

---

**From:** Karly Zeigler <kzeigler@acics.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 28, 2022 7:49 AM  
**To:** Leonard, Natalie  
**Subject:** RE: ACICS Position as to a Portfolio School Change - Empire College of Law

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Good Morning Natalie,

From what you've described, this is not a possible scenario in accordance with our Accreditation Criteria. We have standards relative to a campus closure/teach-out but neither of those would allow for continued admissions.

Regards,

*Karly Zeigler*

Director of Accreditation  
Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools

---

**From:** Leonard, Natalie <Natalie.Leonard@calbar.ca.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 24, 2022 5:21 PM  
**To:** Karly Zeigler <kzeigler@acics.org>  
**Subject:** RE: ACICS Position as to a Portfolio School Change - Empire College of Law

Karly,

Thank you so much for this very helpful information. I have a follow on question.

Here, the law school indicates that it is selling its assets and "winding down" operations rather than doing a teach out. Is this a term in your regulations, "winding down." If so, what is involved in a wind down. If not, what do you expect of institutions that are advising that they are closing?

In particular, here, the school says it plans to sell its assets immediately, but to continue to admit new students for at least the next three semesters. Would this comport with ACICS rules/guidelines/authority?

Thank you,  
Natalie

---

**From:** Karly Zeigler <[kzeigler@acics.org](mailto:kzeigler@acics.org)>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 11, 2022 6:15 AM  
**To:** Leonard, Natalie <[Natalie.Leonard@calbar.ca.gov](mailto:Natalie.Leonard@calbar.ca.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: ACICS Position as to a Portfolio School Change - Empire College of Law

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Ms. Leonard,

I'm going to attempt to answer your questions based on the information you have provided below, as no application has been submitted to our agency yet.

Under our current Accreditation Criteria, the management service agreement of that nature would likely fall *under Section 2-2-505 of our Accreditation Criteria, Contracts with Unaccredited Institutions or Entities*, which states that less than 25% of a program can be offered in such a manner. From looking at their website, it appears that Monterey College of Law is in application with a regional accreditor, but has yet to attain accreditation (by an institutional accreditor for Title IV purposes). ACICS accredits Empire College and this accreditation would not transfer to another institution, utilizing another curriculum. Our criteria relative to teach-outs also requires that the receiving institution be accredited by an agency recognized for Title IV purposes.

Regarding access to Title IV funds and the maintaining of 90/10, that falls under the purview of the Department of Education. While we monitor institutions' compliance with those mandates, oversight and approval are under the DOE itself.

I hope this helps. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Regards,

*Karly Zeigler*

Director of Accreditation

Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools

---

**From:** Leonard, Natalie <[Natalie.Leonard@calbar.ca.gov](mailto:Natalie.Leonard@calbar.ca.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 9, 2022 3:14 PM

**To:** Karly Zeigler <[kzeigler@acics.org](mailto:kzeigler@acics.org)>

**Subject:** ACICS Position as to a Portfolio School Change - Empire College of Law

Dear Ms. Zeigler:

One of the schools in ACICS portfolio is Empire College of Law, which receives its degree granting authority from the State Bar of California through its Committee of Bar Examiners.

Recently, the agency received an application in which the law school would sell its assets to Monterey College of Law in Spring 2022, but teach out its current JD/MSL students, accessing Title IV funds, through Spring 2023 and beyond using a management service agreement from Monterey College of Law to operate the law school and switching to Monterey College of Law's JD/MSL curriculum. The law school intends to continue to access Title IV funding throughout the teachout for its JD/MSL students.

Would the school need to seek any prior approvals from the accreditor to make any of these changes, such as the asset sale, curriculum change, management service agreement in operating the law school or anything other point, either to remain in compliance or for its students to access Title IV funds? We are, in particular, unclear about how the law school will maintain the required 90/10 ratio during the teachout period or what will happen if that is not maintained?

It would be helpful to understand your agency's point of view and the law school's obligations if such a transition is undertaken.

Thank you,

Natalie Leonard (she/her/hers)

Principal Program Analyst, Educational Standards, Office of Admissions

[The State Bar of California](#) | 180 Howard Street | San Francisco, CA 94105

Phone: 415-538-2118 | Fax: 415-538-2304 | [natalie.leonard@calbar.ca.gov](mailto:natalie.leonard@calbar.ca.gov)

***Working to protect the public in support of the mission of the State Bar of California.***

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

[LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

*This message may contain confidential information. Unless you are the intended recipient or are authorized to receive information for the intended recipient, you may not use, copy, or disclose the message in whole or in part. If you have received this message in error, please advise the sender by reply email and delete all copies of the message. Thank you.*