



To: Higher Education Committee
From: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*
Subject: Initial Institutional Accreditation: Fei Tian College
Date: February 3, 2014
Authorizations: *John B. F. S. G.*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents grant accreditation to Fei Tian College?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the Higher Education Committee at its February 2014 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken. It will then come before the full Board at its February 2014 meeting for final action.

Procedural History

On September 20, 2013, the Regents Advisory Council on Institutional Accreditation (RAC) met to consider the initial accreditation application of the College. The RAC's recommendation is hereby transmitted to the Board of Regents for consideration and final action.

Background Information

Fei Tian College is a Regents-chartered independent institution offering four-year programs of full-time study in Music Performance and in Classical Chinese Dance leading to the Bachelor of Music (Mus. B) and Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) degrees respectively. The College was granted a provisional charter by the Board of Regents in June 2011, and an absolute charter in January 2014. Two programs leading to the

authorized degrees were approved and registered in August 2011. The College initiated a request for institutional accreditation that same year.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents accredit Fei Tian College for a period of five years with the requirement that the College provide a comprehensive five year financial plan at the end of the first year of the term of accreditation and submit annual data reports as requested by the Commissioner of Education.

Regents with a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest on this application are asked to recuse themselves from participating in the deliberation and decision.

Attachment

Information in Support of Recommendation

Peer Review Visit

In preparation for a visit by a peer review team, Fei Tian College prepared a self-study following the requirements for self-studies in the *Handbook of Institutional Accreditation*. On December 9, 2011 and February 10, 2012, a team of peers approved by the Department, along with Department staff, conducted site visits to the College to assess compliance with the standards for institutional accreditation. During the visit, the Team interviewed faculty, administrators, staff, Trustees, and students; visited classes; reviewed course syllabi and student work; examined student and faculty folders; examined administrative records and policy statements; and assessed physical facilities, library resources, and instructional equipment.

Overall, the Team found the College to be in compliance with all standards and recommended accreditation without conditions.

The Department transmitted the team's draft compliance review report to the College, providing it 30 days to prepare a written response correcting factual errors and addressing any other aspect of the report. The College accepted the draft report recommendation. It submitted a progress report outlining steps taken to advance all suggestions made in the Team's report.

The draft Team report, Fei Tian College's response, and the Department's preliminary recommendation for accreditation action became the final compliance review report.

Based on the College's self study, the site team's report and the College's response, the Department found that the institution is in full compliance with the standards for institutional accreditation. As a result, the Department recommended accreditation without conditions for a period of five years.

Regents Advisory Council (RAC) Review

As required by Subpart 4-1 of the Regents Rules, the Department transmitted the final compliance review report for consideration by the Regents Advisory Council on Institutional Accreditation. (The RAC is established in §3.12(d) of the *Rules of the Board of Regents* "to review applications for accreditation and renewal of accreditation pursuant to Part 4 of this Title, and such other matters as the department may ask it to review, and make recommendations to the Regents and the Commissioner based on its review.")

On September 20, 2013, the Advisory Council met to consider Fei Tian College's application. In a public meeting, it met with representatives of the College, a member of the peer review team, and Department staff. RAC members discussed their observations and asked questions of the College. The Council then voted unanimously to recommend Fei Tian College for accreditation, as follows:

Accreditation without conditions for a period of five years with the requirement that the College provide a comprehensive five year financial plan at the end of the first year of the term of accreditation and submit annual data reports as requested by the Commissioner of Education.

Commissioner's Review

Neither Fei Tian College nor the Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education appealed the Advisory Council's recommendation. Therefore, pursuant to Subpart 4-1, the Commissioner adopted the Council's recommendation as his recommendation to the Board of Regents.

The attachment to this item sets forth the range of accreditation actions authorized under Subpart 4-1 of the *Rules of the Board of Regents*.

Rules of the Board of Regents

Subpart 4-1, Voluntary Institutional Accreditation for Title IV Purposes

§4-1.2 Definitions.

As used in the Subpart:

(a) *Accreditation* means the status of public recognition that the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents grant to an educational institution that meets the standards and requirements prescribed in this Subpart.

(b) *Accreditation action* means accreditation, accreditation with conditions, probationary accreditation, approval of substantive changes in the scope of accreditation, and denial, revocation, or termination of accreditation.

(c) *Accreditation with conditions* means accreditation that requires the institution to take steps to remedy issues raised in a review for accreditation, and provide reports and/or submit to site visits concerning such issues, provided that such issues do not materially affect the institution's substantial compliance with the standards and requirements for accreditation.

(d) *Adverse action* or *adverse accreditation action* means suspension, withdrawal, denial, revocation, or termination of accreditation or preaccreditation.

(q) *Probationary accreditation* means accreditation for a period of time, not to exceed two years, during which the institution shall come into compliance with standards for accreditation through corrective action.