

**Distance Education Accrediting Commission**

**Public Notice: Denial of Initial Accreditation**

**February 28, 2020**

The DEAC Accrediting Commission will provide written notice to the U.S. Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agencies and accrediting agencies at the same time it notifies the institution that the decision to deny accreditation is final. In addition, DEAC will provide written notice to the public on its website of the decision within 24 hours of the final decision and provide a brief statement summarizing the reasons for the decision. (Section X, Policies and Procedures, DEAC Accreditation Handbook). At its January 2020 meeting, the Commission voted to deny the following institution initial accreditation.

**International University of Leadership  
1507 S. Hiwassee Road, Suite 113-114  
Orlando, FL 32835**

The Commission informed International University of Leadership (IUL) of this decision on February 24, 2020 and afforded the institution the opportunity to provide notice of its intention to appeal the decision within ten (10) days. IUL notified DEAC on February 27, 2020 that it did not intend to appeal. Furthermore, the institution did not elect to provide DEAC with a written statement regarding this action. The decision to deny accreditation is final. Summarized below are the reasons for the decision to deny initial accreditation.

**1. Standard III. A. Description of Program Outcomes**

*Program outcomes are clearly defined, simply stated, and indicate the benefits for students who are reasonably capable of completing the educational offering. Course learning outcomes are linked to program outcomes as identified by the institution and are consistent with the curricula offered;*

and

**Standard III. B. Appropriate Program Outcomes**

*The program outcomes are measurable and reasonably attainable through distance education. Appropriate program outcomes clearly communicate the knowledge, skills, and abilities students will obtain upon completion of the educational offering. Program outcomes reflect the level of student achievement expected that promotes critical thinking, ethical reasoning, social responsibility, global citizenship, civic engagement, or lifelong learning as applicable to educational offerings.*

The institution did not provide evidence to demonstrate that course outcomes are aligned with program outcomes. There was no indication that IUL clearly mapped its stated institutional outcomes of ethical reasoning, social responsibility, global citizenship, civic

engagement, or lifelong learning to the program outcomes or course-level outcomes. The institution did not provide any updated curriculum maps as requested. Additionally, there was no evidence provided as to how the learning concepts are designed to carefully introduce, reinforce and master key concepts at each degree level.

## **2. Standard III. D. Comprehensive Curricula and Materials**

*Curricula and instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive for students to achieve the stated program outcomes. Their content is supported by reliable research and practice. The organization and presentation of the curricula and instructional materials are designed using sound principles of learning and are grounded in distance education instructional design principles. The curricula and instructional materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice. Effective procedures are continuously used to keep curricula and instructional materials up-to-date, and reviews are conducted and documented on a periodic basis. Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the instructional materials are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently;*

The 2019 Chair's Report expressed concern that there was little evidence of scholarly work being completed by graduate students. Conversations that DEAC evaluators had with students at the time of the on-site evaluation did not demonstrate that the students comprehended doctoral or graduate level scholarship and research. Graduate students, when questioned specifically about their studies, could not articulate their knowledge, competencies, and involvement in scholarly work. The comprehensive examination lacked an appropriate level of academic rigor and did not require students to demonstrate the level of scholarly work that one would expect after completing doctoral-level courses. DEAC evaluators requested samples of graded papers or written assignments with faculty feedback for students currently enrolled in graduate courses at IUL. No such documents were available for examination by the on-site evaluation team at the time of the visit.

IUL did not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that faculty review and assess student assignments, research papers, and/or examinations.

## **3. 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.*

IUL did not provide evidence that qualified persons, who are competent in distance education instructional practices, are involved in curricular and instructional development.

## **4. Standard III.H. Examinations and Other Assessments**

*Examinations and other assessment techniques provide adequate evidence of the achievement of stated learning outcomes. The institution establishes and enforces grading criteria that it uses to evaluate and document student attainment of learning outcomes.*

### **2. Master's Degrees**

*The institution assesses student achievement through multiple means of evaluation, including a culminating experience required for program completion (e.g., capstone experience, comprehensive examination, research project, or master's thesis).*

3. *First Professional and Doctoral Degrees*

*The institution assesses student achievement through multiple means of evaluation, including qualifying examinations, comprehensive examinations, and dissertation or final research project. The institution requires students to successfully complete a comprehensive examination when all coursework is completed and prior to commencing work on the dissertation or final research project.*

IUL did not provide evidence that showed comprehensive examinations are aligned with course syllabi. It did not demonstrate how comprehensive examinations/final research projects are appropriate for assessing program learning outcomes. It did not set forth clear guidelines for assessing student assignments or provide other evidence of compliance, such as implementing grading rubrics in a clear and consistent manner.

**5. Standard III. I. Student Integrity and Academic Honesty**

*The institution publishes clear, specific, policies related to student integrity and academic honesty. The institution affirms that the student who takes the examination is the same person who enrolled in the program and that the examination results will reflect the student's own knowledge and competence in accordance with stated learning outcomes.*

IUL did not provide evidence that proctored examinations are fully implemented.

**6. Standard VI. D. Professional Growth**

*The institution demonstrates a commitment to faculty and staff professional development. The institution encourages faculty and staff to become members of professional organizations, to review and apply relevant research, to pursue continuing education or training in their respective fields, and to enhance their skills in developing and using electronically delivered, online, or other forms of distance study. The institution provides faculty and administrators with access to a collection of professional educational materials to keep abreast of current trends, developments, techniques, research, and experimentation.*

IUL did not provide evidence that faculty are engaged in professional growth and development activities and have sufficient access to professional educational materials.

**7. Standard VIII. G. Enrollment Agreements**

*The institution's enrollment agreements/documents clearly identify the educational offering and assure that each applicant is fully informed of the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the institution prior to applicant signature. The institution complies with the Enrollment Agreements Disclosures Check List;*

and

**Standard IX. C. Refunds**

*Each institution must have and implement a fair and equitable refund policy in compliance with state requirements, or in the absence of such requirements, in accordance with DEAC's refund policy standards below and disclosed on the enrollment agreement or similar contractual document. Any money due a student must be refunded within 30 days of a cancellation request, regardless of whether materials have been returned.*

IUL, however, did not provide evidence to demonstrate that the refund practices it described in its submissions to DEAC are being implemented. The Commission could not verify whether the refund policy, in accordance with DEAC standards, is being implemented for students who withdraw from the institution.