

Annual Report
Year in Review: 2013-2014

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ISBN: 978-0-919471-98-6

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OUR MISSION

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) assists institutions and governments in enhancing the post-secondary learning environment.

Excerpt of the MPHEC Act

1. The Commission shall, in carrying out its duties, give first consideration to improving and maintaining the best possible service to students as life-long learners by:
 - (a) taking measures intended to ensure that programs of study are of optimum length and best quality,
 - (b) stressing prior learning assessment and recognition, and credit transfer, to implement the principle that duplication of effort is not required in order to gain credit for learning which [that - NS] has been successfully accomplished,
 - (c) promoting smooth transitions between learning and work,
 - (d) promoting equitable and adequate access to learning opportunities, including making those opportunities available at times and places convenient to the student, and
 - (e) taking measures intended to ensure teaching quality.

2. The Commission's principal duties are:
 - (a) to undertake measures intended to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of academic programs and of teaching at institutions, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include the review of institutional programs and practices for assuring such improvement and making recommendations to institutions and the Provinces,
 - (b) to ensure that data and information is collected, maintained and made available for assuring the public accountability of institutions, and to assist institutions and the Provinces in their work, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include:
 - (i) establishing data and system standards,
 - (ii) establishing public reporting requirements and producing public reports, and
 - (iii) carrying out studies in regard to public policy, institutional concerns and issues related to post-secondary education, and providing advice to institutions and the Provinces on these matters.
 - (c) to take initiatives to stimulate cooperative action among institutions and the Provinces where such action is likely to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the post-secondary education system in the Provinces, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include:
 - (i) encouraging initiatives for institutions to offer joint, complementary and regional programs, and
 - (ii) encouraging administrative, financial and common service arrangements which reduce the overhead cost of programs and the overall cost to students and the Provinces.
 - (d) to continue to develop and administer funding transfers among the Provinces for regional programs, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include developing and administering funding arrangements for programs outside the region, as required to provide additional educational opportunities for students from the region, and
 - (e) to undertake such other duties as the Ministers may assign.

3. The Commission may:
 - (a) provide such services and functions, as may be agreed upon by the Ministers, to one or more institutions or to one or more of the Provinces,
 - (b) provide such advice and services, as may be agreed upon by the Ministers, to one or more of the Provinces to determine their post-secondary education funding policy, and
 - (c) recommend to the Ministers the names of post-secondary educational institutions that may be added to or deleted from those prescribed by [the - NS] regulation for the purposes of the definitions "institutions" and "universities" [in section 1 - NB]; [2002, c.34, s.11 -PEI].

Message from the Chair and the Chief Executive Officer

We are excited that this year marks the MPHEC's fortieth anniversary!

Since its establishment in 1974, this organization has been dedicated to the enhancement of post-secondary education (PSE) in the region. To kick-off our fortieth anniversary celebrations, we held a student photo and video contest. The Commission selected six winners whose entries are featured in this year's annual report. The winning videos can be viewed on the MPHEC website.



Over the past year the Commission has been hard at work characterizing the region's key challenges in the PSE sector, from declining demand for university education among Maritimers to increasing tuition fees. Our stakeholders have also identified challenges with endeavours such as measuring quality in higher education or demonstrating the value of a degree.

All of these challenges have diverse implications for the Commission's various stakeholder groups, including students, universities and governments. This has led to intense debates around the table as the Commission seeks to define how it can best assist institutions and governments in addressing these challenges. One area of consensus relates to the Commission's role in PSE reporting. The Commission has moved beyond providing basic information by identifying potential implications of the findings. The conversation will continue as the Commission finalizes its next multi-year business plan.

Work continues to be done in support of the Commission's top two priorities.

To support its focus on Quality Assurance, the Commission is implementing a new policy on *Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation*. It will assist institutions in developing proposals that meet the Commission's assessment criteria and streamline the process for all involved. In addition, after extensive consultation with stakeholders, the Commission expects to finalize, early in fiscal 2014-2015, new guidelines in support of Maritime universities systematically conducting rigorous reviews to maintain the quality of programs and services available to students in the region.

In terms of Data Analytics, we look forward to a great deal of rich, new, information generated from the Commission's data holdings and new projects - a survey of Grade 12 students; an analysis of survey data from the 2012 class (as they are about to graduate university) and of the students who started their university education in 2013; and a survey of the Class of 2012 two years after they graduated university. These enhanced data will enrich our understanding of student expectations, pathways and outcomes, and help the Commission initiate a dialogue on whether we are, collectively, responding to region's needs.

We regularly add new information to our website, so please visit us online to keep up-to-date on the MPHEC's current activities: www.mphec.ca

In closing, we extend our sincere thanks to Christian Lacroix (University of Prince Edward Island) for his hard work as Chair over the past year. It has been a pleasure to work with him in this capacity and we look forward to further collaboration as he continues on as a member of the Commission. We are fortunate to have so many talented and dedicated Commission members to oversee and direct the important work of this organization.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn Watters'.

Carolyn Watters
Chair
Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mireille Duguay'.

Mireille Duguay
Chief Executive Officer

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- A. Audited Financial Statements: http://www.mphec.ca/media/83224/A_A_MPHEC_signed_Financial_Statements.pdf
- B. Membership of the Commission and its Committees:
http://www.mphec.ca/media/83227/A_B_Membership_of_Commission_Cttees_EN.pdf
- C. Program Proposals Considered for Approval 2013-2014:
http://www.mphec.ca/media/83233/A_C_Program_Proposals_Considered_for_Approval_EN.pdf

MPHEC Student Photo & Video Contest Winners!

