

TIFFIN

UNIVERSITY

Real Connections. Real Results.

Paul Marion, Ph.D.
President

June 15, 2009

Dr. John Taylor, Director
Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality
The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
30 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602-2504

Dear Dr. Taylor:

Thank you for meeting with Dr. Christensen and for your interest in Tiffin University. I am responding to the request that you made to Dr. Christensen for information regarding Ivy Bridge College of Tiffin University.

As you know, Tiffin University is authorized by the Higher Learning Commission to offer the Associate of Arts in General Studies (AA-GS), the Associate of Business Administration (ABA), and the Associate of Criminal Justice (ACJ) in addition to several master's and bachelor's degree programs. Ivy Bridge College of Tiffin University was created in 2008 as a joint venture between Tiffin University and a company known as Ivy Bridge, LLC to deliver the AA-GS program in the online format. This arrangement has worked very well, so beginning this fall, our existing ABA and ACJ degrees will also be delivered online through this organizational entity.

Ivy Bridge, LLC, which is owned by several individuals who have impressive academic credentials and careers in higher education, provided the initial financial resources for the development and marketing of this venture. This funding has been very helpful in establishing a solid enrollment and assuring quality.

The legal documents that established Ivy Bridge College of Tiffin University include a program agreement that specifies that Tiffin University will provide all services related to the academic administration and delivery of the program, including:

- (i) the hiring, assignment, supervision and assessment of all faculty and staff required for the performance of the services;
- (ii) the preparation, approval and distribution of all program courses, materials, examinations, and supplies;
- (iii) the offering of the courses via the learning management system agreed to by the parties;
- (iv) the formation and operation of all academic processes;
- (v) the establishment of minimum standards for the admission of qualified and eligible students and of approval procedures for making exceptions for the admission of any applicants who do not meet the minimum standards;
- (vi) the assessment of the outcomes and effectiveness of the program and its constituent courses;
- (vii) the formation of the constituent courses and their presentation in the online environment;
- (viii) the establishment and administration of all grading, progress, graduation, behavioral, disciplinary and other academic standards;
- (ix) all other services related to the administration and delivery of the program that are required to be administered by Tiffin University pursuant to the accreditation, governmental approvals and educational approvals applicable to Tiffin and the program;
- (x) the award of academic credit, degrees and other credentials to students in the program, including preparation of transcripts for graduates of the program;
- (xi) the provisions of library and other media resources;
- (xii) maintenance of accreditation requirements, including making in a timely matter, any necessary filings to maintain accreditation of the program and to comply with all educational approvals and government approvals;
- (xiii) bursar, including billing, collections, accounting, and business services consistent with the Tiffin University operating standards;
- (xiv) financial aid;
- (xv) bookstore or other learning materials fulfillment services; and
- (xvi) the registration of students and the preparation and maintenance of student records.

In summary, Tiffin University has full and exclusive control of all academic aspects, as well as the financial aid, bursar, library, and bookstore functions. The associate's degree programs are delivered under the auspices of and in the name of Tiffin University, and graduates earn a Tiffin University degree. In addition to the academic content delivered by Tiffin University, the program also includes a system of student mentoring and academic support, as well as articulation agreements with colleges and universities throughout the U.S. that allow the graduates of our associate's degree programs to continue their education toward a bachelor's degree.

We believe that there are many students throughout the nation who can benefit from high-quality online associate's degree programs that include a high level of support for students. This type of outreach is well aligned with the mission and values of Tiffin

University. This joint venture was developed in careful consideration of the HLC *Policies Regarding Institutional Dynamics* and the Commission's *Good Practices in Contractual Arrangements Involving Courses and Programs*.

If additional information is needed, please feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Paul Marion
President

cc: Dr. Charles Christensen, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Teresa Shafer, Dean of Assessment and Accreditation