

COURT & JUSTICE

# University of Akron students sue school over doctoral program's loss of accreditation

Updated 6:33 PM;  
Posted 5:59 PM



Thirteen current and former students sued the University of Akron on Thursday over the 2017 loss of a counseling program's dual-accreditation status. (Thomas Ondrey, The Plain Dealer)

1

0 shares

By **Cory Shaffer, cleveland.com**, [CShaffer@cleveland.com](mailto:CShaffer@cleveland.com)

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Thirteen current and former University of Akron students have sued the college over the loss of accreditation of a unique doctoral program in marriage counseling and therapy.

Lawsuits filed Thursday in Summit County Common Pleas Court accuse the university of engaging in unfair practices by launching an aggressive marketing campaign to highlight the program's dual-accreditation status to enroll, only to lose its dual-accreditation in August 2017.

Those students -- some of whom left careers and moved out of state to enroll in the program -- took on financial loans, moving expenses, lost income from their careers and other, the suit says.

The students are seeking at least \$25,000 in damages and asked a judge to allow them to make their case to a

They also filed complaints with the Ohio Court of Claims, according to a news release from Peter Pattakos, a lawyer for the 13 students who brought the complaint.

University of Akron spokeswoman Christine Boyd said Thursday that the university is still reviewing the complaint that the program at the center of the lawsuit is still accredited by one board, but lost its dual-accreditation status.



---

The Marriage and Family Counseling and Therapy program, under the School of Counseling, offered students a program accredited by both the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs and the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

The school marketed it as "one of a limited number of such programs nationwide," Pattakos said in the news release.

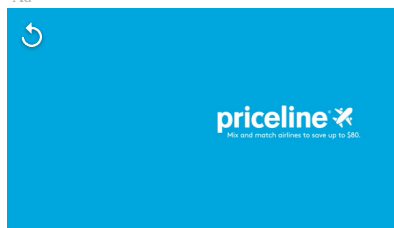
The suit says the driving force behind the decision not to seek re-accreditation was Robert Schwartz, and that the school sought to tank the program as part of a personal grudge he held against its director.

Karin Jordan, who led the program, reported Schwartz to school officials for misconduct around 2012, the suit says. Jordan's complaint involved Schwartz being overseas while he said was supervising the Clinic for Individual Counseling and, as a result, the university removed Schwartz from the position, the suit says.

Schwartz was tapped as the liaison between the program and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. He was also the head of another doctoral counseling program that was accredited by the same council, but lost its dual-accreditation program as a competitor to his own, the suit says.

---

Ad



---

Schwartz overstated negative findings in the council's March 2017 evaluation of the program and then convinced school officials to let the program's accreditation by the commission lapse, losing the program's dual accreditation, a lawyer said.

**SPONSOR CONTENT**

## **10 Small Things You Can Do to Live a More Sustainable Lifestyle**



**By Refinery29 paid for by Cotton**

As we all know, small daily habits can really add up. Drinking plenty of water will get your skin glowing, while five morning meditation can make a day of meetings feel a lot less chaotic.

[Learn More](#)



Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** (updated 5/25/18) and **Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement** (updated 5/25/18).

© 2018 Advance Local Media LLC. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Advance Local.

**Community Rules** apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

**Your California Privacy Rights**

[\*\*▶ Ad Choices\*\*](#)