Photo
Contest
Winner



Christiane Whitehouse, Acadia University



Colin Smith, Acadia University

Runners-Up
(photos)



Paige Chisholm, St. Francis Xavier University



Meaghan Wright, St. Francis Xavier University

Video
Contest
Winner



Marie Wright, St. Francis Xavier University

Runners-Up
(videos)



Dylan Lawrence, St. Francis Xavier University

View winning entries online: <http://www.mphec.ca/general/photocontestwinners.aspx>

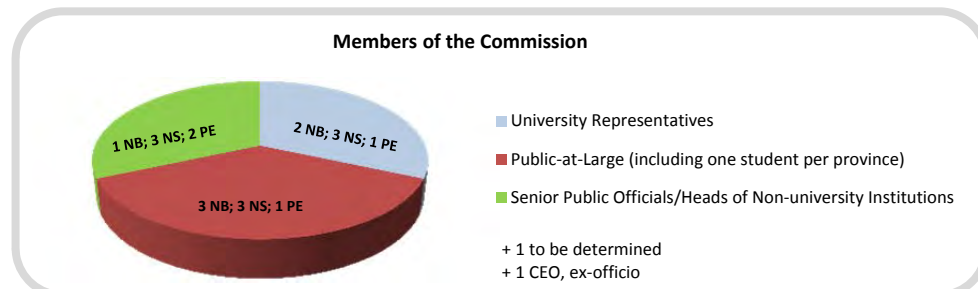
Year in Review: 2013-2014

THE COMMISSION

About the MPHEC

The Commission includes 20 members, plus a CEO (ex-officio).

- The Commission is an arm's-length organization accountable to the Ministers responsible for post-secondary education (PSE) in the Maritimes.
- Its composition is as follows:



- A list of Commission members can be found in Appendix B, at: http://www.mphec.ca/media/83227/A_B_Membership_of_Commission_Cttees_EN.pdf. At year-end, there was one vacancy.
- The Commission meets approximately five times per year, normally on institutional campuses, on a rotating basis.
- At year-end, the Commission operated with 12 permanent and contractual employees. A list of staff can be found at: <http://www.mphec.ca/about/staff.aspx>

Operational Framework

- The Commission puts a heavy reliance on stakeholder input through its operational framework (joint committees, working groups drawing on required expertise, etc.).
- The Commission's standing committees and working groups are as follows:
 - AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee
 - AAU-MPHEC Quality Assurance Monitoring Committee
 - AAU-MPHEC Advisory Committee on Information and Analysis
 - MPHEC Finance Committee
 - NB/MPHEC Finance Working Group
 - NB/PEI Educational Computer Network Board of Directors
 - NB/PEI Educational Computer Network Technical Committee
- A list of members on each of the above-noted committees can be found in Appendix B, at: http://www.mphec.ca/media/83227/A_B_Membership_of_Commission_Cttees_EN.pdf. Their terms of reference are posted online, at: <http://www.mphec.ca/about/advisorycommittees.aspx>
- The Commission obtains additional stakeholder input through workshops/forums, stakeholder meetings, as well as seeking formal comments in various formats (e.g., through the Commission's program distribution process).

Operating Principles

- Universities are autonomous and responsible to their constituencies for the quality of academic offerings and activities.
- Stakeholders (governments, students, taxpayers, etc.) have a legitimate need for information and assurances about the quality of institutional programs and services.
- The best processes and outcomes emerge from dialogue and collaboration (iterative processes).

40th Anniversary



- The MPHEC was established in 1974. This year marks our fortieth anniversary working with our stakeholders to improve the post-secondary learning environment.
- The Commission's contribution ranges from providing current data and findings on trends in PSE to ensuring the quality of programs and services offered to students in the region. This organization promotes and facilitates cooperative action and provides specific services to each Maritime province.
- Over the years, the Commission has built an organizational structure that provides value for money and diverse expertise through Commission staff, Commission and Committee membership, as well as regular consultation with key stakeholder groups.
- The MPHEC represents a strong collaboration between the three Maritime provinces and their joint commitment to enhance PSE in the region.
- At year-end, the Commission was defining its strategic direction for the next few years, while taking stock of all of the changes that have occurred since its inception.

Student Photo & Video Contest

"Students provided us with a splendid glimpse into what they particularly value about their university experience here in the Maritimes."

