



November 8, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Betty Drees, President  
Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research  
1000 E. 50<sup>th</sup> St.  
Kansas City, MO 64110

Dear President Drees:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning the Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research (“the Institution”). This action is effective as of the date the Board acted, November 4, 2021. In taking this action, the Board considered materials from the most recent comprehensive evaluation, including, but not limited to: the Assurance Filing the institution submitted, the report from the comprehensive evaluation team, the report of the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) Hearing Committee, and the institutional responses to these reports.

**Summary of the Action:** The Institution has been granted Early Initial Accreditation. The Institution’s accreditation is limited to the Master’s and Doctoral levels and it is approved within those levels to offer the Master of Science in Biology and the Ph.D. in Biology.

### **Board Rationale**

The Board based its action on the following findings made with regard to the Institution as well as the entire record before the Board:

The Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research meets the Eligibility Requirements, the Assumed Practices, and the Criteria for Accreditation, including all Core Components without any concerns.

The Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research is currently in compliance with all Federal Compliance Requirements.

The Board of Trustees of the Higher Learning Commission has determined based on the preceding findings and evidence in the record that the Institution has demonstrated that it meets the requirements for Early Initial Accreditation.

### Next Steps in the HLC Review Process

**Comprehensive Evaluation:** The Institution is assigned to the Standard Pathway for its initial ten-year cycle. An institution in its first cycle of accreditation undergoes a comprehensive evaluation and is considered for reaffirmation of accreditation in Year 4 of the ten-year cycle. If reaffirmation of accreditation is granted in Year 4, the Institution moves to Year 5 and continues on the Standard Pathway until it completes the ten-year cycle.<sup>1</sup> The Institution will host its next comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation (Year 4) in 2025-26.

### HLC Disclosure Obligations

The Board action resulted in changes that will be reflected in the Institution's Statement of Accreditation Status as well as the Institutional Status and Requirements Report. The Statement of Accreditation Status, including the dates of the last and next comprehensive evaluation visits, will be posted to the HLC website.

HLC policy<sup>2</sup> requires that a summary of Board actions be sent to appropriate state and federal agencies and accrediting associations. It also will be published on HLC's website. The summary will include this HLC action regarding the institution.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your HLC Staff Liaison, Dr. John Marr.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gellman-Danley  
President

Cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research  
Lori Vitale, Director of Accreditation & Certification, Graduate School of the Stowers Institute  
for Medical Research  
Evaluation Team Chair  
IAC Hearing Committee Chair  
John Marr, Vice President of Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning Commission  
Anthea Sweeney, Vice President of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Higher Learning Commission  
Laura Vedenhaupt, Director of Academic Affairs, Missouri Department of Higher Education  
Herman Bounds, Accreditation and State Liaison, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S.  
Department of Education

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<sup>1</sup> INST.C.10.010, Substantive Requirements for Reaffirmation of Accreditation

<sup>2</sup> COMM.A.10.010, Notice of Accreditation Actions, HLC Public Notices and Public Statements