



Middle States Commission on Higher Education

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

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OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT

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June 29, 2012

Dr. Rodney A. Erickson
President
The Pennsylvania State University
201 Old Main Building
University Park
University Park, PA 16802

Dear Dr. Erickson:

At its session on June 28, 2012, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education acted:

To accept the progress report. To remind the institution that the Commission must continue to be informed of any further developments that may result in changes in mission, programs, personnel, and/or budget arising from the institution's investigation or that may result in a change of status with external oversight bodies, such as the NCAA, and to request that the institution provide to the Commission copies of all relevant reports from its investigation or to its external oversight bodies. The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2014-2015.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the Statement of Accreditation Status for your institution. The Statement of Accreditation Status (SAS) provides important basic information about the institution and its affiliation with the Commission, and it is made available to the public in the Directory of Members and Candidates on the Commission's website at www.msche.org. Accreditation applies to the institution as detailed in the SAS; institutional information is derived from data provided by the institution through annual reporting and from Commission actions. If any of the institutional information is incorrect, please contact the Commission as soon as possible.

Please check to ensure that published references to your institution's accredited status (catalog, other publications, web page) include the full name, address, and telephone number of the accrediting agency. Further guidance is provided in the Commission's policy statement *Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status*. If the action for your institution includes preparation of a progress report, monitoring report or supplemental report, please see our policy statement on *Follow-up Reports and Visits*. Both policies can be obtained from our website.

Please be assured of the continuing interest of the Commission on Higher Education in the well-being of The Pennsylvania State University. If any further clarification is needed regarding the SAS or other items in this letter, please feel free to contact Dr. Tito Guerrero, Vice President.

Sincerely,

R. Barbara Gitenstein, Ph.D.
Chair



MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STATUS

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

201 Old Main Building

University Park

University Park, PA 16802

Phone: (814) 865-4700; Fax: (814) 865-1100

www.psu.edu

**Chief Executive
Officer:**

Dr. Rodney A. Erickson, President

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Enrollment

(Headcount): 69863 Undergraduate; 9745 Graduate

Control: Public

Affiliation: State

**Carnegie
Classification:** Research - Very High Research Activity

Degrees Offered: Postsecondary Certificate (< 1 year), Postsecondary Certificate (>=1 year, < 2 years), Associate's, Bachelor's, Postbaccalaureate Certificate, Master's, Doctor's - Professional Practice, Doctor's - Research/Scholarship;

Distance Education Yes

Programs:

Accreditors Approved by U.S. Secretary of Education: American Bar Association, Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar; American Dietetic Association, American Commission on Education in Nutrition and Dietetics; American Physical Therapy Association, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education; American Psychological Association, Commission on Accreditation; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology; Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education; Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education; Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology; Liaison Committee on Medical Education; National Association of Schools of Art and Design, Commission on Accreditation; National Association of Schools of Music, Commission on Accreditation; National Association of Schools of Theatre, Commission on Accreditation; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission

Other Accreditors: American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business; American Assoc of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians; American Chemical Society; American Psychological Assoc; Assoc for Assessment and Accred of Laboratory Animal Care International; Assoc for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business-International; Assoc to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB); Commission on Accred of Athletic Trg Ed; Council for the Accred of

Counseling and Related Ed Prog; Council on Rehab Ed; Institute of Food Technologists; Landscape Architecture Accred Board (LAAB); National Accred Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences; National Architectural Accred Board (NAAB); National Assoc for Sport and Phys Ed (NASPE); National Assoc of Schools of Public Affairs & Administration (NASPAA); North America Wildlife Techn Assoc; PA State Board of Nursing – Licensing; PA Depart of Ed; Professional Golfer's Assoc (PGA) of America; Soc of American Foresters; Society of Wood Science and Technology

Instructional Locations

Branch Campuses: Dickinson School of Law, Carlisle, PA; Penn State College of Medicine, Hershey, PA.

