



MEMORANDUM TO: ACICS Commissioners, Leadership Team, Employees, Evaluators

FROM: Anthony S. Bieda, Executive in Charge

TOPIC: Executive Directive – Review of Institutions Enrolling Student Visa Participants

DATE: June 3, 2016

BACKGROUND:

Strong international demand for post-secondary education credentials earned at accredited institutions operating in the United States has increased the importance of the effective review of education through accreditation. Many ACICS institutions have welcomed the enrollment of international students who are visiting the U.S. on the basis of their participation in Federal student visa programs. The opportunities to effectively serve international students must be balanced, however, with attention to the issues and risks involved.

The stakes of reviewing the quality of institutions enrolling international, visa-holding students are substantial. In that regard, ACICS fully anticipates the opportunities to more fully develop and apply effective accreditation review will be numerous and recurring. However, the depth and breadth of the review of student visa institutions must be more fully developed, fortified and enhanced in order to protect the quality of the education experience of students, in fulfillment of the ACICS Value Statement.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE:

In regard to the issues and circumstances enumerated above, the following ACICS directives are effective immediately:

1. A suspension of the acceptance of applications for initial grants of accreditation from all institutions. This hiatus on initial grants is in effect until further notice.
2. A comprehensive inventory of all existing ACICS colleges and schools enrolling students with immigration visas of any kind, and verification of their compliance with federal immigration requirements.
3. All ACICS evaluators are subject to the Evaluator Development and Deployment Initiative (attached).

4. Formal adverse inquiries are authorized regarding every ACICS college or school that has been subject to SEVIS or ICE investigations for violation of federal immigration law.

The good-faith cooperation and support of the Council, executive leadership, evaluators and staff in re-establishing the credibility and authority of ACICS, applied domestically as well as internationally, is appreciated.

Directed and Ordered this 3rd Day of June, 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony S. Bieda". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and "S".

Anthony S. Bieda, Executive in Charge