



1101 17th Street NW, Suite 808  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.234.5100 | deac.org

## Report from the Accrediting Commission February 27, 2026

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission (the Commission) met on January 30, 2026. This report summarizes the accreditation actions taken by the Accrediting Commission in accordance with its procedure for Notification and Information Sharing (Section XV.A., E., and F.), Part Two, Processes and Procedures, *DEAC Accreditation Handbook*. In addition, the Report provides notice of changes to the DEAC fees, an update to the Processes and Procedures section of the DEAC Accreditation Handbook, and appointment of the DEAC Executive Committee.

### Initial Accreditation

The Commission took action to grant initial accreditation to the following institutions.

#### **Institute of Brain Education**

**Founded 2007**

Joung H Lee, President/CEO

340 Jordan Road

Sedona, AZ 86336

[www.instituteofbraineducation.com](http://www.instituteofbraineducation.com)

928-203-0840

Accredited Programs

Master of Arts in Integrative Brain Education

Master of Science in Regenerative Earth Management

The institution is accredited through January 2029.

#### **Miami Business Technological University**

**Founded 2017**

Daniela Cabanilla, President

2500 NW 107 Avenue Suite 400

Doral, FL 33172

[www.mbtu.us](http://www.mbtu.us)

[admissions@mbtu.us](mailto:admissions@mbtu.us)

786 628 4500

Accredited programs

Degree Programs:

Associate in Business Administration

Associate in Business Entrepreneurship

Bachelor in Health Services Administration

Bachelor in Business Administration with a Minor in Management Information Systems

Bachelor in Marketing and Sales

Master in Business Administration

Master in Business Administration in Human Resource Management

Master in Education

The institution is accredited through January 2029.

#### **Wilmette Institute**

**Founded 1995**

Jeff Albert, Office of Education and Schools, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís

1233 Central Street  
Evanston, IL 60201  
<http://wilmetteinstitute.org>  
[nicolad@wilmetteinstitute.org](mailto:nicolad@wilmetteinstitute.org)  
(877) 945-6388 (877-WILMETTE)  
Accredited Programs  
Social Transformation Certificate (non-credit bearing)  
The Institution is accredited through January 2029.

### **Renewal of Accreditation**

The Commission took action to renew the accreditation of the following institutions.

#### **Agora University**

**Founded 2012**

Dr. Emmanuel Gergis, President  
9253 Old Keene Mill Road  
Burke, VA 22015  
<https://agora.edu/>  
[askagora@agora.edu](mailto:askagora@agora.edu)  
866-462-4672  
Accredited Programs  
Certificate in Servant Enrichment  
Certificate in Contemporary Studies  
Certificate in Eastern Christian History  
Certificate in Eastern Christian Scripture  
Master of Theological Studies  
Master of Business Administration  
Doctor of Theology in Eastern Christian Studies.  
Bachelor of Business Administration - Degree Completion  
Bachelor of Arts in Theology (English) - Degree Completion  
Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies - Degree Completion  
Bachelor of Arts in Theology (Arabic) - Degree Completion  
The institution is accredited through January 2031.

#### **Doral College**

**Founded 2011**

Dr. Judy Marty, President  
2525 NW 112th Avenue  
Doral, FL 33172  
<http://www.Doral.edu>  
[jmarty@doral.edu](mailto:jmarty@doral.edu)  
(305) 463-7210  
Accredited Programs  
**Degree Programs:**  
Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts  
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with ESOL and Reading Endorsement.  
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education  
Bachelor of Business Administration

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice  
Master of Education in Educational Leadership  
The institution is accredited through January 2031.

