



December 12, 2013

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS & EMAIL
(mortonyang@gmail.com)

Mr. Morton Yang
School Director
Metropolitan Business Institute
1370 Broadway, S-601
New York, NY 10018

***Re: Initial Accreditation Denied
(Appealable, Not a Final Action)
ACCET ID #1406***

Dear Mr. Yang:

This letter is to inform you that, at its December 7, 2013 meeting, the Accrediting Commission of the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET) voted to deny initial accreditation to Metropolitan Business Institute, located in New York, New York.

The decision was based upon a careful review and evaluation of the record, including the institution's Analytic Self-Evaluation Report (ASER), the on-site visit team report (visit conducted October 21 – 22, 2013), and the institution's response to that report, dated November 26, 2013. It is noted that none of weaknesses cited in the team report was adequately addressed in the institution's response and accepted by the Commission. Therefore, the Commission determined that the institution has not adequately demonstrated compliance with respect to ACCET standards, policies, and procedures, relative to the following findings:

1. Standard I-A: Mission

The institution failed to demonstrate that its mission is consistent with the education and training provided or that it has systems in place to measure and document its success at meeting its mission. The team report indicated MBI's mission statement addressed both ESL and vocational programs, however, the institution was not currently offering any vocational programs. The school further reported to ACCET that it was offering a 600 hour ESL program, while it was approved by the NYSED to offer a 1400 hour program. Additionally, the team report indicated that the institution did not have systematic and effective procedures in place to validate its successes in meeting its mission parameters.

The institution, in its response, provided a revised mission statement that eliminated reference to vocational programs, but did not address the discrepancy in the two approved program lengths, nor did it address the lack of a system of measurement to validate that it is meeting its mission

as required by this standard. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented systems that measure the institution's success at meeting its mission or that it uses its mission to guide the educational offerings of the institution.

2. Standard I-B, Institutional Goals

The institution failed to demonstrate that it has broad institutional goals that are clearly stated, support the mission, and are understood at all levels of the organization. The team report indicated that the institution demonstrated no understanding of the need for broad overarching goals nor the difference between overarching goals and their relationship to short and long term planning. Institutional goals that were listed in the ASER, were to become accredited and to offer a two-year degree program. These are objectives with an end point, and therefore, more appropriate as short term goals as part of a business plan rather than broad institutional goals that guide the institution on an ongoing basis. The team report further indicated that the institution did not provide documentation for how goals were developed. While the institution's ASER indicated that goals were communicated during weekly and quarterly planning meetings, the institution did not provide documentation that these meetings had taken place.

In its response the institution provided a list of items labeled "meeting minutes" that were in fact policy directives from the School Director. Not included in its response were meeting agendas, minutes or memos that demonstrated how institutional goals were developed, adopted and implemented. Further, in its response the institution provided a list of goals that addressed accreditation, curriculum, staffing, equipment and supplies, and marketing. The goals listed were all short-term goals more appropriate for a short-term business plan rather than broad, overarching goals that guide the institution's planning process. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively developed and implemented broad institutional goals that support its mission as required by this standard.

3. Standard I-C, Planning

The institution failed to demonstrate that it has sound written one-year and longer-range plans that encompass both the educational and business objectives of the institution. Not all plans included specific and measurable objectives, with corresponding operational strategies, projected time frames, required resources, and method(s) for subsequent evaluation of each objective. The team report indicated that the institution's business plan combined both short-term and long-term objectives, and had a total of four objectives, two of which focused on vocational programs for which the institution is no longer offering. The information provided in the institution's ASER indicates that there have been no students in its two approved vocational programs since before May 2012, and therefore the objective to increase vocational programs' completion and placement was not a relevant objective. The other vocational objective was to add three new Medical and Life and Health Insurance programs. Of the two remaining objectives, one was "to ensure the ESL students meet both DHS and NYSED requirements," which is an item which the institution should already be achieving

and the last objective which is “to increase numbers of enrollment.” While this last objective had specific target increases listed, the time frames listed to accomplish each objective did not consistently provide the institution with benchmarks, as many of the steps are listed as “ongoing.” Further, the objectives listed in the business plan did not address any educational areas of the ESL program, nor did they support the institution’s mission as it related to ESL students. As the ESL programs were the only programs being offered at the time of the on-site visit, the business plan did not address the current status of the institution. Additionally, the team report stated that the institution did not provide any documentation of a planning process. There were no agendas or minutes to verify that planning occurred on a regular basis or that plans were reviewed once created.

