

**FOR ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.27 Are teaching loads reasonable?

Yes  No

**FOR NONDEGREE PROGRAMS AND OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.28 Are teaching loads reasonable?

Yes  No

8.29 What is the current student/teacher ratio?

The current student/teacher ratio is 5:1 in the certificate program.

8.30 Is the current student-teacher ratio reasonable for the mode of delivery and course content?

Yes  No

**FOR BACHELOR'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.40 Is the number of hours required to complete the program at least 120 semester hours, 180 quarter hours, or their equivalent, earned over a period of eight semesters, 12 quarters, or their equivalent?

Yes  No

8.41 Is there a minimum of 60 semester hours, 90 quarter hours, or their equivalent in courses within the area of concentration?

Yes  No

8.42 If the institution offers only the last two years of the bachelor's degree program, do the catalog and all advertising materials clearly describe the requirements for admission?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (The institution offers all four years of the degree.)

8.43 How does the curriculum quantitatively and qualitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions offering the same degree?

Admissions criteria for international and domestic students align with other collegiate institutions offering similar degrees to those within the business department and the master of science in international relations. Curriculum for program meets standards of at least 120 semester hours for bachelor programs and 36 semester hours for master's programs. Comparable courses and internship opportunities are offered at VIU as compared to the nearby George Mason University.

8.44 Is enrollment in the third and fourth years of the bachelor's program sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (no students in the third and fourth years)

8.45 Are the third- and fourth-year courses based upon appropriate prerequisites?

Yes  No

**FOR MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

- 8.46 Describe the committee that oversees the development, modification, and maintenance of the graduate degree program.

The Program Advisory Committees (PAC) meet at least twice per year. The PAC for each program is comprised of faculty, a student representative, and external experts with practical experience in the field. Each PAC discusses vocational objectives and employability of graduates at the meetings as they review the curriculum and suggest changes to VIU's programs.

Does the committee include the following:

- (a) Students?

Yes     No

- (b) Faculty?

Yes     No

- (c) Administrators?

Yes     No

- (d) Employers?

Yes     No

- 8.47 Are the program, courses, and services appropriate to the institution's mission and to its specific goals and objectives?

Yes     No

- 8.48 Describe how the graduate program faculty members are directly involved in the development and modification of the master's degree policies, procedures, and curricula.

The faculty, staff, and the industry experts (PAC) are highly involved in the development of both curriculum and policies internal to the department, as well as students' feedback. Feedback from stakeholders (employers, industry experts, faculty, students, and administrators) and research from staff will determine whether or not current curricula are meeting the present and future needs of the student and the University. If updates are suggested, the dean/director prepares a curriculum change proposal, which is then reviewed by the PAC as well as the Graduate Council.

- 8.49 Is the number of hours required to complete the program at least 30 semester hours, 45 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework, plus a thesis at the graduate level; or at least 36 semester hours, 54 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework at the graduate level if a thesis is not required?

Yes     No

- 8.50 How does the curriculum quantitatively and qualitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions offering the same degree?

The graduate programs at VIU require completion of a minimum of 36 to 39 credit hours as do other similar institutions. A student may transfer in a maximum of 18 credit hours. No degree may be earned by a graduate student for any grade below 2.0 or a C on a 4.0 scale in a graduate level course (CGPA). Credit earned at an undergraduate level is not considered.

- 8.51 Is enrollment in the master's program sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work?

Yes     No

- 8.52 Do all faculty members possess a graduate degree in the field or a related field of the courses they are teaching, or do those without master's degrees demonstrate evidence of exceptional practical or professional experience in the assigned field, or are they teaching in an assigned field in which graduate degrees are not widely available?  
 Yes      No
- 8.53 Is the number of faculty with terminal degrees appropriate for the graduate enrollment?  
 Yes      No
- 8.54 Does the faculty possessing terminal degrees teach at least one-half of all graduate-level courses?  
 Yes      No
- 8.55 Does the campus encourage graduate faculty members to engage in scholarly research and to publish in professional journals?  
 Yes      No

If Yes, describe how the campus encourages scholarly activity:

Faculty are supported financially by the institution and encouraged by the campus president and the respective deans of the departments to pursue scholarly activities.

#### COMMENDATIONS:

Since the last ACICS visit, the master's degree program in international relations has grown not only in population (8 to 35 students), but in its depth and breadth through Dr. Bilgin's leadership. Students are active leaders within Fairfax County, and international students take their knowledge and experiences back to their home countries to impact positive social change.

#### 8. PROGRAM EVALUATION

**Master's Degree in Computer Science (MSCS)**  
**Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science (BSCS)**  
**Master's Degree in Information Systems (MSIS)**  
**Master's Degree in Information Systems Management (MSISM)**  
**Master's Degree in Information Technology (MSIT)**  
**Master's Degree in Software Engineering (MSSW)**  
**Graduate Certificate in Information Systems**

#### FOR ALL PROGRAMS

- 8.01 Is licensure, certification, or registration required to practice in the specific career field?  
 Yes      No (*Skip to 8.02*)
- 8.02 Who is assigned to administer the academic program(s) listed above, and what are this person's qualifications?  
 Dr. Chakib Charaibi, dean of the school of computer information systems (SCIS), is the administrator for all degree and certificate programs operated in this school. As the administrator, Dr. Charaibi is assisted by Mr. Koorosh Azandeh, associate dean of SCIS.

Dr. Charaibi was appointed the dean of SCIS at Virginia International University (VIU) in 2016. Prior to joining VIU, Dr. Charaibi worked as a professor at Miami Dade College, and as associate dean at DeVry University for almost 10 years. He worked as a systems engineer in Bull, Inc. in France for three years. Dr. Charaibi holds a PhD in computer science from the State University of New York at Binghamton and a doctor of science degree in applied mathematics from Bordeaux University. He received a bachelor's degree and master's degree in computer science from Bordeaux University in France.

Mr. Azandeh joined the institution as the associate dean for SCIS in 2015. He worked as a media director at The Catholic University of America for more than 10 years, and as an adjunct faculty member at that university for seven years. Mr. Azandeh earned a master's degree in computer science from Catholic University, Washington, DC. Currently, Dr. Azandeh is in the final stages of completing a PhD degree in computer science from The Catholic University of America.

8.03 Does this individual possess appropriate academic or experiential qualifications?

Yes       No

Dr. Charaibi and Mr. Azandeh are both qualified to administer the SCIS programs.

8.04 Describe what evidence there is that the program administrator has sufficient authority and responsibility for the development and administration of the educational program(s).

Dr. Charaibi and Mr. Azandeh shared that they have sufficient authority and responsibility for the development and administration of educational programs in CSIS. Records for Curriculum Review, Evaluation, and Development (CRED) committee meetings, faculty meetings, and other planned or unplanned administrative activities were reviewed by the team and provide the supporting evidence.

8.05 Are the time and resources devoted to the administration of the educational program(s) sufficient?

Yes       No

8.06 Does the program meet the needs of its students and the requirements of the Council, as shown by student achievement outcomes which meet or exceed the standards for the following areas:

(a) Student retention rate of 65 percent (programs >1 year in length) OR 70 percent (programs ≤ 1 year in length)?

Yes       No       Not Applicable (Data not available.)

(b) Student placement rate of 70 percent?

Yes       No       Not Applicable (Data not available.)

If *No*, list programs that fall below the standards.

The 2017 placement rate for the master's degree in computer science (MSCS) was 69 percent.

The 2017 placement rate for the bachelor's degree in computer science (BSCS) was 67 percent.

The 2017 placement rate for the master's degree in information systems management (MSISM) was 61 percent.

The 2017 placement rate for the master's degree in information technology (MSIT) was 66 percent.

If *No* for either item, does the campus provide a Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) that includes an improvement plan for this program with data, analysis, and activities to meet or exceed Council requirements?

Yes     No

If Yes, what specific activities does the campus have planned to improve the student retention and/or placement rate(s)?

The placement-rate enhancement activities include: (i) expand the local network, (ii) conduct a Professional Development Series, (iii) develop an alumni association, (iv) increase student awareness of resources, and (v) enhance data tracking. These activities are documented in the Placement Rate Improvement Plan.

8.07 Does the program utilize a variety of community resources to enhance student achievement and potential career opportunities?

Yes     No

If Yes, list the community resources and describe how they enhance student enrichment and potential career opportunities.

1. Every year, a few guest speakers address students in SCIS and other programs at the university. These presentations are beneficial for students and faculty in the context of new learning and professional networking. Two guest speakers, (Dr. [REDACTED] and Dr. [REDACTED] made presentations at VIU during the last six months.

2. An eleven-member program advisory committee (PAC) has been created for SCIS. The seven external members of the PAC represent relevant organizations, institutions, and businesses. A current student and an alumnus are members of PAC. The PAC meets twice every year to discuss issues related to program administration, and the curriculum development, refreshment, and maintenance. The placement of several SCIS graduates has been facilitated by members of the PAC.

3. SCIS conducted an International Conference on Computing and Technology in November 2017.

4. SCIS is a member of the "Stop' Think/Connect' Alliance, created by the US Department of Homeland Security.

5. SCIS is a member of the Northern Virginia Technology Council. This organization has several hundred member entities accounting for 300,000 employees in the Information Technology domain.

6. SCIS is planning to conduct a STEM Boot Camp in July 2018, for middle and high school students.

7. SCIS is involved in several other activities for the benefit of the local community.

8.08 Does the catalog and/or other advertising material such as brochures and the campus web site, accurately describe the program, its objectives, and its potential occupational outcomes?

Yes     No

8.09 Does the program include an externship?

Yes     No (Skip to 8.10.)

8.10 Does the program use independent studies?

Yes     No (Skip to 8.12.)

8.12 Are the curriculum and length of the program appropriate to meet the educational and placement objectives of the program?