**Rockbridge International Seminary**

**Founded 2003**

Mr. Tommy Hilliker, President  
1725 E. 173rd Street  
Belton, MO 64012  
<https://www.rockbridge.edu/>  
info@rockbridge.edu  
417 459-4323

Accredited Programs  
Diploma in Ministry Studies  
Master of Ministry Leadership  
Master of Divinity  
Doctor of Ministry in Transformational Leadership  
The institution is accredited through January 2031

**United Medical Institute**

**Founded 2006**

Dr. Ina Lisker, President  
5750 Sunrise Boulevard, Suite 105  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610  
<https://www.unitedmedicalinstitute.edu/>  
info@unitedmedicalinstitute.edu  
949 510-5892

Accredited Programs  
Degree Programs  
Associate of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography  
Bachelor of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography  
Diploma:  
Diagnostic Medical Sonography Diploma  
The institution is accredited through January 2031.

**University of Management and Technology**

**Founded 1998**

Dr. Yanping Chen, President  
1901 Fort Myer Drive, Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22209-1609  
<http://www.umtweb.edu/>  
info@umtweb.edu  
703-516-0035

Accredited Programs  
**Degree Programs:**  
Associate of Business Administration  
Associate of Science in Computer Science  
Associate of Science in Criminal Justice  
Associate of Science in Engineering Management

Associate of Science in General Studies  
Associate of Science in Homeland Security  
Associate of Science in Information Technology  
Associate of Science in Civil Engineering  
Bachelor of Business Administration  
Bachelor of Health Administration  
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science  
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice  
Bachelor of Science in Engineering Management  
Bachelor of Science in General Studies  
Bachelor of Science in Homeland Security  
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology  
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering  
Master of Business Administration  
Master of Health Administration  
Master of Public Administration  
Master of Science in Computer Science  
Master of Science in Criminal Justice  
Master of Science in Engineering Management  
Master of Science in Homeland Security  
Master of Science in Information Technology  
Master of Science in Management  
Doctor of Business Administration

**Undergraduate Certificates:**

Certificate in Business Management  
Certificate in Criminal Justice  
Certificate in Homeland Security  
Certificate in Human Resources Management  
Certificate in Health Administration  
Certificate in Information Technology

**Graduate Certificates:**

Executive Certificate in Project Management  
Executive Certificate in Acquisition Management  
Executive Certificate in Criminal Justice  
Executive Certificate in Homeland Security  
Executive Certificate in Public Administration  
Executive Certificate in Information Technology  
Graduate Certificate in Project Management  
The institution is accredited through January 2031.

**Institution on Show Cause:**

The Commission voted to implement the remand decision by the Appeals Panel and maintain the show cause directive for the following institution while it undergoes a total reevaluation of accreditation:

- **Anaheim University**, 1240 South State College Boulevard, Room 110, Anaheim, CA 92806-51

A copy of the decision letter can be found on the “Institutions on Show Cause” page of our website:  
<https://www.deac.org/public-notice/institutions-on-show-cause/>

### **Substantive Change**

#### **Certification of Eligibility to Participate in Title IV programs**

The Commission voted to approve the following institution to participate in FSA Title IV programs.

- **Quantic School of Business and Technology**, 80 M Street SE, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20003

#### **Change in Name**

The Commission affirmed the implementation of a change in name for the following institution.

- **Rockbridge International Seminary** (previously Rockbridge Seminary), 1725 E. 173rd Street, Belton, MO 64012

#### **Change of Location**

The Commission took action to confirm the following change of location. The current approved address is shown below.

- **Acacia University**, 2801 E. Camelback Road Office Space 90, Phoenix, AZ 85015
- **Gracelyn University**, 6060 N Central Expressway, Suite 500, Dallas, Texas, 75206
- **Martinsburg University**, 2206 Dell Range Boulevard, Suite G, Cheyenne, WY 82009
- **Nexford University**, 1015 15th Street NW, Suite 631, Washington, DC 20005
- **Rockbridge International Seminary**, 1725 E. 173rd Street, Belton, MO 64012
- **Sessions College**, 398 S. Mill Avenue, Suite 200, Tempe, AZ 85281
- **WorldQuant University**, 609 H Street NE, Washington, DC 20002

#### **Change of Core Mission**

The Commission affirmed the implementation of a change in core mission for the following institution.

