March 18, 2019

Dear

At the February 2019 meeting, the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (“ACCSC” or “the Commission”) considered its previous decision to continue the ACCSC-accredited schools owned by International Culinary Center, LLC and Affiliates (“ICC”) on Probation. Upon review of the Commission’s December 18, 2018 Continued Probation Order and ICC’s response, the Commission found that ICC failed to finalize a change of control which ICC had stated would result in the financial resources necessary to satisfy the Commission’s requirements. As a result, ICC has failed to demonstrate that the financial structure of the schools is sound with resources sufficient for the proper operation of the schools and discharge of obligations to students (Section I (C)(1), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation) and failed to demonstrate continuous compliance with accrediting standards and ongoing eligibility for accreditation (Section I (G)(1-2); VII (P)(1)(b), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation). Therefore, the Commission voted to withdraw ICC’s accreditation and remove the schools from the list of ACCSC-accredited institutions. The history of the Commission’s review and bases for the Commission’s decision to withdraw ICC’s accreditation are set forth below.

History of the Commission’s Review

November 2015 Review

At the November 2015 meeting, the Commission considered the audited consolidated financial statements for fiscal years-ended December 31, 2014 and 2013 submitted by ICC. Upon review of the financial statements, the Commission voted to place ICC on System-wide Financial Reporting.  

May 2016 Review

At the May 2016 meeting, the Commission considered its previous decision to place ICC on System-wide Financial Reporting. Upon review of the Commission’s January 12, 2016 Financial Reporting letter and the school’s response, the Commission voted to continue ICC on System-wide Financial Reporting.

1 International Culinary Center – New York, New York (M#001493); International Culinary Center – Campbell, California (B#072345)
August 2016 Review

At the August 2016 meeting, the Commission considered its previous decision to continue ICC on System-wide Financial Reporting. Upon review of the Commission’s June 17, 2016 Continued System-wide Financial Reporting letter and the schools’ response, the Commission voted to place ICC on Warning.

May 2017 Review

At the May 2017 meeting, the Commission considered its previous decision to place ICC on System-wide Warning. Upon review of the Commission’s September 7, 2016 System-wide Warning letter and the schools’ response, the Commission voted to place ICC on Probation.
November 2017 Review

At the November 2017 meeting, the Commission considered its previous decision to place the ACCSC-accredited schools owned by ICC on Probation. Upon review of the Commission’s July 10, 2017 Probation Order and the school’s response, the Commission voted to continue ICC on Probation.

May 2018 Review

At the May 2018 meeting, the Commission considered its previous decision to continue the ACCSC-accredited schools owned by ICC on Probation. In addition, the Commission also considered an Outcomes Report for The International Culinary Center (“ICC-NY”) main school located in New York, New York and an Outcomes Report for The International Culinary Center (“ICC-Campbell”) branch campus located in Campbell, California. Upon review of the Commission’s December 7, 2017 Continued Probation Order and the school’s response, the Commission voted to take the following actions:
1. Continue ICC-NY and ICC-Campbell on Probation due to the Commission’s concerns with the financial soundness of the institution.

2. Revoke the approval for the Italian Culinary Experience (Diploma) program for ICC-NY and direct the school to submit a Programmatic Teach-Out Approval Form for this program (Section VII (R)(7), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation).

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**September 2018 Review**

The Commission determined that ICC failed to demonstrate that the schools’ financial structure is sound with resources sufficient for the proper operation of the schools and discharge of obligations to its students (Section I (C)(1), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).
December 2018 Review and Action

The Commission determined that ICC failed to demonstrate that its financial structure is sound with resources sufficient for the proper operation of the schools and discharge of obligations to its students (Section I (C)(1), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).

While the Commission recognized ICC’s continued efforts to improve its financial position, mainly through cost reductions and a potential change of ownership, the Commission remained gravely concerned regarding ICC’s ability to operate the schools in compliance with accreditation requirements due to the consistent weakness and continued deterioration of the school’s financial position.

February 2019 Review and Action

At the February 2019 meeting, the Commission considered its previous decision to continue ICC on Probation and by so doing, to extend the maximum timeframe allowed for ICC to demonstrate compliance with accrediting standards. Upon review of the December 15, 2018 Continued Probation Order and ICC’s
response, the Commission found that ICC failed to demonstrate that its financial structure is sound with resources sufficient for the proper operation of the schools and discharge of obligations to its students (Section I (C)(1), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).