Additional Locations: Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies, Malvern, PA; Penn State Abington, Abington, PA; Penn State Altoona, Altoona, PA; Penn State Beaver, Monaca, PA; Penn State Berks, Reading, PA; Penn State Brandywine, Media, PA; Penn State Dubois, DuBois, PA; Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, Erie, PA; Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus, Uniontown, PA; Penn State Greater Allegheny, McKeesport, PA; Penn State Harrisburg, Middletown, PA; Penn State Hazleton, Hazleton, PA; Penn State Lehigh Valley, Center Valley, PA; Penn State Mont Alto, Mont Alto, PA; Penn State New Kensington, Upper Burrell, PA; Penn State Schuylkill, Schuylkill Haven, PA; Penn State Shenango, Sharon, PA; Penn State Wilkes-Barre, Lehman, PA; Penn State Worthington Scranton, Dunmore, PA; Penn State York, York, PA.

Other Instructional Sites: Aria Health, Philadelphia, PA; Bloomsburg Health, Bloomsburg, PA; Clearfield Area High School, Clearfield, PA; Community Education Council of Elk and Cameron Counties, St. Marys, PA; Corporate Learning Center, Bethlem, PA; Downtown Conference Center, Altoona, PA; Eastern Center for Arts and Technology, Willow Grove, PA; Hanover Hospital, Hanover, PA; Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, PA; Kraft, Wilkes-Barre, PA; Lancaster Center, Lancaster, PA; Manitowoc Crane Group, Shady Grove, PA; Middle Bucks Institute of Technology, Jamison, PA; Mount Nittany Medical Center/Clinics in Centre County, State College, PA; Northern Tier Center, Towanda, PA; Penn State Continuing Education at Williamsport, Williamsport, PA; Pittsburgh Mills Mall, Tarentum, PA; Proctor & Gamble, Mehoopany, PA; Regional Learning Alliance, Cranberry Twp., PA; Sallie Mae, Hanover Twp., PA; Schuylkill Health School of Nursing, Pottsville, PA; Shaver's Creek, Petersburg, PA; The Penn State Learning Center (Lewistown), Lewistown, PA; Tobyhanna Army Depot, Tobyhanna, PA; UPMC McKeesport Hospital, McKeesport, PA; Westmoreland County Community College, Youngwood, PA.

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

Status: Member since 1921

Last Reaffirmed: November 18, 2010

Most Recent Commission Action:

June 28, 2012: To accept the progress report. To remind the institution that the Commission must continue to be informed of any further developments that may result in changes in mission, programs, personnel, and/or budget arising from the institution's investigation or that may result in a change of status with external oversight bodies, such as the NCAA, and to request that the institution provide to the Commission copies of all relevant reports from its investigation or to its external oversight bodies. The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2014-2015.

Brief History Since Last Comprehensive Evaluation:

November 18, 2010: To accept the Periodic Review Report and to reaffirm accreditation. To request a progress report due by April 1, 2012 documenting evidence of further progress in: (1) the establishment of learning goals at the program level in all programs; and (2) the use of appropriate assessment of the attainment of learning goals at the program level, including use of direct measures of the assessment of student learning and evidence that assessment results are used to improve teaching and learning (Standard 14). The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2014-2015.

March 1, 2012: To accept the Commission-requested information report, to remind the institution that the Commission must continue to be informed of any further developments that may result in changes in mission, programs, personnel and/or budget arising from the institution's investigation or that may result in a change of status with external oversight bodies, such as the NCAA, and to request that the institution provide to the Commission copies of all relevant reports from its investigation or to its external oversight bodies. To further remind the institution of the progress report due by April 1, 2012 documenting evidence of further progress in: (1) the establishment of learning goals at the program level in all programs; and (2) the use of appropriate assessment of the attainment of learning goals at the program level, including use of direct measures of the assessment of student learning and evidence that assessment results are used to improve teaching and learning (Standard 14). The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2014-2015.