- **Southwest University of Naprapathic Medicine**, 2006 Botolph Road, Suite A, Santa Fe, NM 87505  
The institution’s mission is approved as follows:  
*Southwest University of Naprapathic Medicine positions itself as a premier healthcare university. Our graduates become Doctors who are non-surgical, drug-free, fascia, connective tissue specialists and anti-inflammatory nutritionists, educated to take the lead role in the world of Integrative Medicine. SUNM graduates are uniquely trained and qualified to deliver value-based healthcare focusing on treating the cause of neuromuscular pain and inflammation, not the symptoms. SUNM aspires to establish Naprapathic Medicine as the science-based standard in drug-free fascia and connective tissue manipulation and anti-inflammatory nutrition.*

#### **Implementation of an Addition of an In-Residence Program Component.**

The Commission affirmed the implementation of the addition of an in-residence program component for the following institution.

- **California Intercontinental University**, 101 South Reid Street, Suite 307, Sioux Falls, SD 57103 The In-residence component is for the Associate of Business Administration and Bachelor of Business Administration programs and will be located at 2601 Main Street, Suite 250, Irvine, CA 92614.

- **California Miramar University**, 3550 Camino Del Rio N., Suite 208, San Diego, CA 92108 The In-residence component is for the Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence and Master of Business Administration in Data Analytics programs and will be located at 505 S. Market Street, San Jose, CA 95113
- **Laurus College**, 421 East Betteravia Road, Suite 100, Santa Maria, CA 93454 The In-residence component is for Occupational Associate Degree: Digital Arts and Computer Animation, Occupational Associate Degree: Information Technologies and Network Systems, Occupational Associate Degree: Medical Billing and Coding, Occupational Associate Degree: Professional Business Systems, Occupational Associate Degree: Web Design, Associate of Science Degree: Audio Video Production, Associate of Science Degree: Business Administration, Associate of Science Degree: Information Technologies and Network Systems, Associate of Science Degree: Visual Design and Multimedia, Associate of Science Degree: Web Design, Associate of Science Degree: Cyber Security, Bachelor of Science Degree: Audio Production, Bachelor of Science Degree: Business Systems Management, Bachelor of Science Degree: Digital Arts and Computer Animation, Bachelor of Science Degree: Information Technology Systems Management, Bachelor of Science Degree: Web Design and Development and will be located at 411 E. Betteravia, Suite 100-B, Santa Maria, CA 93454

#### **Follow Up on a New Program**

The Commission affirmed the implementation of the additions of new programs for the following institutions.

- **Agora University**, 9253 Old Keene Mill Road, Burke, VA 22015
  - Doctor of Theology in Eastern Christian Studies
  - Master of Business Administration
- **Doral College**, 2525 NW 112th Avenue, Doral, FL 33172
  - Bachelor in Business Administration
- **Dunlap-Stone University**, 16165 North 83rd Avenue Suite 200, Peoria, AZ 85382
  - Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
  - Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice
  - Bachelor of Education.
- **Quantic School of Business and Technology**, 80 M Street SE, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20003
  - Master of Science in Software Engineering (MSSE)
- **Southwest University of Naprapathic Medicine**, 2006 Botolph Road, Suite A, Santa Fe, NM 87505
  - Master of Science in Anti-Inflammatory Nutrition.

#### **Implementation of a New Administrative Site**

The Commission affirmed the implementation of a new administrative site at the following institution.

- **California Intercontinental University**, 101 South Reid Street, Suite 307, Sioux Falls, SD 57103, California Intercontinental University implemented a new administrative site located at 2601 Main Street, Suite 250, Irvine, CA 92614.

#### **Engaging in International Activities**

The Commission accepted reports on international activities at an administrative site and an in-residence location for the following institutions:

- **Penn Foster**, 3133 West Frye Road, Suite 215, Chandler, AZ 85226 The new administrative site is located at SPI Building, Pascor Drive, Sto. Niño, Parañaque City, Philippines 1700
- **Gemological Institute of America**, 5345 Armada Drive, Carlsbad, CA 92008 The in-residence component is offered at 3rd Floor, China Building, 29 Queen's Road, Central, Hong Kong 999077

#### **Substantive Changes - Academic Review Committee**

The Commission affirmed the following actions taken by the Academic Review Committee of the Accrediting Commission.

