

**Massachusetts Board of Higher Education  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

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March 5, 2019  
10:00 a.m.

One Ashburton Place, 21st Floor  
Conference Room 3  
Boston, Massachusetts

**Meeting Minutes**

Committee Members Present: Committee Chair Nancy Hoffman; Secretary of Education James Peyser; Commissioner Carlos Santiago (non-voting member); and Community College Segmental Student Advisor Stephanie Teixeira (non-voting member).

Committee Members Absent: Board Chair Chris Gabrieli; Vice Chair, Sheila Harrity; SPC Committee Chair Fernando Reimers; and Student Board Member Kush Patel.

Department Staff Present: Cynthia Brown; Ignacio Chaparro; Winifred Hagan; Patricia Marshall; Elena Quiroz-Livanis; Constantia Papanikolaou; Christine Williams; and Ashley Wisneski.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Nancy Hoffman called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

**II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

On a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes from the January 15, 2019 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee were unanimously approved.

**III. REMARKS**

No remarks were offered from the Chair.

Commissioner Santiago provided remarks. He recounted that in 2013, shortly after his arrival to the Department, he identified two challenges the DHE needed to address to achieve the goals of the Vision Project: 1) the creation of a seamless system of transfer; and, 2) remediation reduction. He immediately began tackling both challenges. Currently, the DHE can say it successfully created a seamless system of transfer. The development of this system resulted in the creation of the Commonwealth Commitment, reverse transfer, student pathways to two- and four-year institutions, the General Education Foundation, the STEM General Education Foundation, and, now, work on learning outcomes. Today the Committee shifts its focus from a seamless system of transfer to the second challenge – remediation reduction.

Commissioner Santiago stated that the Department's efforts to reduce remediation reduction has been an ongoing and inclusive process that has engaged faculty in a variety of disciplines (particularly mathematics and English). He added that the 2019 Common Assessment Policy represents the first major change to the Commonwealth's assessment policy since the 1998 Common Assessment policy was adopted over 20 years ago. He stated that successful policy in this area will result in significant benefits for our students, including increased retention and graduation rates and will serve as a foundation for early college development. The Commissioner thanked staff members for their diligent work on these projects, particularly Chief of Staff Elena Quiroz-Livanis and Deputy Commissioner Patricia Marshall, and also thanked the Board for advocating for these policies and for being supportive throughout the process.

The Commissioner also took time to express his gratitude to our public campuses for stepping up to help students after the abrupt closure of Mount Ida College. Cape Cod Community College worked with Bridgewater State in developing their funeral service program and Framingham State assisted Mount Ida College students who were enrolled in the commercial photography program. He also thanked MCLA for stepping up and intending to accept transfer students from Southern Vermont College, which recently announced that it will be closing.

At the conclusion of Commissioner Santiago's comments, Deputy Commissioner Marshall recognized graduate students from Dr. Francesca Purcell's State and Federal Policy in Higher Education class at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Committee Chair Nancy Hoffman thanked Commissioner Santiago and Deputy Commissioner Marshall for their comments. She also provided an overview of the Committee's agenda items, which included six new programs applications, three degree revocations, and the 2019 Common Assessment Policy.

#### **IV. MOTIONS**

##### **A. AAC 19-13 Fitchburg State University Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies**

Committee Chair Hoffman announced that, due to traffic, all members of Cape Cod Community College's delegation have been delayed in their arrival, but that they were on their way. She stated that she would take the motions out of order, and would allow for AAC 19-12 to be considered last on the agenda. Committee Chair Hoffman proceeded to direct the Board's attention to the next motion on the agenda, AAC 19-13.

Associate Commissioner, Winifred M. Hagan, presented AAC 19-13. The proposed Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies has been designed to align with the mission of Fitchburg State University by supporting its commitment to excellence in teaching and learning and blending liberal arts and sciences with professional programs. The program is expected to develop student examination of broad educational topics from diverse perspectives. Fitchburg anticipates offering an education degree alternative to teaching in PK-12 public school systems.