Yes     No

8.13 Are course prerequisites appropriate, are they identified in the catalog, and are they being followed?

Yes     No

8.14 Is an appropriately detailed syllabus on file for each course that includes the following elements:

- (a) Title and course descriptions?  
 Yes       No
- (b) Course numbers?  
 Yes       No
- (c) Course prerequisites and/or corequisites?  
 Yes       No
- (d) Instructional contact hours/credits?  
 Yes       No
- (e) Learning objectives  
 Yes       No
- (f) Instructional materials and references?  
 Yes       No
- (g) Topical outline of the course?  
 Yes       No
- (h) Instructional methods?  
 Yes       No
- (i) Assessment criteria?  
 Yes       No
- (j) Method of evaluating students?  
 Yes       No
- (k) Date the syllabus was last reviewed?  
 Yes       No

***For Title IV participant campuses that have lecture courses in credit hour programs or clock-to-credit hour programs only:***

- (l) Out-of-class work assignments that support the learning objectives for the course?  
 Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour program)
- (m) A description of the minimum amount of time a student is expected to spend on completion of the work assignments?  
 Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour program)

8.15 Do students confirm that they receive a course syllabus and that it is followed?

- Yes       No

8.16 Are the courses available when needed by the student in the normal pursuit of a program of study?

- Yes       No

8.17 Does the campus participate in Title IV financial aid?

- Yes       No (*Skip to 8.20.*)

8.18 Do the campus's written procedures (as evidenced by their academic credit analysis) support the written policy and definition of a credit hour as defined by the U.S. Department of Education for Title IV funding?

- Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour programs only)

8.19 Is there evidence that out-of-class work or the equivalency is being evaluated?

- Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour programs only)

If *Yes*, describe the documentation of evaluation viewed on site.

The following evidence of evaluation of out-of-class work was found in the classes:

- Samples of assigned out-of-class work statements.
- Samples of submissions of out-of-class work completed by students in the SCIS degree program.
- Samples of graded out-of-class assignment submissions and course records showing that these scores (grades) have been entered in student records.

## FOR ALL PROGRAMS

8.20 Are the following appropriate to adequately support the number of students and nature of the program:

- (a) Facilities?  
 Yes       No
- (b) Instructional equipment?  
 Yes       No
- (c) Resources?  
 Yes       No
- (d) Support for modes of instructional delivery?  
 Yes       No
- (e) Personnel?  
 Yes       No

8.21 Describe how the program(s) includes the following required instructional components:

- (a) Systematic planning.
- (b) Well-defined instructional objectives.
- (c) The selection and use of appropriate and current learning materials.
- (d) Appropriate modes of instructional delivery.
- (e) The use of appropriate assessment strategies.
- (f) The use of appropriate experiences.

(a) The future plans, and the ongoing planning process documented by the administration of VIU, confirm that the operations of this institution are based on systematic planning. The scheduling of courses, course assignments for instructors, and the acquisition of additional equipment and other instructional resources are planned well in advance.

(b) The instructional objectives are documented at the degree program level and individual course level. The contents of degree program descriptions and course syllabi confirm that the instructional components have well-defined student learning outcomes. Conversations with students and faculty members confirmed that these objectives are being achieved by most of the students.

(c) The prescribed textbook(s) and the supplementary learning materials are current in content and appropriate for the offered courses. The on-campus library contains necessary books, journals, and other reference materials. Students can access the online library resources from the workstations in the library, and also from other locations using their laptop computers and mobile devices.

(d) The Canvas LMS is an appropriate mode for online delivery of instruction for students in SCIS. The mode of instruction for on-ground classes incorporates the utilization of state-of-the-art techniques and technology.

(e) The assessment strategy for evaluating the performance of students in computer information systems degree programs is appropriate. The assessment methodology includes credit for assigned work, individual and/or group projects, participation in graded discussion conferences, and research papers.

(f) The SCIS students are encouraged to share their relevant out-of-class experiences with their classmates and instructors. Students are also advised to utilize their in-class and work experience for the benefit of the VIU and the local community.

**FOR NONDEGREE PROGRAMS, OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, AND BACHELOR'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.24 Do the faculty members' qualifications meet the minimum requirements outlined in the *Accreditation Criteria*, and are their qualifications academically and experientially appropriate to the subject matter they teach and the level of the credential awarded?

Yes       No

8.25 Is the size of the faculty appropriate to the total student enrollment?

Yes       No

**FOR OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.26 Is an adequate core of full- and part-time faculty employed to ensure sound direction and continuity of development of the program?

Yes       No

**FOR ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.27 Are teaching loads reasonable?

Yes       No

**FOR BACHELOR'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.40 Is the number of hours required to complete the program at least 120 semester hours, 180 quarter hours, or their equivalent, earned over a period of eight semesters, 12 quarters, or their equivalent?

Yes       No

8.41 Is there a minimum of 60 semester hours, 90 quarter hours, or their equivalent in courses within the area of concentration?

Yes       No

8.42 If the institution offers only the last two years of the bachelor's degree program, do the catalog and all advertising materials clearly describe the requirements for admission?

Yes       No       Not Applicable (The institution offers all four years of the degree.)

8.43 How does the curriculum quantitatively and qualitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions offering the same degree?

The total number of semester credit hours (120), the general education semester credit hours (36), foundation semester credit hours (24), professional core courses semester credit hours (30), concentration courses semester credit hours (18), and elective courses semester credit hours (12) are quantitatively comparable to the typical requirements for the bachelor of science degree offered at other accredited institutions. The course syllabi confirm that the program and course content approximate the quality of courses in other bachelor degree programs in institutions similar to VIU.

8.44 Is enrollment in the third and fourth years of the bachelor's program sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work?

Yes     No     Not Applicable (no students in the third and fourth years)

8.45 Are the third- and fourth-year courses based upon appropriate prerequisites?

Yes     No

### FOR MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY

8.46 Describe the committee that oversees the development, modification, and maintenance of the graduate degree program.

There is a Curriculum Review, Evaluation and Development (CRED) committee in SCIS, with membership representing all stakeholders. Members of CRED, which is chaired by the dean of the school, are selected employers of VIU graduates, faculty, students, administration, and program advisory committee representatives. Although there is no prescribed schedule for meetings of this group, the dean and associate dean of the school indicated that they are regularly in contact with members of this committee to discuss plans for the maintenance and growth of graduate degree programs. At least two meetings of CRED are held annually.

Does the committee include the following:

(a) Students?

Yes     No

(b) Faculty?

Yes     No

(c) Administrators?

Yes     No

(d) Employers?

Yes     No

8.47 Are the program, courses, and services appropriate to the institution's mission and to its specific goals and objectives?

Yes     No

8.48 Describe how the graduate program faculty members are directly involved in the development and modification of the master's degree policies, procedures, and curricula.

The graduate degree programs at VIU are reviewed regularly regarding the currency and employment-market relevance of the curriculum, and the policies/procedures associated with the operation of each program. Graduate faculty members are encouraged to get involved in the formal process for continuous improvement of the SCIS graduate degree curriculum, quality of instruction, and student satisfaction. All graduate faculty members have opportunities for involvement in this process through monthly faculty meetings conducted by the dean. A number of graduate faculty are members of the CRED Committee.

8.49 Is the number of hours required to complete the program at least 30 semester hours, 45 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework, plus a thesis at the graduate level; or at least 36 semester hours, 54 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework at the graduate level if a thesis is not required?

Yes  No

8.50 How does the curriculum quantitatively and qualitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions offering the same degree?

The total number of semester credit hours required (36) for the master's degree at the institution is within the range (36 to 42) of required semester credit hours for this degree at comparable institutions. The distribution of these credit hours between core courses and elective courses is also similar to that in comparable programs at other institutions. The quality of content of the curriculum for the master's degrees at VIU compares favorably with the quality of the curriculum content of competing accredited degree programs.

8.51 Is enrollment in the master's program sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work?

Yes  No

8.52 Do all faculty members possess a graduate degree in the field or a related field of the courses they are teaching, or do those without master's degrees demonstrate evidence of exceptional practical or professional experience in the assigned field, or are they teaching in an assigned field in which graduate degrees are not widely available?

Yes  No

8.53 Is the number of faculty with terminal degrees appropriate for the graduate enrollment?

Yes  No

8.54 Does the faculty possessing terminal degrees teach at least one-half of all graduate-level courses?

Yes  No

8.55 Does the campus encourage graduate faculty members to engage in scholarly research and to publish in professional journals?

Yes  No

If Yes, describe how the campus encourages scholarly activity:

The graduate faculty members are encouraged to:

(a) conduct scholarly research related to the courses they are teaching;

(b) write technical papers suitable for publication in professional journals and/or presentation at professional conferences;

(c) involve their students in meaningful research; and

(d) get involved in technical consultation for clients in the industrial sector.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

Virginia International University was observed to be a well-managed institution that places student welfare at the top of its list of priorities.

**COMMENDATIONS:**

The administration of SCIS has done a remarkable job of attracting highly qualified, committed, and motivated faculty. Most adjunct faculty members bring real-world experience to the classroom, which is very beneficial for the students.

**8. PROGRAM EVALUATION****Master's Degree in Public Administration****FOR ALL PROGRAMS**

8.01 Is licensure, certification, or registration required to practice in the specific career field?

Yes  No (*Skip to 8.02*)

8.02 Who is assigned to administer the academic program(s) listed above, and what are this person's qualifications?

Dr. Klara Bilgin is the dean of the school of public administration and international affairs. She began her career at the institution in August 2013. She holds a PhD in political science from John Hopkins University and a master's degree in political science and international relations from the University of Delaware. Dr. Bilgin brings over 10 years of faculty and administrative experience to the institution.

8.03 Does this individual possess appropriate academic or experiential qualifications?

Yes  No

8.04 Describe what evidence there is that the program administrator has sufficient authority and responsibility for the development and administration of the educational program(s).

Program administrators have sufficient authority and responsibility for the administration of programs. This is supported by detailed job descriptions entailing duties and responsibilities.

8.05 Are the time and resources devoted to the administration of the educational program(s) sufficient?

Yes  No

8.06 Does the program meet the needs of its students and the requirements of the Council, as shown by student achievement outcomes which meet or exceed the standards for the following areas:

(a) Student retention rate of 65 percent (programs >1 year in length) OR 70 percent (programs ≤ 1 year in length)?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (Data not available.)

(b) Student placement rate of 70 percent?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (Data not available.)

The master's degree in public administration has a 2017 placement rate of 33 percent.

If *No* for either item, does the campus provide a Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) that includes an improvement plan for this program with data, analysis, and activities to meet or exceed Council requirements?

Yes  No

If *Yes*, what specific activities does the campus have planned to improve the student retention and/or placement rate(s)?

