

Public Notice – Show Cause Order

March 1, 2016

On January 29, 2016, the Distance Education Accrediting Commission voted to order the following institution to show cause why accreditation should not be withdrawn:

**American Business and Technology University (ABTU)
1018 W. St. Maartens Drive
Saint Joseph, MO 64506**

Summarized below are the accreditation standards from the *2015 DEAC Accreditation Handbook* that were in effect when ABTU prepared its renewal of accreditation materials and that are the subject of the show cause order. ABTU is required to undergo a total reevaluation of compliance with accreditation standards using the procedures and format set forth in the *2016 Accreditation Handbook*. The Commission's next review of ABTU will take place in January 2017.

I.C. Implementation of the Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The institution can demonstrate that it is effectively carrying out its mission, is attaining its goals and objectives, and is sharing appropriate information on its attainments with relevant groups. The institution identifies the key indicators it uses in determining how it is meeting its stated mission, goals, and objectives.

II.B. Appropriate Program Objectives

The program objectives must be reasonably attainable through electronically delivered, online, or other methods of distance study. Appropriate objectives include the development of skills, providing job-related training, the imparting of knowledge and information, the training in the application of knowledge and skills, and the development of desirable habits and attitudes. Evaluation of the program is based on the announced objectives and the success with which students achieve the objectives.

II.C. Comprehensive Curriculum

The curriculum is sufficiently comprehensive for students to achieve the stated program objectives, and its content is supported by sound research and practice. An institution has policies and procedures for determining credit hours as defined in C.9. Policy on Degree Programs and/or clock hours it awards for its courses and/or programs.

II.F. Examinations and Other Assessment

Examinations and other assessment techniques are adequate evidence of the achievement of the stated learning objectives and outcomes. The institution must publish its academic

grading policies, assignment marking system, course extension policy, and information on issuance and completion of incomplete grades, and apply them with fairness and consistency.

II.G. Authorship

Qualified persons competent in distance study techniques and in their subjects or fields develop the curriculum content and prepare instructional materials.

II.K. Educational Media and Learning Resources

Learning resources for faculty and students must be available and appropriate to the level and scope of program offerings. Program designers and/or faculty/instructors make effective use of appropriate teaching aids and learning resources, including educational media and supplemental instructional aids in creating programs and in teaching students. The institution makes effective provisions for students to access learning resources and libraries that are appropriate for the attainment of program learning outcomes.

III.A. Student Inquiries and Submissions

Relevant student inquiries are welcome and are answered promptly and thoroughly. Accurate assessment, correction services, and counseling by instructors/faculty are provided for assignments/lessons and examinations. The institution has a process for maintaining and protecting the confidentiality of student records, e.g., grades, test results, etc.

V.A. Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes and Benefits

The institution articulates student learning outcomes and has a systematic and ongoing process for assessing student learning, provides documented evidence that shows that the results are used to improve programs, curricula, instruction, faculty development, and services, and the results meet appropriate benchmarked standards.

VI.A. Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, and Administrators

The owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and roles and have demonstrated the ability to oversee institutional operations. The governing board members are knowledgeable and experienced in one or more aspects of educational administration, finance, teaching/learning, and distance study. The institution has policies that clearly delineate the duties and responsibilities of governing board members, officials, and administrators. Individuals in leadership and managerial roles are qualified by education and experience.

VI.B. Chief Academic Officer and/or Department Heads

A qualified person serves as the chief academic officer or educational director. This person has overall administrative responsibilities for the educational program(s), faculty/instructors, and a policy-making voice in advertising, sales, and collections. In large institutions, qualified department heads or persons with similar titles are delegated educational, editorial, and research responsibilities within departmental subject fields.

VI.C. Instructors/Faculty/Staff

The institution has a sufficient number of qualified instructors/faculty to give individualized instructional service to each student. The institution maintains files containing the resumes and official transcripts of its instructors/faculty. Faculty are carefully screened for appointment, and are properly and continuously trained with respect to institution policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of appropriate instructional technology. The institution has clear, consistent procedures to evaluate faculty performance.

ABTU must demonstrate compliance with standard VI.C and policy C.9 regarding qualifications for bachelor degree and master degree program faculty. ABTU's response to the Chair's report did not clearly identify faculty teaching at each degree level. Therefore, it was not clear whether the faculty teaching at the BA and MA level faculty had appropriate qualifications. Provide a list of all faculty teaching in the bachelor degree programs, identify the courses taught, and describe their qualifications. Provide a list of all faculty teaching in the MA programs, identify the courses taught, and describe their qualifications.

VIII.A. Advertising and Promotion

All advertising, promotional, and recruitment activities of the institution fully conform to DEAC Business Standard I.A. and B. and to this accreditation standard.

XII.A. Planning and Evaluation

An accredited institution has a written plan (institutional improvement plan) that is designed to identify internal and external trends and patterns, optimize opportunities, address challenges, reflect on achievements, and budgets, and maintain quality. The planning enables the institution to improve services to students, ensure the professional growth of its instructors/faculty and staff, provide for the financial stability, long-term quality, and growth of the institution. The institution collects and analyzes data on a systematic, consistent basis to monitor the status and effectiveness of the plan and evaluates its full range of services.

DEAC C.15. Policy on Institutions Participating in Title IV Programs Standard IX.7.

The published cohort rate for the institution for any cohort year—where 30 or more borrowers enter repayment—cannot exceed the allowable rate as prescribed by the U.S. Department of Education. Institutions that receive a published rate greater than 25% are required to implement and adhere to a default reduction plan that specifically outlines the means by which the institution will provide services and contacts to the borrowers in an attempt to reduce the cohort default rate. The United States Department of Education's Official Cohort Default Rate Search website, ABTU has a cohort default rate of 31.8 percent for FY2012.