

Public Notice: Denial of Initial Accreditation

March 7, 2018

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission provides written notice to the U.S. Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agencies, and the appropriate accrediting organizations at the same time it notifies the institution of the decision, but no later than 30 days after the Commission makes a final decision to deny or withdraw accreditation. A final decision to deny or withdraw accreditation is one reached after an institution has exhausted the appeals process provided when appealing the Commission's adverse decision (*DEAC Accreditation Handbook*. Part Two: Processes and Procedures. X.B and D).

At its January 2018 meeting, the Distance Education Accrediting Commission voted to deny initial accreditation to the following institution.

**Universidad Internacional Iberoamericana, Carr. 658 Km. 1.3 Bo.
Arenalejos, PR 00613**

The Commission informed Universidad Internacional Iberoamericana (UNINI) of its decision on February 26, 2018. On March 6, 2018, UNINI informed the Commission that it did not elect to appeal the Commission's decision. Therefore, the decision to deny accreditation is effective March 6, 2018.

Summarized below is the decision to deny initial accreditation.

The substance of UNINI's submissions did not meet the Commission's threshold requirements for consideration and an extensive amount of analysis and documentation was needed in order for UNINI to demonstrate that the institution meets DEAC Accreditation Standards. After carefully reviewing the entire record and thoughtfully weighing UNINI's written responses to DEAC's requests for evidence of compliance, the Commission determined that UNINI did not provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that it had taken the steps necessary to come into compliance with DEAC Standards of Accreditation.

- 1. Section I.A. 1-6, Processes and Procedures.** UNINI did not demonstrate it met eligibility requirements and that it has full autonomy for essential institutions functions including enrolling students, retaining qualified faculty, and providing educational sound and up-to-date curricula.
- 2. Standard III. E. Curricula Development**

UNINI did not demonstrate that qualified persons competent in distance education instructional practices and experts in their subjects or fields develop the content of curricula and prepare instructional materials.

3. Standard VI.C. Instructors, Faculty, and Staff

UNINI did not demonstrate that a) faculty/instructors are qualified and appropriately credentialed to teach the subject at the assigned level, b) the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified faculty/instructors to provide individualized instructional service to each student, c) the institution maintains faculty/instructors' resumes and official transcripts on file. Faculty/instructors are carefully screened for appointment and are properly and continuously trained on institution policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of instructional technology, d) the institution regularly evaluates faculty performance using clear, consistent procedures, and e) the institution assures that faculty are appropriately involved and engaged in the curriculum and instructional aspects of the educational offerings.

4. Standard VII. C. Control of Student Recruitment Personnel

The institution did not demonstrate that ethical processes and procedures are followed throughout the recruitment of prospective students. Recruitment personnel are defined as any administrators, staff, faculty, or contractors who enroll prospective students.

5. Standard VIII.D. 5. Admissions Criteria. Master's Degrees

UNINI did not demonstrate that at the time of admission, it obtains official documentation that applicants possess a bachelor's degree earned from an appropriately accredited institution.

In accordance with Section X.E, Notification and Information Sharing, Processes and Procedures, DEAC Accreditation Handbook, for any decisions to deny accreditation, no later than 60 days after the final decision, the Commission makes available to the U.S. Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agencies, the appropriate accrediting organizations, and the public a brief statement summarizing the reasons for the Commission's decision and the official comments, if any, that the affected institution makes regarding the Commission's decision.

Comments were submitted by UNINI on March 15, 2018 and follow below.

March 15, 2018

Dear Mrs. Matthews:

We disclose our final comments regarding the wherefores of the Commission's Decision.