The improvement plan for placement consists of the following: work with career services to prepare students for the application and interview process; develop a peer-to-peer system of employment information by contacting previously placed students; expand the internship program; and develop additional contacts for employers' public service in Fairfax, Virginia.

8.07 Does the program utilize a variety of community resources to enhance student achievement and potential career opportunities?

Yes  No

If *Yes*, list the community resources and describe how they enhance student enrichment and potential career opportunities.

The public administration program utilizes guest speakers, Fairfax public service tours, and a program advisory committee. The team reviewed documentation to verify the use of community resources.

8.08 Does the catalog and/or other advertising material such as brochures and the campus web site, accurately describe the program, its objectives, and its potential occupational outcomes?

Yes  No

8.09 Does the program include an externship?

Yes  No (*Skip to 8.10.*)

(a) Does the institution have a mutually signed written agreement that outlines the arrangement between the institution and the externship site, including specific learning objectives, course requirements, and evaluation criteria?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (No students currently enrolled in internship.)

At the time of the team's visit, no students were enrolled in the internship course. The campus did provide documentation for previous students enrolled in the internship course. Documentation reviewed meets requirements for the internship program.

(b) Is the experience supervised by an appropriately qualified faculty member?

Yes  No  Not Applicable

Describe how the externship is an appropriate culmination of previously studied theory and is appropriate for the program's objectives.

Students are able to participate in the job-related environment and utilize learned theory to meet the program's objectives. This is hands-on practical application.

8.10 Does the program use independent studies?

Yes  No (*Skip to 8.12.*)

8.11 Are independent studies used appropriately, and is there a contract signed by the student and the institution that meets Council standards?

Yes  No  Not Applicable

At the time of the team's visit, no students were enrolled in independent studies.

8.12 Are the curriculum and length of the program appropriate to meet the educational and placement objectives of the program?

Yes  No

8.13 Are course prerequisites appropriate, are they identified in the catalog, and are they being followed?

Yes  No

8.14 Is an appropriately detailed syllabus on file for each course that includes the following elements:

(a) Title and course descriptions?

Yes  No

(b) Course numbers?

Yes  No

(c) Course prerequisites and/or corequisites?

Yes  No

(d) Instructional contact hours/credits?

Yes  No

(e) Learning objectives

Yes  No

(f) Instructional materials and references?

Yes  No

(g) Topical outline of the course?

Yes  No

(h) Instructional methods?

Yes  No

(i) Assessment criteria?

Yes  No

(j) Method of evaluating students?

Yes  No

(k) Date the syllabus was last reviewed?

Yes  No

***For Title IV participant campuses that have lecture courses in credit hour programs or clock-to-credit hour programs only:***

(l) Out-of-class work assignments that support the learning objectives for the course?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (clock hour program)

(m) A description of the minimum amount of time a student is expected to spend on completion of the work assignments?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (clock hour program)

8.15 Do students confirm that they receive a course syllabus and that it is followed?

Yes  No

Students interviewed by the team verified they received a copy of course syllabi.

8.16 Are the courses available when needed by the student in the normal pursuit of a program of study?

Yes  No

8.17 Does the campus participate in Title IV financial aid?

Yes  No (Skip to 8.20.)

8.18 Do the campus' written procedures (as evidenced by their academic credit analysis) support the written policy and definition of a credit hour as defined by the U.S. Department of Education for Title IV funding?  
 Yes     No     Not Applicable (clock hour programs only)

8.19 Is there evidence that out-of-class work or the equivalency is being evaluated?  
 Yes     No     Not Applicable (clock hour programs only)

If Yes, describe the documentation of evaluation viewed on site.

Students interviewed by the team provided homework assignments that included the graded element and comments from their instructor.

## FOR ALL PROGRAMS

8.20 Are the following appropriate to adequately support the number of students and nature of the program:

(a) Facilities?

Yes     No

(b) Instructional equipment?

Yes     No

(c) Resources?

Yes     No

(d) Support for modes of instructional delivery?

Yes     No

(e) Personnel?

Yes     No

8.21 Describe how the program(s) includes the following required instructional components:

(a) Systematic planning.

(b) Well-defined instructional objectives.

(c) The selection and use of appropriate and current learning materials.

(d) Appropriate modes of instructional delivery.

(e) The use of appropriate assessment strategies.

(f) The use of appropriate experiences.

The team interviewed faculty and the program dean to verify the instructional components. Faculty and the dean participate in various in-service trainings, meetings, and are allowed to submit suggestions. These areas are also covered in faculty meetings. The team reviewed class syllabi and additional documentation to verify the inclusion of the required instructional components.

## FOR OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY

8.26 Is an adequate core of full- and part-time faculty employed to ensure sound direction and continuity of development of the program?

Yes     No

The master's in public administration program has adequate full-time and adjunct faculty to support the current and future expansion of the program.

**FOR ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.27 Are teaching loads reasonable?

Yes  No

Full-time faculty teach four (4) classes per semester and adjunct faculty can teach up to three (3) classes. Additional time is allotted for office hours and meeting with students.

**FOR MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

8.46 Describe the committee that oversees the development, modification, and maintenance of the graduate degree program.

The program advisory committee for the MPA program oversees the graduate degree program. Advisory membership consists of the vice president of academic affairs, program academic dean, community employers, students, and alumni. This committee makes recommendations to improve quality, relevancy, and course delivery, and to suggest new program offerings, supporting resources, and other materials. The team reviewed documentation to verify this information.

Does the committee include the following:

(a) Students?

Yes  No

(b) Faculty?

Yes  No

(c) Administrators?

Yes  No

(d) Employers?

Yes  No

8.47 Are the program, courses, and services appropriate to the institution's mission and to its specific goals and objectives?

Yes  No

8.48 Describe how the graduate program faculty members are directly involved in the development and modification of the master's degree policies, procedures, and curricula.

During the faculty meeting, faculty shared that they participate in the development and modification of master's degree components. Some of the faculty advised they submitted recommendations for revisions of curricula and for the adoption of textbooks. The team also verified their participation through the review of meeting minutes.

8.49 Is the number of hours required to complete the program at least 30 semester hours, 45 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework, plus a thesis at the graduate level; or at least 36 semester hours, 54 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework at the graduate level if a thesis is not required?

Yes  No

8.50 How does the curriculum quantitatively and qualitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions offering the same degree?

The team reviewed the master's degree in public administration program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and James Madison University. Curriculum offered at both institutions is similar to course offerings at VIU.

- 8.51 Is enrollment in the master's program sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work?  
 Yes      No
- 8.52 Do all faculty members possess a graduate degree in the field or a related field of the courses they are teaching, or do those without master's degrees demonstrate evidence of exceptional practical or professional experience in the assigned field, or are they teaching in an assigned field in which graduate degrees are not widely available?  
 Yes      No

At the time of the team's visit there were 7 faculty members. Six are part-time and one is full-time. All faculty possess a graduate degree, and six have terminal degrees.

- 8.53 Is the number of faculty with terminal degrees appropriate for the graduate enrollment?  
 Yes      No
- 8.54 Does the faculty possessing terminal degrees teach at least one-half of all graduate-level courses?  
 Yes      No
- 8.55 Does the campus encourage graduate faculty members to engage in scholarly research and to publish in professional journals?  
 Yes      No

If Yes, describe how the campus encourages scholarly activity:

The team reviewed faculty documentation to verify they participate in scholarly research, are published in professional journals, attend conferences, and present at these conferences. During the faculty meeting, faculty also verified this information.

## 8. PROGRAM EVALUATION

**Master's degree in Applied Linguistics**

**Master's degree in TESOL**

### FOR ALL PROGRAMS

- 8.01 Is licensure, certification, or registration required to practice in the specific career field?  
 Yes      No (*Skip to 8.02*)
- 8.02 Who is assigned to administer the academic program(s) listed above, and what are this person's qualifications?  
 Mr. 8.06Martin Kevin, PhD candidate, is assigned to administer the academic programs as the dean of education. He holds a master's degree in education and a bachelor's degree in French. He demonstrates sufficient experience in the field of Teaching Second Language Acquisition as well as Applied Linguistics. His academic background includes language, linguistics, and education studies at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Mr. Kevin has administration experience supervising similar academic programs and

developed the graduate programs in applied linguistics and TESOL. In addition, he is a member of TESOL association and organizes an annual conference at this institution.

The department chair is Dr. Rebecca Sachs. She holds a PhD in linguistics from Georgetown University in addition to a master's degree in TESOL from Michigan State University and a bachelor's degree in foreign languages and communication disorders from Boston University. Ms.Sachs has experience teaching linguistics and TESOL at other higher learning institutions.

8.03 Does this individual possess appropriate academic or experiential qualifications?

Yes  No

8.04 Describe what evidence there is that the program administrator has sufficient authority and responsibility for the development and administration of the educational program(s).

Mr. Kevin is the dean of education and therefore has sufficient authority and responsibility to support these programs. In addition, he is a member of the committee that is responsible for program and curriculum development, as demonstrated in the faculty meeting minutes and in teacher evaluations. The department chair, Dr. Sachs, reports directly to the dean. She holds the department chair's position with its incumbent responsibilities and authority as verified by the faculty meeting minutes provided.

8.05 Are the time and resources devoted to the administration of the educational program(s) sufficient?

Yes  No

8.06 Does the program meet the needs of its students and the requirements of the Council, as shown by student achievement outcomes that meet or exceed the standards for the following areas:

(a) Student retention rate of 65 percent (programs >1 year in length) OR 70 percent (programs ≤ 1 year in length)?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (Data not available.)

(b) Student placement rate of 70 percent?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (Data not available.)

The placement rate for the Master's in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages is 0 percent.  
The placement rate for the Master's in Applied Linguistics is 0 percent.

If *No* for either item, does the campus provide a Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) that includes an improvement plan for this program with data, analysis, and activities to meet or exceed Council requirements?

Yes  No

The programs are relatively new; therefore, there is not sufficient data available to measure student placement at this point. There is a placement plan in place with a narrative describing the individual situation for each of the two programs.

8.07 Does the program utilize a variety of community resources to enhance student achievement and potential career opportunities?

Yes  No

If *Yes*, list the community resources and describe how they enhance student enrichment and potential career opportunities.

