

23 February 2017

Dr. Michael Kiphart
Director of Academic Affairs
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 North Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear Dr. Kiphart:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the objection letter submitted by Salisbury University regarding Stevenson University's proposal for a new Bachelor of Science degree in Sales Management and Leadership. We wish to respond to concerns raised by Salisbury about this program being unreasonably duplicative and causing demonstrable harm, given Salisbury's current course offerings and potential future plans in this area.

The purpose of our proposed Sales Management and Leadership degree program is to provide students with the education demanded of them by employers and as such is well aligned with Stevenson University's mission. The curricular design and course content integrate Stevenson's career-focused approach with a strong grounding in the liberal arts so as to prepare students for one of the fastest growing and income stable professional areas in the current and future US job market. With that said, our research on the need for professional sales staff and sales managers as well as the overall growth opportunities for persons who hold a bachelor's degree in sales and sales-related areas suggests that there is considerable market demand for academic programs in this area. Career positions in professional sales and sales management are estimated to grow 5% per year in the next 8-10 years nationally and 6% per year for the same time frame in Maryland. Sales managers have been listed as one of the top ten largest growing occupations by a number of business journals and by government-based agencies since 2014. The demand for sales professionals and sales managers is continually growing according to a number of the largest employment websites, e.g. simplyhired.com, monster.com, and careerbuilder.com.

As cited in Stevenson's proposal to MHEC and reiterated in the preceding paragraph, the market demand for this program is strong both regionally and nationally. The state-level market demand data suggest that there is sufficient room for more than one Maryland higher education institution to offer a bachelor's degree in this field of study.

Respectfully, we wish to note that it is challenging to respond to an objection based on program duplication, given that Salisbury does not currently offer a similar program as a bachelor's

degree. We understand that Salisbury has a minor in Professional Sales and may seek approval for a major from the University System of Maryland and MHEC at some point in the future. Sight unseen, we cannot comment on the extent to which Stevenson's proposed program would or would not differ from Salisbury's future program in terms of content, coursework, curriculum, student outcomes, and target audiences. However, we can definitively state that:

- Stevenson University and Salisbury University are not at all geographically proximate, with campuses more than 120 miles apart.
- Stevenson's proposed program will be delivered in a face-to-face format, not as an online program.

In its letter to MHEC, Salisbury suggests that Stevenson's program could be approved "... with the stipulation that Stevenson University would not object to any future Salisbury proposal for a B.S. in Sales and Sales Management." We believe that it is inappropriate to ask Stevenson to waive its right to participate in the program review process with respect to a future Salisbury proposal. An action of this nature would essentially undermine MHEC's role in program approval, which requires MHEC to apply specific statutes and regulations in making a determination about academic programs, a process which includes all Maryland institutions having an equal opportunity to raise issues and concerns. Therefore, we urge MHEC to recommend the implementation of Stevenson University's program without the condition proposed by Salisbury.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address the concerns raised by Salisbury University. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information to MHEC in support of Stevenson University's Bachelor of Science degree in Sales Management and Leadership.

Sincerely,



Susan Thompson Gorman, Ph.D.
EVPAA and Provost
TEL: 443-334-2331

cc: Tina Bjarekull, President, MICUA
Claire Moore, Interim President, Stevenson University