

STATE OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY

IN RE: PETITION FOR VARIANCE OR WAIVER BY
FERNANDO ORTIZ of JOSE MARIA VARGAS UNIVERSITY

VW 2026-066

ORDER OF WITHDRAWAL OF PETITION

Petitioner, Fernando Ortiz of Jose Maria Vargas University, filed a petition for a permanent variance or waiver of rule 61H1-27.001, F.A.C., regarding the application of the rule to its specific circumstances as outlined in the petition. The petition was filed on May 12, 2026. The notice of the petition appeared in the Florida Administrative Register on June 4, 2026, in Volume 52, Number 108. No comments by interested persons were received.

By email dated July 8, 2026, Petitioner withdrew the request for review. The Petitioner's withdrawal is accepted as final action of the petition. The petition and emailed statement of withdrawal are incorporated by reference and attached to this Order (Composite Exhibit A).

It is therefore **ORDERED** that the petition is **WITHDRAWN**.

This Order shall become effective upon filing with the Clerk of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

DONE AND ORDERED this 9th day of July, 2026, by the
Florida Board of Accountancy.

FLORIDA BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY



Kevin Brown, Acting Director
Division of Certified Public Accounting
for Jason Lafser, Chair

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by U.S. Certified Mail to: **FERNANDO ORTIZ of JOSE MARIA VARGAS UNIVERSITY**, 10131 Pines Blvd., Pembroke Pines, FL 33026; and by email to ortiz@jmvu.edu; and by electronic delivery to **Rachelle Munson**, Office of the Attorney General, Rachelle.Munson@myfloridalegal.com, Tracy Smith at Tracy.Smith@myfloridalegal.com, and to Cassandra Fullove at Cassandra.Fullove@myfloridalegal.com; this 22nd day of July, 2026.

Brenda M. Nicks



Outlook

Re: Florida Board of Accountancy - Petition for Variance or Waiver

From Fernando Ortiz <ortizf@jmvu.edu>

Date Wed 7/8/2026 2:24 PM

To Brown, Kevin <Kevin.Brown@myfloridalicense.com>

Cc Rachelle R. Munson <Rachelle.Munson@myfloridalegal.com>

[NOTICE] This message comes from a system outside of DBPR. Please exercise caution when clicking on links and/or providing sensitive information. If you have concerns, please contact your Knowledge Champion or the DBPR Helpdesk.

Hi Kevin,

Yes please, thank you.

On Wed, Jul 8, 2026 at 2:18 PM Brown, Kevin <Kevin.Brown@myfloridalicense.com> wrote:

Good Afternoon Mr. Ortiz,

For a quick clarification, do you wish to withdraw your petition?

Very Respectfully,



dbpr

Kevin J. Brown

ACTING DIRECTOR

Division of Certified Public Accounting

Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation

Office: (352) 313-6607 Cell: (352) 740-6730
Kevin.Brown@MyFloridaLicense.com



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From: Fernando Ortiz <ortizf@jmvu.edu>

Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 12:02 PM

To: Brown, Kevin <Kevin.Brown@myfloridalicense.com>

Cc: Rachelle R. Munson <Rachelle.Munson@myfloridalegal.com>; Lee, Karan <Karan.Lee@myfloridalicense.com>; Applications, CPA <CPA.Applications@myfloridalicense.com>

Subject: Re: Florida Board of Accountancy - Petition for Variance or Waiver

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Hi Kevin,

It was a pleasure speaking with you. and confirmed I will get that to you before the 22 of July

On Wed, Jul 8, 2026 at 11:31 AM Brown, Kevin <Kevin.Brown@myfloridalicense.com> wrote:
Good Morning Mr. Ortiz,

It was a pleasure talking with you about your petition and the accounting program at JMVU. During our call, we discussed the petition, and how courses can be approved for credit. Based on your desired outcome, and the best path forward, you indicated that you may want to withdraw this petition and instead present your courses to our Education Advisory Committee. If this is route you wish to take, I ask that you do the following:

- 1) Reply to this email indicating that you are withdrawing your petition. This will allow our staff to pull it from our agenda and not be heard by the full Board. I ask for a reply no later than this Friday, July 10, 2026.
- 2) Provide us copies of the syllabi of the courses you are looking to get approval for from our Education Advisory Committee.
 - a. Please email the syllabi to our Applications Team (CC'ed). You will need to indicate the type of credit you are asking for approval for (Upper Division Accounting, Business, Law, etc.).
 - b. When we receive them, we will provide you notice of when to appear at the next Education Advisory Committee meeting, which I believe is August 12, 2026 at 10:30am. We will also earmark the Agenda to discuss DEAC as an accrediting agency.