The institution’s response to the team report indicated that the school director and business development manager met to discuss additional programming to prepare students for employment. It further described at length the institution’s rationale for shifting from an information technology school to an ESL school. Not included in the response was a coherent short- and long-term plan which addressed the range of functions of school management nor was there any evidence of a planning process in place. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented planning policies and procedures to guide the institution on both a short and long term basis which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

4. Standard II-A, Governance

The institution failed to demonstrate that its management structure ensures the integrity and effectiveness of the institution and its compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. The team report indicated that MBI is currently teaching a 600-hour ESL program, while the school only provided the team with NYSDE approval for the curriculum of a 1400-hour ESL program. It also has three programs listed in its catalog that were not included on its application to ACCET and for which the institution did not provide approval from the NYSDE: a Business English program with up to 360 clock hours; a Business Administration program with up to 290 clock hours; and a Business Accounting program with up to 300 clock hours. Further, the institution’s website, www.mbi.edu, also lists, in addition to the above, a web design course which was not included on the institution’s application to ACCET or in the NYSDE approval documentation.

The institution in its response provided approval letters from NYSDE for the 600 hour ESL courses mentioned above, but did not provide approval letters from NYSDE for the three business-related courses nor an explanation as to why those courses were not included on the application for accreditation to ACCET. It did provide page one of an approval letter from NYSDE making reference to approved courses elsewhere in the letter; however, because only page one of the letter was provided, the Commission could not determine to which courses that letter was referring. Further, the institution’s response made no mention of the web design course being advertised on the institution’s web site. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that management has policies and procedures in place that ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory and accreditation requirements.

5. Standard II-B, Operational Management

The institution has failed to demonstrate that it systematically and effectively implements the strategies and written policies and procedures that guide the day-to-day operations of the institution. The team report indicated that while policies and procedures related to the daily operations of the institution exist, they are not consistently implemented.

The institution in its response acknowledged that its copyright and leave of absence policies were not effectively implemented, but that it had revised its policies to provide better guidance. Included in its response was a revised copyright policy and a series of free websites of materials that were not copyrighted. Not included, however, was a revised attendance or leave of absence policy or any explanation as to how these new policies have been communicated to staff or faculty or how implementation of these changes will be monitored. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented policies and procedures relative to the monitoring of copyright, leave of absence, and attendance policies which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

6. Standard II-C, Personnel Management

The institution failed to demonstrate that it has implemented, and maintained written policies and procedures relative to supervision, evaluation, and training and development of its employees to ensure that qualified and capable personnel, at appropriate staffing levels, are placed and effectively utilized. The team report stated that while a written policy for regular classroom observations exists, there was no documentation of this occurring in faculty files. Further, there was no evidence that the institution provides in-service or professional development opportunities for its faculty or staff.

In its response the institution indicated that it will use the NYSED professional teacher evaluation form for classroom observation and it provided evidence that it had purchased TESOL memberships for six of its faculty members. Not included in its response, however, was any documentation that its policies and procedures relative to class observations have been implemented nor that the six faculty members have participated in any TESOL activities. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented policies and procedures relative to the supervision and evaluation of faculty which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

7. Standard II-E, Communications

The institution failed to demonstrate that to maintain operational effectiveness, it has periodic meetings with employees with appropriate documentation on significant issues, consistent with the size and purpose of the institution. The team report stated that MBI has a policy requiring quarterly meetings for the purpose of communicating and updating staff members of the institution on pertinent aspects of its operations, including the delivery of quality

education and training services. However, the only meeting minutes provided were from April 29, 2013, which were minimally informative.

