

**Public Disclosure:**  
**Illinois Institute of Art and Art Institute of Colorado**  
**From “Accredited” to “Candidate”**  
**Effective: January 20, 2018**  
**Updated: August 24, 2018**

The Higher Learning Commission has received official notification that the Illinois Institute of Art and the Art Institute of Colorado are closing. This includes the Illinois Institute of Art’s branch campuses in Schaumburg, Illinois and its Art Institute of Michigan campus in Novi, Michigan, as well as Art Institute of Colorado’s additional location in Denver, CO. The anticipated date of closure is December 28, 2018.

The Dream Center Foundation has ceased enrollment at these various locations. HLC is working with the U.S. Department of Education and the institutions to provide the best options for students based on this recent information.

In spring 2017 Education Management Corporation (EDMC) requested HLC’s approval of a Change of Control seeking the extension of the accreditation of these institutions after their proposed sale to the Dream Center Foundation, through its subsidiary, Dream Center Education Holdings. During its review process, HLC evaluated the potential for the institutions to continue to ensure a quality education to students after the change of ownership took place. The Higher Learning Commission Board of Trustees voted to approve the transaction subject to a change in accreditation status from “Accredited” to “Change of Control-Candidacy” for the Institutes effective as of the date of sale by Education Management Corporation. Generally, the period of Change of Control-Candidacy status lasts from a minimum of six months to a maximum of four years. During this status, an institution is not accredited, but holds a recognized status with HLC indicating the institution meets the standards for candidacy.

The transaction occurred on January 20, 2018.

**What This Means for Students**

Students taking classes or graduating during the candidacy period should know that while the institution remains in candidacy status, their courses or degrees are not accredited by HLC and it is possible that they will not be accepted in transfer to other colleges and universities or recognized by prospective employers. Courses completed, and degrees earned prior to the January 20, 2018 change of status were completed and earned at an accredited institution. In most cases, other institutions of higher education will accept those credits in transfer or for admission to a higher degree program as they were earned during an HLC accreditation period. However, all colleges and universities define their own transfer and admission policies. Students should contact any institution they plan to

attend in the future so they are knowledgeable about the admission and transfer policies for that institution.

HLC currently is reviewing teach-out plans submitted by both Institutes. Currently enrolled students will receive information from the Institutes regarding teach out opportunities in the near future. For more information about teach outs, visit <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/teach-out-arrangements.html>.

Students considering transfer to other Art Institutes should be aware that the Art Institute of Philadelphia and the Art Institute of Pittsburgh have been placed on a [Show Cause Order](#) by their respective accrediting agency, Middle States Commission on Higher Education. That agency will consider if accreditation for those campuses will be withdrawn in November 2018.

### **Next Steps**

HLC requires that the Institutes provide proper advisement and accommodations to students in light of this action, which may include, if necessary, assisting students with financial accommodations or transfer arrangements if requested. HLC is also requiring that the Institutes it accredits post this document prominently on their respective websites.

HLC continues to follow its established change of control process which included the July 16-17, 2018 campus visit. The HLC Board of Trustees will make a decision related to candidacy status in November 2018.

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

*The Higher Learning Commission accredits approximately 1,000 colleges and universities that have a home base in one of 19 states that stretch from West Virginia to Arizona. HLC is a private, nonprofit accrediting agency. It is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Questions? Contact [info@hlcommission.org](mailto:info@hlcommission.org) or call 312.263.0456.*