If you can, please provide those documents to us no later than July 22, 2026. Our staff need time to compile the documents into a book and the Committee will need time to review these syllabi,

especially if you are submitting numerous courses. If this deadline is too tight, the next meeting would likely be in October or November and could provide you more time to structure your presentation before the committee.

I am available if you need any further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Very Respectfully,



Kevin J. Brown

ACTING DIRECTOR

Division of Certified Public Accounting

Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation

Office: (352) 313-6607 Cell: (352) 740-6730

Kevin.Brown@MyFloridaLicense.com



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From: Brown, Kevin <Kevin.Brown@myfloridalicense.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 10:56 AM

To: ortizf@jmvu.edu <ortizf@jmvu.edu>

Subject: Florida Board of Accountancy - Petition for Variance or Waiver

Good Morning Mr. Ortiz,

My name is Kevin Brown, the acting Director of the Florida Board of Accountancy. Do you have time to call and discuss the petition you filed with the Board? Please call at your convenience, my office and cell lines are below.

Very Respectfully,



Kevin J. Brown

ACTING DIRECTOR

Division of Certified Public Accounting

Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation

Office: (352) 313-6607 Cell: (352) 740-6730
Kevin.Brown@MyFloridaLicense.com



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Fernando Ortiz
Jose Maria Vargas University
10131 Pines Blvd
Pembroke Pines, FL 33026
Tel: 954-322-4460

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Fernando Ortiz
Jose Maria Vargas University
10131 Pines Blvd
Pembroke Pines, FL 33026
Tel: 954-322-4460

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FILED

Department of Business and Professional Regulation

Senior Deputy Agency Clerk

CLERK: Brandon Nichols

Date: 5/12/2026

File #:

**VW 2026-066****Fernando Ortiz**

Jose Maria Vargas University

10131 Pines Blvd, Pembroke Pines FL, 33026

Email: ortizf@jmvu.edu

Phone: (954) 322-4460

RECEIVED

May 12, 2026

MAY 12 2026

Florida Board of Accountancy
240 NW 76th Drive, Suite A
Gainesville, Florida 32607Florida Division of
Certified Public Accounting**RE: Petition for Waiver or Variance from Rule 61HH-27.001, Florida Administrative Code**

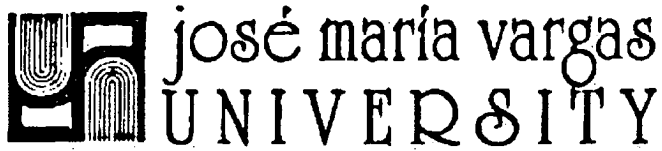
Dear Members of the Florida Board of Accountancy,

I respectfully submit this petition for a waiver or variance from Rule 61HH-27.001, Florida Administrative Code, pursuant to Section 120.542, Florida Statutes. Specifically, this petition requests consideration of degrees issued by institutions accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission for purposes of CPA educational eligibility requirements.

The current rule recognizes several institutional accreditors and specialized accrediting agencies; however, DEAC-accredited institutions are not presently included. This creates a substantial hardship and raises principles of fairness concerns for students attending institutions that are fully accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by both the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

DEAC is a recognized institutional accreditor (as most accrediting agencies listed are) that has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education since 1959. Institutions accredited by DEAC are subject to rigorous standards related to academic quality, student achievement, financial responsibility, governance, and educational effectiveness. Additionally, many DEAC-accredited institutions are approved and regulated by state higher education authorities, including the Florida Commission for Independent Education.

The exclusion of DEAC-accredited institutions from Rule 61HH-27.001 affects otherwise qualified graduates differently from similarly situated students attending institutions accredited by other recognized agencies. Many students complete equivalent coursework, meet state educational standards, and attend institutions operating legally and in good standing within the State of Florida, yet remain categorically excluded solely because of the institutional accreditor listed in the rule.



Granting this waiver or variance would continue to serve the purpose of Section 473.306, Florida Statutes, by ensuring that CPA applicants possess appropriate academic preparation while also recognizing the evolving landscape of institutional accreditation recognized by federal and state authorities.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that the Board consider:

1. Granting a variance or waiver recognizing DEAC-accredited institutions for CPA educational eligibility purposes; or
2. Providing guidance regarding the formal process necessary to pursue amendment or reconsideration of Rule 6111-27.001 to include DEAC-accredited institutions.

This petition is intended as a request for a permanent variance or waiver.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the Board's attention to this matter and look forward to any guidance you may provide.

Respectfully submitted,

Fernando Ortiz
Jose Maria Vargas University
10131 Pines Blvd, Pembroke Pines FL, 33026
Email: ortizf@jmvu.edu
Phone: (954) 322-4460