The programs offer an internship in linguistic education and the TESOL program offers a teaching practicum. In addition, the programs have a graduate committee, which includes representatives from the community to support student achievement. In terms of networking, the students attend and volunteer at an annual international conference. They also have guest speakers in their field.

8.08 Does the catalog and/or other advertising material such as brochures and the campus web site, accurately describe the program, its objectives, and its potential occupational outcomes?

Yes  No

8.09 Does the program include an externship?

Yes  No (*Skip to 8.10.*)

(a) Does the institution have a mutually signed written agreement that outlines the arrangement between the institution and the externship site, including specific learning objectives, course requirements, and evaluation criteria?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (No student is at the point of needing them.)

(b) Is the experience supervised by an appropriately qualified faculty member?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (No student is at the point of needing them.)

Describe how the externship is an appropriate culmination of previously studied theory and is appropriate for the program's objectives.

The teaching practicum is generally done at the VIU's ESL program under the supervision of a faculty member. There is a detailed program where the student is asked to implement concepts and methods learned in class. The students have to compile a portfolio, submit it for approval, and complete it for graduation. In addition, students can choose another venue for externship. For example, one student preferred to participate in an externship at a nearby charter school.

8.10 Does the program use independent studies?

Yes  No (*Skip to 8.12.*)

8.12 Are the curriculum and length of the program appropriate to meet the educational and placement objectives of the program?

Yes  No

The curriculum, as described in the catalog for programs, is equivalent to other similar institutions. Both of VIU's programs require completion of 36 credits hours and a practicum and intership experience. This is equivalent to similar programs at other accredited institution like Arizona State University, which requires 36-39 credits, and Georgetown University, which requires 24-36 credits. The VIU catalog delineates similar concentration, core, and elective courses in general.

8.13 Are course prerequisites appropriate, are they identified in the catalog, and are they being followed?

Yes  No

8.14 Is an appropriately detailed syllabus on file for each course that includes the following elements:

(a) Title and course descriptions?

Yes  No

(b) Course numbers?

- Yes       No
- (c) Course prerequisites and/or corequisites?  
 Yes       No
- (d) Instructional contact hours/credits?  
 Yes       No
- (e) Learning objectives  
 Yes       No
- (f) Instructional materials and references?  
 Yes       No
- (g) Topical outline of the course?  
 Yes       No
- (h) Instructional methods?  
 Yes       No
- (i) Assessment criteria?  
 Yes       No
- (j) Method of evaluating students?  
 Yes       No
- (k) Date the syllabus was last reviewed?  
 Yes       No

***For Title IV participant campuses that have lecture courses in credit hour programs or clock-to-credit hour programs only:***

- (l) Out-of-class work assignments that support the learning objectives for the course?  
 Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour program)
- (m) A description of the minimum amount of time a student is expected to spend on completion of the work assignments?  
 Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour program)

If *No* for any item, insert the section number in parentheses, list the courses, and explain:

**(Section 3-1-513(a) and Glossary):** Some syllabi do not appropriately state the modality and the instructional methods used in the class. The team reviewed the syllabi for the TESOL program and found that some syllabi state that the course is on ground, others state that the course is online, and the team was not able to obtain clarification from the institution regarding the modality and instructional methods used in all courses.

- 8.15 Do students confirm that they receive a course syllabus and that it is followed?  
 Yes       No
- 8.16 Are the courses available when needed by the student in the normal pursuit of a program of study?  
 Yes       No
- 8.17 Does the campus participate in Title IV financial aid?  
 Yes       No (*Skip to 8.20.*)
- 8.18 Do the campus's written procedures (as evidenced by their academic credit analysis) support the written policy and definition of a credit hour as defined by the U.S. Department of Education for Title IV funding?  
 Yes       No       Not Applicable (clock hour programs only)
- 8.19 Is there evidence that out-of-class work or the equivalency is being evaluated?

Yes     No     Not Applicable (clock hour programs only)

If *Yes*, describe the documentation of evaluation viewed on site.

Most of course syllabi reviewed include reading articles with class discussion and written reports. Most course syllabi require student elaboration of a critical thinking paper with step-by-step development, including submitting a theme for approval, an outline proposal, and a class presentation. Some syllabi include a grading rubric.

## FOR ALL PROGRAMS

8.20 Are the following appropriate to adequately support the number of students and nature of the program:

(a) Facilities?

Yes     No

(b) Instructional equipment?

Yes     No

(c) Resources?

Yes     No

(d) Support for modes of instructional delivery?

Yes     No

(e) Personnel?

Yes     No

8.21 Describe how the program(s) includes the following required instructional components:

(a) Systematic planning.

(b) Well-defined instructional objectives.

(c) The selection and use of appropriate and current learning materials.

(d) Appropriate modes of instructional delivery.

(e) The use of appropriate assessment strategies.

(f) The use of appropriate experiences.

a) The master's in TESOL includes an academic plan for the current year delineating objectives and proposes responses to findings from previous years. An example is the required Graduate Academic Research and Writing Seminar for students to develop writing and critical thinking skills.

b) All courses include clearly defined programs with student learning objectives.

c) Both programs include a bibliography list and other resources.

d) The modes of instructional delivery are described in the syllabus and program descriptions are adjusted to the nature of the course. The catalog describes the mode of delivery as hybrid to "...enable students to learn and expand outside" (VIU 2017-2018 Catalog p.141); however it is not course specific. Some of the on-ground courses ask students to post online responses, making the courses hybrid.

e) Assessment strategies are appropriate and well described in the syllabi of every course, including the use of rubrics; as well as in the program description (at length in the case of the master's in TESOL).

f) The master's in TESOL program offers a practicum with clearly defined objectives, outcomes, tasks, and assessments.

**FOR OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE'S, ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

- 8.26 Is an adequate core of full- and part-time faculty employed to ensure sound direction and continuity of development of the program?  
 Yes       No

**FOR ACADEMIC ASSOCIATE'S, BACHELOR'S, AND MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

- 8.27 Are teaching loads reasonable?  
 Yes       No

**FOR MASTER'S DEGREES ONLY**

- 8.46 Describe the committee that oversees the development, modification, and maintenance of the graduate degree program.  
The program advisory committee for both programs include six external experts in the field at various universities and language entities, one administrator, one full-time faculty member, one alumnus, and one student.

Does the committee include the following:

- (a) Students?  
 Yes       No
- (b) Faculty?  
 Yes       No
- (c) Administrators?  
 Yes       No
- (d) Employers?  
 Yes       No
- 8.47 Are the program, courses, and services appropriate to the institution's mission and to its specific goals and objectives?  
 Yes       No
- 8.48 Describe how the graduate program faculty members are directly involved in the development and modification of the master's degree policies, procedures, and curricula.  
There is evidence of faculty involvement in these processes, as described in the faculty meeting minutes and the development of curricula, student learning objectives, and syllabi.
- 8.49 Is the number of hours required to complete the program at least 30 semester hours, 45 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework, plus a thesis at the graduate level; or at least 36 semester hours, 54 quarter hours, or their equivalent of coursework at the graduate level if a thesis is not required?  
 Yes       No
- 8.50 How does the curriculum quantitatively and qualitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions offering the same degree?

In comparison with the master's degree in applied linguistics programs offered at Arizona State University and Georgetown University, this program is quantitatively similar in terms of units required for graduation. Some programs do not require completion of a thesis.

- 8.51 Is enrollment in the master's program sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work?  
 Yes      No
- 8.52 Do all faculty members possess a graduate degree in the field or a related field of the courses they are teaching, or do those without master's degrees demonstrate evidence of exceptional practical or professional experience in the assigned field, or are they teaching in an assigned field in which graduate degrees are not widely available?  
 Yes      No

All four faculty members hold a terminal degree. There is one full-time faculty and two part-time faculty, with one faculty shared with another department. According to the course list provided, teaching loads vary from three to nine semester credits (information taken from provided course list, spring 2018).

- 8.53 Is the number of faculty with terminal degrees appropriate for the graduate enrollment?  
 Yes      No
- 8.54 Does the faculty possessing terminal degrees teach at least one-half of all graduate-level courses?  
 Yes      No
- 8.55 Does the campus encourage graduate faculty members to engage in scholarly research and to publish in professional journals?  
 Yes      No

If Yes, describe how the campus encourages scholarly activity:

The Department organizes an annual international conference in the TESOL field. Faculty members are encouraged to participate in the faculty development events offered by the university, including conferences and guest speakers.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

In general, both programs are adequately designed, quantitatively and qualitatively. Both programs are clearly defined and delineated in the catalog. Students have the pertinent information for applying, registering, course and track selection, work load, and fulfillment of requisite courses for graduation. Both programs offer a practicum and internship as graduation requirements.

#### COMMENDATIONS:

The faculty is well-prepared and demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm. All syllabi submitted are well developed and provide all pertinent information to the student in terms of content and expectations. The students are engaged and interested in their studies and satisfied with their overall college experience.

#### NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

- H-A Distance Education (Online and Hybrid/Blended)

Up to 50%    50% or more

A.01 Who is assigned to provide administration of the distance education activities at the institution, and what are this person's qualifications and any other responsibilities currently held at the campus (if applicable)?  
Ms. Christine Smith, director for the school of online education, is responsible for providing administration for the distance education activities at the institution. She is also responsible for supervising Mr. Sadik Belut, academic technologist, and Dr. Nilufer Korkmaz, instructional designer. She holds a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership from Chapman University, a master's degree in computing technology in education from Nova Southeastern University, and she is currently enrolled in the doctor of philosophy in instructional design and technology program at Keiser University. Prior to her current role at the institution, Ms. Smith acquired over 15 years of experience as an online faculty member, involved in eLearning management and online faculty development.

A.02 Does this individual possess appropriate academic or experiential qualifications?  
 Yes  No

A.03 Is there evidence that the program administrator has sufficient authority and responsibility for the development and administration of this mode of delivery?  
 Yes  No

Describe documentation that was reviewed which enabled the team to make this determination.

The visit team interviewed Ms. Christine Smith, director of the school of online education, reviewed her job description, interviewed faculty and staff, and reviewed meeting minutes between Ms. Smith and Dr. Ron Kavach, vice president of academic affairs to determine that she has sufficient authority and responsibility for the development and administration of distance education at the institution. Ms. Smith is responsible for managing and developing Canvas, which is the institution's learning management system. The meeting minutes reviewed by the team provided evidence of collaboration between Ms. Smith, the faculty, and the deans to ensure that training is developed and offered on a regular basis. Ms. Smith has a team of two, which consists of one full-time person and one part-time person, who assist faculty with the development of their online courses.