The institution in its response indicated that MBI does not have detailed information for quarterly meeting, but that it would add a more informative account of its meeting agenda. As an exhibit it included an email announcing an upcoming faculty meeting, but no meeting had taken place at the time of the submission of the response, no agenda was provided, nor was a schedule of future quarterly meetings included. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has periodic meetings with employees or that it systematically and effectively documents these meetings which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

8. Standard III-B, Financial Procedures

The institution has failed to demonstrate that tuition charges are applied fairly and consistently. The team report stated that MBI offers tuition discounts on a regular basis, but that there are no written guidelines governing how discounts are applied nor are they published in the school catalog, on the website, or in a policies and procedures manual to ensure the equitable application of discounts.

The institution in its response stated that it had changed its student discount policy to be consistently the same for everyone. Any student who refers a new student to the school will receive \$100. Not included in the response was an actual written policy governing the discount procedure or evidence that this new policy has been communicated to appropriate staff and announced to the student body. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented its new tuition discount policy.

9. Standard IV-B, Program/Instructional Materials

The institution has failed to demonstrate that its materials are up-to-date, readily available, and facilitate positive learning outcomes. The team report stated that in addition to excessive use of photocopied materials without permission from the publisher or author as well as the institution's failure to monitor and implement its own copyright policy, the institution's class sets of the *Interchange* series were outdated (1998).

The institution in its response stated that it has revised its policy on photocopies to not allow photocopying unless there is a formal letter from the publisher or author granting permission to copy materials. The response further included a list of websites where there are materials available that are not copyrighted for instructors to use. Relative to the outdated *Interchange* series, the institution provided Cambridge University Press invoices indicating that it was purchasing more recent editions of their class sets. Not included in the response, however, was any evidence that the new copyright policies have been communicated to faculty, or any evidence that this new policy has been implemented. Relative to the new class sets, the institution provided no evidence in the way of revised lesson plans, course syllabi, or teacher training sessions nor that these new texts books had been received and are now in use in all

classes. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented and is monitoring its new copyright policy nor has incorporated the most recent edition of the *Interchange* series into its curriculum, which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

10. Standard IV-C, Performance Measurements

The institution has failed to demonstrate that it has a sound, written assessment system that contains a set of defined elements, such as a grading scale, weighting factors, tests, quizzes, reports, projects, attendance, and participation, that are appropriately related to the performance objectives of the program or course and that this system is consistently implemented and closely monitored. The team report stated that while MBI has a published grading scale with a 2.0 requirement, there was no documentation that this grading system is being used by the institution. The institution was unable to provide a consistent response from the institution relative to the criteria used for determining level advancement. Further, there was no documentation provided that a nationally normed exit proficiency test was administered to assess and validate its curriculum.

The institution in its response stated that it has implemented an NYSED approved Student Progress document that will support students' academic progress and their advancing or repeating ESL levels reflective of the institution's grading scale. Not included in the response was defined criteria for determining advancement from one proficiency level to the next or any completed Student Progress documents as evidence that this form has been implemented. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented policies and procedures relative to ensuring there is a sound written assessment system in place to measure student performance which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

11. Standard IV-D, Curriculum Review/Revision

The institution has failed to demonstrate that it has effective procedures in place to continuously monitor and improve the curriculum. The written procedures did not include soliciting feedback from relevant constituencies, such as faculty, students, graduates, employers, and advisory/certification boards, nor does it include an analysis of completion results nor did they focus on a comprehensive review of the curriculum as it relates to the expected learning outcomes. The team noted that there was a revision in 2012; however it had not been implemented as of date of visit and there was no documentation provided to evidence institution's revision process.

The institution in its response indicated that the curriculum revision policy was included in its operations manual, and that it was recently updated. The institution included a copy of the policy, but upon review the Commission determined that it was the NYSED curriculum revision policy and primarily addressed curriculum revision resulting from changes in certification and/or licensing requirements and not curriculum revision as a matter of policy. The policy did not include incorporating various constituents such as students, faculty, or

industry leaders in the process, nor did it include specific procedures to be followed when reviewing/revising curriculum. Further, the institution provided no documentation of the curriculum revision process resulting in the referenced 2012 revision. Therefore, the institution failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented a curriculum review/revision policy.

