

COMMISSION FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION STAFF NEWS

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Agenda Information

Location:	Date and Time:
Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites 5905 South Kirkman Road Orlando, Florida 32819 (800) 327-1364	January 16, 2008 Beginning at 9 a.m.
Webcast:	Webcast Requirements:
Go to www.fldoe.org/cie the day of the meeting and click on the webcast link.	Windows Media Player version 9 or higher

Important Dates:

January 16
Commission Meeting
Orlando

February 14
Renewal Applications
Due for May

CIE Website Links:

[CIE Home](#)

[Institution Login](#)

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Assessing Academic Credentials



As a response to the rising tide of “bogus” academic credentials that have appeared in the workplace, the Federal Trade Commission has created a web page (<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/diplomamills.pdf>) to assist employers in assessing academic credentials. The issue of employees that gain employment using falsified “degrees” is especially important in the education sector where the credibility of an institution may well rest upon the credentials of the faculty and the administrators.

The term “diploma mills” refers to “...companies that sell degrees or professional certificates on the Internet without requiring the buyer to do anything more than pay a fee. Most diploma mills charge a flat fee, they require little course work, if any, and award the degree basely solely on work or life experience.”

By hiring an individual who gains his position through the use of falsified credentials you could be setting yourself up for future attacks on your institution’s credibility. “You could place an unqualified person in a position of responsibility, leaving your organization liable if the employee’s actions harm someone.

You could hire a person who is dishonest in other ways, exposing your organization and colleagues to potential damage. And if the bogus degrees are brought to light, you risk embarrassment.” In the state of Florida, your institution could also risk disciplinary action by the Commission for Independent Education if references to the phony credentials have been submitted on the CIE personnel forms (CIE 401 and/or CIE 402).

The web page lists several “Tell-tale Signs” that you can look for when assessing the credibility of an individual’s educational credentials. If you

see these signs, "...consider it a red flag and the likely sign of a diploma mill..."

Out of Sequence Degrees – You may find that degrees are earned in a non-traditional order such as the "...applicant claims a master's or doctoral degree but no bachelor's degree – or if the applicant claims a college degree but no high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) diploma..."

Quickie Degrees – Since it takes several years of study to complete undergraduate and graduate degrees, you should beware of the applicant who has "...a degree earned in a very short time, or several degrees listed for the same year..."

Degrees from Schools in Locations Different than the Applicant's Job or Home (at the time that they were acquired) – If the applicant was working, how did they attend this distant school? If the credential was earned via distance education, is that school an accredited distance learning institution?

Sound-Alike Names – "Some diploma mills use names that sound like those of well-known colleges or universities." The bogus institution may "...have a similar name to a well-known school, but is located in a different state..." You should also "...consider it a warning if an applicant claims a degree from a country where he or she has never lived."

Assessing the veracity of educational credentials can be a daunting task but the reward will be the protection of your institution's reputation.

Printed CIE Newsletter will Cease

This will be the last print version of the *CIE Staff Newsletter* (the December, 2007 edition). The same important news and features will continue to be available in the online version.



This e-version of the newsletter can be found at the CIE website (www.fldoe.org/cie) under the tab that is labeled Newsletters. Although it contains the same articles as the print version of the newsletter, the online version has a more colorful presentation style and it also contains "links" that allow the reader to move directly to the features that are of personal interest.

Please verify that the Commission has an accurate e-mail address for your institution in order to ensure the delivery of your electronic newsletter. You may verify your institution's e-mail address by accessing the Institution Login Feature of the CIE website.

Ask Licensure



What type of financial statement am I required to submit with the Annual Renewal Application?

According to Subparagraph 6E-2.004(6)(b)1,2, F.A.C. - Finances , The Financial Statement that must be submitted with the Annual Renewal Application is determined by the level of credential offered at the institution.

Non-degree Institutions

Need a Financial Review or Financial Audit prepared, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, by an independent CPA that meets these criteria:

1. Current Assets exceed Current Liabilities;
2. Have a Positive Net Working Capital; and
3. Demonstrate a Profit or Surplus from the Prior Year.

Degree Institutions

Need a Financial Audit, prepared, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, by an independent CPA that meets the following criteria: 1. Current Assets exceed Current Liabilities;

2. Have a Positive Net Working Capital; and
3. Demonstrate a Profit or Surplus from the Prior Year.

NOTE: *If the institution earns less than \$100,000 gross tuition revenue per the institution's fiscal year, the following TWO Financial Statements are required:*

- (a) Financial Statement of the Institution; and
- (b) Financial Statement(s) of the Controlling Principals.

These *TWO* Financial Statements Shall Be Compiled (Compilations must clearly indicate gross tuition revenue), Reviewed, or Audited by an Independent CPA. These Financial Statements shall demonstrate sufficient resources to ensure appropriate institutional development.

Please make sure that your CPA is aware of this Rule to ensure proper preparation of your financial statement(s). If you have any questions regarding this Rule, please contact your Program Specialist.

Calendar

COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS	> NEW INSTITUTE > SUBSTANTIVE > CHANGES > CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP/CONTROL MUST BE RECEIVED <u>NO LATER THAN:</u>	> ANNUAL RENEWALS PROGRAM > ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS > AND ALL OTHER LICENSE RELATED MATTERS MUST BE RECEIVED <u>NO LATER THAN:</u>
January 16, 2008 Orlando	Wednesday September 19, 2007	Wednesday October 17, 2007
March 12, 2008 Orlando	Tuesday November 13, 2007	Thursday December 13, 2007
May 14, 2008 Orlando	Tuesday January 15, 2008	Thursday February 14, 2008
July 21, 2008 Miami	Friday March 21, 2008	Tuesday April 22, 2008

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