October 13, 2015

To the Campus Community:

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistants (ARC-PA) has cited the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) for being out of compliance with its standards for institutional oversight, reporting, staffing, clinical sites and general support for an accredited program. Consequently, ARC-PA has informed UMES that the Commission does not plan to continue accreditation of the University’s PA program.

UMES’ first priority is the welfare of PA students enrolled in the program. The University is working toward arrangements for all students in the program so that their educational pursuits are impacted as little as possible.

With resolve, UMES acknowledges that meaningful changes in how this institution delivers the physician assistant program must be made in a manner consistent with its other stellar academic programs. The PA students and faculty, as well as this region and the State expected more from UMES, and rightfully so.

Our institution’s character is rooted in its integrity. That means facing reality head-on and acting according to our core values – especially during difficult times. The University reinforces its commitment to all students across a spectrum of disciplines offering distinctive degree programs. It will continue to secure, invest, and manage the human and fiscal resources necessary to sustain these programs.

This University pledges to emerge from this situation a better institution, deeply rooted in fundamental principles that make us who we are — a place devoted to diversity, committed to access and opportunity for all. We will be guided by our core values of integrity, commitment, accountability, respect, and excellence in everything we do.

The Commission’s findings are a major setback for the physician assistant program and a region in need of qualified health care professionals. Consequently, UMES, with the support of the University System of Maryland, is committed to taking this opportunity to rebuild the PA program into one that reflects our core values, as our other programs do, and exceeds the Commission’s standards.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Juliette B. Bell, Ph.D.
President