12. Standard VI-B, Supervision of Instruction

The institution failed to demonstrate that individuals with relevant education and experience in instructional delivery and management supervise instructional personnel. Supervisors of instructional personnel demonstrate good practice in the evaluation and direction of instructors. Regular classroom observations, along with student, peer, and supervisory feedback, have not been conducted or documented, nor have they been effectively utilized to enhance the quality of instruction. The team report stated that there was a part time ESL instructor who was designated the ESL Coordinator, but that she did not have responsibility for or experience in instructor training and/or evaluation. The team further noted that during the hiring process, potential hires provide a demonstration lesson which is approved by the school director who has no formal ESL training or education.

The institution in its response indicated that the ESL Coordinator's job description has been expanded to include responsibility for classroom observations, scheduling faculty meetings, and maintaining lesson plan materials in binders. Not included in the response was any evidence that the ESL Coordinator was receiving training to enable her to perform her new duties more effectively, nor was a revised hiring procedure provided to address the concern that the school director, who has no formal ESL training or education was conducting evaluations of the demonstration lessons during the instructor hiring process. Further, there were no completed class observation forms included in the institution's response as evidence that the ESL Coordinator's expanded responsibilities have been systematically and effectively implemented. Therefore, the institution failed to adequately demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented policies and procedures relative to regular classroom observations, along with student, peer, and supervisory feedback, which is documented and effectively utilized to enhance the quality of instruction.

13. Standard VI-C, Instructor Orientation and Training

The institution failed to demonstrate that it has developed and implemented an effective written policy for the ongoing professional development of instructional personnel that is systematically implemented, monitored, and documented. The team report stated that the institution pays for membership in TESOL and that instructors are encouraged to attend at least two seminars/workshops offered by TESOL which they are then required to share the information learned with the faculty; however, the team found no verification that instructors had ever attended TESOL nor subsequently conducted in service training seminars for faculty. Further, upon review of personnel files, the team found that MBI does not consistently follow its own orientation and professional development procedures. Files

reviewed by the team did not include a checklist as described in the ASER, nor was there verification of: faculty members signing off on having received the administrative and/or faculty handbooks; professional in-services, in house workshops or outside seminars or memberships in any organizations offered to the instructors.

The institution in its response indicated that by signing the acknowledgement that faculty have agreed to comply with the rules and regulations of Metropolitan Business Institute constitutes the institution's orientation program. The institution provided 11 acknowledgements as evidence of compliance. Not included in the institution's response, however, was any evidence at that time that professional in-services, in house workshops, or outside seminars were attended or conducted, or memberships in any organizations offered to the teachers. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it systematically and effectively implements policies and procedures relative to the ongoing professional development and training of its faculty which can only be evidenced in practice over time.

14. Standard VIII-A, Student Progress

The institution has failed to demonstrate that it effectively monitors, assesses, and records the progress of participants utilizing a sound assessment system with a set of defined elements that are appropriately related to the performance objectives of the programs or courses. Student progress is not documented consistently in accordance with institutionally established performance outcomes and is communicated to all participants. The team report stated that the school does not track student progress in the manner described in its catalog. The team found that all students were placed in one of three levels based upon their performance on the Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.). According to MBI, this test is approved by the NYSED for use by ESL programs. After placement testing occurs, the team found no qualitative method for determining satisfactory academic progress, a consistent process for determining advancement through the levels, or that exit testing takes place to determine level of proficiency at program completion. Additionally, even though the school states it requires a 2.0 GPA for completion and to stay in good academic standing, no grades were being tracked at the administrative level to ensure students were meeting the school's GPA requirements.

The institution in its response indicated that MBI will implement the NYSED approved student progress form and BEST test results to validate students moving to the next ESL level, and will administer exit examinations. Not included in the response was criteria or policies and procedures for determining how students would move from one level to the next based on qualitative measures, policies and procedures for tracking student achievement, or any evidence that an exit proficiency exam was being administered. In the absence of policies and procedures for monitoring student progress, the institution was unable to provide any evidence of systematic and effective implementation of policies and procedures that effectively monitors, assesses, and records the progress of its students which can only be demonstrated in practice over time.

15. Standard VIII-B, Attendance

The institution failed to demonstrate that it implements written policies and procedures for monitoring and documenting attendance. The team report stated that while the institution tracks attendance, the team found that it does not implement the 80% attendance requirement as stated in its catalog and policy. The administrative assistant tracks attendance daily and sends emails or letters to remind students of their need to attend school. The school sends a final letter that includes a date by which the student must return to school or be terminated. However, the team found that the institution is not terminating students who received warning letters as stated in its policy, and that students could continue attending well after their final notice date. Further, the institution's leave of absence policy states that students are allowed one leave of absence during each 12-month period; however, during a file review the team noted that students were being given multiple leaves of absence, frequently for a period as short as one day.

