



Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education
1747 N. Market Blvd. Ste 225 Sacramento, CA 95834
P.O. Box 980818, West Sacramento, CA 95798-0818
P (916) 574-8900 F (916) 263-1897 www.bppe.ca.gov



ORDER SUSPENDING APPROVAL TO OPERATE DEGREE GRANTING PROGRAMS

To: Southwestern California University, Owner
Southwestern California University
2140 W. Olympic Blvd, Suite 441
Los Angeles, CA 90006

INSTITUTION CODE: 93159692

ORDER NUMBER: 1006543

ORDER MAILING DATE: December 29, 2020

ORDER EFFECTIVE DATE: January 3, 2021

DUE DATE TO REQUEST INFORMAL OFFICE CONFERENCE: February 2, 2021

Beth Scott, as the designee of the Bureau Chief of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (Bureau), hereby issues an Order Suspending Approval to Operate Degree Granting Programs (Order) of the above institution.

This Order is hereby issued to Southwestern California University, Owner of Southwestern California University located at 2140 W. Olympic Blvd, Suite 441, Los Angeles, CA 90006, pursuant to California Education Code (CEC) section 94885.5 and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations (5, CCR) section 71410 for the violations described below.

Factual Basis

Pursuant to CEC section 94885.5 (b)(1)(2), the institution was required to submit evidence of having achieved accreditation candidacy or pre-accreditation¹ by October 31, 2020.

On October 31, 2018, Southwestern California University (Institution), an unaccredited degree granting institution, received a provisional approval to operate two (2) degree programs offered via an online method of instruction and in Korean and English languages. The provisional approval was granted in accordance with CEC section 94885.5 (a). The Institution's accreditation plan for the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) was submitted with the application for approval to operate.

On May 14, 2019, the Bureau emailed the Institution a copy of the Accreditation Benchmark Table for ACCSC with a request to return the completed Accreditation Benchmark Table to the Bureau.

On June 24, 2019, the Bureau received an email from the Institution stating that they changed accreditors from ACCSC to the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). The email included certificates of attendance to an ACICS workshop and a benchmark table for ACCSC, not ACICS.

¹ As defined by 5, CCR section 70000(s), for this purpose, "pre-accreditation" or "candidacy" means that an institution has submitted a completed application for initial accreditation with the required fee, which was accepted by the accreditor.

On June 26, 2019, the Bureau emailed the Institution a copy of the Accreditation Benchmark Table template for ACICS and a request for an ACICS accreditation plan.

On September 3, 2019, per the Institution's request, the Bureau discontinued the Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration program.

On September 13, 2019, the Bureau received an email from the Institution stating that they had changed accreditors from ACICS to Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and that an orientation meeting was scheduled for October 24, 2019.

On September 16, 2019, the Bureau emailed the Institution an Accreditation Benchmark Table template for TRACS.

On September 24, 2019, the Bureau received an email from the Institution that included an Accreditation Benchmark Table for TRACS, a copy of a confirmation email for the orientation visit scheduled for October 22, 2019, and a copy of the Applicant Initial Profile submitted to TRACS listing 20 students enrolled in the Master of Business Administration program.

On October 28, 2019, the Bureau emailed the Institution a request for a completed accreditation plan for TRACS.

On October 29, 2019, the Bureau mailed the Institution a letter requesting an update on the accreditation progress, outlining the procedure to follow if accreditation is no longer pursued, a request for an accreditation plan for TRACS and informing the Institution of the mandated visiting committee that will review the progress of the Institution toward achieving accreditation.

On November 4, 2019, the Bureau received the accreditation plan for TRACS from the Institution.

On December 30, 2019, the Institution received an approval to operate one (1) Ph.D. in Business Administration degree program offered via an online method of instruction and offered via Korean and English languages and an approval to add a direct method of instruction to the Master of Business Administration program.

On April 27, 2020, the Bureau mailed the Institution a letter requesting an update on the accreditation progress, outlining the procedure to follow if accreditation is no longer pursued and informing the Institution of the opportunity to request an extension by September 30, 2020 in order to meet the accreditation requirements.

On May 12, 2020, the Bureau received an Accreditation Benchmark Table indicating that the Institution had completed the first step, known as Corresponding Institution, on September 17, 2019.

On June 22, 2020, per the Institution's request, the Bureau discontinued the direct method of instruction for the Master of Business Administration program.