Mr. Sadik Bulet, academic technologist, is a full-time, on-campus staff member who has a bachelor's degree in education from MarMara University in Istanbul, Turkey, a master's degree in management from Faith University in Istanbul, Turkey, and is currently pursuing a doctor of philosophy in eLearning methodology from Assumption University in Bangkok, Thailand. Both of Mr. Bulet's conferred degrees have been evaluated and an authentication report provided by WES Evaluation Services. Dr. Nilifer Korkmaz, instructional designer, is part-time and works remotely. Dr. Korkmaz holds a bachelor's degree in translation & interpreting from Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey, a master's degree in instructional systems technology and a doctor of philosophy in instructional systems technology, both from Indiana University.

A.04 Are the time and resources devoted to the administration of distance education sufficient?  
 Yes  No

A.05 Does the institution have a plan to implement distance education instruction?  
 Yes  No

If *No*, insert the section number in parentheses and explain:

**(Section 3-1-512 and Appendix H, Section II, Institutional Readiness(b)):** The institution did not provide a plan to implement distance education that included a rationale, resources, course/program objectives, course content, and student assessment. Ms. Smith explained that a formal, written plan has not been drafted for distance education. Ms. Smith also explained that she meets with her team weekly to address monthly goals, which are determined between her team and her supervisor, Dr. Ron Kovach, vice-president of academic affairs; but no documentation was provided to support this assertion.

During the visit, Ms. Smith consulted with Ms. Christina Koontz, assistant vice president, institutional effectiveness & quality assurance, and Dr. Ron Kovach, vice president of academic affairs to provide the visit team with the distance education plan for 2016-17 and the plan for the first quarter of 2018. While on site, the team was provided a 2017 Campus Effectiveness Distance Education Addendum that included an outline for distance education, a listing of student services, and results from satisfaction surveys conducted by the student services department; but the documents did not include a rationale and analysis for distance education, resources allocated, course/program objectives, course content, and student assessment.

A.06 If the institution has a plan, does it include the following:

- (a) Rationale?  
 Yes     No
- (b) Resources?  
 Yes     No
- (c) Course/program objectives?  
 Yes     No
- (d) Course content?  
 Yes     No
- (e) Student assessment?  
 Yes     No

If *No* for any item, insert the section number in parentheses and explain:

**(Section 3-1-512 and Appendix H, Section II, Institutional Readiness (b)):** The institution did not provide the visit team with a plan for distance education that is integrated with the Campus Effectiveness Plan and includes student assessment, faculty development, course content, program objectives, resources, and rationale.

A.07 Does the institution integrate this plan into the Campus Effectiveness Plan?

- Yes     No

If *No*, insert the section number in parentheses and explain:

**(Section 3-1-111 and Appendices H and K):** The institution did not provide the visit team with a plan for distance education, and does not integrate planning for the school of online education into the Campus Effectiveness Plan. The visit team interviewed Ms. Christine Smith, director of the school of online education, and reviewed the institution's Campus Effectiveness Plan to determine that planning for distance education was not included. While on site, the team was provided with a 2017 Campus Effectiveness Distance Education Addendum that included an outline for distance education, a listing of student services, and results from satisfaction surveys conducted by the student services department; but the documents did not include a rationale and analysis for distance education, resources allocated, course/program objectives, course content, faculty and student training, and student assessment.

During the visit, the team was informed that the online faculty and student orientation courses were recently developed and are still in the initial phases of rollout. While the team was on site, the school provided documentation to the team that all online faculty who teach fully online and all students admitted as online students have been trained; however, the campus did not provide documentation that all faculty and students at the institution have been trained to use the learning management system. The latter is of particular importance because the visit team observed classes and course syllabi that require students to login and use Canvas to submit assignments, post discussion board comments, review the course syllabi, and communicate with the instructor. Specifically, the visit team observed APLX 520 Introduction to Multilingualism taught by Dr. [REDACTED] who instructed students to log into Canvas and post to weekly forums by Saturday. The course syllabus for APLX 520 specifies that students are required to post an initial weekly discussion to the forum, and are encouraged to respond to their peers and forum discussions, which accounts for 15 percent of their final grade. For example, in Week One students are required to provide an introduction, worth 25 points; in Week Two students are to write a post describing how the internet has changed the way people communicate, worth 25 points; in Week Three students are to discuss the variation in language, worth 25 points; and so forth. Furthermore, the visit team discovered multiple references to hybrid courses and programs throughout the institution's catalog. For example, pages 141 and 147 of the 2017-18 academic catalog state, "VIU's School of Education embraces a learning model that allows for a hybrid learning environment in which students can benefit from a combination of online coursework and in-class meetings." This is in direct conflict with the information shared with the visit team and the Campus Effectiveness Addendum documents provided to the team while on site.

A.08 Is the delivery method appropriate for students and the curriculum?

Yes  No

A.09 Describe the distance education delivery method(s) the campus utilizes: fully online, hybrid/blended, or both.

The institution uses hybrid and fully-online delivery methods for its academic programs. During the admissions process applicants are asked to complete an application as an on-ground or online student. Also, faculty are required to set up an online shell for every course offered, and asked to post their contact information and the course syllabi. The team interviewed faculty, observed classes, and reviewed 17 online courses and 9 online course shells to determine that faculty are using the learning management system in their courses.

A.10 Are admission requirements for distance education courses/programs identified by the institution?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (There are no additional admissions requirements.)

A.11 If an admissions test is required, is it administered in a manner which verifies the student's identity?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (No admissions test is required.)

A.12 Does the institution make it clear in writing at the time of enrollment how the student's identity will be verified throughout the course and program and how the student's privacy will be protected?

Yes  No

If Yes, explain how and when this information is disclosed.

The campus reviewed 12 signed enrollment agreements and interviewed 4 online students to determine that during enrollment students are informed how their identity will be verified throughout their

program. On the enrollment agreement, which is signed by the student prior to admission, the institution lists how students' identity is verified and how students' privacy is protected.

- A.13 Does the institution make it clear in writing at the time of enrollment if the student will be assessed any additional charges or fees associated with the verification of student identity?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (There are no additional charges or fees associated with the verification of student identity.)

- A.14 Do students confirm that the institution clearly and appropriately states any requirements they must possess or have access to in order to access this mode of delivery during the admissions/enrollment process?

Yes  No

- A.15 Describe the online orientation program that the institution provides to familiarize students with the equipment, learning management system, and resources used in the distance education activities, as well as the available support services (including technical support).

Students are required to complete an online orientation in the Canvas learning management system. This orientation is facilitated by Dr. Nilufer Korkmaz, instructional designer, is self-paced, and consists of six modules. The modules review the student handbook, the institution's mission and history, registering for classes, student services offered at the institution, and how to navigate Canvas. Students enrolled in online programs also have access to virtual advising, technical support, library services, and career services. For example, the institution utilizes a chat function so that students can communicate with information technology helpdesk staff and the library staff.

Is this orientation adequate?

Yes  No

- A.16 Do syllabi identify course learning objectives, and does each course learning objective support one or more program learning outcomes?

Yes  No

- A.17 Describe how the courses provide opportunities for interaction between faculty and students and among students.

The team reviewed 17 of the online courses offered in the Spring I term to verify that online courses provide opportunities for interaction between faculty and students, and among students. For courses offered fully online, each faculty member is required to have at least one discussion board question each week, and students are required to post an initial comment and respond to at least two of their classmates' posts each week. In addition, some courses, such as APLX 630 Sociolinguistics in the Classroom, requires online group work that is completed using Skype/Zoom and Google Docs for collaboration.

Are these opportunities sufficient and appropriate?

Yes  No

- A.18 Does the institution demonstrate that the clock or credit hours required and awarded are appropriate for the degrees and credentials offered using a thoroughly developed rationale?

Yes  No

If *Yes*, describe documentation reviewed by the team to evidence this.

The visit team reviewed the academic credit analysis, transcripts, and the course syllabi to determine that the clock-to-credit hours required and awarded are appropriate for the degree and credentials offered.

A.19 Is the curriculum administered in a way that maintains security of access?

Yes       No

A.20 Describe the student identity verification method used by the campus.

The campus provides each enrolled student with a college e-mail address through Google Gmail Email services. For access to the student portal and the learning management system, the institution uses a single sign-on system. After the student has been admitted, a student number and e-mail address is automatically generated and provided directly to them via the e-mail provided on their application documents. Students are given a temporary password and they have three (3) days to change their password to meet institutional standards. The institution requires that passwords include a least one uppercase letter, one lower case letter, one number, no spaces, and be a minimum of eight characters long. Student passwords expire after every 180 days, and then students are required to reset their password. If a student has forgotten their password, they can reset their password online by providing their student identification number, school e-mail address, and their date of birth.

Is this method adequate?

Yes       No

A.21 Does the institution employ academically and experientially credentialed faculty to teach online courses?

Yes       No

A.22 Describe the institution's learning management system and the technical support provided for the system.

The institution uses the Canvas learning management system (LMS), which is a cloud-based system that is designed to be used on a computer and on mobile and tablet devices. Canvas allows institutions and faculty to customize their courses to fit their students' needs, upload media and resources from third-party sources, and provide real-time feedback on student assignments. The institution has three levels of technical support for students, faculty, and administration. The first level of support is internal and requires users to e-mail questions or concerns to [online@viu.edu](mailto:online@viu.edu) for assistance. This e-mail address is a shared inbox monitored by the team in the school of online education. This level typically handles password reset issues and course development issues. The second level of support is offered directly through Canvas and addresses upgrade issues and technical issues specific to the Canvas system. The third tier of support is offered internally by the information technology department at the institution, and this level of support addresses issues with the Application Programming Interface (API) for single sign-on patches from the institutional portal to Canvas, and serves as back-up support for student and faculty access issues.

Is the learning management system accessible and reliable and does the technical support effectively facilitate online instruction and learning?

Yes       No

A.23 Are the faculty properly trained to utilize the institution's learning management system for purposes of instruction, communication, and assessment?