#### **Addition of a Program in an Unrelated Field**

The Commission affirmed the addition of new programs in unrelated fields for the following institutions. There will be a follow-up site visit six months to one year following the first enrollment in these programs.

- **Agora University**, 9253 Old Keene Mill Road, Burke, VA 22015  
Bachelor of Business Administration – Degree Completion  
Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies– Degree Completion
- **American National University**, 1813 East Main Street, Salem, VA 24153  
Credit-bearing Certificate Program: HVAC/R Technician
- **Elmwood Institute**, 2433 Coolidge Avenue, Oakland, CA 94601  
Bachelor of Science in Data Science  
Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering
- **Humboldt International University**, 4000 West Flagler Street, Fifth Floor, Miami, FL 33134  
Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence (English)
- **Jose Maria Vargas University**, 10131 Pines Boulevard, Pembroke Pines, FL 33026  
Master of Science in Data Systems Engineering (English)  
Master of Science in Data Systems Engineering (Spanish)
- **San Ignacio University**, 3905 NW 107th Ave. Ste. 301, Doral, Florida 33178  
Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence (English)  
Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence (Spanish)  
Master of Science in Big Data (English)  
Master of Science in Big Data (Spanish)  
Master of Science in Cybersecurity (English)  
Master of Science in Cybersecurity (Spanish)
- **Union University of California**, 14200 Goldenwest Street, Westminster, CA 92683  
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration  
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology  
Master of Business Administration

#### **Addition of an In-Residence Program Component**

The Commission affirmed the addition of an in-residence program component for the following institutions.

- **California Miramar University**, 3550 Camino Del Rio North, San Diego, CA 92108. Their-

residence component is for the following programs Certificate in Artificial Intelligence Certificate in Cybersecurity programs will be located at 505 S. Market Street, San Jose, CA 95113.

- **MIU City University Miami**, 111 NE 1st Street, Miami, Florida 33132. The In-residence component is for the following programs Master of Science in Business Administration (Spanish) Master of Science in Financial Management (English) Master of Science in Human Resource Management (English) Master of Science in Big Data Analytics and Visualization (English) Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence (English) and will be located at 111 NE 1st Street, 6th Floor, Miami, FL 33132
- **Patten University**, 2433 Coolidge Avenue, Oakland, CA 94601 The In-residence component is for the Master of Science in Technology, Engineering, and Management
- Master of Science in Machine Learning and Innovation programs and will be located at 2433 Coolidge Avenue, Oakland, CA 94601.
- **San Ignacio University**, 3905 NW 107th Ave. Ste. 301, Doral, Florida 33178. The in- residence component will be for the following programs Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering (English) and Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering (Spanish) and will be located at 3905 NW 107th Ave. Ste 301, Doral, FL 33178.
- **Setanta College**, Oscar Wilde House, 1 Merrion Square N D02 NH98, Dublin, Leinster. The in-residence component will be for the following program: Master of Science in Advanced Athletic Performance Coaching and will be located at National Sports Campus, Snugborough Road, Abbotstown Dublin 15 D15 K4PP Ireland.
- **Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola (USIL)**, Avenida la Fontana 550, La Molina, Lima, Lima, Peru. The in- residence component will be for the following programs: Master's Degree in Business Administration – Executive MBA, Master's Degree in Business Sciences - Project Management, Master's Degree in Public Administration and will be located at Av. Lambramani 325 lote 2 Ancla 4. Perú, Arequipa 04002.
- **Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola (USIL)**, Avenida la Fontana 550, La Molina, Lima, Lima, Peru. The in- residence component will be for the following programs: Bachelor's Degree in Digital Business Management (Digital Business Management) Bachelor's Degree in Engineering in Cybersecurity (Ingeniería en Ciberseguridad) Bachelor's Degree in Nursing (Enfermería) Bachelor's Degree in Medical Technology in Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation (Tecnología Médica en Terapia Física y Rehabilitación) Bachelor's Degree in Biomedical Engineering (Ingeniería Biomédica) Bachelor's Degree in Human Psychology (Psicología Humana) Doctor of Government and Public Policy (Doctorado en Gobierno y Políticas Públicas) Second Specialization in Learning Difficulties with an Inclusive Approach (Segunda Especialidad en Dificultades de Aprendizaje desde un Enfoque Inclusivo) Master's Degree in Education - Educational Management (Maestría en Educación con Mención en Gerencia Educativa) and will be located at La Fontana 550-750, La Molina, Lima, Perú 15026
- **Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola (USIL)**, Avenida la Fontana 550, La Molina, Lima, Lima, Peru. The in- residence component will be for the following programs: Bachelor's Degree in Medical Technology in Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation (Tecnología Médica en Terapia Física y Rehabilitación) Bachelor's Degree in Biomedical Engineering (Ingeniería Biomédica) and will be located at Av. Pista Asfaltada, Fundo La Carolina Sección B, Parcela 1, Pachacamac, Lima, Perú 15823
- **University of Fairfax**, 1813 East Main Street, Salem, VA 24153. . The in- residence component will be for the following programs PhD Computer Science and Engineering, Doctorate in Information