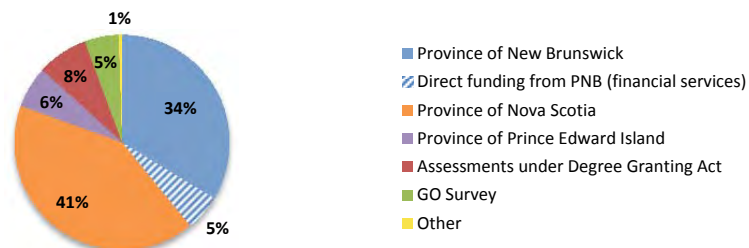
- Mireille Duguay, CEO

Review of the MPHEC

Resources

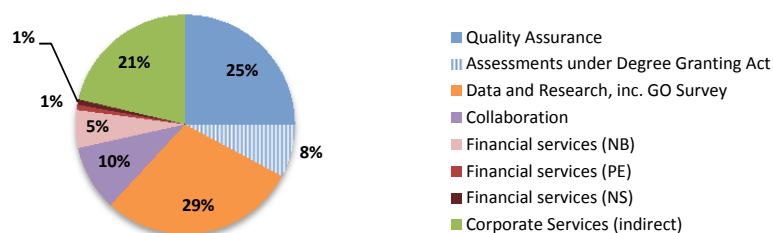
- In celebration of its fortieth anniversary, the MPHEC held a Student Photo & Video Contest. The theme was "the Student Experience." Students from across the three Maritime provinces submitted photos and videos that depicted life as a university student.
- The submissions were quite diverse. Some students emphasized the importance of a quality education, while others focused on the value of making new connections and participating in extracurricular activities or exchange programs. They really showcased the diversity of their experiences.
- The Commission extends a big "thank you" to all those who participated in this informative contest!
- The six contest winners are featured in this report, and can be viewed online: www.cespm.ca/general/photocontestwinners.aspx.
- During this past fiscal year, the Maritime Ministers responsible for PSE launched a review to assess the MPHEC's current activities against the mandate of the organization, with a focus on outcomes/benefits and reviewing operations.
- The review was conducted by an independent consultant in late fall 2013/early winter 2014 with a final report submitted to the Deputy Ministers responsible for PSE (Deputies) in January 2014.
- Upon receipt of the report, the Deputies struck a committee of provincial senior officials to assess the recommendations.
- A response from the Deputies on next steps is expected early in the new fiscal year.
- The current fiscal year was the final of three years of planned reductions to the Commission's base funding. The Commission was also instructed that it would have to absorb cost-of-living adjustments and other inflationary items throughout the year.
- The Commission's revenue for its administration was almost \$1.7 million in 2013-2014; 81% of this is core funding provided by the three Maritime provinces on a per-capita basis through the Council of Atlantic Premiers annual budget approval process. The remaining sources of revenue (making up the remaining 19% of revenue) include: annual project funding for the Maritime GO Survey Program, the annual translation allocation from the Province of New Brunswick, funding from the Province of New Brunswick for financial services, quality assurance work performed (on a cost-recovery basis) under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act, and SRDC (for the provision of data).

Revenue by Funding Source (2013-14)



- The Commission's expenditures, totalling approximately \$1.7 million in 2013-2014, are presented below (per key function).

Expenditures by Function (2013-14)



The detailed MPHEC 2013-2014 financial statements can be found in Appendix A, online at: http://www.mphhec.ca/media/83224/A_A_MPHEC_signed_Financial_Statements.pdf

QUALITY ASSURANCE



The Commission provides quality assurance (QA) services for all publicly-funded universities in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

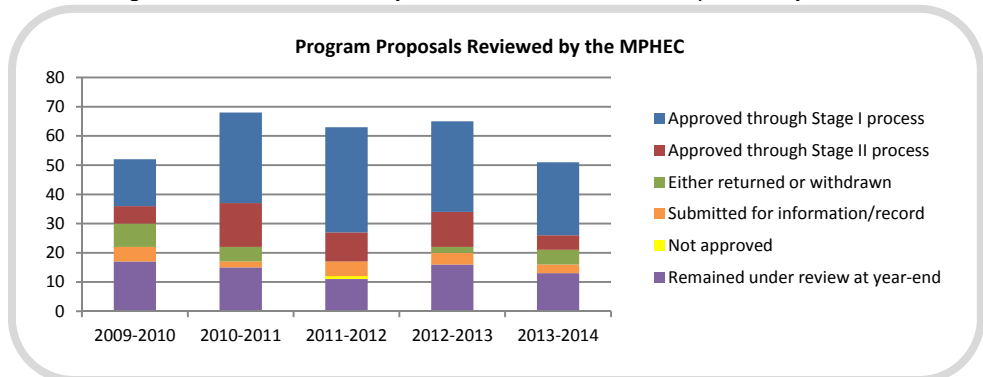
With a focus on the student's experience, the Commission's QA services are built on a partnership with the institutions to help ensure students receive quality education and related services over the course of their university experience.

Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation

- QA, and program assessment specifically, is the Commission's first strategic priority. Through this process, the Commission ensures programs meet agreed upon standards, which provides quality assurances to students, governments and the public. Institutions can also rely on the Commission's external validation to market their programs and to provide evidence that they meet regional quality standards.
- During 2013-2014, the Commission considered a total of 51 program proposals. The following demonstrates how this year's submissions relate to previous years.

In NS and NB students are only eligible for student financial assistance when enrolled in an MPHEC-approved program.

Nearly all active degree programs in Maritime universities have Commission approval.



- Stage I assessment: this is an expedited process (normally 10 weeks) for proposals that clearly meet all of the Commission's assessment criteria. A key feature of the process is its reliance on peer review, through inter-institutional cooperation (e.g., written comments on proposals from regional experts).
- The majority of programs (i.e., approximately 70%) are approved following a Stage I assessment. This allows the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee, through the Stage II assessment, to focus its efforts on the proposed programs that did not readily meet the assessment criteria.
- Of the 18 program proposals submitted for a Stage II Assessment, 10 underwent significant revisions as a result of the assessment process; these programs are identified with an asterisk in the table in Appendix C: http://www.mphec.ca/media/83233/A_C_Program_Proposals_Considered_for_Approval_EN.pdf
- Appendix C also includes details on each program proposal considered during the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Certificates and diplomas are more often terminated or suspended than other programs.

