



# South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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CAAL  
2-2-12  
Agenda Item 5

February 2, 2012

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chairman, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**From:** Dr. T. Michael Raley, Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing 

### Reconsideration of Request for Amendment to Existing License to Recruit South Carolina Residents Into New Programs: D.B.A., Ph.D., and Ed.D., Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ

#### Summary

Grand Canyon University (GCU) (<http://www.gcu.edu/>) of Phoenix, Arizona, requests approval to recruit South Carolina residents into online programs leading to the Doctor of Business Administration degree in Management; the Doctor of Philosophy degree in General Psychology with an emphasis in (1) Cognition and Instruction or (2) Industrial and Organizational Psychology; and the Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership. The request is to begin advertising and recruiting upon approval by the Commission.

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) considered the item at its September 1, 2011, meeting, and voted to recommend licensure to the Commission. At its December 1, 2011, meeting, CAAL reconsidered the item, tabled the request, and asked that GCU provide additional information addressing specialized accreditation, program costs, and US Department of Education investigations. The September 1 memorandum from the staff to CAAL is posted on the web site of the Commission at [http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/CAA\\_Meeting/Sept1-2011Mtg/3b.pdf](http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/CAA_Meeting/Sept1-2011Mtg/3b.pdf).

Listed below are the Committee's concerns and responses from the institution. GCU officials will attend the February 2 meeting to make a special presentation to the Committee and answer any additional questions.

The Committee requested:

1. A projected timeline for:
  - A. Ed.D., specialized accreditation, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
  - B. D.B.A., specialized accreditation, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
  - C. Ph.D., Psychology, specialized accreditation, American Psychological Association (APA), Committee on Accreditation (CoA) so that graduates will be eligible for licensure.
2. Program costs. An explicit breakdown and total costs for each program.
3. A report on the status of the US Department of Education (USDE) investigations listed below and any other USDE or other governmental-initiated investigations.
  - A. Incentive compensation: The question was about whether GCU violated USDE's parameters for paying enrollment counselors. USDE requested additional information from the University regarding its compensation practices. GCU's position is that the compensation plan for enrollment counselors complied with the USDE's regulations in effect during the period of the review.
  - B. Gainful employment: The USDE's position was that students enrolled in GCU's BA in Interdisciplinary Studies (BAIS) program were not eligible for Title IV financial aid because the program did not provide students with training to prepare them for gainful employment in a recognized occupation. The BAIS is not part GCU's request for new programs in South Carolina.
  - C. Inadequate procedures related to non-passing grades. This involves students with non-passing grades for a term and that the institution had no documented attendance, under which circumstances should have been unofficial withdrawals.

## Responses

GCU officials submitted the following responses.

### 1. Projected Timelines:

D.B.A.: The first graduate of the D.B.A. is expected to graduate in early summer 2014. GCU will then be eligible to seek specialized accreditation. The dean of the Business School projects that Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) accreditation will take 6-12 months. The process includes a site visit; therefore, the timing will depend on the availability of reviewers to conduct an on-site visit in Phoenix. GCU expects to accomplish ACBSP accreditation by mid-2015.

Ed.D.: In December 2011, The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) granted "candidate" status to GCU. The NCATE on-site visit is scheduled for April 2012. The first NCATE meeting after the visit will be in October 2012. In the absence of significant findings, notification of NCATE accreditation is expected before the end of 2012.

Ph.D. in General Psychology with an emphasis in Cognition and Instruction: Per NCATE requirements, this program has been submitted to NCATE as well, and should also be accredited by November, assuming the review ends positively.

Ph.D. in General Psychology with an emphasis in Industrial and Organizational Psychology: This program is not a program leading to licensure because it does not contain a clinical (internship) component. It is not intended to help students become practicing clinical psychologists; rather, it is intended to provide career training for use in business and other organizations. The American Psychological Association (APA) requires that accredited programs include clinical components that are not included in GCU's program. Dr. Hank Radda, dean of the College of Doctoral Studies, will be addressing the Committee on the value of a Ph.D. program that does not lead to licensure, along with information about the gainful employment prospects of students who graduate with this degree.

