November 4, 2016

Dr. Sidney A. McPhee, President
0204 Building CAB
Middle Tennessee State University
1301 E. Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Dr. Harold D. Whiteside, Dean
College of Behavioral & Health Sciences
0251 Building CKNB
Middle Tennessee State University
1301 E. Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Dr. Deborah Belcher, Chair
Department of Human Sciences
0100 Building EHS
Middle Tennessee State University
1301 E. Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Dear Dr. McPhee, Dr. Whiteside, and Dr. Belcher:

In its October 26, 2016 meeting, the Council for Accreditation of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) voted to grant accreditation to the Department of Human Sciences at Middle Tennessee State 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 Department of Human Sciences and faculty members for providing high quality Family and Consumer Sciences programs. The following strengths are particularly noteworthy:

1. The Administration is to be commended for their support of the Unit’s mission as evidenced by the renovation of the Learning Resource Center, state of the art computer facilities, and purchase of specialized equipment.

2. The Unit Chair is to be commended for her energy in engaging the community in support of student and faculty work.

3. The faculty is held in high esteem by students because of their professionalism, dedication, and service as role models in professional and personal development. The faculty is highly regarded by alumni, community partners, and other campus faculty members.
4. The faculty is to be commended for their dedication to service learning, integration of research and creative endeavors into the classroom, and their success in sharing their knowledge beyond the classroom.

5. The students are to be commended for their commitment to address the needs of individuals, families, and communities through service learning activities.

6. The Unit is commended for its active participation in College and University initiatives in support of the University mission.

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 Department of Human Sciences:

1. Develop a formal department-wide strategic plan utilizing data to provide evidence for long- and short-range planning and priority setting. Ensure that degree and concentration programs align with the departmental strategic plan. [Criteria 1.2(2); 1.2(3); 1.2(4); 1.2(5); 1.2(6)]

2. Fully integrate the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge into the Unit curriculum. Use the overarching goals of the Unit as a basis for developing program goals, student learning outcomes, and subsequently curriculum goals. Infuse the Core Concepts, Integrative Elements, and Cross-Cutting Themes into the content of the courses across all programs. [Criteria 2.1(1), 2.1(2); 2.1(3)]

3. Evaluate assessment instruments to ensure that each instrument specifically addresses the identified student learning outcomes. Additionally, determine if an item analysis is necessary to accurately report how the concepts are captured with the specific assessment instrument. [Criteria 2.2(2); 2.2(3)]

4. Update at least annually the public reporting of reliable Department of Human Sciences aggregated student achievement/performance data and other outcome measures. [Criteria 2.2(1); 2.2(3)]

5. Provide opportunities for increased faculty member productivity in the publication of refereed scholarly papers and provide continued support for administrative responsibilities for the Unit Head and Program Coordinators especially related to development and implementation of strategic planning. [Criteria 1.4(3); 3.1(3)]

6. Continue to work with University administrators so that when an opportunity arises, additional full-time tenure track faculty members can be added to the Nutrition and Food Science and the Family and Consumer Studies programs. [4.2(2); 4.2(3)]

7. Identify and implement policies regarding the Unit’s efforts to increase diversity among the faculty population. [Criteria 4.3(6); 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 2018. 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 2022. The next Self-Study Report will be due September 1, 2021.

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.

With Best Wishes,

Laura Stephenson, Ph.D.
Chair – Council for Accreditation

Lori Myers, Ph.D., CFCS
Senior Director: Credentialing, Education & Research