

COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION

RECOGNITION DECISION SUMMARY

ACCREDITING COUNCIL FOR INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS (ACICS)

In accordance with the [2019 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures, Paragraph 39](#), this summary describes the formal status of an accrediting organization in relation to recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

Profile of Accrediting Organization

Type of Accreditor: Institutional

Number of Institutions: 652

Current CHEA-Recognized Scope of Accreditation

Accreditation of private postsecondary institutions offering certificates or diplomas, and postsecondary institutions offering associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees in programs designed to educate students for professional, technical or occupational careers including those that offer those programs via distance education or internationally. (2006)

CHEA Recognition Information

History: Recognized by CHEA in May 2001; September 2012

Most Recent Recognition Action

Date: January 17, 2020

Decision: No Board Action- see explanation below

At its November 25, 2019 meeting, the CHEA Committee on Recognition recommended that CHEA deny recognition to the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). On January 17, 2020, ACICS withdrew from CHEA recognition.

Prior Actions on ACICS' Application for Recognition

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, May 1-2, 2017: The CHEA Committee on Recognition and the Board of Directors reviewed the application for recognition provided by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

The Board of Directors acted to take the matter regarding ACICS under advisement.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, January 30, 2017: The CHEA Committee on Recognition and the Board of Directors reviewed the application for recognition provided by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

The Board of Directors returned the matter to the CHEA Committee on Recognition for further review and consideration to assess whether ACICS has the resources and capacity to sustain itself over a significant period of time.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, April 25-26, 2016: The CHEA Committee on Recognition and the Board of Directors reviewed the application for recognition provided by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

The Board of Directors deferred recognition to obtain additional evidence that ACICS (1) has a preponderance of institutions that routinely provide reliable information to the public on their performance, including student achievement as determined by the institution (Standard 12(B)(1), *2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*); (2) clarifies, in the information provided to the public, what accreditation activities are included in CHEA recognition as distinct from activities that are not part of CHEA recognition (Paragraph 10, *2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*); and (3) clarifies the degree levels and programs within institutions that are accredited by ACICS from those that are not (Standard 12(B)(3), *2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*). The Board of Directors additionally requested that the committee review information about ACICS that has become available to the public since the March 2016 meeting at which the committee took action.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, September 24-25, 2012: The Board of Directors recognized ACICS for three years and required that ACICS undergo a full recognition review by CHEA prior to the end of that period.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, September 19-20, 2011: The Board of Directors deferred recognition in order to obtain additional information that shows ACICS has and implements accreditation standards or policies that require institutions or programs routinely to provide reliable information to the public on their performance, including student achievement, as determined by the institution or program (Paragraph 12(B)(1), *2006 CHEA Policy and Procedures*); ACICS' capacity to review applied doctorate degrees and first professional degree programs within specialized areas that include education, pharmacy, social work, veterinary medicine, osteopathy and law as this relates to the organization's responsiveness, flexibility and accountability when working with institutions, programs and the public through critical self-review (Paragraph 12(E)(1), *2006 CHEA Policy and Procedures*); the adequacy of ACICS' financial, staff and operational resources to perform accreditation functions that include the review of applied doctoral degree and first professional degree programs (Paragraph 12(F)(1), *2006 CHEA Policy and Procedures*); ACICS has and implements accreditation standards or policies that require institutions to distinguish accurately between programs that have achieved accredited status and those that have not (Paragraph 12(B)(3), *2006 CHEA Policy and Procedures*); and that ACICS is consistent in the terminology it uses to describe doctoral degrees.