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November 10, 2020

Dr. Zulma Toro
President
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT 06050-4010

Dear President Toro:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on September 25, 2020, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the report submitted by Central Connecticut State University and took the following action:

that the report submitted by Central Connecticut State University be accepted;

that the interim (fifth-year) report scheduled for consideration in Fall 2023 be confirmed;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Fall 2028 be confirmed.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The report submitted by Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) was accepted because it was responsive to the concerns raised by the Commission in its letter of May 22, 2019.

The Commission commends Central Connecticut State University for its comprehensive report describing the progress the institution has made in response to the three areas specified by the Commission: completing and implementing its strategic plan; achieving enrollment goals; and documenting compliance with Title IV and Title IX requirements and ensuring sufficient staffing for Title IX requirements. We note with favor that shortly after the comprehensive evaluation, CCSU developed a Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), engaged the entire campus community in the strategic planning process, and began implementation of the approved plan, *SP 2030*, in February 2020. We are pleased to learn that the University adopted five strategic goals each supported by objectives, strategies, and key activities.

The Commission also takes favorable note of the reorganization undertaken by CCSU to enhance its enrollment efforts through the creation of a new division, Enrollment Management, that comprises Admissions, Graduate Admissions, Transfer and Academic Articulations, and Financial Aid. However, despite a

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strong focus on retention and recruitment, there was a 5-6% downturn in enrollment AY2020 pre-COVID-19. In addition, the University anticipates a 10% additional downturn for AY2021. The Commission appreciates the on-going planning and student-centered responsiveness CCSU demonstrates in its efforts to reach its ambitious enrollment goals of 15,000 students.

Finally, the Commission is pleased to learn that CCSU has made considerable progress with respect to compliance with Title IV and Title IX requirements. Given this progress, the University was notified by the United States Department of Education that it has “satisfied the definition of an eligible institution” and is qualified to participate in federal student assistance programs. In addition, CCSU created a new Office of Financial Literacy which hosts several workshops both on and off campus. To ensure compliance with Title IX, CCSU assembled a Task Force on Sexual Misconduct, Bullying and Campus Culture and included “Fostering an Inclusive and Safe Campus Culture” as one of the goals in *SP 2030* supported by a 15-point action plan. Additional staffing and reorganization to support this goal includes elevating the Chief Diversity Office to the vice presidential level, changing the name of the Office of Diversity and Equity to the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI), and hiring an additional officer and two new associates for the OEI.

Commission policy requires an interim (fifth-year) report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution’s current status in keeping with the Policy on Periodic Review. We refer you to our letter of May 22, 2019, which specifies matters to receive attention in the Fall 2023 interim report, including information about the institution’s continued progress in addressing the areas of emphasis for the Fall 2020 report. The Commission recognizes that these matters do not lend themselves to rapid resolution and will require the University’s sustained attention over time; hence, we ask that further information be provided in the Fall 2023 interim report.

Finally, the scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Fall 2028 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by Central Connecticut State University and hopes that its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

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 and the head of the state system of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Matt Fleury and Mr. Mark E. Ojakian. 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 Lawrence M. Schall, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



George W. Tetler

GWT/jm

Enclosure: Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions

cc: Mr. Matt Fleury
Mr. Mark E. Ojakian