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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 12, 2015

TO: Ms. Tina M. Bjarekull  
Mr. Matt Daly  
Dr. Tuajuanda Jordan  
Dr. William E. Kirwan  
Dr. Bernard J. Sadusky  
Dr. David Wilson  
College and University Chief Academic Officers

FROM: Jennie C. Hunter-Cevera, Ph.D. *JCHC*  
Acting Secretary of Higher Education

SUBJECT: Stratford University Certificate of Approval

On May 20, 2015, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) circulated a Certificate of Approval application for Stratford University to operate *The Sojourner-Douglass Center at Stratford University*, including 11 academic programs. The proposal is in the required 30-day circulation period in accordance with statute and regulation, and will remain so through July 12, 2015. We ask that if you plan to offer a comment or objection to do so as quickly as possible.

In MHEC's subsequent discussions with Stratford University's President and Chief Academic Officer earlier this week, I was apprised that Stratford will not be utilizing academic space on the Sojourner-Douglass College campus in Baltimore as originally anticipated, but rather, will be seeking a suitable location in a building proximate to the campus. As you may be aware, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education has withdrawn Sojourner-Douglass College's accreditation effective June 30, 2015. At that time, MHEC will withdraw authorization for the institution to operate in Maryland, since statute requires that degree-granting institutions maintain accreditation.

While Stratford University has stated that its intention remains to serve current and former students of Sojourner-Douglass College who choose to attend Stratford, and in fact has executed a teach-out agreement with Sojourner-Douglass College, that is the extent of the formal relationship between the two institutions. While the two institutions had been working to come to an agreement over a period of several months, no merger or acquisition has occurred. The leadership of Stratford University has shared with MHEC that it remains committed to meeting the needs of students in Baltimore, including current and former students of Sojourner-Douglass College, who can be served by its mission and programs.

Stratford University has been forthcoming and transparent with respect to its current status, and I wanted to ensure that MHEC clearly communicated these most recent developments with all of you, as they relate to this Certificate of Approval application. In light of this new information pertinent to the application, I am extending the circulation deadline for review for another 30 days from today's date, until July 12, 2015. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions or concerns.

cc: Ms. Diane Hampton, Director of Institutional Relations, MICUA  
Ms. Theresa Hollander, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, USM  
Ms. Jody Kallis, Legislative Director, MACC