

Self-Accredited Indiana School Plans Joint Program With Center Being Investigated Here

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GAS CITY, Ind., July 17 — Indiana Northern University, a self-accredited university whose "campuses" include a nearby motel where classes are held once a month is granting a full range of degrees — from B.A.'s to Ph.D.'s.

Indiana Northern, whose founder and president, Gordon Da Costa, set up the Accrediting Commission for Specialized Colleges three years ago, will begin a joint program this fall with a New York City group-therapy training center now un-

der investigation by the city's Department of Consumer Affairs and by the New York State Attorney General's office.

Dr. Da Costa said in an interview here that graduates of the New York center, called the Group Relations Ongoing Workshop (GROW) would begin studies at I.N.U. this fall, working toward the university's advanced degree in human relations.

GROW, which offers courses in varieties of psychotherapy, is being investigated by the city and state agencies to determine whether its administrators and some of its faculty

members are making fraudulent use of Ph.D.'s from unaccredited universities.

173 Enrolled at GROW

A total of 173 New Yorkers are currently enrolled at GROW in a different program leading to B.A., M.A., or Ph.D. degrees from Indiana Northern. The program is offered under an extension study plan that was ruled illegal by the State Department of Education last May.

The 173 GROW students may be permitted to finish the I.N.U. degree programs they started before the state forbade the awarding of degrees from out-of-state institutions.

However, GROW has agreed not to offer any new degree programs in conjunction with I.N.U., and has severed its relationship with Da Costa and the Indiana school.

Several members of the GROW staff have doctorates from Philathea College in London, Ontario, which is not officially accredited in that province.

Philathea, however, is "accredited" by the Accrediting Commission of Specialized Colleges, of which Dr. Da Costa is chairman.

"We have not granted any degrees of any kind as yet to GROW graduates," he told a

visitor today. "But at least five have indicated they want to do work with us in October, and we will fulfill a commitment to accept them."

I.N.U. was founded nine years ago by Dr. Da Costa, whose own doctorate in human relations was granted by Indiana Northern.

The university offers two-year, four-year and graduate degrees from colleges of specialized science, business administration, liberal arts, and "fire science technology." Eight full-time faculty members are on its staff.

The school began as technical college giving a two-year

technical training course, and at first had the enthusiastic cooperation of the industries in and around Gas City, which supplied the institution with instructors.

Now, eight years later, the institution's ambitions have expanded, and the involvement of local industries has dwindled.

Indiana Northern is not accredited by the regional Accrediting Commission of Higher Education. According to Dr. Da Costa, a major reason for this is that the institution did not meet the commission's minimum library requirement.

"Why should we have to have 50,000 books here?" he

asked. "Students just don't use libraries the way they used to."

He said there were 18,000 volumes in I.N.U.'s library, "including the Harvard Classics."

Indiana, like a member of other states, now requires any private educational institution to be approved or accredited on the state level to operate within the state.

But the law requiring such institutions to be accredited by the Indiana Private School Accrediting Commission is a new one, and the evaluation process is still under way.

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