



**Public Disclosure Notice on  
University of Phoenix**  
Tempe, Arizona  
Effective: June 27, 2013

University of Phoenix (“the University”) in Tempe, Arizona, is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission; it has been placed on Notice.

**Understanding Notice**

**Notice** is a public status signifying that an accredited institution is pursuing a course of action that, if continued, could make it no longer in compliance with one or more of the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation. The period of notice is not more than two years, commencing with the date that the Board placed the institution on notice. During the notice period, the institution remains accredited and it has the opportunity to remedy the concerns that led to the notice sanction.

In most cases, because institutions on Notice remain accredited, other institutions of higher education will continue to accept the institution’s credits in transfer or for admission to a program at a higher degree level. However, students enrolled at an institution on Notice and interested in pursuing a higher degree or transferring should contact any institution they plan to attend in the future to confirm the institution’s admission and transfer policies.

**Recent Board Action**

On June 27, 2013, the Higher Learning Commission placed University of Phoenix on Notice. The Commission’s Board of Trustees took this action because of concerns related to governance, assessment, and research and scholarship. The Board based its action on the findings of a comprehensive evaluation visit.

The Criteria for Accreditation (2005 Criteria for Accreditation<sup>1</sup>) and Core Components on which the Board based its action are: Criterion One, particularly Core Component 1.d, “the organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission”; Criterion Three, particularly Core Component 3.d, “the organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching”; and Criterion Four, particularly Core Component 4.b, “the organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.”

**Next Steps**

The University is required to file a Notice Report in fall 2014 providing evidence that the University has resolved the concerns of the Board identified in the Notice action and evidence that the University meets the Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components (effective January 1, 2013) identified in this action as the basis for the future evaluation of the institution.

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<sup>1</sup> 2005 Criteria for Accreditation were in effect at the time of the University’s evaluation visit.

The Criteria (2013 Criteria for Accreditation) and Core Components that are the subject of the report are: Criterion Two, Core Component 2.C, “the governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to ensure its integrity”; Criterion Three, Core Component 3.A, “the institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education,” Core Component 3.B, “the institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs,” and Core Component 3.C, “the institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services”; Criterion Four, Core Component 4.B, “the institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning”; Criterion Five, Core Component 5.B, “the institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission”; and Assumed Practice B.2.b, “instructors teaching at the doctoral level have a record of recognized scholarship, creative endeavor, or achievement in practice commensurate with doctoral expectations.”

The University will host a focused visit in January 2015 focused on validating the contents of the Notice Report. At its meeting in June 2015, the Board will review materials related to this evaluation and determine whether the University can be removed from Notice. If the University has not resolved the Board’s concerns that led to the imposition of Notice and demonstrated that it is in compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, other action may be appropriate.

In addition, while not part of the sanction, the Board noted significant issues at the University with regard to retention and graduation rates; three-year cohort default rates; and credit hour policies and practices at the University on which the University will also be required to report its progress in conjunction with the Notice report and focused visit.

### **About the Higher Learning Commission**

The Higher Learning Commission accredits more than 1,000 colleges and universities that have a home base in one of 19 states that stretch from West Virginia to Arizona. The Commission is a private, nonprofit regional accrediting agency. The Commission’s mission is to assure and advance the quality of higher learning. It is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The institutions the Commission accredits include public, private not-for-profit, and proprietary institutions at degree levels from the associate’s through the doctoral degree level and from small, specialized institutions through large research universities.

Students, parents, and others from the general public with questions regarding the Commission’s work should contact John Hausaman at the Higher Learning Commission by email at [info@hlcommission.org](mailto:info@hlcommission.org) or by phone at 312-263-0456.