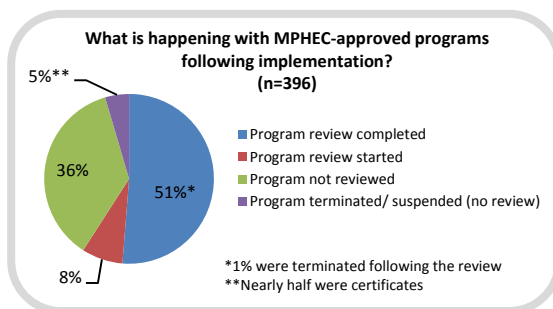
Ongoing Quality Assurance

Validation of Institutional Quality Assurance Frameworks

Follow-ups on Institutional Reviews of Programs after Implementation

Follow-ups on Conditions to Approval

- The Commission's policy on *Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation* was finalized in March 2013 (update to the 2005 version) and is now being implemented.
- The Commission has begun to develop a qualifications framework for certificates and diplomas (much like what is already in place for degrees: [Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework](#)). This recognizes a growth in the granting of certificates and diplomas to (formally) recognize completion of a group of university courses.
- Universities are responsible for ensuring the ongoing quality of the programs and services they provide to students. This is largely accomplished through cyclical internal and external reviews managed independently by each university. The Commission's primary role is in confirming that such reviews are indeed taking place and in validating the extent to which institutional QA frameworks meet agreed upon regional standards.
- The Commission has completed an assessment of the QA frameworks (i.e., related policies and procedures) at all institutions within its scope. These assessments focussed on ensuring that all institutions had an implemented policy to support ongoing quality assessment and improvement. This goal has largely been achieved but there are remaining gaps to be addressed if the Commission is to discharge its legislated mandate properly. Most notably, students and learning were too often at the periphery of institutional QA frameworks.
- The Commission has been actively devising new *Guidelines for Institutional Quality Assurance Frameworks* over 2012-2013 and most of 2013-2014. These *Guidelines* were the focus of extensive consultation with stakeholders, through a discussion paper (January 2013) and a Forum on Quality Assurance (March 2013). A summary of feedback from stakeholders can be found in the [Consultation Report - Students at the Heart: Stakeholder Reactions to the MPHEC's Proposed Approach to Quality Assurance at Maritime Universities](#) (released September 2013).
- A final version of the *Guidelines* is expected to be released in 2014-2015.
- The Commission approves all programs with the condition that the submitting institution conducts an external review of the program, normally after one or two cohorts have graduated. In 2012-2013, the Commission surveyed institutions to benchmark the extent to which program reviews were taking place, with data collection completed in September 2013. The survey covered 396 programs, of these, 64% were at various stages of assessment.
- There was wide variability across institutions. The new *Guidelines* and upcoming monitoring/validation activities will address these findings.
- Programs are at times approved with conditions requiring follow-up. The Commission actively monitors the level of compliance with such conditions to ensure they are being met over the course of the program's implementation.



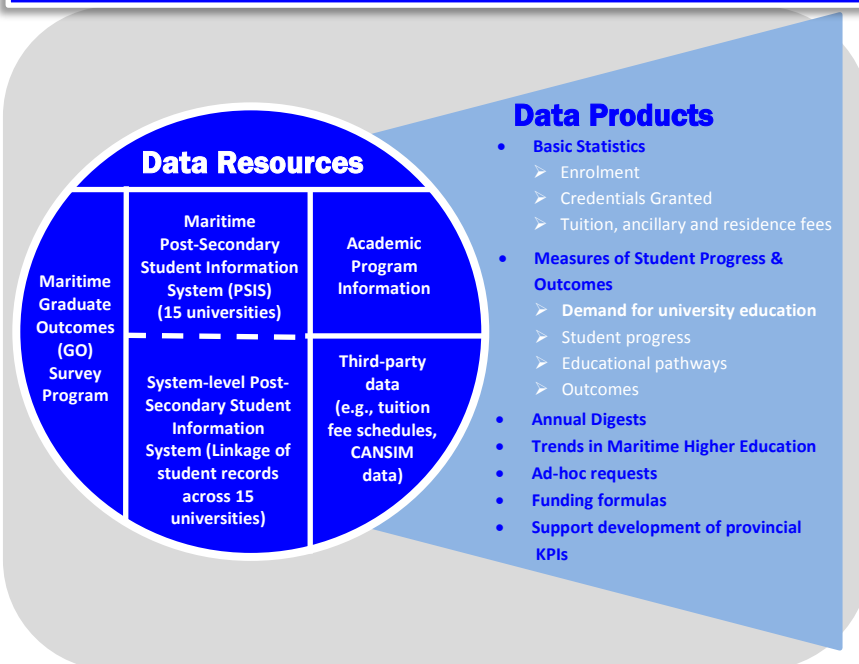
- A Typical Program Review Includes:**
1. Self-study (by the relevant unit);
 2. Site visit (by an external reviewer);
 3. Submission of the reviewer report, with recommendations;
 4. Response from the unit under review;
 5. Recommendations approved by Senate; and
 6. Follow-up by senior university administration to ascertain progress in implementing recommendations from a review.

¹ This project covers programs approved by the MPHEC between 1999-2006 for Bachelors and PhDs, and between 1999-2009 for Certificates, Diplomas and Masters, as all such programs were due for review by that time (or earlier).

**Assessments
Conducted Under
the Provincial
Degree Granting
Acts**
(Services to
Provinces: NB, NS)

- The Commission, at the Minister's request, conducts a variety of assessments under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act (on a cost-recovery basis). At year-end, the Commission had concluded the following assessments:
 - **Bachelor of Business Administration – Yorkville University** (proposed modifications): On the request of the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, the MPHEC was asked to provide advice on whether a change in the method of delivery (from fully online to a hybrid model) for Yorkville University's BBA program would constitute a significant change requiring a formal proposal and assessment. The MPHEC advised the Department that the proposed modification did represent a significant change as the institution has not yet received approval for any face-to-face offerings. The MPHEC recommended that should Yorkville intend to implement the modification, a proposal be submitted following the *Policy on the Assessment of Existing Programs Established under the New Brunswick Degree Granting*; as an alternative, Yorkville could include the proposed modification in the self-study that will form part of the BBA's scheduled follow-up review in 2014. Yorkville opted to incorporate the proposed modification as a proposal within the forthcoming review.
 - **Institutional Assessment – St. Croix University**: At the Minister's request, the Commission undertook an assessment of an application to establish a new institution, St. Croix University, under the New Brunswick Degree Granting Act. As per the policy, a Panel of consultants was struck and a site visit carried out in April 2013. On receipt of the Panel report, the applicant chose to withdraw its submission.
- At year-end, the following assessments were at various stages:
 - **Master of Business Administration / Executive Master of Business Administration (existing) – University of Fredericton**: Assessment of these existing programs was nearly complete by year-end.
 - **Master of Education, Specializations in Educational Leadership and Inclusive Education, and Adult Education (new) – Yorkville University**: Assessment of this new program was well underway by year-end.
 - **Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology (existing) – Yorkville University**: Assessment of this program was nearly complete by year-end.
- No assessments were undertaken under the Nova Scotia Degree Granting Act.

