October 22, 2015

Dear Campus Community:

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore on Tuesday notified the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) of our intent to voluntarily withdraw our PA program from the ARC-PA accreditation review process, effective December 31, 2015.

The decision to voluntarily withdraw was a difficult one, but the right thing to do and in the best interest of our students. This decision means that physician assistant students scheduled to graduate in December will be eligible to be licensed to practice in the medical field after passing the professional certification exam.

With this decision, the University is now focused on developing a plan to provide first- and second-year students in the master’s program an alternative path to earning their degree from an accredited program.

In addition, I will convene a task force, to include among others, members from the medical community, whose charge will be to:

1) review and develop policies and procedures necessary for comprehensive oversight of UMES' physician assistant program and make recommendations for program improvement and enhancement;
2) develop a plan for stringent compliance with the standards of the ARC-PA and guide the university's efforts toward reaccreditation.

UMES is focused on this challenge, and in the days and weeks ahead, we will take the necessary actions to address these issues.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Juliette B. Bell, Ph.D.
President