Yes       No

If *Yes*, explain how and when faculty members are trained to utilize the institution's learning management system.

Prior to teaching online, all faculty are required to complete three faculty orientation courses titled Canvas Level 1, 2, and 3 in the Canvas learning management system. Canvas course Level 1 and 2 are a non-facilitated, self-paced courses that provide an overview of Canvas, expectations for teaching online, process for grading, tutorials for recording and uploading files for students to review, and expectations regarding student communication. Canvas course Level 3 is specifically designed for faculty who develop online courses. While completing the online faculty orientation course, faculty are provided a sandbox course and expected to complete assignments as though they are setting up and teaching a live course. For example, in Canvas Level 1 and 2, faculty are asked to create discussion board posts, post an introductory video, and set up the gradebook. Once completed, Ms. Smith reviews the faculty sandbox course and provides feedback to each faculty member.

- A.24 Does the institution demonstrate appropriate faculty student ratios to support the following:
- (a) Faculty and student interaction?  
 Yes     No
  - (b) Facilitation of interaction among students?  
 Yes     No
  - (c) Facilitation of interaction with curriculum content?  
 Yes     No
- A.25 Is there evidence that appropriate faculty development plans have been developed and implemented on an annual basis for those faculty members teaching online courses, including documentation to support completed activities listed on the plans?  
 Yes     No
- A.26 Does the institution have adequate financial resources to support the courses/program(s)?  
 Yes     No
- A.27 Do students who are in a program, of which 50 percent or more is delivered online, have access to, at a minimum, a virtual library collection of program-related books, journals, and periodicals, and virtual library and information technology services?  
 Yes     No
- A.28 Does the institution provide support services for online students which are the same or equivalent to those provided for on-ground students in the following areas:
- (a) Counseling?  
 Yes     No
  - (b) Academic advising?  
 Yes     No
  - (c) Financial aid?  
 Yes     No     Not Applicable (The institution does not participate in financial aid.)
  - (d) Employment assistance?  
 Yes     No     Not Applicable (The institution enrolls only international students on a student visa.)

If *Yes* for any item, describe how the institution provides these support services to students.

Students enrolled in the school of online education can meet with program advisors, faculty, career services, and library personnel virtually for additional support. Students are informed of these services during their online orientation course. The institution uses a chat function online so that students can receive immediate attention from library staff, academic advisors, and career services. Additionally, students can e-mail or call the campus to request one-on-one Skype sessions with a librarian or a career services staff.

- A.29 Are the course learning objectives for online courses the same as the learning objectives for the same on-ground courses?  
 Yes       No
- A.30 Do assessments and assignments demonstrate student achievement of course learning objectives?  
 Yes       No
- A.31 Does the institution document that it conducts the following:
- (a) Course/program evaluations (including assessments of educational outcomes)?  
 Yes       No
  - (b) Student retention and placement?  
 Yes       No
  - (c) Student satisfaction?  
 Yes       No
  - (d) Faculty satisfaction?  
 Yes       No
  - (e) Employer satisfaction?  
 Yes       No
- A.32 Does the institution fully disclose what forms of instruction it uses in its catalog and website and, when appropriate, in its advertising and promotional material?  
 Yes       No

## Summary

Based on the team's review, the following areas require an explanatory response:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Summary Statement</b>
1	<b>3-1-111 and Appendices H and K</b>	A distance education plan is not appropriately integrated into the Campus Effectiveness Plan (pages 68 and 69).
2	<b>3-1-441(c)</b>	Follow up studies on graduates are not conducted at specific measuring points following placement (pages 28 and 29).
3	<b>3-1-512 and Appendix H, Section II, Institutional Readiness (b)</b>	The institution does not have a distance education plan that includes the rationale, resources, course program objectives, content, or student assessment (page 68).
4	<b>3-1-512(c)</b>	Documentation of community resources is not sufficient in the business programs (page 40).
5	<b>3-1-513(a) and Glossary</b>	An appropriate externship agreement is not in place in the MBA program (page 41).  Course syllabi in the business and TESOL programs do not clearly or accurately identify the online delivery methodology (pages 42 and 63).
6	<b>3-1-542</b>	Official transcripts are not available for two faculty members (page 26).
7	<b>3-1-543</b>	Current 2018 Faculty development plans are not on file for all faculty members (page 27).
8	<b>3-1-701 and Appendix C</b>	The catalog does not meet Council standards in some areas (pages 30 and 31).
9	<b>3-1-703 and Appendix C</b>	The reference to financial aid availability is not aligned with the requirements of the Criteria (page 33).
10	<b>3-6-800</b>	There is not a separate section for the graduate admissions procedures in the catalog (page 34).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Applied Linguistics and TESOL:*

The assignment of a graduate mentor would benefit students. Also, financial support for faculty scholarly research is recommended.

### *Distance Education:*

The visit team recommends that a representative from the school of online education be added to the campus effectiveness committee.

### *Admissions:*

The team observed that the three admissions representatives are appropriately located on the first floor of the facility. However, the person who oversees them is located on the third floor. To adequately supervise and monitor the admissions department, the team recommends that the person in charge, (b)(6), should be located in the same area as the admissions representatives.

## STUDENT SURVEY

Please find below the results of the Student Surveys issued to several students while the team was on-site. Please note that these results are aggregated and are not distinguished by individual.

SA.01. Prior to enrolling in this institution, have you attended any other college or institution of higher learning?



A.02. If you had transfer credits, did your admissions representative describe the transfer of credit policies and procedures accurately? (Select N/A if no transfer credits)



A.03. Did your admissions representative accurately describe the enrollment process regarding available courses and programs of study?



A.04. Did your admissions representative accurately describe student services offered by the institution?



A.05. Did your admissions representative accurately describe the tuition and fees associated with your program of study?



A.06. Did you receive a catalog or were you provided access to one during the enrollment process?



A.07. Did the catalog accurately portray programs, services and policies of the institution?



A.08. Was the information provided during enrollment sufficient for you to make your decision?



A.09. Did you feel pressured into making the decision to enroll?



B.01. Do you receive federal financial aid?



B.02. Are you aware of your federal financial aid loan repayment obligations? (Select N/A if no loan repayment obligations)



C.01. Are your instructors available to provide additional help, if needed?



C.02. Are the learning resources and lab equipment/supplies adequate for your program of study?



C.03. Were textbooks available when you started classes?



C.04. Were the out of class activities sufficient to help you achieve the course objectives? (Select N/A if no out of class activities have been assigned)



D.01. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education I am receiving.



D.02. I would recommend this institution to others.



ACICS values your feedback and we are particularly interested in your perspective on the educational experience and organizational and academic processes at this campus. Hence, please share any information that you feel would be valuable to the evaluation review. Thank you for taking the time to share.

**Campus Name \***

- Role**
- Student
  - Faculty
  - Staff

**Do you believe students receive the value from their educational experience that the institution advertises?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Does the institution provide support to students who need academic assistance?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Does the institution provide training and support to faculty and staff?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Overall are you satisfied with your experience at this institution?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Would you recommend this institution to**

- Yes
- No

**friends, family or others?**

**Comments**

**How can the student experience at this institution be improved?**

**Please use this section for additional comments, including comments about the organizational and academic processes at this institution:**

**Were your responses to this survey influenced by the campus?**

- Yes
- No

ACICS values your feedback and we are particularly interested in your perspective on the educational experience and organizational and academic processes at this campus. Hence, please share any information that you feel would be valuable to the evaluation review. Thank you for taking the time to share.

**Campus Name \***

- Role**
- Student
  - Faculty
  - Staff

**Do you believe students receive the value from their educational experience that the institution advertises?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Does the institution provide support to students who need academic assistance?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Does the institution provide training and support to faculty and staff?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Overall are you satisfied with your experience at this institution?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Would you recommend this institution to**

- Yes
- No

**friends, family or others?**

**Comments**

**How can the student experience at this institution be improved?**

**Please use this section for additional comments, including comments about the organizational and academic processes at this institution:**

**Were your responses to this survey influenced by the campus?**

- Yes
- No

ACICS values your feedback and we are particularly interested in your perspective on the educational experience and organizational and academic processes at this campus. Hence, please share any information that you feel would be valuable to the evaluation review. Thank you for taking the time to share.

**Campus Name \***

- Role**
- Student
  - Faculty
  - Staff

**Did you feel pressured to enroll by the recruiting or admissions department?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Were you given enough time to make a sound decision to enroll at the institution?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Did the statements made by the recruiting or admissions department accurately portray your experience at the institution?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Did the admissions department make it easy to enroll and give you a clear understanding of the process?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Do you know the month and year you are scheduled to graduate?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Do you feel you are receiving the value from your education that you expected when you enrolled?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Do you feel that your instructors are well qualified?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Does the institution provide support to students in need of academic assistance?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Does the career services department assist you with career placement?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Overall, are you satisfied with your experience at this institution?**

- Yes
- No

**Comments**

**Would you recommend this institution to friends, family, or others?**

- Yes  
 No

**Comments**

**Name of Program of Study**

**How can the student experience at this institution be improved?**

**Please use this section for additional comments, including comments about the organizational and academic processes at this institution:**

**Were your responses to this survey influenced by the campus?**

- Yes  
 No



## ACICS Survey

[LOG OFF](#)

---

### Please complete the following questions:

Please enter the name of the person who asked you to complete this survey

Name of your program of study

---

A.01. Prior to enrolling in this institution, have you attended any other college or institution of higher learning?

Yes  No

A.02. If you had transfer credits, did your admissions representative describe the transfer of credit policies and procedures accurately? (Select N/A if no transfer credits)

Yes  No  N/A

A.03. Did your admissions representative accurately describe the enrollment process regarding available courses and programs of study?

Yes  No

A.04. Did your admissions representative accurately describe student services offered by the institution?

Yes  No

A.05. Did your admissions representative accurately describe the tuition and fees associated with your program of study?

Yes  No

A.06. Did you receive a catalog or were you provided access to one during the enrollment process?

Yes  No

A.07. Did the catalog accurately portray programs, services and policies of the institution?

Yes  No

A.08. Was the information provided during enrollment sufficient for you to make your decision?

Yes  No

A.09. Did you feel pressured into making the decision to enroll?

Yes  No

B.01. Do you receive federal financial aid?

