

# Lincoln University

January 25, 2021

Ms. Michelle Edwards, President and CEO  
Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools  
1350 Eye Street, NW, Suite 560  
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: Show-Cause Notice

Dear Ms. Edwards:

This letter is being sent to you in response to the ACICS Show-Cause Notice, dated December 16, 2020.

As indicated in the ACICS letter to Lincoln University (LU), the only ACICS ‘finding’ which remains unresolved pertains to institutionally funded needs-based tuition-fee discounts. We believe that this finding by ACICS is not significant because the funds associated with this program are coming from LU’s own financial resources and the total annual expenditure has minimal impact on the financial viability of our institution. Nevertheless, the administration has formalized the application process and award decision procedure for need-based financial relief for selected student applicants. The documents asked for by ACICS have been uploaded to the appropriate database. With this action, LU has effectively addressed all ‘findings’ related to its accreditation renewal application and the Show-Cause Notice.

The other ACICS requirement pertains to ‘Updated Institutional Teach-Out Plan’. LU is submitting the updated plan, containing all the required information specified by ACICS.

The remaining ACICS position with respect to the ongoing DBA program at ACICS is illogical and unrealistic. Lincoln University is accredited by WSCUC, an organization authorized by the US Department of Education (USDOE) to accredit institutions that offer doctoral degrees. The DBA and other graduate business programs were also accredited by IACBE (specialized business programs accreditor) in February 2019 for a period of seven years. Both accreditors are certified by USDOE and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

ACICS has already lost its CHEA recognition, and seems to be headed towards decertification by USDOE for the second time within five years. Does the ACICS Council expect the LU administration to close out the DBA program to maintain accreditation by ACICS? The reality is that ACICS is not authorized to accredit doctoral programs. Therefore, it cannot claim that an institution operating a doctoral program is not complying with an ACICS standard that does not

exist or operate. In the current scenario, the ACICS Council is repeatedly going back to a phantom issue. The proper posture for the council is to admit that ACICS cannot continue its institutional accreditation of Lincoln University, and ask LU to withdraw from ACICS.

In this context, it is appropriate to point out that LU has (i) incurred substantial avoidable expenses, (ii) suffered loss of revenue running into thousands of dollars, and (iii) been subjected to serious damage related to reputation in the higher education domain, as a result of corrective actions taken by ACICS to deal with the consequences of apparently fraudulent accreditation of the DBA program by ACICS in 2009. At that time, ACICS falsely claimed that USDOE had authorized it to accredit doctoral programs. As public records show, USDOE was not aware of the unauthorized accreditation of doctoral programs by ACICS, until a hearing related to multiple other transgressions committed by ACICS, a few years after the initial accreditation of the DBA program at LU. This revelation led to ACICS asking LU administration to terminate/phase-out the DBA program abruptly. The action resulted in serious suffering for more than 40 doctoral students who either dropped out of the program, or transferred to other accredited programs with full assistance and financial support by LU. Additionally, LU suffered substantial loss of revenue and a significant negative impact on the credibility of its administration. Our institution is still trying to recover from the damage caused by apparently fraudulent actions of past ACICS administration and council. Instead of helping LU in dealing with the consequences of ACICS actions based on apparent false pretense, the ACICS Council is impeding the smooth operation of the current programs at LU, through the circulation of baseless accusations embedded in show-cause notices. These communications from ACICS have created problems for LU in its relationships with WSCUC, IACBE, USDOE, US ICE SEVP, and BPPE.

Please be advised that this charade by ACICS must end immediately. LU has addressed all "findings" and requirements of the ACICS show-cause notice, and uploaded documentation. There remains only the spurious issue of LU's DBA program, which is already independently accredited, and for which any outstanding issue originates from ACICS long-ago malfeasance. If the ACICS show-cause notice is not withdrawn or deemed cured or moot by February 15, 2021, the administration of LU will initiate legal action to (i) recover the financial damages caused by the apparently fraudulent accreditation of the DBA program by ACICS, and (ii) stop the ongoing harassment and defamation of LU by ACICS. The documents and evidence necessary for initiating a lawsuit have already been prepared and collected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M Brodsky", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mikhail Brodsky, ScD, PhD

President

CC:

Mr. Walter Hansel, LU Legal Counselor

Mr. Michael Marion, California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education  
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