



January 7, 2021

Mr. Randy Rinke
Associate Dean
Walker College of Business
Mercyhurst University
501 East 38th Street
Erie, PA 16546

Dear Mr. Rinke:

The IACBE Board of Commissioners met on December 18, 2020 to consider the request for accreditation of the business programs offered by the Walker College of Business at Mercyhurst University. I am writing to report that the commissioners voted to defer action on accreditation.

For clarification, the relevant section of the Board of Commissioners Policy and Procedural Manual states:

Action on Accreditation Deferred

When the business programs of an academic business unit that is a candidate for accreditation or that is seeking reaffirmation of accreditation are found to be in noncompliance with a number of the IACBE's Accreditation Principles, the Board of Commissioners may defer action on accreditation for a time period not to exceed three years pending remedial action and/or receipt of additional information. The Board of Commissioners will provide written reasons for the deferred action and will invite the academic business unit to respond.

During this period, the academic business unit will continue to hold the status of candidate for accreditation, or in the case of reaffirmation of accreditation, the academic business unit's business programs will continue to hold their accredited status.

Section I: Reasons for the Deferral of Action on Accreditation

In the judgment of the Board of Commissioners, there are some issues that still must be addressed before accreditation can be granted to your business programs. These are identified below:

Principle 2.2: Assessment of Student Learning and Operational Effectiveness

Provide a complete set of outcomes assessment results that includes at least two measures for each Intended Student Learning Outcome (ISLO), for either the self-study year or for academic year 2020-21.

Section II: Other Findings of the Board of Commissioners

While not reasons leading to the deferral of action on accreditation, the Board of Commissioners identified other issues that it believes warrant attention by the Walker College of Business. These are identified below:

Principle 2.1: Assessment Planning

The Walker College of Business needs to revise their Outcomes Assessment Plan to include the following:

1. In your revised OAP, ensure that the ISLOs do not measure multiple items as this can provide confusing results that do not identify the specific outcome areas that are not being met. 'Unbundling' and streamlining the ISLOs will help to ensure that they are clear and measurable and that the results provide clear guidance for continuous improvement efforts.
2. Provide assessment instruments that map to and measure individual ISLOs.
3. If the ETS Major Field Test is used to measure more than general business knowledge, provide a mapping of the subsets of questions to the ISLOs that are being measured.
4. Instruments to measure the ISLOs need to be end of program level and cover the full extent of the desirable outcomes. For the BAIB degree, the school is using an assignment from BA 285 class. An instrument needs to be developed that is end of program and covers the broader ISLO outcome. The BAM degree is measured by a paper assignment on Leadership. It does not include any other aspects of management. The BAMK measurement consists of 5 mini cases (1.5-2 pages each). The case assignments should be comprehensive and of a sufficient level to measure end of program outcomes.
5. Provide a description of how the assessment instruments that you are using measure the ISLOs that are mapped to it for each of the programs identified above. In addition, provide assignment instructions and rubrics for each instrument.

In order to assist the Alliance School of Business with revisions to the outcomes assessment plan and address the issues identified above, the Board of Commissioners is requiring a mentor visit from your staff liaison, Ted Collins. He will be in contact with you in the next week to discuss timing and logistics.

To facilitate the Board of Commissioners' review of your deferral please provide the IACBE with a written response to each of the items listed as Reasons for the Deferral of Action on Accreditation and as Other Findings of the Board of Commissioners. Provide a narrative response and any applicable supporting documentation to demonstrate program compliance. It is important that you also provide any requested documentation along with a revised Outcomes Assessment Plan that addresses the issue(s) identified above. Submissions for the narrative response(s) are to follow this format using MS Word: 1) copy each issue, 2) embed the corresponding response immediately following the issue. Submissions must be in electronic format utilizing a Drop Box which you share with the IACBE, emailed to iacbe@iacbe.org, or saved to a flash drive which is sent to the IACBE office via trackable delivery (e.g. Federal Express). All submissions must be received by the following:

June 1, 2021: Responses to all of the items listed as Reasons for the Deferral of Action on Accreditation and as Other Findings of the Board of Commissioners.

November 1, 2022: submission of an Interim Quality Assurance Report

The following language must be used on the Walker College of Business homepage, where “status page” is a hyperlink to your IACBE member status page at <https://iacbe.org/memberpdf/MercyhurstUniversity.pdf>

The Walker College of Business has received specialized accreditation for its business programs through the International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE) located at 11374 Strang Line Road in Lenexa, Kansas, USA. The specialized accreditation for one or more programs of the Walker College of Business is currently on a Deferral of Action on Accreditation. For a list of program accreditation status(es) please view our IACBE member [status page](#).

The decision of the Board of Commissioners to defer action on accreditation of your business programs is, in effect, a ruling of no action on accreditation at this time. Therefore, the action cannot be appealed. Should you have any questions concerning this action or if I can be of assistance to you, please contact me through the IACBE’s headquarters office.

If you have any questions or if we can be of assistance, please feel free to contact your liaison Ted Collins at tcollins@iacbe.org, or 913-631-3009.

Sincerely,



Dr. Patrick Hafford, Chair
Board of Commissioners

cc: Dr. Kristofer Gossett, Associate Professor
Dr. Heidi Hosey, Dean