

December 7, 2009

Dr. Elizabeth H. Sibolski  
Acting President  
Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
3624 Market Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-2680

Dear Dr. Sibolski:

My colleagues and I have carefully reviewed the report of the evaluation team that visited Empire State College on November 1 – 4, 2009. We concur with the findings of the team and accept the report as written.

We appreciate the leadership of Dr. George Pruitt, team chair, and the contributions of the very highly qualified team members. Team members came to the visit thoroughly prepared and carried out their evaluative responsibilities in a professional and collegial manner. The faculty, staff and students who met team members were impressed with their grasp of the institution and their broad experience and understanding of higher education and peer review.

The team visit and exit interview conveyed a very positive evaluation of the college and affirmed the conclusions of the institutional self-study. We were pleased that the team identified eight areas for commendation in areas of governance, institutional planning and assessment, academic programs, institutional resources, student services and the quality of institutional leadership and the dedication of faculty and staff.

The college will give careful attention to the suggestions presented by the team. They are congruent with the action items in our self-study report and we are pleased for this validation of our analyses. The team's single recommendation called for SUNY system administration to allocate resources more appropriately to Empire State College. We have been in conversations for some time with the senior administration in the system about this matter and look forward to further constructive collaboration.

We overlooked two typographical errors in reviewing the draft team report. On page 4, the second title in the list of programs offered at a distance should be "Middle Childhood Education (MAT)." On page 6, the third line under the heading "Evaluation Overview" should read "...Suggestions relative to Standards 2, 7, 9, 11, 12, and 14..."

The self-study process and the team visit and report came at an opportune time for the college. At the same that the institutional self-study was nearing completion, I engaged the college community in a participatory process that culminated in the Vision 2015 statement that was shared with the team. Building on the vision, a strategic planning process is now under way, with a plan for 2010 – 2015 to be completed early in 2010 after wide consultation within the college. We believe that our discussions with team

members and their report, as well as the self-study findings, will be of great value in our planning.

We appreciate the work that you and MSCHE commissioners and staff continue to do in support of regional accreditation and quality in higher education. We find great value in the peer review process and the collegial advice that we received from the team. We look forward to our ongoing work with Middle States.

Sincerely yours,

Alan R. Davis  
President