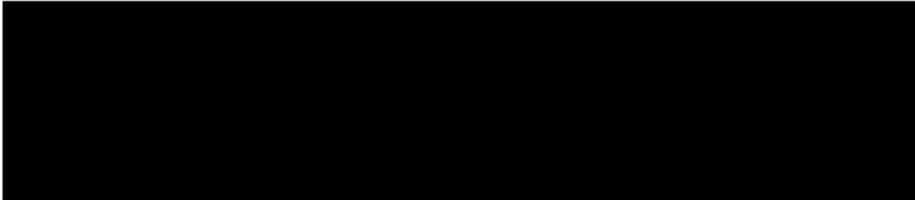


U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
Administrative Appeals Office (AAO)  
20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., MS 2090  
Washington, DC 20529-2090



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services



B5

Date:

**DEC 19 2012**

Office: TEXAS SERVICE CENTER

FILE:



IN RE:

Petitioner:

Beneficiary:



PETITION: Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker as a Member of the Professions Holding an Advanced Degree or an Alien of Exceptional Ability Pursuant to Section 203(b)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(2)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the AAO inappropriately applied the law in reaching its decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen in accordance with the instructions on Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. The specific requirements for filing such a motion can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. **Do not file any motion directly with the AAO.** Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires any motion to be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Ron Rosenberg

Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The preference visa petition was denied by the Director, Texas Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a garment importer (wholesale). It seeks to employ the beneficiary permanently in the United States as a business analyst. As required by statute, the petition is accompanied by an ETA Form 9089, Application for Permanent Employment Certification, approved by the United States Department of Labor (DOL). Upon reviewing the petition, the director determined that the beneficiary did not satisfy the minimum level of education stated on the labor certification or as required by the advanced degree professional classification. The director denied the petition accordingly.

The record shows that the appeal is properly filed, timely and makes a specific allegation of error in law or fact. The procedural history in this case is documented by the record and incorporated into the decision. Further elaboration of the procedural history will be made only as necessary.

As set forth in the director's August 30, 2011 denial, the single issue in this case is whether the beneficiary possessed the minimum level of education stated on the labor certification and as required by the advanced degree professional visa category.

In pertinent part, section 203(b)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(2), provides immigrant classification to members of the professions holding advanced degrees or their equivalent and whose services are sought by an employer in the United States. An advanced degree is a United States academic or professional degree or a foreign equivalent degree above the baccalaureate level. 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(k)(2). The regulation further states: "A United States baccalaureate degree or a foreign equivalent degree followed by at least five years of progressive experience in the specialty shall be considered the equivalent of a master's degree. If a doctoral degree is customarily required by the specialty, the alien must have a United States doctorate or a foreign equivalent degree." *Id.*

The AAO conducts appellate review on a *de novo* basis. See *Soltane v. DOJ*, 381 F.3d 143, 145 (3d Cir. 2004). The AAO considers all pertinent evidence in the record, including new evidence properly submitted upon appeal.<sup>1</sup>

As noted above, the ETA Form 9089 in this matter is certified by the DOL. The DOL's role is limited to determining whether there are sufficient workers who are able, willing, qualified and available and whether the employment of the alien will adversely affect the wages and working conditions of workers in the United States similarly employed. Section 212(a)(5)(A)(i) of the Act; 20 C.F.R. § 656.1(a).

It is significant that none of the above inquiries assigned to the DOL, or the remaining regulations

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<sup>1</sup> The submission of additional evidence on appeal is allowed by the instructions to the Form I-290B, which are incorporated into the regulations at 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(1). The record in the instant case provides no reason to preclude consideration of any of the documents newly submitted on appeal. See *Matter of Soriano*, 19 I&N Dec. 764 (BIA 1988).

implementing these duties under 20 C.F.R. § 656, involve a determination as to whether or not the alien is qualified for a specific immigrant classification or even the job offered. This fact has not gone unnoticed by federal circuit courts. See *Tongatapu Woodcraft Hawaii, Ltd. v. Feldman*, 736 F. 2d 1305, 1309 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1984); *Madany v. Smith*, 696 F.2d 1008, 1012-1013 (D.C. Cir. 1983).