Insurance, Doctorate of Business Administration, Doctorate of Software Development, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Computer Science and Engineering, Master of Science in Cybersecurity Management, Master of Science in Cloud Computing, Master of Science in Information Technology, Bachelor of Science in Network Administration, Bachelor of Science in Network Administration and Cybersecurity, Bachelor of Science in Software Development and will be located at 5850 T.G. Lee Blvd., Orlando, FL 32822 and 5955 T.G. Lee Blvd., Orlando, FL 32822.

### **Addition of a Program at a Different Degree or Credential Level**

The Commission affirmed the addition of new programs at a different credential level for the following institutions. There will be a follow-up site visit six months to one year following the first enrollment in these programs.

- **Agora University**, 9253 Old Keene Mill Road, Burke, VA 22015  
Bachelor of Arts in Theology – Degree Completion (English)  
Bachelor of Arts in Theology – Degree Completion (Arabic)  
Bachelor of Business Administration – Degree Completion  
Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies– Degree Completion
- **City Vision University**, 1100 E 11th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106-3028  
Doctor of Organizational Leadership and Innovation
- **Genesis University**, 4000 Alton Road, Miami Beach, FL 33140  
Master of Arts in Jewish Studies
- **Gracelyn University**, 6060 N Central Expressway, Suite 500, Dallas, TX 75206  
Associate of Science in Transformational Education  
Master of Arts in Transformational Education
- **Patten University**, 2433 Coolidge Avenue, Oakland, CA 94601  
Bachelor of Arts in Global Strategic Leadership

### **Change in Core Mission**

The Commission affirmed the approval for an application in a Change in Core Mission. Per DEAC Processes and Procedures, XIX.A. Change of Core Mission or Objectives, the institution must undergo an on-site visit within six to 12 months of implementation.

**Gemological Institute of America**, 5345 Armada Drive, Carlsbad, CA 92008 The institution's new mission is:

*"To transform students into the trusted gem and jewelry professionals and makers of the future through flexible education."*

*Education Values*

- *Lifelong Learning and Curiosity: We encourage continuous learning, growth and exploration.*
- *Creativity and Innovation: We champion creative thinking and innovative solutions, driving progress and inspiring new ideas.*
- *Integrity and Respect: We uphold the truth with consideration for the thoughts and ideas of others.*
- *Global Community: We foster collaboration and enduring relationships with peers and colleagues around the world.*

### **Change in Name**

The Commission affirmed the approval of a change in name for the following institution.

**Maestro University (previously Bottega University)**, 50 West Broadway, Suite 300, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

### **Approval of New Programs in a Field Related to Programs Already Within the Scope of the Institution's Accreditation**

The Commission affirmed the staff approval of the following new programs.

