Dear Dr. Guice, Dr. Liberatos, and Dr. Yates:

In its November 20, 2015 meeting, the Council for Accreditation of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences voted to grant accreditation to the School of Human Ecology at Louisiana Tech University. This action followed careful review and consideration of the Self-Study Report, the report of the site visit team, and the institution’s response to the site visit report.

The Council for Accreditation commends the School of Human Ecology and faculty members for providing high quality Family and Consumer Sciences programs. The following strengths are particularly noteworthy:

1. The School of Human Ecology’s mission statement is aligned with the College and University, contemporary practice in the profession, and societal needs. The statement is reflected in the institutional decisions affecting the Unit.

2. Central administrators expressed an understanding of, and indicated strong support for the mission of the Unit.

3. The Director of the Unit is a highly skilled, positively-regarded, energetic, and an effective leader who has the respect of University administrators, Unit faculty members, students, Alumni, Advisory Board members, and community representatives. The Director’s collegial relationships and professional collaborations strengthen the quality, visibility, and reputation of the Unit. The Director is a diplomatic leader who appreciates diversity, encourages shared decision-making, and advocates on behalf of faculty members.

4. Students hold faculty members in high esteem for their dedication to creating meaningful learning environments. Faculty members actively engage students in research and creative scholarly activities.

5. Students recognize faculty members’ passionate commitment to the profession and appreciate the investment that faculty members make in the lives of students. Students benefit from faculty members’ mentoring and guidance.
6. The Unit’s commitment to assessment of learning goals is reflected in the measurement of results and use of results to improve programs. The Unit engages in highly reflective planning and decision-making to create a proactive system of assessment strategies.

7. The common core courses provide an opportunity for students in all programs to interact and learn from one another. Students demonstrate an understanding of the integrative, synergistic nature of the profession. Assignments and outcomes in the core courses reflect the integrative nature of Family and Consumer Sciences.

8. Students are able to apply research-based and theoretically-based knowledge to professional skills and practice.

9. Faculty members exhibit active research productivity through grants, publications, and presentations. Research productivity standards in the College provide faculty members with clear and focused expectations. The Director and faculty members demonstrate resourcefulness in securing support for research/scholarly activity and dissemination of results to professional and lay audiences.

10. Faculty members encourage student involvement in professional organizations. Faculty members demonstrate and model leadership by holding positions in professional organizations, such as the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and the Louisiana Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

11. The College of Applied and Natural Sciences and the School of Human Ecology value and support continuing faculty development through grants and professorships.

12. Culminating and capstone experiences (e.g., practica, internships) are matched to students’ professional career goals and supervised by well-qualified, highly invested faculty members. Students appreciate educational opportunities related to their professional development and express confidence in their career preparation.

13. Faculty members establish and maintain collaborations and mutually beneficial professional relationships with community partners and advisory board members.

The Council for Accreditation makes the following recommendations to strengthen compliance with accreditation standards and to assist in further enhancement of the programs in the School of Human Ecology:

1. Use outcome data from program assessment in the Fashion Merchandising and Retail Studies program to make informed curricula decisions and revise assessment strategies to insure program competencies. [Criterion 1.2(6)]

2. Create long-term sustainability for the Early Childhood Education Center by providing new or expanded facilities. [Criteria 1.4(2e); 1.5(2)]

3. Enhance the quality of the relationship with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction to expand connections across programs in the Unit and increase the enrollment in the Family and Consumer Sciences Education program. [Criteria 1.4(5); 1.4(7)]

4. Encourage the University to maintain and increase appropriate resources to strengthen the development of each of the Unit’s programs. [Criterion 1.5(2)]
5. Secure resources and complete work to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for accessibility in the Early Childhood Education Center and in the foods laboratories. [Criteria 1.5(4); 1.5(7); 4.3(5); 4.4(8)]

6. Continue to implement the approved plan in which reliable information on Family and Consumer Sciences Program aggregated student achievement/performance data and other measures are updated at least annually and provided to the public on a timely basis utilizing the homepage of the Unit website. [Criteria 2.3(3); 4.2(2)]

7. Continue guiding students’ appreciation for the centrality of the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge as applied in each program and career path. [Criterion 2.2(3a)]

8. Develop a formal student assessment protocol for all courses offered during the summer quarter. [Criterion 2.4(4)]

9. Implement a plan for insuring consistency in rigor across faculty groups (full-time, part-time) and delivery modes. [Criteria 2.4(2); 2.4(4)]

10. Develop and implement a plan to grow student enrollment and faculty numbers (both full-time and part-time) in the Fashion Merchandising and Retail Studies program in order to maintain a quality program. [Criterion 4.3(1)]

11. As additional faculty positions within the Unit become available, recruit well qualified professionals to enhance the diversity of the faculty. [Criteria 4.3(1c); 4.3(5); 4.3(7)]

Actions taken in response to these recommendations are to be described in the Unit’s first interim report which shall be submitted in year three (2018) of accreditation. You will receive notification of the specific date the report will be due to arrive in the Office of Accreditation for consideration during the Council for Accreditation’s subsequent meeting.

Accreditation is granted by the Council for Accreditation for a period of ten years. Any extension and/or provisional accreditation periods are counted as part of the ten-year period. Therefore, this accreditation expires Fall 2025. The next Self-Study Report will be due September 1, 2024.

When accreditation is granted, the Unit is eligible to use the AAFCS Seal of Accreditation. This seal indicates that the Unit has been found to meet or exceed stated criteria and can be used in all communications, both print and electronic. You will be sent an electronic file containing the seal graphic with protocol-for-use.

Members of the Council for Accreditation join us in congratulating you and the faculty on the quality of programs offered by the School of Human Ecology. This comes with our good wishes for continued success of the programs.

With best wishes,

Ethel G. Jones, Ph.D., CFCS
Chair, Council for Accreditation

Gay Nell McGinnis, CFCS, Director
Credentialing, Professional Development, and Research