Next Self-Study Evaluation: 2014 - 2015

Next Periodic Review Report: 2020

Date Printed: June 29, 2012

DEFINITIONS

Branch Campus - A location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. The location is independent if the location: offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential; has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

Additional Location - A location, other than a branch campus, that is geographically apart from the main campus and at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program. **ANYA** ("Approved but Not Yet Active") indicates that the location is included within the scope of accreditation but has not yet begun to offer courses. This designation is removed after the Commission receives notification that courses have begun at this location.

Other Instructional Sites - A location, other than a branch campus or additional location, at which the institution offers one or more courses for credit.

Distance Education Programs - Yes or No indicates whether or not the institution has been approved to offer one or more degree or certificate/diploma programs for which students could meet 50% or more of their requirements by taking distance education courses.

EXPLANATION OF COMMISSION ACTIONS

An institution's accreditation continues unless it is explicitly suspended or removed. In addition to reviewing the institution's accreditation status at least every 5 years, actions are taken for substantive changes (such as a new degree or geographic site, or a change of ownership) or when other events occur that require review for continued compliance. Any type of report or visit required by the Commission is reviewed and voted on by the Commission after it is completed.

In increasing order of seriousness, a report by an institution to the Commission may be accepted, acknowledged, or rejected.

Levels of Actions:

Grant or Re-Affirm Accreditation without follow-up

Defer a decision on initial accreditation: The institution shows promise but the evaluation team has identified issues of concern and recommends that the institution be given a specified time period to address those concerns.

Postpone a decision on (reaffirmation of) accreditation: The Commission has determined that there is insufficient information to substantiate institutional compliance with one or more standards.

Continue accreditation: A delay of up to one year may be granted to ensure a current and accurate representation of the institution or in the event of circumstances beyond the institution's control (natural disaster, U.S. State Department travel warnings, etc.)

Recommendations to be addressed in the next Periodic Review Report: Suggestions for improvement are given, but no follow-up is needed for compliance.

Supplemental Information Report: This is required when a decision is postponed and are intended only to allow the institution to provide further information, not to give the institution time to formulate plans or initiate remedial action.

Progress report: The Commission needs assurance that the institution is carrying out activities that were planned or were being implemented at the time of a report or on-site visit.

Monitoring report: There is a potential for the institution to become non-compliant with MSCHE standards; issues are more complex or more numerous; or issues require a substantive, detailed report. A visit may or may not be required.

Warning: The Commission acts to Warn an institution that its accreditation may be in jeopardy when the institution is not in compliance with one or more Commission standards and a follow-up report, called a monitoring report, is required to demonstrate that the institution has made appropriate improvements to bring itself into compliance. Warning indicates that the Commission believes that, although the institution is out of compliance, the institution has the capacity to make appropriate improvements within a reasonable period of time and the institution has the capacity to sustain itself in the long term.

Probation: The Commission places an institution on Probation when, in the Commission's judgment, the institution is not in compliance with one or more Commission standards and that the non-compliance is sufficiently serious, extensive, or acute that it raises concern about one or more of the following:

1. the adequacy of the education provided by the institution;
2. the institution's capacity to make appropriate improvements in a timely fashion; or
3. the institution's capacity to sustain itself in the long term.

Probation is often, but need not always be, preceded by an action of Warning or Postponement. If the Commission had previously postponed a decision or placed the institution on Warning, the Commission may place the institution on Probation if it determines that the institution has failed to address satisfactorily the Commission's concerns in the prior action of postponement or warning regarding compliance with Commission standards. This action is accompanied by a

request for a monitoring report, and a special visit follows. Probation may, but need not always, precede an action of Show Cause.

Suspend accreditation: Accreditation has been Continued for one year and an appropriate evaluation is not possible. This is a procedural action that would result in Removal of Accreditation if accreditation cannot be reaffirmed within the period of suspension.

Show cause why the institution's accreditation should not be removed: The institution is required to present its case for accreditation by means of a substantive report and/or an on-site evaluation. A "Public Disclosure Statement" is issued by the Commission.

Remove accreditation. If the institution appeals this action, its accreditation remains in effect until the appeal is completed.

Other actions are described in the Commission policy, "Range of Commission Actions on Accreditation."