A United States baccalaureate degree is generally found to require four years of education. *Matter of Shah*, 17 I&N Dec. 244 (Reg'l. Comm'r. 1977). This decision involved a petition filed under 8 U.S.C. §1153(a)(3) as amended in 1976. At that time, this section provided:

Visas shall next be made available . . .to qualified immigrants who are members of the professions . . . .

The Act added section 203(b)(2)(A) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. §1153(b)(2)(A), which provides:

Visas shall be made available . . . to qualified immigrants who are members of the professions holding advanced degrees or their equivalent . . . .

Significantly, the statutory language used prior to *Matter of Shah*, 17 I&N Dec. at 244, is identical to the statutory language used subsequent to that decision but for the requirement that the immigrant hold an advanced degree or its equivalent. The Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of Conference, published as part of the House of Representatives Conference Report on the Act, provides that “[in] considering equivalency in category 2 advanced degrees, it is anticipated that the alien must have a bachelor’s degree with at least five years progressive experience in the professions.” H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 955, 101<sup>st</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess. 1990, 1990 U.S.C.C.A.N. 6784, 1990 WL 201613 at \*6786 (Oct. 26, 1990).

At the time of enactment of section 203(b)(2) of the Act in 1990, it had been almost thirteen years since *Matter of Shah* was issued. Congress is presumed to have intended a four-year degree when it stated that an alien “must have a bachelor’s degree” when considering equivalency for second preference immigrant visas. We must assume that Congress was aware of the agency’s previous treatment of a “bachelor’s degree” under the Act when the new classification was enacted and did not intend to alter the agency’s interpretation of that term. See *Lorillard v. Pons*, 434 U.S. 575, 580-81 (1978) (Congress is presumed to be aware of administrative and judicial interpretations where it adopts a new law incorporating sections of a prior law). See also 56 Fed. Reg. 60897, 60900 (Nov. 29, 1991) (an alien must have at least a bachelor’s degree).

In 1991, when the final rule for 8 C.F.R. § 204.5 was published in the Federal Register, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (the Service), responded to criticism that the regulation required an alien to have a bachelor’s degree as a minimum and that the regulation did not allow for the substitution of experience for education. After reviewing section 121 of the Immigration Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-649 (1990), and the Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of Conference, the Service specifically noted that both the Act and the legislative history indicate that an alien must have at least a bachelor’s degree:

The Act states that, in order to qualify under the second classification, alien members of the professions must hold “advanced degrees or their equivalent.” As the legislative history . . . indicates, the equivalent of an advanced degree is “a bachelor’s degree with at least five years progressive experience in the professions.” Because neither the Act nor its legislative history indicates that bachelor’s or advanced degrees must be United States degrees, the Service will recognize foreign equivalent degrees. But both the Act and its legislative history make clear that, in order to qualify as a professional under the third classification or to have experience equating to an advanced degree under the second, *an alien must have at least a bachelor’s degree.*

56 Fed. Reg. 60897, 60900 (Nov. 29, 1991) (emphasis added).

There is no provision in the statute or the regulations that would allow a beneficiary to qualify under section 203(b)(2) of the Act as a member of the professions holding an advanced degree with anything less than a full baccalaureate degree (plus the requisite five years of progressive experience in the specialty). More specifically, a three-year bachelor’s degree will not be considered to be the “foreign equivalent degree” to a United States baccalaureate degree. *Matter of Shah*, 17 I&N Dec. at 245. Where the analysis of the beneficiary’s credentials relies on work experience alone or a combination of multiple lesser degrees, the result is the “equivalent” of a bachelor’s degree rather than a “foreign equivalent degree.”<sup>2</sup> In order to have experience and education equating to an advanced degree under section 203(b)(2) of the Act, the beneficiary must have a single degree that is the “foreign equivalent degree” to a United States baccalaureate degree (plus the requisite five years of progressive experience in the specialty). 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(k)(2).

