

January 29, 2009

Re: Announcements regarding your education at American Pacific University

Aloha,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of a recent development at American Pacific University, as well as to clarify some policies that must be adhered to as you continue your educational journey.

First and foremost, I would like to announce that American Pacific University has recently received notice that our application for accreditation with the Distance Education Training Council (DETC) has been reviewed, and our bid has been approved. Our status as an accredited educational institution provides a multitude of benefits for the University, as well as to you, the student.

We began our journey to accreditation during the 2005 calendar year, and spent a substantial amount of time preparing all the necessary information for a seamless transition. This hard work has paid off, as DETC has now welcomed us into their fold, as an accredited institution. The focus of this change in status will currently be on our new program, those individuals working to achieve their Masters in Transpersonal Psychology through our University. While this does not affect the status of those students enrolled in our other programs, it does provide an indirect benefit. Students who have received degrees from our other programs will be able to state that they have received their education from an institution that has since been accredited. This strengthens the conveyance of a status already assumed with the obtainment of such a degree.

We must reiterate that the change in status does not directly affect those students enrolled in our other programs. Unfortunately, there is no ability to retroactively apply accreditation to former degrees and programs. Accreditation does not carry with it the dictum of a grandfather clause. All those individuals that have received degrees from the institution, as well as those that are enrolled in programs other than the Masters in Transpersonal Psychology will not have an accredited degree, and should refrain from announcing themselves as such. This responsibility rests squarely on the shoulders of the students, embodied in the obligatory code of ethics that runs through every educational process. Misrepresentation of accomplishments belittles one's educational advancements, and we hope that you share this understanding with us. This is not meant to negatively reflect on those achievements, as the process of obtaining such stature has been a portrait of intellectual fortitude and pilgrimage. We hope that you hold your accomplishments in such high regard as we do.

While the focus of this letter is to inform you of our recent accreditation, we would also like to restate some of our University policies in accordance with the degree programs that we offer. These policies deal with the use of PhD(c) as a title of accomplishment, the guidelines that correspond to submitting your dissertation, our minimum-coursework policy and the rights afforded to every student under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

1. There are some students that wish to use the title of PhD(c) to describe their accomplishments in the educational process. In order to use such a title, certain criteria must be adhered to. A student must have completed all their coursework, and have begun work on his/her dissertation. Additionally, the student must have permission from his/her Dissertation Chairperson, in writing. Upon notification of this policy violation, the student will be subject to immediate dismissal if the violation is not remedied within a period of no more than two (2) weeks. Once notified of the violation, the student must submit a letter to the University confirming receipt of the notification, and explaining in detail the actions he/she takes in order to abide by our request.
2. For those students that are nearing completion of their program, there are certain guidelines that must be adhered to during the dissertation process. Prior to submitting a dissertation proposal, a student is required to read the Dissertation Format and Procedure Guidelines, and complete the Student Affirmation, located in Appendix D. That affirmation should then be either faxed or mailed to the University, so that your dissertation work may begin. Once we receive the Student Affirmation, the student will then be assigned a Dissertation Chairperson.

The Dissertation Format and Procedure Guidelines outline the path that a student must take in submitting his/her dissertation to the University for review. The dissertation should be submitted 25 to 30 pages at a time, as an email attachment, to his/her Faculty Advisor. This policy must be adhered to, as completed dissertations will not be accepted without prior incremental submissions. Additionally, a student should be prepared to defend their dissertation after completion. This process involves a teleconference with the Dissertation Committee, in which the student will present his/her hypothesis, and strengthen it with a valid, researched argument. Please refer to the aforementioned Dissertation Format and Procedure Guidelines for additional information and requirements.

3. For all students, there are established minimum and maximum coursework policies. A student is required to submit coursework for a minimum of five (5) courses per calendar year, while submitting coursework for no more than two (2)

courses per month. Work that exceeds the maximum amount of submissions allowed will not be accepted by the University, and credit will not be granted for those courses. If a student fails to submit work for at least five (5) courses during the calendar year, he/she will be subject to probation, beginning in January of the following year.

When a student is placed on probation, he/she will have six (6) months to remedy the violation that led to the probationary status. If the violation is not remedied within that period of time, the student will then be dismissed from the University, pending a meeting of the Academic Review Committee. Decisions made by the Committee are final, and there exists no appellate process for dismissals based upon probationary period lapses. It should further be noted that being placed on academic probation by the University in no way limits your obligations to complete the minimum coursework required for the subsequent year.

4. Finally, we would like to notify you of your rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA dictates when an educational institution must disclose confidential student records without prior approval of the student. Additionally, it establishes a standard for how these confidential records are to be kept. A statement of your rights under FERPA is attached for your further review.

We at American Pacific University would like to thank you for your continued enthusiasm towards the educational process. We hope that if you have any questions or concerns about the information contained in this letter, that you will contact Student Services at (808) 791-5050 or paquino@ampac.edu.

Thank you,

Nancy Moreno-Derks, LMFT
Vice President
American Pacific University

attachments

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords learners certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the learner's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.

A learner should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the learner wishes to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the learner of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the learner of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the learner's education records that the learner believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the learner's privacy rights under FERPA.

A learner who wishes to ask the University to amend a record should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the learner wants changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If the University decides not to amend the record as requested, the University will notify the learner in writing of the decision and the learner's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the learner when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the University discloses personally identifiable information from the learner's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The University discloses education records without a learner's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using University employees or officials (such as an

attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board Director; or a learner serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the University.

Upon request, the University also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a learner seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901**