First of all, we express once again that the relation UNINI-FUNIBER subscribes to the Agreement renewed on April 5, 2016, which states:

UNINI has an agreement with FUNIBER, as where FUNIBER agrees to:

- 1. Offer a scholarship to students interested.*
- 2. Provide a loan for the construction of the facilities of UNINI.*
- 3. FUNIBER guarantees economic support of the institution.*
- 4. Provides technological support to develop and maintain the institutional technological infrastructure.*
- 5. Advertises UNINI academic offer.*
- 6. Collaborates in the faculty contracting, however the faculty is hired and paid by our university.*

UNINI agrees to:

- 1. Pay the construction loan. This was satisfied on June 9, 2017.*
- 2. Advertise FUNIBER's academic offer.*
- 3. Collaborate with training programs.*
- 4. Keep a space designated and incorporated for FUNIBER services purposes in UNINI's facilities.*

In the other hand, the Commission also found that UNINI did not demonstrate compliance with the following standards:

Standard III.E. Curricula Development- *Qualified persons competent in distance education instructional practices and experts in their subjects or fields develop the content of curricula and prepare instructional materials.*

It is important to point out that UNINI counts with authors with five years or more of experience in their field. These authors have carried out research and publications that have gone through stringent quality processes and validation; contributing with a high degree in experience of the scientific method to the different topics and innovations in their specialization field. The practice of continuous research and publications allows these authors to remain current in their specialization. Author hiring goes through an evaluation process prior to the recruitment where they must demonstrate mastery of the subject matter and correct observation of paperwork presentation standards.

Standard VI.C. Instructors, Faculty and Staff- *Faculty/instructors are qualified and appropriately credentialed to teach the subject at the assigned level. The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified faculty/instructors to provide individualized instructional service to each student. The*

institution maintains faculty/instructors' resumes and official transcripts on file. Faculty/instructors are carefully screened for appointment and are properly and continuously trained on institution policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of instructional technology. The institution regularly evaluates faculty performance using clear, consistent procedures. The institution assures that faculty are appropriately involved and engaged in the curriculum and instructional aspects of the educational offerings.

As expressed by the Evaluation Committee in the 2017 Chair Response, dated April 26, 2017, Standard VI.C, UNINI faculty are, overall, well qualified; we count with a qualified faculty; all our professors have a Doctorate Degree or are Doctor Candidates. An official credit transcript is kept in file for professors who have completed their degree in the United States and its territories. UNINI requests title homologation of professors of other countries, since in those countries this is enough to validate and accredit the degree. The homologations of these professors is done by SPANTRAN: The Evaluation Company, member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation (NACES).

Standard VII. C. Control of Student Recruitment Personnel - The institution demonstrates that ethical processes and procedures are followed throughout the recruitment of prospective students. Recruitment personnel are defined as any administrators, staff, faculty, or contractors who enroll prospective students. Minimum ethical practices and procedures are identified below.

- 1. The institution takes full responsibility for the actions, statements, and conduct of its student recruitment personnel. The institution maintains appropriate records, licensures, registrations, signed employment contracts, and signed DEAC Code of Ethics, as applicable for all recruitment personnel. The institution demonstrates it adequately trains its student recruitment personnel and provides them with accurate information concerning employment and remuneration. Recruitment personnel are provided with a sales manual or appropriate materials covering applicable procedures, policies, and presentations. The institution demonstrates it routinely monitors its student recruitment personnel or independent organizations that provide prospective applicant names to assure they are in compliance with all state, federal, and DEAC recruitment practices.***
- 2. All student recruitment personnel, including telemarketing staff, conform to applicable federal and state laws; do not use any title that indicates special qualifications for career guidance, advising, or registration; and do not publish advertisements without the appropriate written authorization from the institution.***

The admissions personnel is trained and supervised by the Admissions Director of Puerto Rico and the International Admissions Director. FUNIBER has agreed with UNINI to grant scholarships to potential students. The role of FUNIBER is limited to granting economic assistance and does not participate in the admissions process of the candidate.

Standard VIII.D.5. Admissions Criteria, Master's Degree - At the time of admission, the institution obtains official documentation that applicants possess a bachelor's degree earned from an appropriately accredited institution.

Our university admits students from different parts of the world, therefore the student can submit a copy of their diploma in the admissions process. This copy is accepted, nonetheless the institution informs the potential student that the University must receive the official transcript within three months after the admission. This policy is published in the Institutional Catalog and in our web page. The Students Affairs Deanship monitors enrolled students admissions documentation; a follow up is programmed through our

System (AGORA) which alerts the Students Affairs official before the three months period. In addition, during the year student files are constantly monitored to guarantee continuity of compliance with the admissions criteria, a check list is used to register documentation receipt, this is also recorded in our System (AGORA).