For this classification, advanced degree professional, the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(k)(3)(i)(B) requires the submission of an “official academic record showing that the alien has a United States baccalaureate degree or a foreign equivalent degree” (plus evidence of five years of progressive experience in the specialty). For classification as a member of the professions, the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(l)(3)(ii)(C) requires the submission of “an official college or university record showing the date the baccalaureate degree was awarded and the area of concentration of study.” We cannot conclude that the evidence required to demonstrate that an alien is an advanced degree professional is any less than the evidence required to show that the alien is a professional. To do so would undermine the congressionally mandated classification scheme by allowing a lesser evidentiary standard for the more restrictive visa classification. Moreover, the commentary accompanying the proposed advanced degree professional regulation specifically states that a “baccalaureate means a bachelor’s degree received *from a college or university*, or an equivalent degree.” (Emphasis added.) 56 Fed. Reg. 30703, 30306 (July 5, 1991). Compare 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(k)(3)(ii)(A) (relating to aliens of exceptional ability requiring the submission of “an official

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<sup>2</sup> Compare 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(D)(5) (defining for purposes of a nonimmigrant visa classification, the “equivalence to completion of a college degree” as including, in certain cases, a specific combination of education and experience). The regulations pertaining to the immigrant classification sought in this matter do not contain similar language.

academic record showing that the alien has a degree, *diploma, certificate or similar award* from a college, university, *school or other institution of learning* relating to the area of exceptional ability”).

The required education, training, experience, and special requirements for the offered position are set forth at Part H of the ETA Form 9089. Here, Part H shows that the position requires a bachelor’s degree, or foreign educational equivalent, in business administration or CIS and 60 months of experience in the job offered or in the alternate occupations of manager of administration or garment field experience. Part H-8 asks the employer if there is an alternate combination of education and experience that is acceptable. The petitioner answered this question “no.” Therefore, the minimum education required by the labor certification is a bachelor’s degree or foreign educational equivalent.

The beneficiary set forth his credentials on the labor certification and signed his name, under a declaration that the contents of the form are true and correct under the penalty of perjury. On the section of the labor certification eliciting information of the beneficiary’s education, and elsewhere in the record, he states that he has earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Delhi, in India, in 1997, and a “professional diploma” in network-centered computing from the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) in India in 2000.

The record contains the following educational evaluations of the beneficiary’s credentials:

- An evaluation from IndoUS Technology & Educational Services, Inc. (ITES). The evaluation is dated June 6, 2008. The evaluation is signed by [REDACTED]. The evaluation describes the beneficiary’s three-year degree in Commerce from the University of Delhi, combined with his Professional Diploma from the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT), as being the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor’s degree in computer information systems. The Bachelor of Commerce alone was evaluated to be equivalent to 90 credits toward a U.S. bachelor’s degree.
- An evaluation from Career Consulting International (CCI). The evaluation is dated May 8, 2011. The evaluation is signed by [REDACTED]. The evaluation describes the beneficiary’s Bachelor of Commerce degree as being the equivalent of a U.S. Bachelor of Business Administration degree (120 credits).
- An evaluation from European-American University. The evaluation is dated May 4, 2011. The evaluation is signed by [REDACTED]. The evaluation describes the beneficiary’s Bachelor of Commerce degree as being the equivalent of a U.S. Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

In response to the AAO’s Request for Evidence (RFE), the petitioner submitted the following educational evaluation of the beneficiary’s credentials:

- An evaluation from Education Evaluation and Immigration Service, Inc. (EEIS). The evaluation is dated November 6, 2012. The evaluation is signed by [REDACTED].

██████████ The evaluation describes the beneficiary's Bachelor of Commerce degree as being the equivalent of a U.S. Bachelor of Business Administration degree (126 credits).

USCIS may, in its discretion, use as advisory opinions statements submitted as expert testimony. *See Matter of Caron International*, 19 I&N Dec. 791, 795 (Commr. 1988). However, USCIS is ultimately responsible for making the final determination regarding an alien's eligibility for the benefit sought. *Id.* The submission of letters from experts supporting the petition is not presumptive evidence of eligibility. USCIS may evaluate the content of the letters as to whether they support the alien's eligibility. *See id.* USCIS may give less weight to an opinion that is not corroborated, in accord with other information or is in any way questionable. *Id.* at 795. *See also Matter of Soffici*, 22 I&N Dec. 158, 165 (Commr. 1998) (citing *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Commr. 1972)); *Matter of D-R-*, 25 I&N Dec. 445 (BIA 2011)(expert witness testimony may be given different weight depending on the extent of the expert's qualifications or the relevance, reliability, and probative value of the testimony).

