete by the time they complete:

- Foundational skills in literacy, numeracy and communication, including the ability to work in teams, communicate clearly verbally and in writing, and solve problems
- An individual career plan prepared early in their postsecondary experience
- At least one paid and/or credit-bearing work-integrated learning experiences
- Achievement of digital competencies related to their course of study, career goals and the fast-changing economy
- Attainment of an affordable credential that is employer-informed and is aligned to career pathways
Strategic Imperative to Colleges & Universities

To stave off enrollment pressures and growing competition, institutions may find differentiation and recruitment opportunities through employability strategies.

- Link employability to institutional strategic plans, performance indicators and accountability measures
- Embed employability across the institutions and all dimensions of learning and the student experience
- Ensure access to employability experiences to all students
Successful Higher Education-Industry Partnerships

Recommendations of the Commission:

• Institutions should create single points of contact or “navigators” to simplify the interface and increase the effectiveness of partnerships with employers

• Institutions should regularly assess the employer landscape to identify potential opportunities for collaboration, gain insights on labor market needs and understand the language of employers
Work-Integrated, Cooperative & Internship-based Learning

Recommendations of the Commission:

• Institutions should require the completion of one high-quality work-integrated learning experience and award credit for successful completion. Accordingly, institutions should expand their capacity to document such experiences via transcripts and portfolios.

• Employers should provide sustainable and high-quality work-integrated learning experiences that include: pay, mentorship, performance evaluation and clear articulation of responsibilities, skills and competencies.
Q&A!

For more information and to view the report, visit:

www.nebhe.org/policy-research/grant-consulting-technical-assistance/commission
Please be sure to fill out the session evaluation at:

neacrao.org/feedback/

Thank you!