The program is intended to support the development of professionals and extend Fitchburg's community outreach and partnership with local agencies, centers, and programs. Extensive practice and employment opportunities are planned for students through field-based experiences and a focused internship. The proposed Educational Studies program is expected

to extend and develop direct links to the local workforce through field-based and internship experiences, civic learning, career development, further defining Fitchburg State--an active member of the Campus Compact for Southern New England--as a service-learning university.

This effort is supported by Fitchburg's Crocker Center for Civic Engagement, and its existing relationship to the Campus Compact's commitment to build institutional capacity toward achieving its civic mission. It is intended that students will learn how to support and enhance the education of children and adults in a variety of settings. The proposed program is intended to provide different and multiple paths to employment by working with children and adults in education-related and instruction-based areas such as early childhood education, out-of-school time, as well as adolescent and adult learning environments, and in public or private educational institutions. The interdisciplinary design of the program is expected to provide students with flexibility and opportunity to create a particular pathway, tailored to their personal goals and objectives in such areas as adult education, child development, higher education, social/educational policy, and business and community organizations.

The external review included an onsite visit and found the proposal to be strong. The team noted that the foundational course work in varying disciplines will give students a substantive and coherent understanding of the broad field of education. They also found the program to be consistent with the institutional mission and indicated that the program of studies is enough for students to receive professional training, make connections between content and practice, and develop advanced skills in a specific area. The reviewers stated that the program meets an important need to address the impact of technology and globalization on education, which calls for a broad and interdisciplinary preparation for students to be competitive in the field.

Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by Fitchburg State University and the external reviewers. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies program.

Secretary Peyser inquired regarding the type of entry-level positions available to graduates of the program. Dr. Alberto J.F. Cardelle, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Fitchburg State University, responded that the entry-level opportunities include positions in business, the public sector, higher education, daycares, and nonprofit organizations.

Secretary Peyser expressed a concern that students may not be prepared for these pathways, particularly if they do not receive certification/licensure. Dr. Cardelle responded that the program does not end up resulting in licensure due to the multiple paths and opportunities offered to students. He stated that not all paths require licensure – for example, students have opportunities through internships and experiences to become ABA technicians or behavioral consultants by connecting with stakeholders in the field. They would ultimately only need to take a registered technician test in this example to become ABA technicians.

Committee Chair Hoffman concurred with Secretary Peyser, noting that while internship experiences and contact with outside stakeholders looks strong, there is no course to direct students towards pathways in senior services, or adult education. She added that it would be great to guide students towards project management courses, as that is a skill always in demand, especially if graduates end up working in nonprofit organizations. Dr. Cardelle responded that field experiences and other courses on campus could focus on adult education or lifespan development, and that there are partnership opportunities for students to have field-based experiences in these areas. Chair Hoffman responded that while these opportunities exist, the curriculum aspect is missing for adult education.

Secretary Peyser stated that the largest concern is that students will not be prepared to work in the field, just simply exposed to it through their coursework. He added that there is an open-ended menu of options of courses that you can take beyond the core, which may or may not prepare a student for work in the field. Students should have a high level of counseling and coaching in order to prepare them for employment in the field and to set expectations so that students are aware of their options. He also noted that many of the courses focus on education, pedagogy and child development.

Secretary Peyser noted that it would be helpful to clarify the top ten jobs or positions students would be qualified for post-graduation. Too many options may make the program too broad and not serve students well, especially without intense coaching or guidance.

Committee Chair Hoffman made note of time and business on the agenda and asked the committee whether they wanted to table the motion until the next committee meeting, propose adjustments to the language of the motion, or ask the institution to submit clarifying information in time for the board meeting next week. She noted her preference would be to seek more clarity on pathways for students. Secretary Peyser concurred with Committee Chair Hoffman.

There being no further discussion, the Committee Chair noted that the motion would be separated from the consent agenda and voted on separately. Fitchburg would also need to submit extra documentation prior to the next Board of Higher Education meeting on March 12, 2019. The Committee Chair asked of a motion on suggested language; and on a motion duly made and seconded, the following motion passed unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-13 APPLICATION FROM FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATIONAL STUDIES**

**VOTED:** That AAC Motion 19-13 move forward for consideration by the full Board of Higher Education at its next regularly scheduled meeting, subject to receiving the following additional information: Sample pathways that demonstrate how the curriculum can lead to internship or employment opportunities for students in the field of Educational Studies.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, §9(b).