DATA AND INFORMATION



The Commission collects data and develops statistical and research products that are nationally recognized as credible sources of information on PSE. A key focus of this work is identifying the characteristics of educational streams/ pathways and other factors that impact student progression, credential completion and graduate outcomes.

The Commission makes available value-added sources of information to governments, post-secondary institutions, students and the public-at-large, to increase awareness of, and dialogue on, Maritime PSE issues and opportunities.

Collection of Student Data (Post-Secondary Student Information System [PSIS])

- The MPHEC collects data on institutions' program and course offerings, student demographics, program and course registration, and credit transfer through an annual submission to fulfill many information needs for the Commission, provincial governments, the universities and others invested in PSE. Maritime universities reported 199 elements through PSIS for 89,337 students enrolled and/or graduated during the 2012-2013 academic year (<http://www.mphec.ca/research/postsecondarystudentinfosys.aspx>).
- The MPHEC also continued to collect provincial student identifiers issued by the K-12 system. In the future, this will inform students' transitions to higher education and support research on key determinants of student success in PSE.
- Over 2013-2014, the MPHEC updated its proprietary software, the MPHEC Maritime pre-screener (MPS), which is used by Maritime universities to verify PSIS data files before submission to the MPHEC. The new version (MPS 9.1, to be released in May 2014) has new features such as frequency reports for provincial student identifiers.
- The MPHEC is planning to conduct a review of PSIS. This comes on the tail of anticipated changes to Statistics Canada's PSIS requirements and offers an opportunity to improve MPHEC PSIS and to streamline the data requirements and collection process to ensure it is fully optimized to meet the region's needs.

Graduate Outcomes (GO) Survey Program

- The Graduate Outcomes (GO) Survey Program (A new survey program launched in 2013, following the cancellation of the Graduate Survey Program, initially established in 1995) explores the themes of financing education, employment outcomes, graduate mobility, and further education. It focusses solely on Maritime university bachelors graduates and follows a six-year cycle, which includes two graduating cohorts (both interviewed two years after graduation, with one of those two cohorts also interviewed six years after graduation). The GO Survey Program costs \$145,000 per year, funded by the three provinces.
- In 2013-14, the GO Survey Program Conceptual Roadmap was created, which outlines the linkages between the individual surveys of the program, the detailed methodological framework, and analytical framework. Questionnaires for the Class of 2012 in 2014, Class of 2014 in 2016 and Class of 2012 in 2018 were drafted.
- The first survey of university graduates under this redesigned program will begin in September 2014 – a two-year-out survey of the Class of 2012. With this survey, the Commission will for the first time offer graduates the choice between telephone and online modes as part of a suite of measures designed to improve response rates.

Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)

- To provide information on students' expectations for a university education, and outcomes such as patterns of financing education and student debt, and anticipated future earnings, the Commission has entered into data sharing agreements with the five Maritime universities that participated in the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) surveys – both the 2012 survey of graduating students and the 2013 survey of entering students. The information will enrich our understanding of students' expectations, pathways and outcomes.

Survey of Maritime Grade 12 High School Students - Expectations and Transitions to Postsecondary Education

- The Commission will be conducting a survey of Maritime grade 12 high school students in May 2014. The information gathered as part of this project on expectations for PSE (among those intending to enroll) and the value placed on higher education, will be compared to graduate outcomes to determine the extent to which expectations are met.
- The research objectives are to answer the following:
 - What proportion of students intend to enroll in PSE? Of those intending to enroll, what do students expect from higher education, and university education in particular?
 - Of those intending to enroll, how do they think of quality/value when it comes to PSE and what importance do they attach to it? What role if any does it play in their decision-making?
 - To what extent does cost play a role in decisions to enroll and persist in PSE?
- In addition to meeting the Commission's research objectives, the project will also address the provinces' information needs. Two provinces - Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia added question modules to address their own specific policy questions (New Brunswick has in place its own survey program focusing on the high school experience). This project would not be possible without the collaboration and in-kind contribution of the participating provinces' departments of education.
- The project is an excellent example of what can be achieved through regional collaboration that individual partners could not achieve as efficiently or as cost-effectively on their own.
- The survey is designed to help the Commission and its stakeholders understand the decade-long trend of softening demand for university education by Maritimers.

"We are looking forward to these survey results which will help us understand how young Maritimers are making decisions about pursuing post-secondary education."

- Mireille Duguay, CEO

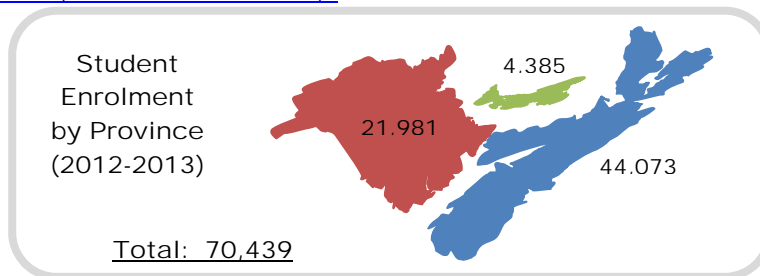
Data Linkages

The Commission tracks individual student's progress within and between Maritime universities and into the labour market

- The Commission continues to build its analytical capacity, transforming the annual PSIS submissions from individual universities into a system-level data resource that links student records between Maritime institutions and over time. A pilot project linking responses from the 2009 Survey of Class of 2007 graduates to this system level data has provided some preliminary information on the relationships between graduate attributes, educational pathways (e.g., time-to-degree, switching institutions, working while studying) and outcomes (e.g., debt and employment). This work will be further developed with the Survey of Class of 2012 Maritime University Graduates project.
- The Commission continues to provide longitudinal data to the Social Research and Development Corporation (SRDC) under a data sharing agreement with SRDC and the province of New Brunswick to support the Future to Discover project, which aims to estimate the effectiveness of various learning and financial interventions to increase access to PSE among low income and first-generation students. Approximately 4,400 New Brunswick Grade 9 students enrolled in the project in 2004-2005. The MPHEC is tracking these students in the PSIS database to provide key information on university participation, persistence, graduation rates, and time to degree.