2, Program Costs:

Doctoral program tuition at GCU is \$595 per credit (\$35,700 for 60 credits) plus \$400 one-time learning management fee and \$800 per residency. The D.B.A. and the Ed.D. include two residencies each; the Ph.D. does not require a residency.

Program	Tuition	Other fees	Total fees
DBA	\$35,700	\$2,000	\$37,700
Ed.D.	\$35,700	\$2,000	\$37,700
Ph.D.	\$35,700	\$400	\$36,100

3. DOE Investigations:

1. Incentive compensation: GCU developed and provided with the supplemental materials submitted to the staff of the Commission its plan for enrollment counselor (EC) compensation. ECs are not paid by the number of enrollments they achieve.
2. Gainful employment for graduates of the Interdisciplinary Studies B.A.: Because of low enrollment, GCU has terminated the bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies.
3. GCU has implemented modifications to its system to auto-detect students who are not participating in online classes and not making grades which qualify as satisfactory academic progress (SAP) as required by the USDE, as follows:

**First Course Completion** – Students who just completed their first GCU course or re-take of the first course are reviewed daily. If a student does not pass his or her first course he or she is dropped from the current course with a grade of mandatory withdrawal (MW) and registered for the re-take of the first course. If a student does not pass the second attempt at the course he or she is removed from the current course with a grade of MW and dismissed from the University. Students are eligible to apply for reinstatement after one year.

**Accepted with Specifications** – Students who were accepted with specifications and finished their probationary period (doctoral, six credits; graduate, eight credits; and undergraduate, 12 credits) are reviewed daily. The status of students who met accepted specifications (AS)

requirements are moved to accepted status. Students who do not meet AS requirements are dropped from their current course with a grade of administrative withdrawal (AW) and are dismissed from the University. Students are eligible to apply for reinstatement after one year.

**GPA Progression** – The automated GPA progression process runs nightly and reviews every student who had a grade posted that day. If a student's GPA is below program requirements (doctoral 3.0; graduate 3.0; undergraduate 2.0; and BS, Nursing 2.5) the student is placed in the GPA Progression Watch Group. A student has up to three courses to raise his/her GPA to the required level. Students who do not meet requirements after the completion of the third course are placed in the GPA Disqualification Group, dropped from their current course with a grade of AW, and are dismissed from the University. Students are eligible to apply for reinstatement after 16 weeks.

**SAP** – The automated satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is run once a week for students who complete 12 undergraduate credits or six graduate credits during that week. Students are designated MET, WARNING, or SUSPENSION. Students who have not met GPA and/or completion percentage requirements for consecutive checkpoints are placed on SAP Suspension, dropped from their current course with a grade of AW, and dismissed from the University. Students are eligible to apply for reinstatement after 16 weeks.

**Attendance** – The Office of Financial Aid runs a daily process report that identifies students who have not posted in the online classroom. Attendance counselors monitor participation and contact students who are not participating. After 15 days of not participating, students are dropped from current courses with a grade of W and their enrollment status is moved to Inactive.

### **Recommendation**

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission amendment to the license of Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ, to recruit South Carolina residents into online programs leading to the Doctor of Business Administration degree in Management; the Doctor of Philosophy degree in General Psychology in (1) Cognition and Instruction and (2) Industrial and Organizational Psychology; and the Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership conditional upon the inclusion of additional disclosures to South Carolina residents in the program information and on the Enrollment Agreement and that the institution meet its timelines for NCATE and ACBSP specialized accreditation. If it becomes apparent that it cannot meet the standards for accreditation within its timeline, the institution must cease recruiting and enrolling new students into the programs and immediately advise enrolled students of the status of accreditation.