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success.

**B. AAC 19-14 Fitchburg State University Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health**

Associate Commissioner, Winifred M. Hagan, presented the program. The proposed Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health is consistent with the mission of focusing on challenges in environmental public health through course work in environmental policy, urban history, sociology, and geography, and fostering civic and global responsibility. It is also consistent with Fitchburg State's strategic goal of increasing multi- and cross-disciplinary opportunities for students. Fitchburg intends that the proposed program will combine general education and specialized coursework with the unique focus of applying geographic technologies to public health concerns. A rigorous curriculum is planned across health, natural,

environmental and social sciences to effectively prepare graduates to enter the workforce or to pursue graduate studies.

Reviewers found that the program fit with the mission of Fitchburg State in providing affordable, accessible education and that it is designed to respond to the community's needs around environmental safety and population health. Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by Fitchburg State University and the external reviewers. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health program.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-14 APPLICATION FROM FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH**

**VOTED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of **Fitchburg State University** to award the **Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health**.

Upon graduating the first class for these programs, Fitchburg State University shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, §9(b).

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success.

**C. AAC 19-15 Holyoke Community College Associate in Applied Science in Culinary Arts**

Associate Commissioner, Winifred M. Hagan, presented the program. The proposed Associate's in Applied Science in Culinary Arts supports Holyoke Community College's (HCC) strategy to align programs with workforce demands, as well as with student needs for transfer and employment opportunities. HCC plans to directly align the proposed program to the accommodations and food services industry sector and develop it with active collaboration from industry groups. Holyoke expects that the degree will support a growing need for food service professionals in the region because of the MGM casino opening in Springfield.

The program intends to coincide with the recently established off-site, Holyoke- MGM Culinary Arts Institute located within the Innovation District of Holyoke. The institute will house all of Holyoke's culinary programming, as the establishment and location of the Institute supports key strategies outlined in the 2014 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission's *Plan for Progress*. The proposed program intends to provide a stackable pathway to students in the existing culinary certificate program who wish to further their education and earn a degree. Holyoke further intends that students will demonstrate appropriate skills in a wide range of competencies in the area of culinary arts, including principles of food preparation, knowledge of laws and regulations, effective commercial food production and much more.

Holyoke's existing Culinary Arts certificate is accredited through December 2020 and Holyoke intends to pursue accreditation for the proposed program. It is also intended that graduates will find employment in a wide range of positions throughout the hospitality and food service industry. Holyoke further intends that general education requirements inherent in the proposed program, will position graduates for management-level advancement.

External reviewers found that the proposed program to be part of significant urban renewal in the region and consistent with the academic mission of Holyoke. They thought it would contribute substantially to labor and workforce development by creating career pathways, skills, and credentials that will allow for direct entry into the workforce with credentials leading to gainful and rewarding employment. Reviewers highlighted that the culinary program design to complement certificate offerings with a more robust program of study, which provides a pathway to a full career in foodservice rather than simply an entry-level position.

Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by Holyoke Community College and the external reviewers. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed Associate in Applied Science in Culinary Arts program.

Secretary Peyser reinforced that because of the location and MGM expansion, investments had been made and that this program is going to provide a strategic and economic benefit, and job opportunity for students.

Committee Chair Hoffman asked if a student wanted to obtain a bachelor's degree, what the process would look like and which institutions would they be able to attend. Dean Ricker Choleva explained that one of the most common routes is students pursuing a hospitality bachelor's degree, which offers options in a management position. If the student is more focused on the culinary aspect, they are well placed to transfer to major culinary colleges which offer four-year bachelor's degrees. One of those institutions is Johnson and Wales, which accepts all of the classes in the HCC Program. They have also been involved with the development of the proposal.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-15 APPLICATION FROM HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO AWARD THE ASSOCIATE IN APPLIED SCIENCE IN CULINARY ARTS**

**VOTED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of **Holyoke Community College** to award the **Associate in Applied Science in Culinary Arts**.