On August 10, 2020, the Bureau mailed the Institution a follow-up letter requesting an update on the accreditation progress, outlining the procedure to follow if accreditation is no longer pursued and informing the Institution of the opportunity to request an extension by September 30, 2020 in order to meet the accreditation requirements.

On September 10, 2020, the Bureau received from the Institution a copy of the application for initial accreditation provided to TRACS by the Institution and a revised Accreditation Benchmark Table indicating that an application and fees had been submitted to TRACS on August 17, 2020.

On September 10, 2020, the Bureau received an email from TRACS with documentation denying the Institution's application for initial accreditation based on non-compliance with seven of the Institutional Eligibility Requirements.

On September 28, 2020, the Bureau received the Institution's request for an extension to achieve pre-accreditation or candidacy.

On October 27, 2020 the Bureau notified the Institution that their request for extension was denied, as sufficient evidence was not submitted to demonstrate that the Institution had made strong progress toward achieving accreditation.

The Institution, therefore, did not achieve accreditation candidacy or pre-accreditation by October 31, 2020.

ORDER

In accordance with the provisions of CEC section 94885.5(d)(1) & (d)(2) and 5, CCR sections 71410 and 74250, the Bureau hereby orders the following:

The approval to operate, issued to Southwestern California University is automatically suspended as to all of the institution's degree programs. The Bureau will not lift the suspension until the Institution complies with the requirements of CEC section 94885.5(d)(1) & (d)(2) by submitting evidence to the Bureau of having achieved accreditation.

1. You must immediately **cease enrolling new students** in all of your degree programs.
2. Within 30 days of the effective date of this Order, you must submit a **degree program closure plan** to the Bureau with all of the following:
 - a. The date the institution stopped enrolling new students in the degree program(s).
 - b. A list of contact information for all students currently enrolled in each degree program.
 - c. A **teach-out plan** with information on the arrangements you have made for students to complete their educational programs at another institution. **The institution shall not teach-out its own students.** The teach-out plan must: (1) provide the name and location of the institution(s) providing the teach-out; (2) include a plan for the disposition of student records per CEC section 94927.5; (3) be compliant with the refund provisions of CEC section 94927; and (4) include a copy of the notification to be provided to students identified in item # 4 below.
3. The institution must notify, in writing, all currently enrolled students within five (5) business days of the effective date of this Order of the following:
 - a. That the institution has received a notice of suspension from the Bureau and may no longer offer degree programs.

- b. The teach-out plan, which shall provide, at minimum, the following information: (1) the name and location of the institution(s) that is providing the teach-out, (2) the date upon which instruction at the teach-out institution(s) will begin, (3) how and when payments will be made to the new institution and any relevant financial information, and (4) a contact person at the new institution(s).
 - c. That the student has a right to choose not to participate in the teach-out, and instead seek a refund for any classes the student is currently enrolled in or has not yet completed.
4. Any student may seek a refund from the institution rather than participate in a proposed teach-out program. The school must provide refunds within 45 days of the request by a student.
 5. Failure of any institution to comply with the requirements of this section will be considered a violation and subject to action by the Bureau.

APPEAL OF ORDER

You may request an appeal of this Order before the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs, or his or her designee. (5 CCR section 71410.)

Because this suspension is automatic per CEC section 94885.1(e), the institution shall not operate its degree programs during any appeal.

If you wish to appeal this Order, you must do so within 30 days from the effective date of the Order. *Unless you sign a written request for an appeal and deliver it to the Bureau within 30 days from the effective date of the Order, you will be deemed to have waived your right to appeal this matter to the Department of Consumer Affairs.*

Upon timely receipt of your request for an appeal, an informal office conference will be arranged within 30 days, or as extended at your request or by the Bureau for good cause. Upon request and approval, the person approved to operate the institution or representative may participate in the office conference by telephone.

Please submit your request to:

Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education
Attn: Cheryl Lardizabal, Discipline Analyst
1747 N. Market Blvd., Ste. 225
Sacramento, CA 95834

Failure by an institution to comply with the Order above may result in further enforcement action.
The Bureau will promptly take all appropriate action to enforce this Order.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding this Order or can verify that you submitted evidence to the Bureau of accreditation candidacy or pre-accreditation, please contact Cheryl Lardizabal, Discipline Analyst, at (916) 574-8968 or Cheryl.Lardizabal@dca.ca.gov.

“Original Signature on File”

“December 29, 2020”

Beth Scott
Enforcement Chief

Date

Enclosures

- Declaration of Service by Certified and First-Class Mail