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Middle States Commission on Higher Education

3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680. Tel: 267-284-5000. Fax: 215-662-5501
www.msche.org

May 21, 2015

Dr. Marcia G. Welsh, President
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania
200 Prospect Street
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301-2999

Dear Dr. Welsh:

I write to thank you and everyone at ESU for welcoming me to your institution to discuss its self-study design. I was impressed with the clear commitment that various individuals have to the institution. I believe that we had a number of substantive conversations about the self-study design and I hope that my feedback was helpful as ESU moves forward to researching the questions it has posed, documenting compliance with the Commission's standards, drafting the self-study, and eventually hosting the evaluation team visit in 2017.

I came away from the visit believing that the institution is prepared to undertake an effective and useful self-study process. In what follows, I offer a few reminders about how the self-study process might be further enhanced:

1. It is encouraging that many of the questions in the self study design are evaluative and that ESU's Steering Committee is staffed with what appears to be representatives of various groups, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators. I recommend continuing to ensure that each working group contains an appropriate balance of these stakeholders so that the interests of one group do not receive more attention than those of others.
2. The self-study design appears to address the institution's mission statement and the institution's goals and objectives substantially, something so very important in any self study process. It will be important that the Steering Committee and its Working Groups continue their efforts to assess institutional mission and ESU's key goals and objectives in substantive ways and to ensure that student learning and institutional goals and objectives are clearly stated and assessed appropriately; and,
3. The Commission continues to require institutions to demonstrate the implementation of an organized, systematic, and sustained assessment process that is used in budgeting, planning, and resource allocation. From now until the decennial team visit is complete, it will be important for ESU to demonstrate that a fully-functioning assessment process is in place for all academic programs, for general education, and for the institution as a whole and its constituent units.

I believe that ESU's choice to follow a comprehensive self-study model is an appropriate one and that this choice enhances the potential for the Steering Committee and Working Groups to evaluate ESU's mission effectively and to identify for the institution recommendations that will further enhance the institution's mission. The suggestions I have made are in the spirit of

collegial feedback and I hope they will be helpful to the Steering Committee and Working Groups in particular.

In accordance with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's specification of self-study procedures (*Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process and Report, 2nd Edition, p. 29*), I therefore approve the self-study design. By approving the design, I recognize that changes to self-study research questions might indeed occur from time to time (which do not require my approval), but I also emphasize that any major changes to the design require Commission approval (*Ibid.*, p. 29).

I thank you again for your warm hospitality and for your obvious commitment to peer review, and I remain available to assist ESU as it moves forward with its decennial self-study review process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. McKittrick', with a small dot at the end.

Sean A. McKittrick, Ph.D.
Vice President