Basic Statistics (Updated Annually)

- Each fall, the MPHEC releases a set of standard statistical tables and downloadable databases that provide information on key indicators and trends in the Maritime university system.
- Enrolment and full-time equivalents statistical tables are available at: <http://www.mphec.ca/research/enrolment.aspx>



- Credentials granted tables are available at: <http://www.mphec.ca/research/credentialsgranted.aspx>
- Tuition fees data for undergraduates, graduates and international students are available at: <http://www.mphec.ca/research/tuitionsurvey.aspx>

Data in Support of Funding Formulas (Services to Provinces: NB, NS)

- As a service to the Provinces, the MPHEC provides, on an annual basis, calculated key measures from PSIS to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in support of their funding formulas (<http://www.mphec.ca/funding/fundingadministration.aspx>).
- The MPHEC delivers full course equivalents, weighted full course equivalents, full-time equivalents, and enrolments, which support the following components of the Nova Scotia Funding Formula: the Weighted Enrolment Grant, the Size Grant, the French Language Grant, the Part-Time Student Grant and the international student funding limits.
- The Commission calculates full-year weighted full-time equivalents for use within the funding formula calculating the distribution of Unrestricted Operating Assistance to the New Brunswick Universities. These are also used in the annual calculation of the Regional Transfer Arrangement (further explained below under "Interprovincial Agreements and Intra-Maritime Program Funding Arrangements").

Measures of Student Progress and Outcomes

- As a core component of its research agenda, the Commission has been developing measures of student progress and outcomes based on student administrative data (PSIS) as well as the GO Survey data. The project extracts further value from existing data resources by building robust measures that inform the themes of: demand for university education; student progress (e.g. persistence and graduation); educational pathways (e.g., time-to-degree, switching institutions, student course load); and outcomes (e.g. employment, financing education, pursuing further education, mobility and perceptions of university experience).
- These measures support institutions in continuing to deliver quality education and support governments in maintaining accountability and transparency and in providing students and their families with an understanding of the nature of educational pathways in the Maritime university 'system' and the outcomes of its graduates.
- In 2013-2014, the methodology was developed for measures of system-level

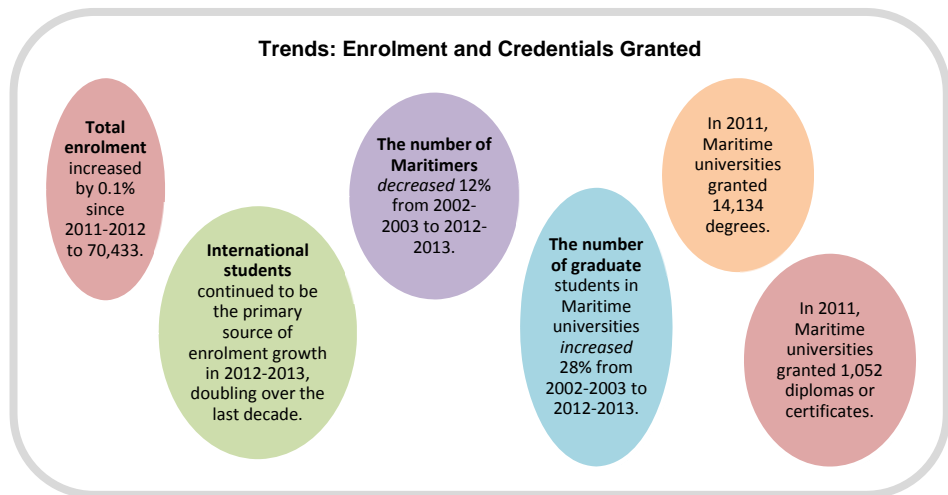
Trends in Maritime Higher Education: Annual Digests

University Enrolment (2011-2012 and 2012-2013) and Credentials Granted (2011)

“Given that we have seen an increase in the number of students in recent years, we can project that there will be an increase in the number of university graduates at all levels in the coming years.”

- Mireille Duguay, CEO

- persistence, system-level graduation rates, time-to-degree and student course load. Data providers were consulted on the preliminary methodology at the annual Forum on Data Collection and Research in December 2013. Work is underway to incorporate the feedback collected at the Forum to further refine the measures.
- Each year the Commission releases Annual Digests on Enrolment and Credentials Granted that present summary tables and charts of provincial-level statistics for all publicly-funded Maritime universities, showing trends over one, five and 10-year intervals. Each summary table relates to a detailed table on the MPHEC website with a breakdown by university or other variable. The Annual Digests identify high-level trends in enrolment and credentials granted.
- In fiscal 2013-2014, three Annual Digests were released on enrolments and credentials granted.
- During the past fiscal, two annual digests on university enrolment were released; one in May 2013 and another in February 2014; both can be found at: <http://www.mph.ec.ca/research/trendsmaritimehighereducation.aspx>. Highlights from each are outlined below.



