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March 15, 2018

Dr. James Dlugos
President
Saint Joseph's College of Maine
278 Whites Bridge Road
Standish, ME 04084-5263

Dear President Dlugos:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on March 1, 2018, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education considered the report submitted by Saint Joseph's College of Maine and voted the following:

that action on the report submitted by Saint Joseph's College of Maine be deferred, pending the receipt of additional information, specifically:

1. evidence of using assessment results for program improvement;
2. specific information on how the strategic plan and multi-year financial plan are integrated, including a comparison of projected and actual results to date for the FY2015-2019 financial plan;
3. details of the process and timeline that will be used to decide whether the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology program will be continued;

that the additional information be submitted by April 9, 2018 for consideration at the Commission's April 2018 meeting.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

While we acknowledge the progress Saint Joseph's College of Maine (SJCM) has made since its Fall 2016 interim (fifth-year) report in each of the areas identified, action was deferred because the Commission did not have enough information to make a decision. Specifically, the Commission seeks additional information about three matters related to our standards on *Planning and Evaluation*, *Educational Effectiveness*, *Institutional Resources*, and *The Academic Program*.

While SJCM described in its report a number of "ongoing, new, or enhanced" assessment initiatives including the use of e-portfolios, regular administration

of the Gradleaders Outcomes Survey, mapping of online program competencies to the College's institutional learning outcomes, and a revised Annual Program Review and Planning Report, little evidence was provided to demonstrate the institution's use of assessment results for improvement as requested in our November 14, 2016 letter. We therefore ask that the institution provide this information in its report prepared for the Commission's April 2018 meeting. Our standards on *Planning and Evaluation* and *Educational Effectiveness* support this request:

The institution has a demonstrable record of success in using the results of its evaluation activities to inform planning, changes in programs and services, and resource allocation (2.8).

The results of assessment and quantitative measures of student success are a demonstrable factor in the institution's efforts to improve the learning opportunities and results for students (8.8).

We appreciate the summary provided of the assumptions used to build SJCM's initial Multi-Year Financial Plan that covers FY2015 to FY2019, and note with approval the projects undertaken during the turnover of the institution's CFO and Controller, including implementation of Great Plains Financial software to "improve [the College's] ability to effectively track and report financial data." Missing from the report, however, was evidence of the link between the Multi-Year Financial Plan and the College's strategic plan (*Sustaining the Promise*) to demonstrate the institution had been successful in integrating its financial and strategic planning as requested in our letter of November 14, 2016. Accordingly, we ask for further information in the report that will be reviewed at the Commission's April 2018 meeting on how the Multi-Year Financial Plan and the College's strategic plan are integrated, including a comparison to date of the projected and actual results of the financial plan to ensure the assumptions on which it was built are realistic and achievable. We refer you to our standards on *Planning and Evaluation* and *Institutional Resources*:

Planning and evaluation are systematic, comprehensive, broad-based, integrated, and appropriate to the institution. They involve the participation of individuals and groups responsible for the achievement of institutional purposes and include external perspectives (2.1).

The institution's multi-year financial planning is realistic and reflects the capacity of the institution to depend on identified sources of revenue and ensure the advancement of educational quality and services for students (7.6).

The institution's financial planning, including contingency planning, is integrated with overall planning and evaluation processes. The institution demonstrates its ability to analyze its financial condition and understand the opportunities and constraints that will influence its financial condition and acts accordingly. It reallocates resources as necessary to achieve its purposes and objectives (7.14).

Finally, we understand that admission to the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) program – which currently has two students enrolled – has been "paused" due to the resignation of the second program director in two years. While the College is assessing the viability of the program, the Director of the Health Administration Program has agreed to serve as the interim director for the program to "assure a quality education for currently enrolled BSIT students." We anticipate being apprised, in the April 2018 report, of the timeline for this decision and the factors the institution is considering. Our standard on *The Academic Program* specifies:

The institution undertakes academic planning and evaluation as part of its overall planning and evaluation to enhance the achievement of institutional mission and program objectives. These activities are realistic and take into account stated goals and available resources. Additions and deletions of programs are consistent with institutional mission and capacity, faculty expertise, student needs, and the availability of sufficient resources required for the development and improvement of academic programs. The institution allocates resources on the basis of its academic planning, needs, and objectives (4.7).

When programs are eliminated or program requirements are changed, the institution makes appropriate arrangements for enrolled students so that they may complete their education with a minimum of disruption (4.9).

Saint Joseph's College of Maine is requested to submit the additional information by April 9, 2018 for consideration at the Commission's April meeting. We request four paper copies and an electronic copy (single, searchable pdf file).

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Kenneth Lemanski. The institution is free to release information about the report and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



David P. Angel

DPA/jm

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Kenneth Lemanski