Yes  No

B.02. Are you aware of your federal financial aid loan repayment obligations? (Select N/A if no loan repayment obligations)

Yes  No  N/A

C.01. Are your instructors available to provide additional help, if needed?

Yes  No

C.02. Are the learning resources and lab equipment/supplies adequate for your program of study?

Yes  No

C.03. Were textbooks available when you started classes?

Yes  No

C.04. Were the out of class activities sufficient to help you achieve the course objectives? (Select N/A if no out of class activities have been assigned)

Yes  No  N/A

D.01. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education I am receiving.

Agree  Disagree  Neutral

D.02. I would recommend this institution to others.

Agree  Disagree  Neutral

E.01 Did you take classes online?

Yes  No

1. Were you informed of the computer requirements you would need for the online classroom?

Yes  No

2. Did your school provide an online orientation program before you began your online classes?

Yes  No

3. As an online student do you have access to the following student services:

Academic advising

Yes  No

Counseling

Yes  No

Financial aid

Yes  No

Placement/Employment Services

Yes  No

4. Do you know who to contact if you have a technical issue?

Yes  No

5. Do your instructors provide detailed feedback on your assignments?

Yes  No



6. Describe your online experience with your school.

---



General comments: (500 Words Max)



August 26, 2016

ID Code 00050228(MC)

VIA E-MAIL AND UPS DELIVERY

Dr. William Schipper  
President and CEO  
American College of Commerce and Technology  
803 West Broad Street, Suite 100  
Falls Church, VA 22046

*acics@acct.edu*

Dear Dr. Schipper:

**Subject: Special Visit Report/Show-Cause Directive Letter**

The Council reviewed your institution at its recent meeting, including correspondence from the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV), the report from the special visit conducted in June 2016, and the institution's response to the special visit report. As a result of its review, the Council found the following based on the *Accreditation Criteria*:

1. SCHEV is moving forward with its decision to revoke the campus's certificate to operate due to the institution's failure to comply with SCHEV requirements, raising critical questions about the institution's ability to continue to operate or to establish eligibility for accreditation (Sections 1-2-100(b) and 3-1-521).
2. The Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) does not address the assessment of student learning outcomes in online courses (Section 3-1-111 and Appendix H).
3. The campus did not provide a complete job description signed by Ms. [REDACTED] (Section 3-1-303(a)).
4. There is insufficient evidence that the online courses are being delivered properly with appropriate interaction between faculty and students and sufficient oversight by the administration. The campus provided evidence that the institution had created a policy to resolve the issue of online interaction, but there remains no evidence that there is substantive interaction occurring as required in online courses (Sections 3-1-500 and 3-1-512 and Appendix H).
5. The Council is unable to determine that the newly assigned department chair for the Accounting programs is a member of the campus administration and has sufficient time to devote to the oversight of the programs (Section 3-1-511).

6. The campus does not maintain official transcripts for all credentials that qualify faculty members, and there is insufficient documentation to evidence that some faculty members are qualified to teach their courses (Sections 3-1-542, 3-4-302 and 3-5-302).
7. The online catalog does not comply with Council requirements (Section 3-1-701 and Appendix C).
8. The campus's designated committee for oversight of the graduate degree programs does not include employers (Section 3-6-301).
9. The apparent failure of the institution to comply with SCHEV requirements and the significant number of findings of noncompliance with the Council's accreditation standards identified by the special visit team only 14 months after the institution obtained initial accreditation from the Council call into question the integrity and effectiveness of the institution's administration (Title II, Chapter 1, Introduction and Sections 3-1-202 and 3-1-300).

### **Council Action**

Due to the concerns surrounding the eligibility of the institution and the integrity and effectiveness of the institution, and the repeated findings issued in the short span of the institution's accreditation history, the Council directed the institution to show-cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn by suspension or otherwise conditioned during the December 2016 review cycle. The institution is required to review and follow the Council hearing procedures as detailed in Section 2-3-500 of the *Accreditation Criteria* and the "Schedule of Fees" listing on the ACICS website. The institution must provide the appropriate notification and fee within ten days of receipt of this notice.

In response to the show-cause directive, the institution must submit the following information by **November 1, 2016**:

1. Evidence that the campus continues to be licensed to operate and to confer credentials in the state of Virginia. Documentation must include all communication between SCHEV and the campus as to the status of the institution's approval to operate in Virginia and to award degrees. The institution is reminded that in the event of a revocation of its license to operate by SCHEV, it is required to notify ACICS immediately of such action.

2. A revised CEP that includes disaggregated student learning outcomes data specifically for online courses. The campus must also provide a summary and analysis of this data and any educational processes that have changed as a result of this analysis.
3. A signed job description for Ms. [REDACTED] human resources coordinator.
4. Evidence that the campus provides sufficient, appropriate, and timely opportunities for interaction between faculty and students in the online courses with oversight by the campus administration. Documentation must include a detailed outline of the institution's updated policies and procedures for the delivery of online education, including expectations for interaction and engagement between students and between students and faculty, as well as a documented summary of completed administrative oversight activities in regards to the courses. The campus must also provide sufficiently thorough documentation of the interaction among students, and between faculty and students to provide a compelling picture of the systematic and effective implementation of this important practice.
5. Evidence that the accounting department chair is an institutional employee and member of the campus administration with sufficient time devoted to the administration of the programs. Documentation must include, but is not limited to, a signed employment or appointment letter, job description, and an ACICS Data Sheet for Dr. [REDACTED]
6. Evidence that the campus maintains official transcripts of faculty members to include sufficient information to demonstrate that all faculty members are qualified to teach their assigned courses. Documentation must include a list of all faculty teaching in the fall 2016 term, along with their teaching assignment, their credentials held, and copies of official transcripts for all qualifying credentials. For credentials earned at institutions outside the United States, the campus must provide equivalency documentation as outlined in Section 3-1-541.

The campus must also provide information to address the findings in the special visit report regarding the teaching assignments of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and whether or not these instructors are teaching in the fall 2016 term. Documentation must include official transcripts for all credentials held by each of these faculty members and identification of the coursework on each of these transcripts that qualify [REDACTED] to teach HUM200, Logic; PSY100 Introduction to Psychology, and SOC101, Introduction to Sociology; [REDACTED] to teach PSY100, Introduction to Psychology; and [REDACTED] to teach CIS150, Introduction to Networking.

7. A current catalog that complies with the Council's requirements and evidence demonstrating that the online catalog is identical to the printed catalog.
8. Evidence that the graduate oversight committee includes the appointment of employers as designated members of the committee. Documentation must include names and company affiliations, meeting minutes, and sign-in sheets of the graduate oversight committee demonstrating the participation of the employer members.

Please submit eight hard copies of your response and one electronic copy via flash drive by the date indicated above. Failure to provide all information requested by the Council may result in the withdrawal of your institution's accreditation.

### **Special Visit**

Pursuant to Section 2-3-800 of the *Accreditation Criteria*, the Council has determined that a special full-team evaluation visit shall be conducted to both campuses of the institution to investigate the issues listed above. The institution will be required to pay the expenses of the evaluation team and will be contacted by an ACICS staff member to schedule the date of the visits.

### **Institutional Teach-Out Plan**

Further, in compliance with Section 2-3-230 of the *Accreditation Criteria*, the institution is directed to submit an updated contingency teach-out plan that includes:

- a. A listing of students with the student name; program of study; expected graduation date; and status of unearned tuition, status of refunds due, and current account balance for each student.
- b. A listing of comparable programs offered at other nearby institutions in the event that teach-out agreements or transfer arrangements are needed for students to complete their programs elsewhere.
- c. A custodian for all permanent academic records in case of closure that includes contact information for this individual or entity and the process by which students can obtain their records.
- d. A description of the financial resources available to ensure that students can complete their programs or receive refunds if the institution does cease operations.

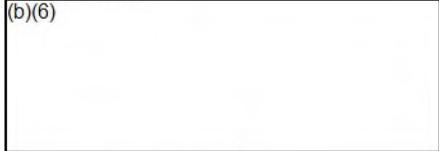
The Council is obligated to take adverse action against any institution that fails to come into compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria* within established time frames without good cause. Please consult the Introduction of Title II, Chapter 3 for additional information.

Dr. William Schipper  
August 26, 2016  
Page 5

If you have any questions about this action, please contact Ms. Katie Morrison at [kmorrison@acics.org](mailto:kmorrison@acics.org) or (202) 336-6783.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)



Roger J. Williams  
Interim President

- c: Ms. Cathy Sheffield, Accreditation and State Liaison, U.S. Department of Education  
([aslrecordsmanager@ed.gov](mailto:aslrecordsmanager@ed.gov))  
Ms. Nancy Gifford, U.S. Department of Education, School Participation Team, Region  
III ([nancy.paula.gifford@ed.gov](mailto:nancy.paula.gifford@ed.gov))  
Ms. Sylvia Rosa-Casanova, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia  
([communications@schev.edu](mailto:communications@schev.edu))



September 14, 2016

VIA E-MAIL AND UPS DELIVERY

(b)(6)

Chief Executive Officer  
Globe University/Minnesota School of Business  
8089 Globe Drive  
Woodbury, MN 55125

(b)(6)

Dear Mr. Myhre:

GLOBE UNIVERSITY, WOODBURY, MINNESOTA ID CODE 00010898(MC)  
MINNESOTA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, RICHFIELD, MINNESOTA ID CODE 00011103(MC)

**Subject: Show-Cause Directive Letter**

The Council has reviewed the September 8, 2016, decision by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education to revoke the institutions' authorization to operate in the state. This action raises serious concerns about the institutions' ability to continue to provide educational services to its students per Section 1-2-100(b) of the *Accreditation Criteria*. As a result, the Council has directed the institutions' to show-cause why their accreditation should not be withdrawn by suspension or otherwise conditioned during the December 2016 review cycle.

The institutions are required to review and follow the Council hearing procedures as detailed in Section 2-3-500 of the *Accreditation Criteria* and the "Schedule of Fees" listing on the ACICS website. The institution must provide the appropriate notification and fee within ten days of receipt of this notice.