**American National University**, 1813 East Main Street, Salem, VA 24153

Associate of Science in Nursing

#### **Calbright College**

Community Health Worker

Talent Acquisition

#### **California Miramar University**

Associate of Science in Business Technology

Bachelor of Science in Business Technology

#### **ChildCare Education Institute**

Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) School-Age Certificate (Spanish)

#### **Martinsburg College**

Master of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis

#### **Nexford University**

Master of Business Administration in Finance

#### **Quantic School of Business and Technology**

Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence Engineering

#### **Penn Foster College**

Medical Laboratory Assistant Career Diploma

Medical Coding Professional Career Diploma

Phlebotomy Technician

#### **San Ignacio University**

Master of Science in Business Analytics (English)

Master of Science in Business Analytics (Spanish)

#### **Thirdmill Seminary**

Master of Divinity (English)

Master of Divinity (Spanish)

#### **William Carey International University**

Master of Arts in Global Studies

### **Executive Committee Elections**

The Commission voted to elect the following individuals to serve as Officers of the Corporation/Executive Committee members for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Marcia Ditmyer, Public Member, Dean, Saginaw Valley University (SVSU) College for Health and Human Services – Chair

Amanda Harrison, Institution Member, Chief Operating Officer, Cummings Graduate Institute for Behavioral Health Studies – Vice Chair

Kevin Ruth, Public Member, Executive Director, New Jersey Association of K-12 Independent Schools

(NJAIS) – Treasurer

Robert Frankel, Institution Member, Chief Academic Officer, Genesis University – At Large Member of the Executive Committee

### **Forthcoming Call for Comment**

Based on recommendations from the Standards Committee, the Commission intends to issue a Second Call for Comment regarding proposed standards for a subscription-based tuition model. Please be attentive to the upcoming release of this Call for Comment within the next week, and prepare to submit your feedback on this proposal.

### **Implementation of Applied Bachelor's Degree**

The Commission reviewed the public comments and recommendations of the Standards Committee and voted to establish a degree category “applied bachelor’s” with no less than 90 and no more than 119 credits. Changes will be made to the DEAC Accreditation Handbook to reflect this additional degree category.

The following language will be added to Standard V.A General Program Requirements:

2. Applied Bachelor's degree – minimum of 90 semester hours or equivalent.

The following definition will be added to the Glossary:

### **Applied Bachelor's Degree**

An undergraduate degree program that emphasizes practical learning that is designed to prepare students for immediate entry into specific career fields. Applied Bachelor's Degree programs require between 90 and 120 credits. The program name of any Applied Bachelor's Degree programs must be clearly designated as such, e.g. “Applied Bachelor of Science” or “Bachelor of Applied Arts”. Applied Bachelor's Degree programs must meet both industry-based expectations and state requirements and must clearly communicate their intended career pathways to prospective students.”

In reaching its decision to implement the glossary definition, the Commission determined that retaining this language for the Applied Bachelor's Degree is essential to preserving clarity, transparency, and consistency across accredited programs. Requiring that the program title explicitly include the term ensures that the degree's orientation is immediately clear to students, employers, regulators, and other stakeholders.

The Commission also recognized that precise degree nomenclature promotes consistency across institutions and strengthens public trust. Clear designation of the Applied Bachelor's Degree enhances comparability among programs, reduces ambiguity in transcripts and marketing materials, and reinforces accountability in how credentials are represented. In an environment where clarity in academic offerings is increasingly important, retaining this language safeguards both institutional integrity and consumer understanding.

### **Part Two, Processes and Procedures, Section XIII, DEAC Accreditation Handbook**

To align with updated U.S. Department of Education (USED) guidelines, revisions to the DEAC Arbitration Policy are necessary, specifically the removal of the binding arbitration provisions from Part Two,

Processes and Procedures, Section XIII, Binding Arbitration, DEAC *Accreditation Handbook*. The revised policy, in its entirety, follows below:

### XIII. Arbitration

DEAC complies with the arbitration requirements of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended (“HEA”) at Section 496(e), 20 U.S.C. § 1099b(e). Under this provision, the Secretary does not recognize the accreditation of an institution unless the institution agrees to submit any dispute involving an adverse action<sup>1</sup> to arbitration before initiating any other legal action. DEAC has established this process for initial arbitration pursuant to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. § 602.20(e) and the due process considerations of 34 C.F.R. § 602.25.

