

March 3, 2015

RE: Exemplary Practice: Peer Review of a STARS Submission
SUNY New Paltz's STARS 2.0 rating, March 2015. IN-4

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to affirm my opinion regarding the innovative quality of the State University of New York at New Paltz's STARS 2.0 Innovation Credit titled *Exemplary Practice: Peer Review of STARS Submission* (IN-4).

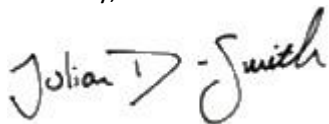
As former the Chair of the STARS Steering Committee and one of three original co-creators of STARS, I feel sufficiently qualified and knowledgeable to declare that SUNY New Paltz's use of four peer reviewers on its STARS submission meets the requirements stated in the credit as follows:

- *"The innovation describes a new, extraordinary, unique, ground---breaking, or uncommon outcome, policies or practice"*
 - I am not aware of any other campus that has engaged peer reviewers to provide a comprehensive review of their STARS submission.
- *"This innovation (program, policy, or outcome) is not already covered by an existing STARS credit or greatly exceeds the highest criterion of an existing STARS credit"*
 - External verification is not required in STARS and the review provided by four industry colleagues exceeds the standard review that AASHE performs on all submissions.
- *"The innovative practice, policy, program, or outcome has occurred within the past three years"*
 - The peer review was completed during the winter of 2014, well within the 3 year timeframe.
- *"The institution has not previously received a STARS innovation credit for this specific practice, policy, program, or outcome"*
 - To my knowledge, this is the first time any institution has claimed a third party peer review of a STARS submission for an Innovation credit. University of Colorado at Boulder was the first institution to hire a third party external consultant to conduct a peer review.

Moreover, I have reviewed the analysis compiled by the peer reviewers and found it to be thorough and fair. It seems to have helped SUNY New Paltz make a meaningful improvement in the quality of their STARS submission.

Given all of the above, I affirm that SUNY New Paltz's claim of an Innovation credit for this activity is consistent with the necessarily requirements. I hope to see more institutions pursuing this kind of review in the future.

Sincerely,



Julian Dautremont---Smith
Senior Program Manager, GreenerU
Member, STARS Steering Committee