



## Middle States Commission on Higher Education

3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680. Tel: 267-284-5000. Fax: 215-662-5501

[www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org)

June 24, 2011

Dr. David A. Heath  
President  
SUNY College of Optometry  
33 West 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10036-8003

Dear Dr. Heath:

At its session on June 23, 2011, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education acted:

To reaffirm accreditation and to commend the institution for the quality of the self-study report. The Periodic Review Report is due June 1, 2016.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the Statement of Accreditation Status for your institution. The Statement of Accreditation Status (SAS) provides important basic information about the institution and its affiliation with the Commission, and it is made available to the public in the Directory of Members and Candidates on the Commission's website at [www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org). Accreditation applies to the institution as detailed in the SAS; institutional information is derived from data provided by the institution through annual reporting and from Commission actions. If any of the institutional information is incorrect, please contact the Commission as soon as possible.

Please check to ensure that published references to your institution's accredited status (catalog, other publications, web page) include the full name, address, and telephone number of the accrediting agency. Further guidance is provided in the Commission's policy statement *Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status*. If the action for your institution includes preparation of a progress report, monitoring report or supplemental report, please see our policy statement on *Follow-up Reports and Visits*. Both policies can be obtained from our website.

Please be assured of the continuing interest of the Commission on Higher Education in the well-being of SUNY College of Optometry. If any further clarification is needed regarding the SAS or other items in this letter, please feel free to contact Dr. Debra G. Klinman, Vice President.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Middaugh, Ed.D.  
Chair

c: Dr. Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor, State University of New York Central Office



## MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680. Tel: 267-284-5000. Fax: 215-662-5501  
[www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org)

### STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STATUS

#### SUNY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

33 West 42nd Street

New York, NY 10036-8003

Phone: (212) 938-4000; Fax: (212) 938-5699

[www.sunyopt.edu](http://www.sunyopt.edu)

**Chief Executive Officer:** Dr. David A. Heath, President

**System:** State University of New York Central Office  
Dr. Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor  
State University Plaza  
Albany, NY 12246  
Phone: (518) 443-5313; Fax: (518) 443-5677

### INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

**Enrollment**

**(Headcount):** 303 Graduate

**Control:** Public

**Affiliation:** State

**Carnegie Classification:** Special Focus - Other Health Professions Schools

**Degrees Offered:** Master's, Doctor's - Professional Practice, Doctor's -  
Research/Scholarship

**Distance Education** No

**Programs:**

**Accreditors Approved by U.S. Secretary of Education:** American Optometric  
Association, Accreditation Council on Optometric Education

### Instructional Locations

**Branch Campuses:** None

**Additional Locations:** None

**Other Instructional Sites:** None

## **ACCREDITATION INFORMATION**

**Status:** Member since 1976

**Last Reaffirmed:** June 23, 2011

### **Most Recent Commission Action:**

June 23, 2011: To reaffirm accreditation and to commend the institution for the quality of the self-study report. The Periodic Review Report is due June 1, 2016.

### **Brief History Since Last Comprehensive Evaluation:**

November 20, 2008: To accept the Periodic Review Report, to commend the institution for the quality of its Periodic Review Report, and to reaffirm accreditation. The next evaluation visit is scheduled for 2010 - 2011.

**Next Self-Study Evaluation:** 2020 - 2021

**Next Periodic Review Report:** 2016

**Date Printed:** June 24, 2011

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Branch Campus** - A location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. The location is independent if the location: offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential; has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

**Additional Location** - A location, other than a branch campus, that is geographically apart from the main campus and at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program. **ANYA** ("Approved but Not Yet Active") indicates that the location is included within the scope of accreditation but has not yet begun to offer courses. This designation is removed after the Commission receives notification that courses have begun at this location.

**Other Instructional Sites** - A location, other than a branch campus or additional location, at which the institution offers one or more courses for credit.

**Distance Education Programs** - Yes or No indicates whether or not the institution has been approved to offer one or more degree or certificate/diploma programs for which students could meet 50% or more of their requirements by taking distance education courses.

## **EXPLANATION OF COMMISSION ACTIONS**

An institution's accreditation continues unless it is explicitly suspended or removed. In addition to reviewing the institution's accreditation status at least every 5 years, actions are taken for substantive changes (such as a new degree or geographic site, or a change of ownership) or when other events occur that require review for continued compliance. Any type of report or visit required by the Commission is reviewed and voted on by the Commission after it is completed.

In increasing order of seriousness, a report by an institution to the Commission may be accepted, acknowledged, or rejected.

**Levels of Actions:**

Grant or Re-Affirm Accreditation without follow-up

Defer a decision on initial accreditation: The institution shows promise but the evaluation team has identified issues of concern and recommends that the institution be given a specified time period to address those concerns.

Postpone a decision on (reaffirmation of) accreditation: The Commission has determined that there is insufficient information to substantiate institutional compliance with one or more standards.

Continue accreditation: A delay of up to one year may be granted to ensure a current and accurate representation of the institution or in the event of circumstances beyond the institution's control (natural disaster, U.S. State Department travel warnings, etc.)

Recommendations to be addressed in the next Periodic Review Report: Suggestions for improvement are given, but no follow-up is needed for compliance.

Supplemental Information Report: This is required when a decision is postponed and are intended only to allow the institution to provide further information, not to give the institution time to formulate plans or initiate remedial action.

Progress report: The Commission needs assurance that the institution is carrying out activities that were planned or were being implemented at the time of a report or on-site visit.

Monitoring report: There is a potential for the institution to become non-compliant with MSCHE standards; issues are more complex or more numerous; or issues require a substantive, detailed report. A visit may or may not be required.

Warning: The Commission acts to Warn an institution that its accreditation may be in jeopardy when the institution is not in compliance with one or more Commission standards and a follow-up report, called a monitoring report, is required to demonstrate that the institution has made appropriate improvements to bring itself into compliance. Warning indicates that the Commission believes that, although the institution is out of compliance, the institution has the capacity to make appropriate improvements within a reasonable period of time and the institution has the capacity to sustain itself in the long term.

Probation: The Commission places an institution on Probation when, in the Commission's judgment, the institution is not in compliance with one or more Commission standards and that the non-compliance is sufficiently serious, extensive, or acute that it raises concern about one or more of the following:

1. the adequacy of the education provided by the institution;
2. the institution's capacity to make appropriate improvements in a timely fashion; or
3. the institution's capacity to sustain itself in the long term.

Probation is often, but need not always be, preceded by an action of Warning or Postponement. If the Commission had previously postponed a decision or placed the institution on Warning, the Commission may place the institution on Probation if it determines that the institution has failed to address satisfactorily the Commission's concerns in the prior action of postponement or warning regarding compliance with Commission standards. This action is accompanied by a request for a monitoring report, and a special visit follows. Probation may, but need not always, precede an action of Show Cause.

Suspend accreditation: Accreditation has been Continued for one year and an appropriate evaluation is not possible. This is a procedural action that would result in Removal of Accreditation if accreditation cannot be reaffirmed within the period of suspension.

Show cause why the institution's accreditation should not be removed: The institution is required to present its case for accreditation by means of a substantive report and/or an on-site evaluation. A "Public Disclosure Statement" is issued by the Commission.

Remove accreditation. If the institution appeals this action, its accreditation remains in effect until the appeal is completed.

Other actions are described in the Commission policy, "Range of Commission Actions on Accreditation."