The institution in its response indicated that MBI tracks 80% student attendance through its student database and daily classroom attendance report. As evidence it provided several screen shots of one student's record demonstrating how attendance was being tracked. Noted however, was that the institution sent the student five warning letters with no evidence that she was dismissed from the school, nor was there any evidence to suggest that it has implemented its stated policy of terminating students with excessive absences. Further, the institution did not address the issue of providing multiple leaves of absence within a 12 month period which was contrary to its stated policy. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented its attendance and leave of absence policies.

16. Standard VIII-C, Student Satisfaction

The institution has failed to demonstrate that it has implemented written policies and procedures to regularly assess, document, and validate student satisfaction relative to the quality of education and training offered, as well as the student services provided. Implementation of interim evaluations and a final evaluation upon completion of the term of enrollment were not documented. The team report stated that the school's policy indicated that the school should regularly assess student satisfaction of their courses and instructors, based on the school's mission statement and goals, through course completion percentages, instructor evaluation and administrative support services. It further stated that student evaluation should be conducted at the midpoint (for 100+ hour courses) and end of the course. However, MBI was unable to verify to the team that it was following its published policy regarding periodic written student assessments of the school and programs. MBI did not administer midterm or final student satisfaction surveys nor was there documentation or analysis showing that MBI regularly assessed student satisfaction.

The institution in its response indicated that MBI has developed and will implement student satisfaction surveys and included in its response a blank course evaluation form. There was, no however, no indication on the survey form that it was soliciting feedback on aspects of the institution other than the courses being offered nor was there any evidence to suggest that this survey instrument or any other document has been used to solicit feedback relative to student satisfaction. Missing, also was any analysis of survey results. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has implemented policies and procedures relative to soliciting feedback from students relative to the quality of education and training as required by this standard.

17. Standard VIII-E, Completion and Placement

The institution failed to demonstrate that it has implemented written policies and procedures which provide an effective means to regularly assess, document, and validate the quality of the education and training services provided relative to completion. The team report indicated that while the institution provided completion rates to the team, and a completed ACCET Document 28.1, it was unable to provide supporting documentation to verify those rates with data using the methodology described in their policy.

The institution did not provide a response to this weakness. Therefore, the institution has failed to demonstrate that it has systematically and effectively implemented policies and procedures to effectively track completion rates as required by this standard.

Since denial of initial accreditation is an adverse action by the Accrediting Commission, the institution may appeal the decision. The full procedures and guidelines for appealing the decision are outlined in Document 11 – Policies and Practices of the Accrediting Commission, which is available on our website at www.accet.org. If the institution wishes to appeal the decision, the Commission must receive written notification no later than fifteen (15) calendar days from receipt of this letter, in addition to a certified or cashier's check in the amount of \$8,500.00, payable to ACCET, for an appeals hearing.

In the case of an appeal, a written statement, regarding the grounds for the appeal, saved as **PDF documents properly bookmarked and copied to individual flash drives**, must be submitted to the ACCET office within sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of this letter. The appeal process allows for the institution to provide clarification of and/or new information regarding the conditions at the institution at the time the Accrediting Commission made its decision to deny or withdraw accreditation. The appeal process does not allow for consideration of changes that have been made by or at the institution or new information created or obtained after the Commission's action to deny or withdraw accreditation.

Initial applicants are advised that, in the instance of an appeal following a denial of accreditation being initialized in accordance with ACCET policy, the institution may not make substantive changes to its operations, such as additional programs or sites, until a notice of final action is forwarded by the Commission.

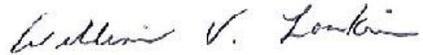
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It remains our hope that the accreditation evaluation process has served to strengthen your institution's commitment to and development of administrative and academic policies, procedures, and practices that inspire a high quality of education and training for your students.

Sincerely,



William V. Larkin, Ed.D.

Executive Director

WVL/chm

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