If an institution disputes the Commission’s initiation of an adverse action or a Commission decision not to approve a substantive change beyond the appeals process administered by DEAC, it may elect to submit the dispute to initial non-binding arbitration.

To initiate such arbitration, the institution must submit to DEAC a request for review by an independent Arbitrator within five business days of its receipt of written notice from the Commission of its decision (after the appeal has been exhausted) together with the applicable non-refundable arbitration fee (see DEAC website for arbitration fee). The Commission’s adverse decision will be stayed upon receipt of the institution’s request for review and the institution’s accreditation will remain in place until the final outcome of the arbitration proceeding is determined. Arbitration shall be conducted under the auspices of the American Arbitration Association (AAA) and must be initiated by the institution with the AAA within 30 days following the institution’s receipt of notice that the adverse action taken by the Commission has become final. The sole and exclusive venue for the arbitration shall be the District of Columbia.

Arbitration under this section shall be conducted by a single arbitrator who must have familiarity and experience with the field of higher education and the federal rules governing accrediting organizations. The AAA will provide a list of qualified arbitrator candidates. The institution and DEAC will use good faith efforts to select an arbitrator from the AAA list; if they are unable to do so, the AAA will select the arbitrator. Arbitrator candidates will be subject to DEAC’s Conflict of Interest Policy and is not a decision maker of DEAC.

The question(s) to be resolved by the arbitrator are limited to whether the Commission’s decision was clearly erroneous because it was (a) not reasonably supported by the Record for Appeal and/or (b) solely attributable to a misapplication of DEAC’s accreditation standards or published policies and procedures. The fact that the Record considered by the Commission could have also supported a different decision is not sufficient grounds for an arbitrator to remand the decision if the Commission’s actual decision is also supported by the Record.

The arbitration shall be held within ninety days following the submission of the Record of Appeal to the Arbitrator. The date for the hearing shall be determined by the Arbitrator in their discretion but may be revised by the Arbitrator in their discretion in response to a request for change from either party. The

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<sup>1</sup> An adverse action is the denial or withdrawal of accreditation or the denial of a substantive change, appeal rights exhausted.

institution may submit a brief of no longer than 20 pages at least 30 days prior to the hearing date. DEAC may respond to the institution's brief with a brief of no more than 20 pages. No discovery shall be authorized nor may evidence in addition to that in the Record for Appeal be introduced in either party's briefs or oral argument. At the arbitration hearing, each party shall be entitled to 30 minutes of oral argument. The parties may reserve up to five minutes for use in a closing statement. The remainder of the hearing will be reserved for questions from the Arbitrator. A transcript of the hearing shall be made and provided in electronic form to the Arbitrator and each of the parties. The Arbitrator shall make a decision based on the Record for Appeal, the briefs of the parties, and the arbitration hearing (the "Arbitral Record").

The Arbitrator may affirm, affirm in an amended form, or remand the Commission decision at issue. The decision of the Arbitrator shall include a summary of the reasoning supporting the decision and shall be delivered to the institution and DEAC within 30 days following the Arbitration hearing. If the decision of the arbitrator is to affirm or amend and affirm the Commission's decision, it may be reviewed by the federal courts. If the decision of the Arbitrator is to remand the adverse decision to the Commission, the Commission will consider the remand at its next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting called for this specific purpose. The institution will be informed of the Commission's decision on remand within 30 days of its consideration.

The arbitration proceedings, arbitration filings and Record shall be treated as confidential by the parties except as may be required to enforce their respective rights. The arbitrator's decision shall not be deemed confidential.

The expense of the AAA, the arbitrator, and the hearing transcription shall be shared equally by the parties. Otherwise, each party shall bear its own costs in connection with the arbitration.