

NOBLE to HELM FAQ List

For nearly 20 years, the NECC has been a member of the NOBLE library network. **In June 2020, NECC will be ending our membership in NOBLE, and moving to the HELM library network.** The library catalog is the primary service that we receive through network membership, including the ability to share materials among the member libraries. The HELM network is comprised entirely of academic libraries, including 11 of the 15 community colleges in Massachusetts. This move means NECC faculty, staff and students will have the ability to access and request items from the collections of all of them. I will be providing more updates through the spring semester. Please note, that there will be no changes during the spring, but if you have links to library resources, you will need to update them for the summer and fall. We will work with you to make the transition as easy as possible.

Why is the library changing from NOBLE to HELM?

One important reason is cost. The annual fee that we pay to be part of HELM is about 30% lower than what we pay NOBLE. Further, HELM is comprised entirely of academic libraries, whereas NOBLE is 75% public libraries. This change positions us to serve our faculty and students better within a more academic-focused network.

How do the HELM and NOBLE collections differ?

Academic library collections are mostly academic books and electronic resources. After the change, we will be able to offer students and faculty access to more academic library collections. Since NOBLE is mostly public libraries, we have access to their large collections of popular reading items. Academic libraries do not typically collect those materials in large quantities. If you are a frequent user of our NOBLE network for popular leisure reading items, then you will see less of those available after the change. We encourage you to use your town public library for those types of materials, and will gladly help you navigate that process if needed.

Can I still use NOBLE?

If you live in a town with a public library in the NOBLE network, you can still access the NOBLE collections through your public library. Books and other materials cannot be borrowed from or returned to NECC after the changeover.

What about access to ebooks and audiobooks in Overdrive?

Overdrive is available through all public libraries in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. We can offer advice on how to setup access to Overdrive with your local library if necessary. If you have been accessing Overdrive using your NECC account, you will need to switch to an account through your local public library or the Boston Public Library.

When will the network change occur?

The transition date is June 1, 2020

Do I need to get a new library card?

Student library card numbers will remain the same. Most faculty and staff will have new numbers assigned to them. More information about faculty and staff numbers will be forthcoming.

What about my library password?

Library passwords for off campus access will be reset to your birthdate in the format MMDDYYYY. You will be able to change your library password easily by logging into your library account after June 1.

I have links to library database articles in my course materials. Will I need to change those links?

Yes. The proxy server that we use for off campus authentication will be through HELM, so all of the resource links must be updated for the 2020 summer and fall semesters. The library team will be happy to assist you with this. There is also the option of embedding resources directly into your Blackboard courses, which we will also assist with.

Are the library databases changing?

No, the network change does not impact our electronic resources. Access to the library databases is contracted with individual vendors.

I have an item that I borrowed from another NOBLE library. When do I need to return it?

Because of the pandemic disruption, do not be concerned with returning your books at this time. Once it is safe to do so, the lending library will be in touch about how and when to get things back to them.

Will NECC's contributions to the NOBLE Digital Heritage site go away, too?

Yes. We are in the process of moving all of the content in the NOBLE Digital Heritage site to a new digital archives, giving us more control of how it is presented and located. This new site will be shared widely once available.