As stated in the June 8, 2018 Continued Probation Order, the Commission informed ICC that the maximum timeline for ICC to demonstrate compliance with ACCSC’s standards extended through January 10, 2019. At ACCSC’s December 2018 meeting, the Commission found that good cause existed to extend the maximum timeframe for ICC to come into compliance with accrediting standards until the February 2019 meeting and voted to do so. As stated in the December 18, 2018 letter, the purpose of the extension was to afford ICC an additional opportunity to demonstrate financial soundness by finalizing a change of control which ICC had stated would result in the financial resources necessary to satisfy the Commission’s requirements regarding financial viability.

As stated in the December 18, 2018 letter:

While the Commission found that good cause currently exists to extend the maximum timeframe for ICC to demonstrate compliance from January 10, 2019 until the Commission’s February 2019 meeting, ICC should take this Continued System-wide Probation Order to underscore the seriousness of ACCSC’s concerns regarding the school’s financial viability. Additionally, in reaching the decision to extend the maximum timeframe to demonstrate compliance, the Commission has the explicit expectation that ICC will provide a realistic and workable teach-out plan for both the main school and branch campus in response to this Probation order. If ICC does not submit an Institutional Teach Out Plan Approval Form and cannot submit an Application for a Change of Control-Part I showing an agreement with a qualified buyer for the New York main school, then in accordance with the deadlines established in this letter, the Commission will likely withdraw the school’s accreditation at the February 2019 meeting.

The Commission found that the Commission’s December 18, 2018 letter provided clear notice and an opportunity for ICC to come into compliance with ACCSC’s financial viability standards. Yet, despite the notice and additional opportunity afforded to ICC to come into compliance with ACCSC’s standards, ICC failed to submit an Application for a Change of Control-Part I showing an agreement with a qualified buyer for the New York main school as directed by the Commission in its December 18, 2019 letter. Rather, ICC’s response states the following:
The Commission found, however, that in this case ICC failed to provide an Application for a Change of Control-Part I, again failing to meet the requirement set forth in the December 18, 2018 letter.

Moreover, pursuant to Section IV (E)(2)(g)(iv), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation a school subject to a Probation Order may only seek the Commission’s approval for the transfer of accreditation resulting from a change of control by making a clear and convincing showing of good cause that the change of control would substantially resolve the issues that led to the Probation Order. Neither the school’s response to the December 18, 2018 letter nor the incomplete change of control application make such a showing.

Given ICC’s failure to submit a complete Application for a Change of Control-Part I within the maximum timeframe in either case as directed by the Commission and failure to make a showing of good cause in either case as required, the Commission voted to withdraw ICC’s accreditation and to remove the main school and branch campus from the ACCSC list of accredited institutions.²

In accordance with Section X, Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation, the reasons for the withdrawal of accreditation will be made public and provided to the U.S. Department of Education, appropriate state agencies, and appropriate accrediting agencies.

**Appeal and Reapplication Process and Procedure**

ICC may opt to appeal the Commission’s decision to deny accreditation or may elect to reapply for accreditation. Details regarding the reapplication and appeal procedures are outlined in the ACCSC Rules of Process and Procedures, Standards of Accreditation.

- If ICC elects to appeal this decision, the school must sign and return the enclosed Letter of Intent to Appeal a Commission Decision, along with the Appeal Expense Fee of $6,000.00, **on or before March 28, 2019.**
- If ICC elects to appeal this decision, the school’s Application for Appeal of a Commission Decision and Grounds for Appeal must be submitted **on or before April 17, 2019.**
- If ICC elects not to appeal this decision, the Commission’s decision will become effective **March 18, 2019.** The school may submit comments **on or before March 28, 2019** in accordance with the enclosed Public Comment Disclosure Form. Comments submitted by the school will accompany any public disclosure of a final Commission action pursuant to Section X (D)(4), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation.
- In accordance with Section VII (N)(3) Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation, the school may reapply no sooner than nine months from the date on which the denial of accreditation becomes effective.

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² As a result of this action against the main school, the branch campus in Campbell, California, which is currently in teach-out, will also have its accreditation withdrawn.
For additional information regarding the Commission’s decision, please contact me directly at

Sincerely,

Michale S. McComis, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Encls:  Letter of Intent to Appeal a Commission Decision
       ACCSC Standing Appeals Commission Members
       Public Comment Disclosure Form