



September 26, 2013

**THIS NOTICE IS REQUIRED BY THE NEW NATIONAL HEALTH REFORM LAW
(ALSO KNOWN AS THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT OR ACA)**

Dear Faculty and Staff:

When key parts of the Affordable Care Act take place in 2014, there will be a new way to buy health insurance: the Health Insurance Marketplace. To assist you as you evaluate options for you and your family, this notice provides some basic information about the new Marketplace and employment-based health coverage offered by Merrimack College.

WHAT IS THE HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE?

The Health Insurance Marketplace is designed to help you find health insurance that meets your needs and fits your budget. The Marketplace offers “one-stop-shopping” to find and compare private health insurance options. You may also be eligible for a new kind of tax credit that lowers your monthly premium. Open enrollment for health insurance coverage through the Marketplace begins in October 2013 for coverage starting January 1, 2014.

**CAN I SAVE MONEY ON MY HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS IN THE
MARKETPLACE?**

You may qualify to save money and lower your monthly premium, but only if you are not eligible for Health Benefits from Merrimack College or if Merrimack’s coverage does not meet certain standards. The savings on your premium that you might be eligible for depends on your household income.

**DOES EMPLOYER HEALTH COVERAGE AFFECT ELIGIBILITY FOR THE
MARKETPLACE?**

Yes, if you are eligible for Health Coverage through Merrimack College, and the coverage meets certain standards, you will not be eligible for a tax credit through the Marketplace and you may wish to enroll in Merrimack’s health plan options. However, you may be eligible for a tax credit that lowers your monthly premium, or a reduction in certain cost-sharing if you are not eligible for health coverage through Merrimack or if Merrimack’s coverage does not meet certain standards. If the cost of the plan from Merrimack College that

covers you (and not your family) is 9.5% of your annual household income, or if the coverage offered by Merrimack College does not meet the “minimum value” standard set by the Affordable Care Act, you may be eligible for a tax credit. An employer-sponsored health plan meets the “minimum standard” if the plan’s share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60% of such costs.

Note: If you purchase a health plan through the Marketplace instead of accepting health coverage offered by your employer, then you may lose the employer contribution (if any) to the employer-offered coverage. Also, this employer contribution – as well as your employee contribution to employer-offered coverage – is often excluded from income for Federal and State income tax purposes. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis.

For more information about the Merrimack College Health Plans and eligibility, please contact Deb Gagnon 978-837-5472 or Laura Higgins at 978-837-5194.

If you are not eligible for health coverage through Merrimack College and wish to consider coverage through the Marketplace, please visit www.HealthCare.gov, for more information. This website will provide an online application for health insurance coverage and contact information for a Health Insurance Marketplace in your area.

If you have any questions about Merrimack’s health insurance coverage, eligibility, or about this letter, please feel free to contact Deb Gagnon at (978) 837-5472 or Laura Higgins at (978) 837-5194.

Sincerely,

Merrimack College
Personnel and Payroll