In response to the show-cause directive, the institutions' must submit the following information by **November 1, 2016**:

- Evidence that the institutions continue to be licensed to operate and to confer credentials in the state of Minnesota. Documentation must include all communication between the institutions and the Office of Higher Education as to the status of the institution's approval to operate. The institutions are reminded that in the event of a revocation of its license to operate by the state, it is required to notify ACICS immediately of such action.

Please submit eight hard copies of your response and one electronic copy via flash drive by the date indicated above. Failure to provide all information requested by the Council may result in the withdrawal of your institution's accreditation.

### **Institutional Teach-Out Plan**

Further, in compliance with Section 2-3-230 of the *Accreditation Criteria*, the institutions must submit fully executed teach-out plans that ensure all students will receive an appropriate educational outcome. The institutions have represented that they can initiate agreements with the following institutions for the following programs:

<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Teach-Out Institution</b>
Massage Therapy	Northwestern Health Sciences University
Nursing	Herzing University
Gaming Application and Development	Minneapolis Media Institute
Master's degree and doctoral level programs	Argosy University
	St. Mary's University of Minnesota
All other online and residential programs	Rasmussen College
	Argosy University
	Herzing University

ACICS requires that the institutions execute formal teach-out agreements or transfer arrangements with these institutions and/or any other institutions that will provide a comparable program to the currently enrolled students. In addition, the institutions must provide updated information that includes the following:

- a. A listing of students with the student name; program of study; expected graduation date; and institution at which the student will complete their program, if not through their current campus.
- b. A custodian for all permanent academic records that includes contact information for this individual or entity and the process by which students can obtain their records.
- c. A description of the financial resources available to ensure that students who are expected to graduate from their current campus can complete their programs or receive refunds.

The Council is obligated to take adverse action against any institution that fails to come into compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria* within established time frames without good cause. Please consult the Introduction of Title II, Chapter 3 for additional information.

Mr. Terry Myhre  
September 14, 2016  
Page 3

If you have any questions about this action, please contact Ms. Perliter Walters-Gilliam at [pwgilliam@acics.org](mailto:pwgilliam@acics.org).

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Roger J. Williams  
Interim President

- c: Ms. Jeanne Herrmann, Globe University/Minnesota School of Business, Chief Operating Officer ([jherrmann@globeuniversity.edu](mailto:jherrmann@globeuniversity.edu))  
Ms. Cathy Sheffield, Accreditation and State Liaison, U.S. Department of Education ([aslrecordsmanager@ed.gov](mailto:aslrecordsmanager@ed.gov))  
Mr. Douglas Parrott, U.S. Department of Education, School Participation Team, Region VI ([douglas.parrott@ed.gov](mailto:douglas.parrott@ed.gov))  
Ms. Betsy Talbot, Minnesota Office of Higher Education ([Betsy.Talbot@state.mn.us](mailto:Betsy.Talbot@state.mn.us))



May 8, 2018 \*\*REVISED\*\* May 15, 2018\*\*

(b)(6)

**VIA E-MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL**

*regulatory.birmingham@vc.edu*

(b)(6)

Campus President  
Virginia College  
488 Palisades Boulevard  
Birmingham, AL 35209-5154

**Subject: Institutional Show-Cause Directive – Adverse Action by another Agency**  
**RE: Virginia College, Birmingham, Alabama (00010582 MC)**

Dear Mr. Gossett:

On May 1, 2018, ACICS received a copy of the adverse action by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training with regards to the application by Virginia College, LLC (dba Virginia College, Golf Academy of America, and Ecotech Institute) for initial accreditation by that agency. Detailed in 57 pages of its 59-page letter to Mr. John Carreon, SVP, Regulatory Affairs and Associate General Counsel, ACCET provided its assessment of the 23 standards where the entire system or specific campuses within the system failed to demonstrate compliance, in a systematic and effective manner. The 23 areas of non-compliance include Completion and Placement, Certification and Licensing, Employer/Sponsor Satisfaction, Student Satisfaction, Student Progress, Attendance, Student Services, Admissions/Enrollment, Instructor Orientation and Training, Supervision of Instruction, Instructional Methods, Curriculum Review/Revision, Externship/Internships, Program/Instructional Materials, Educational Goals and Objectives, Financial Assistance/Scholarships, Financial Procedures, Communications, Human Resource Management, Institutional Management, Governance, Mission, and Learning Resources, Equipment and Supplies.

Further, 14 of the campuses within the institution have been directed by ACICS to show-cause why their approvals should not be withdrawn for below standard placement outcomes. The institution's accreditation is also in jeopardy of being withdrawn having reported a 37% placement at the main campus. This action would affect all **33** campuses within the system. Additionally, 10 campuses are on compliance warning for student achievement outcomes.

### **Council Action**

The Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the Council, has determined that given the adverse action taken by another recognized accrediting agency and the student achievement show-cause directive against the institution, the institution does not materially operate in accordance with the *Accreditation Criteria*. Therefore, the institution has been directed to show-

cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn by suspension at the Council's August 2018 meeting.

In response to the show-cause directive, the institution must submit the following information by **July 9, 2018**:

1. A detailed narrative, with documentation, on all the areas of non-compliance identified in the ACCET May 1, 2018, letter.
2. A detailed explanation on all current areas of non-compliance with ACICS standards, including the student achievement show-cause directive and compliance warning actions to a number of the campuses.

Five hard copies of your response and one electronic copy via the Show-Cause application on the institution's account, must be received by the date indicated above. Failure to provide all information requested by the Council may result in the withdrawal of your institution's accreditation.

The institution must respond to this **directive in person** and is required to review and follow the Council hearing procedures as detailed in Section 2-3-500 of the *Accreditation Criteria* and the "Schedule of Fees" listing on the ACICS website. The institution must provide the appropriate notification and fee within **ten business days (May 22, 2018)** of receipt of this notice.

#### **Institutional Teach-Out Plan**

Further, in compliance with Section 2-3-230 of the *Accreditation Criteria*, the institution must submit an Institutional teach-out plan which includes the following for all its campuses:

- a. A listing of students with the student name; program of study; expected graduation date; and status of unearned tuition, status of refunds due, and current account balance for each student.
- b. A listing of comparable programs offered at other nearby institutions in the event that teach-out agreements or transfer arrangements are needed for students to complete their programs elsewhere.
- c. A custodian for all permanent academic records in case of closure that includes contact information for this individual or entity and the process by which students can obtain their records.
- d. A description of the financial resources available to ensure that students can complete their programs or receive refunds if the institution does cease operations.

The Council is obligated to take adverse action against any institution that fails to come into compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria* within the established time frames without good cause. Please consult the Introduction of Title II, Chapter 3 of the *Accreditation Criteria* for additional information.

Mr. Gregory Gossett  
May 15, 2018  
Page 3 of 3

The institution's ongoing attention and efforts toward continuous improvement are a very important component of its accredited status, and your responsiveness to this Council action letter is essential to a favorable outcome for both the campus and its students.

Please contact Ms. Perliter Walters-Gilliam at (b)(6) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Michelle Edwards  
President and CEO

- c: Ms. Cathy Sheffield, Accreditation and State Liaison, U.S. Department of Education  
Ms. Tivoli Nash, Alabama Community College System (tivoli.nash@accs.edu)  
Ms. Teri Stanfill, Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education  
(teri.stanfill@azppse.gov)  
Dr. Michael Marion Jr., California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education  
(michael.marion@dca.ca.gov)  
Ms. Lorna Candler, Colorado Department of Higher Education  
(lorna.candler@dhe.state.co.us)  
Mr. Samuel Ferguson, Florida Department of Education (Joey.Smith@fldoe.org)  
Ms. Corinna Robinson, Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission  
(crobinson@gnpec.org)  
Ms. Carol Marabella, Louisiana Board of Regents (carol.marabella@la.gov)  
Ms. Kim Verneuille, Mississippi Commission of Proprietary School and College  
Registration (kverneuille@mccb.edu)  
Mr. Scott Corl, North Carolina Community College System  
(corls@nccommunitycolleges.edu)  
Ms. Nora House, Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools  
(nhouse@obpvs.ok.gov)  
Ms. Lane Goodwin, South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
(lgoodwin@che.sc.gov)  
Ms. Julie Woodruff, Tennessee Higher Education Commission (julie.woodruff@tn.gov)  
Ms. Cathie Maeyaert, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
(cathie.maeyaert@thecb.state.tx.us)  
Texas Workforce Commission (Career.schools@twc.state.tx.us)  
Ms. Sylvia Rosa-Casanova, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia  
(sylviarosacasanova@schev.edu)



[#Quick Takes \(/quick-takes\)](#)

# Embattled Accreditor Projects Losses After Closure of Member Colleges

By [Andrew Kreighbaum](#) // June 4, 2019

[2 COMMENTS \(/QUICKTAKES/2019/06/04/EMBATTLED-ACCREDITOR-PROJECTS-LOSSES-AFTER-CLOSURE-MEMBER-COLLEGES#DISQUS\\_THREAD\)](#)

Michelle Edwards, president of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools, said Monday that the organization faces losses of \$2.1 million this year, after the closure of a chain of member colleges and unexpected legal fees.

Edwards said ACICS does not expect to reach the break-even point until 2023 at the earliest.

After having its federal recognition restored by the Trump administration last year, the accreditor is under review by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation's recognition committee. Edwards and her team answered questions from the committee Monday. While ACICS needs federal approval in order for member colleges to access Title IV student aid, CHEA recognition can affect decisions by state authorizers, specialized accrediting agencies, licensing boards and some institutional authorities abroad.

ACICS was targeted for scrutiny by the Obama administration and congressional Democrats after the collapse of Corinthian Colleges and ITT Tech, two for-profit college chains overseen by the accreditor. Late last year, another for-profit chain accredited by ACICS, Education Corporation of America, abruptly closed its doors.

Other colleges sought recognition with new accreditors or closed their doors after the Obama administration pulled federal recognition from ACICS in 2016.

ACICS has taken cost-cutting measures like moving to a smaller office space, but Edwards said the organization can't simply reduce expenses to close the gap.

Also on Monday, two former students of Virginia College, which was operated by ECA, filed a [class action lawsuit \(https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ACICS-DE-1-](#)



... against Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, arguing she illegally restored federal  
ACICS. The students asked a federal court to void federal loans taken out to attend  
ECA colleges after June 12, when their access to federal aid would have expired without intervention  
by DeVos.

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