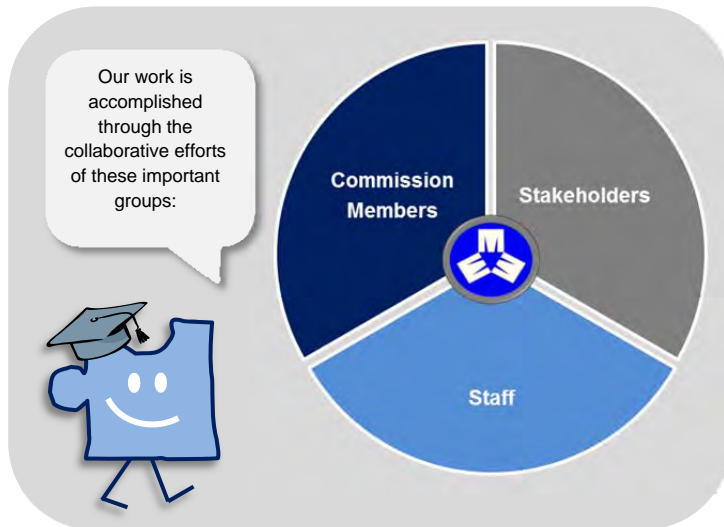
Credentials Granted: Trends between 2006 and 2011

	NB	NS	PE
Undergraduate	↓ 12% (3,674)	↓ 7% (6,877)	↑ 21% (734)
Master's	↑ 14% (542)	↑ 14% (2040)	↑ +27% (107)
Doctorate	↓ 17% (49)	↑ +8% (109)	N/A (2)

Custom Requests

- Over the course of the year, the Commission has provided custom data files and measures to government, institutions and other stakeholders.

COLLABORATION AND OTHER SERVICES



The Commission knows that much more is achieved through cooperation with stakeholders. Each stakeholder group brings a different, important, piece of the “puzzle” when offering their input on the issue at hand. Collaborative work has yielded positive results time and time again, and it has helped to ensure that the Commission’s efforts are in line with stakeholders’ needs and expectations.

Furthermore, and in many cases, working together represents a cost-effective approach for all those involved. For these reasons, and many more, the Commission is continuously engaging in collaborative efforts with its stakeholders.

Forum on Data Collection and Research

- For the past several years, the Commission has been hosting an annual Forum on Data Collection and Research, which provides a venue for data providers and provincial representatives to become informed about data collection requirements and processes, to discuss issues related to the reporting of student administrative data, and to learn about the Commission’s research.
- The Forum took place on December 3, 2013 in Truro Nova Scotia. The forum was attended by institutional researchers, registrars, and provincial representatives responsible for PSE. The agenda included an information session on updates to PSIS and related reporting tools and a session to discuss the Class of 2012 GO Survey that will go to field in the fall of 2014. A large part of the Forum focused on the methodology behind new measures developed under the project of Measures of Student Progress and Outcomes. Participants provided feedback on the methodology and preliminary outputs through round table discussions.

NB/PEI Educational Computer Network Agreement (NB/PEI ECN)

- The NB/PEI Educational Computer Network (ECN), in which the Commission is a signatory, has provided connectivity among its members and to the wider world for the past 42 years. Additional benefits include joint purchasing and licensing, shared support services, the delivery of network-based services and information exchange.
- Over the past fiscal year:
 - A workshop on “Technical Support – Exploring Efficiencies” was held at the Université de Moncton (November 2013). Results from the facilitated discussion were summarized in a report with recommendations around three themes: increase professional development, improve the help desk, and collaborate within ECN. Based on the recommendations, the ECN approved in March 2014 its first-ever (2014-15 to 2016-17) Multi-Year Strategic Plan, focusing on expanding its offerings in the area of shared services.
 - An IT assessment of ECN member institutions (to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each organization’s technical infrastructure and processes) and of the consortium (to identify new areas of collaboration for the group) was completed.
 - MPHEC staff participated in a panel (June 2013) with other Network Committee members at the Atlantic Universities and Colleges Technology Conference (AUCTC), the Atlantic region’s annual higher education IT conference, to discuss the value and benefits of the Dell IT Assessment process to individual institutions and to the consortium.
- ECN members have been jointly issuing RFPs for internet services for several years. A joint RFP for commodity internet services was launched in 2012 by ECN members and NRC and was awarded to BellAliant (the current contract expires at the end of April 2014). ECN also provides Internet access to the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) and Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB) on a full cost-recovery basis. The most recent internet RFP resulted in even lower costs for the ECN. In New Brunswick, it was awarded to Rogers and has also been extended to NBCC/CCNB. In PEI, it was awarded to Eastlink.

Interprovincial Agreements and Intra-Maritime Program Funding Arrangements

- The Commission continued to administer agreements with other Canadian provinces to place Maritime students in programs of study not available in this region. In 2013-2014, **509 Atlantic students** benefited from these agreements.
- The Commission also maintained the Regional Transfer Arrangement (RTA) whereby each of the three Maritime provinces provides funding for any of its residents enrolled in a university program in either of the other two Maritime provinces that is not offered in the student's home province. As a result, in 2011-2012, the latest year for which statistics are available at the time the 2013-2014 budget is prepared, a total of **1,170 students** benefited from the RTA.
- In addition, **235 Atlantic students** in Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Sciences were funded through the Atlantic Veterinary College Interprovincial Funding Agreement in 2011-2012, the latest year for which statistics are available at the time the 2013-2014 budget is prepared. The agreement is administered by the Province of Prince Edward Island.

Financial Services (Services to Provinces)

The act allows the Commission to provide financial services to individual provinces (currently NB [on a cost-recovery basis] and PEI)

New Brunswick:

- The Commission is responsible for preparing the university education budget (which also includes the Maritime College of Forest Technology). This includes calculating operating (unrestricted, tuition grant and restricted) assistance and the various transfers through interprovincial agreements in which the Province participates.
- The MPHEC also administers the university education budget throughout the year, including the Province's committed funds. This includes providing audited financial statements for the Province's university education funding.
- The Commission provides support to the NB/MPHEC Finance Working Group and flows federal funding to institutions for the Canada/New Brunswick Official Languages in Education Agreement and sits on the bi-partite committee that reviews projects submitted under the Province's University Deferred Maintenance Program.