The evaluations are not persuasive in establishing that the beneficiary's education from India is equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree. The EEIS, ITES, and ██████████ evaluations attempt to compare the beneficiary's Bachelor of Commerce program to a U.S. bachelor's degree program but the rationale behind these credit assignments is not substantiated and significantly contradict each other. EEIS claims the beneficiary earned the equivalent of 126 academic credits while ITES claims the Bachelor of Commerce program is equivalent to 90 credits. The evaluation prepared by ITES combines the beneficiary's Bachelor of Commerce degree and diploma from NIIT to equate to a U.S. bachelor's degree in computer information systems. The evaluations from ██████████ and European-American University equate the beneficiary's Bachelor of Commerce alone to a U.S. Bachelor of Business Administration degree. Not only do these evaluations use different degrees, but they reach different conclusions as to the beneficiary's degree equivalency. *See Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591 (BIA 1988) (stating that doubt cast on any aspect of the petitioner's proof may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the visa petition). Moreover, none of the evaluations is peer-reviewed or relies on peer-reviewed materials in reaching their unsubstantiated conclusions.

██████████ credibility is seriously diminished as he completely distorts an article by ██████████ and ██████████. Specifically, ██████████ asserts that this article concludes that because the United States is willing to consider three-year degrees from Israel and the European Union, "Indian bachelor degree-holders should be provided the same opportunity to pursue graduate education in the U.S." While this is the conclusion of the article, the specific means by which Indian bachelor degree holders might pursue graduate education in the United States provided in the discussion portion of the article in no way suggests that Indian three-year degrees are, in general, comparable to a U.S. baccalaureate. Specifically, the article proposes accepting a first class honors three-year degree following a secondary degree from a CBSE or CISCE program or a three-year degree plus a post graduate diploma from an institution that is accredited or recognized by the NAAC and/or AICTE. The record contains no evidence that the beneficiary in this matter received his secondary degree from a CBSE or CISCE program. Thus, ██████████ reliance on this article is disingenuous.

Ultimately, the record contains no evidence that the Carnegie Unit is a useful way to evaluate Indian degrees. The Carnegie Unit was adopted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in the early 1900s as a measure of the amount of classroom time that a high school student studied a subject.<sup>3</sup> For example, 120 hours of classroom time was determined to be equal to one "unit" of high school credit, and 14 "units" were deemed to constitute the minimum amount of classroom time equivalent to four years of high school.<sup>4</sup> This unit system was adopted at a time when high schools lacked uniformity in the courses they taught and the number of hours students spent in class. The Carnegie Unit does not apply to higher education.<sup>5</sup>

The record fails to provide peer-reviewed material confirming that assigning credits by lecture hour is applicable to the Indian tertiary education system. For example, if the ratio of classroom and outside study in the Indian system is different than the U.S. system, which presumes two hours of individual study time for each classroom hour, applying the U.S. credit system to Indian classroom hours would be meaningless. [REDACTED], The University of Texas at Austin, "Assigning Undergraduate Transfer Credit: It's Only an Arithmetical Exercise" at 12, available at [http://handouts.aacrao.org/am07/finished/T0415p\\_R\\_Watkins.pdf](http://handouts.aacrao.org/am07/finished/T0415p_R_Watkins.pdf) (accessed November 21, 2012) provides that the Indian system is not based on credits, but is exam based. *Id.* at 11. Thus, transfer credits from India are derived from the number of exams. *Id.* at 12. Specifically, this publication states that, in India, six exams at year's end multiplied by five equals 30 hours. *Id.*

[REDACTED] also relies on an article he coauthored with [REDACTED]. The record contains no evidence that this article was published in a peer-reviewed publication or anywhere other than the Internet. The article includes British colleges that accept three-year degrees for admission to graduate school but concedes that "a number of other universities" would not accept three-year degrees for admission to graduate school. Similarly, the article lists some U.S. universities that accept three-year degrees for admission to graduate school but acknowledges that others do not. In fact, the article concedes:

None of the members of N.A.C.E.S. who were approached were willing to grant equivalency to a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States, although we heard anecdotally that one, W.E.S. had been interested in doing so.

