



BOARD OF REGENTS

SUMMARY OF ITEM FOR ACTION, INFORMATION, OR DISCUSSION

TOPIC: Accreditation Update: Frostburg State University

COMMITTEE: Education Policy and Student Life

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: September 20, 2016

SUMMARY: Accreditation of the USM institutions is through the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), which sets forth standards for accreditation and provides support and guidance to meet those standards.

Accreditation by the Commission follows a period of candidacy lasting up to five years. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education reviews institutions periodically through either on-site evaluation (decennial review) or other reports. Accreditation is continued only as a result of periodic reviews and evaluations of institutional achievements. The Periodic Review Report, due five years after the decennial self-study and reaffirmation of accreditation, is a retrospective, current, and prospective analysis of the institution. The decennial evaluation involves a significant institutional self-study and a visit by a team of external peer evaluators.

Several of our institutions were up for their decennial review during 2015-2016. The Committee will receive an update on Frostburg State University's review, which resulted in a warning that the institution's accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), and Standard 12 (General Education). It is critical to note that Frostburg remains accredited by the MSCHE while on warning. The report includes a summary of Commission actions, current status, and expected activities.

ALTERNATIVE(S): This is an information item only.

FISCAL IMPACT: This is an information item only.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION: This is an information item only.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Information Only

DATE: September 20, 2016

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

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MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Public Disclosure Statement

Frostburg State University

June 23, 2016

By the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

This statement has been developed for use in responding to public inquiries, consistent with the Commission's policies on [Public Communication in the Accrediting Process](#), [Accreditation Actions](#), and [Standardized Language for Commission Actions on Accreditation](#). It should be read in conjunction with the *Statement of Accreditation Status* for Frostburg State University. The policies listed above explain what information the Commission makes public regarding its member institutions and what information remains confidential, describe the various accreditation actions the Commission can take, and define the terms used in the Commission's actions.

Frostburg State University, located in Frostburg, Maryland, is a public institution and part of the University System of Maryland. The University has been accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education since 1953. Frostburg State University offers Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees, along with postsecondary and post-baccalaureate certificates and diplomas. A complete listing of Frostburg State University's Additional Locations and Other Instructional Sites can be found in its *Statement of Accreditation Status*. A summary of the most recent Commission actions relative to the institution's accreditation follows.

Current Accreditation Status

On June 23, 2016, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education acted to warn the institution that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), and Standard 12 (General Education). The full text of the Commission's action is provided below. The Commission's accreditation standards are available online at <http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX-2011-WEB.pdf>.

Frostburg State University remains accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education while on warning.

The Commission places an institution on warning when, in the Commission's judgment, the institution is not in compliance with one or more Commission accreditation standards. When the

Commission warns an institution, it believes that, although the institution is out of compliance, the institution has the capacity both to make appropriate improvements within a reasonable period and to sustain itself in the long term. A follow-up report, called a monitoring report, is required to demonstrate that the institution has made appropriate improvements to bring itself into compliance. A small team visit also is conducted to verify institutional status and progress.

Summary of Recent Commission Actions

At least every ten years, all accredited institutions engage in an 18-24 month period of self-study intended to demonstrate institutional compliance with accreditation standards and to promote institutional improvement. Frostburg State University completed its self-study process and hosted an evaluation team visit during the 2015-16 academic year.

On June 23, 2016, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education acted as follows:

To warn the institution that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), and Standard 12 (General Education). To note that the institution remains accredited while on warning. To request a monitoring report, due March 1, 2017, documenting evidence that the institution has achieved and can sustain compliance with Standards 7 and 12, including but not limited to evidence of the development and implementation of (1) a documented, organized, and sustained institutional effectiveness assessment process, with evidence that assessment information is used to improve programs, services, and processes and is shared and discussed with appropriate constituents (Standard 7) and (2) assessment of general education outcomes with evidence that assessment results are utilized for curricular improvement (Standard 12). A small team visit will follow submission of the monitoring report. To direct a prompt liaison guidance visit to discuss Commission expectations. The date of the next accreditation review will be established when accreditation is reaffirmed.

Current Status and Expected Activities

Frostburg State University remains accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education while on warning.

Following submission of a monitoring report on March 1, 2017, the Commission will conduct a small team visit to assess the institution's compliance with the Commission's standards. Following the on-site visit, a report by the visiting team will be completed. The monitoring report, the small team report and the institutional response to the small team report will be considered by the Committee on Follow-Up Activities, and then by the Commission.

Following review by the Committee on Follow-up Activities, the Commission will take further

action, in accordance with the Commission's policy, *Accreditation Actions* (available at <http://www.msche.org/documents/P2.3-AccreditationActions.pdf>). If, based on the monitoring report and small team report, the Commission determines that Frostburg State University has made appropriate progress in addressing the cited concerns, the Commission may act to remove the warning and reaffirm accreditation. If the Commission determines that progress sufficient to demonstrate compliance with its accreditation standards has not been made, the Commission may take further action as allowed under *Accreditation Actions*.

For More Information

The following resources provide additional information that may be helpful in understanding the Commission's actions and Frostburg State University's accreditation status:

Statement of Accreditation Status for Frostburg State University (http://www.msche.org/institutions_directory.asp) provides factual information about Frostburg State University and the full text of the Commission's recent actions regarding the institution.

Media Backgrounder (<http://www.msche.org/documents/MediaBackgrounder2016.pdf>) answers questions about accreditation such as "What is accreditation?" and "What is the Middle States Commission on Higher Education?"

Informing the Public about Accreditation (www.chea.org/public_info/index.asp), published by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, provides additional information on the nature and value of accreditation.