Prince Edward Island:

- The Commission is responsible for preparing the PSE budget. This includes providing the budgeted amounts for the various transfers through interprovincial agreements in which the Province participates.
- The Commission flows funding for the Department of Health relating to Prince Edward Island's contribution to the residency stipends at the Dalhousie Medical School.
- The Commission also administers the PSE budget throughout the year, including the Province's committed funds. This includes providing audited financial statements for the Province's university education funding.

National and International Fora

- The Commission is a member of various committees and working groups and may be delegated by the Maritime Ministers to represent all three Maritime provinces.
- The Commission participates in the following:
 - Atlantic Financial Reporting Committee
 - Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association
 - CMEC Quality Assurance Subcommittee
 - International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
 - National Advisory Committee on Post-Secondary Education Statistics
 - Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer
 - Strategic Management Committee (SMC)
 - SMC Subcommittee on the CESC Data Strategy

2013-2014 Knowledge Sharing

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Publications:

- *Students at the Heart: Stakeholder Reactions to the MPHEC's Proposed Approach to Quality Assurance at Maritime Universities.* Fredericton, NB; September 2013.
- *Programs Under Review:* The MPHEC publishes information electronically on program proposals undergoing review at regular intervals:
 - May 4, 2013
 - September 4, 2013
 - January 7, 2014

DATA & INFORMATION

Publications:

- *Annual Digest: University Enrolment 2011-2012.* May 2013.
- *Annual Digest: Credentials Granted 2011.* June 2013.
- *2013-2014 Tuition, Ancillary and Residence Fees.* September 2013.
 - Table A: Undergraduate Arts and Sciences Full-time Tuition Fees and Provincial Tuition Rebates/Bursaries
 - Table B: Graduate Level Arts and Sciences Full-time Tuition Fees and Provincial Tuition Rebates/Bursaries
 - Table C: Undergraduate Ancillary and Residence Fees
- *Annual Digest: University Enrolment 2012-2013.* February 2014.
- *Enrolment, FTE, and Credentials Granted Statistics;* in November 2013, 18 statistical tables along with 3 databases, available for download, were released :
 - Total Enrolment by Province, Institution, and Registration Status (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Undergraduate Enrolment by Province, Institution, and Registration Status (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Graduate Enrolment by Province, Institution, and Registration Status (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) as of December 1st, by Province, Institution, and Registration Status (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Enrolment of International Students by Province, Institution, Registration Status, and as a Percentage of Total Enrolment (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Enrolment by Province, Major Field of Study, and Level of Study (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Enrolment by Province, Immigration Status, Province of Residence, and Level of Study (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Enrolment by Province, Institution, and Gender (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Enrolment by Province, Field of Study, and Gender (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Total Enrolment by Province, Institution, and Age Group (2008-2009 to 2012-2013)
 - Credentials Granted by Province, Institution, and Type of Credential (2008 to 2012)
 - Degrees Granted by Province, Program Type, and Program Orientation (2008 to 2012)
 - Undergraduate Degrees Granted by Province, Institution, and Field of Study (2012)
 - Graduate Degrees Granted by Province, Institution, and Field of Study (2012)
 - Undergraduate Degrees Granted by Province of Study, Major Field of Study, Immigration Status and Province of Residence (2012)
 - Graduate Degrees Granted by Province of Study, Major Field of Study, Immigration Status and Province of Residence (2012)
 - Degrees Granted by Province, Program Type, and Age Group (2012)
 - Degrees Granted by Province, Program Type, and Student Gender (2012)

Presentations:

- "Graduate Outcomes Survey Program," Forum on Data Collection and Research; December 3, 2013 – Truro, NS
- "Measures of Student Progress and Outcomes," Forum on Data Collection and Research; December 3, 2013 – Truro, NS
- "Measures of Student Progress and Outcomes: Student Course Load," Forum on Data Collection and Research; December 3, 2013 – Truro, NS
- "Measures of Student Progress and Outcomes: Time-to-degree," Forum on Data Collection and Research; December 3,

2013 – Truro, NS

- “PSIS Submissions,” Forum on Data Collection and Research; December 3, 2013 – Truro, NS
- “From PSIS to Pathways: How we are turning data into knowledge in the Maritimes,” Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association; October 29, 2013 – Regina, SK
- “From PSIS to Pathways: How we are turning data into knowledge in the Maritimes,” Data Strategy Subcommittee Meeting (presented by invitation of CMEC); November 6, 2013 – Toronto, ON
- “Why go to university? Labour market outcomes of New Brunswick University Graduates,” Symposium on The Social and Economic Contribution of Public Universities in New Brunswick; March 28, 2014 – Moncton, NB

OTHER

Publications:

- Annual Report – Year in Review: 2012-2013; September 2013.

Presentations:

- “NB-PEI/ECN Collaboration: An independent assessment,” Atlantic Universities and Colleges Technology Conference; June 3, 2013 – Saint John, NB
- “The MPHEC Data and Information Framework,” workshop hosted by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer; January 29, 2014 – Toronto, ON
- “University Education in the Maritimes: What Google Won’t Tell You,” Probus Club; February 4, 2014 – Fredericton, NB



Don't forget!

The following appendices are available online:

A. Audited Financial Statements:

http://www.mphec.ca/media/83224/A_A_MPHEC_signed_Financial_Statements.pdf

B. Membership of the Commission and its Committees:

http://www.mphec.ca/media/83227/A_B_Membership_of_Commission_Cttees_EN.pdf

C. Program Proposals Considered for Approval 2013-2014:

http://www.mphec.ca/media/83233/A_C_Program_Proposals_Considered_for_Approval_EN.pdf