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<sup>3</sup> The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was founded in 1905 as an independent policy and research center whose motivation is "improving teaching and learning." See <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/about-us/about-carnegie> (accessed November 21, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/faqs> (accessed November 20, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.suny.edu/facultysenate/TheCarnegieUnit.pdf> (accessed November 20, 2012).

In this process, we encountered a number of the objections to equivalency that have already been discussed.

██████████ of Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc., commented thus,

“Contrary to your statement, a degree from a three-year “Bologna Process” bachelor’s degree program in Europe will NOT be accepted as a degree by the majority of universities in the United States. Similarly, the majority do not accept a bachelor’s degree from a three-year program in India or any other country except England. England is a unique situation because of the specialized nature of Form VI.”

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International Education Consultants of Delaware, Inc., raise similar objections to those raised by ECE.

“The Indian educational system, along with that of Canada and some other countries, generally adopted the UK-pattern 3-year degree. But the UK retained the important preliminary A level examinations. These examinations are used for advanced standing credit in the UK; we follow their lead, and use those examinations to constitute the an [sic] additional year of undergraduate study. The combination of these two entities is equivalent to a 4-year US Bachelor’s degree.

The Indian educational system dropped that advanced standing year. You enter a 3-year Indian degree program directly from Year 12 of your education. In the US, there are no degree programs entered from a stage lower than Year 12, and there are no 3-year degree programs. Without the additional advanced standing year, there’s no equivalency.

<http://www.thedegreepeople.com/3-year-degree.html> (accessed November 21, 2012).

These materials do not examine whether those few U.S. institutions that may accept a three-year degree for graduate admission do so on the condition that the holder of a three-year degree complete extra credits.

Finally, ██████████ relies on a UNESCO document. The relevant language relates to “recognition” of qualifications awarded in higher education. Paragraph 1(e) defines recognition as follows:

‘Recognition’ of a foreign qualification in higher education means its acceptance by the competent authorities of the State concerned (whether they be governmental or nongovernmental) as entitling its holder to be considered under the same conditions as those holding a comparable qualification awarded in that State and deemed

comparable, for the purposes of access to or further pursuit of higher education studies, participation in research, the practice of a profession, if this does not require the passing of examinations or further special preparation, or all the foregoing, according to the scope of the recognition.

The UNESCO recommendation relates to admission to graduate school and training programs and eligibility to practice in a profession. Nowhere does it suggest that a three-year degree must be deemed equivalent to a four-year degree for purposes of qualifying for inclusion in a class of individuals defined by statute and regulation as eligible for immigration benefits. More significantly, the recommendation does not define “comparable qualification.” At the heart of this matter is whether the beneficiary’s degree is, in fact, the foreign equivalent of a U.S. baccalaureate. The UNESCO recommendation does not address this issue.

In fact, UNESCO’s publication, “The Handbook on Diplomas, Degrees and Other Certificates in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific” 82 (2d ed. 2004) (accessed on November 21, 2012 at [http://unesdoc.unesco.org/Ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?catno=138853&set=4A21BC53\\_1\\_64&database=new1&gp=0&mode=e&ll=5](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/Ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?catno=138853&set=4A21BC53_1_64&database=new1&gp=0&mode=e&ll=5)), provides:

Most of the universities and the institutions recognized by the UGC or by other authorized public agencies in India, are members of the Association of Commonwealth Universities. Besides, India is party to a few UNESCO conventions and there also exists a few bilateral agreements, protocols and conventions between India and a few countries on the recognition of degrees and diplomas awarded by the Indian universities. But many foreign universities adopt their own approach in finding out the equivalence of Indian degrees and diplomas and their recognition, just as Indian universities do in the case of foreign degrees and diplomas. The Association of Indian Universities plays an important role in this. *There are no agreements that necessarily bind India and other governments/universities to recognize, en masse, all the degrees/diplomas of all the universities either on a mutual basis or on a multilateral basis.* Of late, many foreign universities and institutions are entering into the higher education arena in the country. Methods of recognition of such institutions and the courses offered by them are under serious consideration of the government of India. UGC, AICTE and AIU are developing criteria and mechanisms regarding the same.

*Id.* at 84 (emphasis added).

Accordingly, in this matter, the AAO will prefer the peer-reviewed information provided by EDGE on the equivalency of the beneficiary’s foreign education to a U.S. master’s degree.

The AAO has reviewed the Electronic Database for Global Education (EDGE) created by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). According to its website, [www.aacrao.org](http://www.aacrao.org), AACRAO is “a nonprofit, voluntary, professional association of more than 11,000 higher education admissions and registration professionals who represent approximately

2,600 institutions and agencies in the United States and in over 40 countries.” See <http://www.aacrao.org/About-AACRAO.aspx> (accessed November 20, 2012 and incorporated into the record of proceeding). Its mission “is to provide professional development, guidelines and voluntary standards to be used by higher education officials regarding the best practices in records management, admissions, enrollment management, administrative information technology and student services.” *Id.* In *Confluence Intern., Inc. v. Holder*, 2009 WL 825793 (D. Minn. March 27, 2009), a federal district court determined that the AAO provided a rational explanation for its reliance on information provided by AACRAO to support its decision.

According to the login page, EDGE is “a web-based resource for the evaluation of foreign educational credentials” that is continually updated and revised by staff and members of AACRAO. [REDACTED] Director of International Education Services, “AACRAO EDGE Login,” <http://aacraoedge.aacrao.org/index.php> (accessed November 20, 2012 and incorporated into the record of proceeding). In *Tisco Group, Inc. v. Napolitano*, 2010 WL 3464314 (E.D.Mich. August 30, 2010), a federal district court found that USCIS had properly weighed the evaluations submitted and the information obtained from EDGE to conclude that the alien’s three-year foreign “baccalaureate” and foreign “Master’s” degree were comparable to a U.S. bachelor’s degree. In *Sunshine Rehab Services, Inc.*, 2010 WL 3325442 (E.D.Mich. August 20, 2010), a federal district court upheld a USCIS conclusion that the alien’s three-year bachelor’s degree was not a foreign equivalent degree to a U.S. bachelor’s degree. Specifically, the court concluded that USCIS was entitled to prefer the information in EDGE and did not abuse its discretion in reaching its conclusion. The court also noted that the labor certification itself required a degree and did not allow for the combination of education and experience. The reasoning in these decisions is persuasive.

In the section related to the Indian educational system, EDGE provides that a three-year Bachelor of Commerce degree “represents attainment of a level of education comparable to two to three years of university study in the United States. Credit may be awarded on a course-by-course basis.”

The ITES evaluation combines the beneficiary’s three-year degree in Commerce with his Professional Diploma from the NIIT. EDGE states that a postgraduate diploma following a three-year bachelor’s degree represents attainment of a level of education comparable to a bachelor’s degree in the United States. However, the “Advice to Author Notes” section states:

Postgraduate Diplomas should be issued by an accredited university or institution approved by the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). Some students complete PGDs over two years on a part-time basis. When examining the Postgraduate Diploma, note the entrance requirement and be careful not to confuse the PGD awarded after the Higher Secondary Certificate with the PGD awarded after the three-year bachelor’s degree.

The record contains no evidence that the PGD program at the NIIT was an AICTE-approved post-bachelor level program, that the entrance requirements were a three-year bachelor’s degree, or that this is a college or university.

Based on the juried opinion of EDGE, the AAO has concluded that the beneficiary's education is comparable to two to three years of university study in the United States. However, since the ETA Form 9089 required a bachelor's degree as the minimum level of education, the petitioner has failed to establish that the beneficiary possessed all the education, training, and experience specified on the labor certification as of the priority date. 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(1), (12). See *Matter of Wing's Tea House*, 16 I&N Dec. at 159; see also *Matter of Katigbak*, 14 I. & N. Dec. 45, 49 (Reg. Comm. 1971). Therefore, the beneficiary does not meet the job requirements on the labor certification and may not be classified as an advanced degree professional.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not met that burden.

**ORDER:** The appeal is dismissed.