Upon graduating the first class for these programs, Holyoke Community College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, §9(b).

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success.

**D. AAC 19-16 Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
Bachelor of Arts in Communications**

Associate Commissioner, Winifred M. Hagan, presented the program. The Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts –MCLA- proposes to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, consistent with its mission and position as the only 4-year public college in Berkshire County. The program prepares its graduates to be practical problem solvers and engaged, resilient global citizens. The proposed plans complement existing programs that integrate liberal arts with professional studies. MCLA intends that the proposed program will prepare students for careers in various communications fields such as journalism, broadcast media, film, public relations and corporate communications, publishing or film and video editing, digital media, and professional writing, as well as graduate study in media and cultural studies and journalism. It is intended that students will gain knowledge of media production practices with a range of digital media, and that they will develop a conceptual and theoretical basis of understanding the role digital media, media and communications play in modern life.

The external review team found the proposed program to be consistent with the academic mission of the campus, with a demonstrated commitment to resources and compelling evidence of demand for this degree. The team found an effective relationship to exist between curricular content and effective practice in the field of media production.

Secretary Peyser asked for clarification regarding a student's experiences in internships or other real-world exposure in the field. He added that given the location of the institution, how likely are these opportunities to happen, and if they do – how robust would they be? Dr. Shawn McIntosh, Assistant Professor of English/Communications at MCLA responded that half of the staff at Berkshire Eagle are MCLA graduates and that there is a lot of availability at mostly smaller media outlets – but it is a career trajectory. He also added that there are positions in nonprofits that students are pursuing, even though it may not be in a traditional media capacity.

Committee Chair Hoffman asked whether students can do an internship online. Dr. McIntosh responded that there are some virtual internships.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-16 APPLICATION FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATIONS**

**VOTED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of the **Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts** to award the **Bachelor of Arts in Communications**.

Upon graduating the first class for these programs, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, §9(b).

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success.

**E. AAC 19-17 University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Bachelor of Science in Informatics**

Associate Commissioner, Winifred M. Hagan, presented the program. The University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMA) intends that the proposed Bachelor of Science in Informatics will create a pathway from the undergraduate through graduate level in information science and social computing. The proposed program aligns with this goal as well as another UMA strategic initiative - to create a School of Information – iSchool – within the College of Information and Computer Sciences. The proposed program intends to be a first step towards iSchool.

In addition, UMass intends a focus on data science, computing and analytics, and computational social science, very closely tied to the Center for Data Science within the College of Information and Computer Sciences. Equity and inclusion are expected to be a significant focus of the program. UMass states that the proposed informatics program, with its data science concentration, addresses the highest educational priority of the Center for Data Science, which is to extend data science education to the broadest range of undergraduates through on-line delivery as well as brick-and-mortar offerings from both of its campuses. UMass expects that this program will be available on the Amherst campus and that portions of it will be offered on the Newton campus to accommodate UMass Amherst student internships in the Newton area. UMass noted that they are moving rapidly toward a multi-modal future in which all workforce-related degree programs will be offered in face-to-face, hybrid, and fully online formats.

UMA reports that informatics attracts a diversity of students with a range of perspectives and variety of skills. UMass reports that growing industry sectors, such as education, healthcare, energy, finance, insurance, tourism and travel, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices are increasingly dependent on informatics. The proposed program is expected to educate students interested in applying computing principles across these sectors, thereby filling an unserved need. UMass finds that the need to process “big data” exists in nearly every industry segment, including government, health care, insurance, biotech, and pharmaceutical. UMA intends that graduates of the proposed program will be able to serve as data analyst, business analyst, or data scientist in these industry segments.

Reviewers found the Informatics program to be representative of a growing national trend of introducing new interdisciplinary degree programs that combine foundational knowledge in computing with knowledge in a specific discipline of study. They noted that knowledge of data science is a critical skill necessary for making sense of large data sets in many areas of human endeavor. Reviewers indicated that graduates of the proposed program will be sought after by industry and government. The team noted the proposal’s fit with the priority to expand data science education to the broadest possible range of undergraduates, emphasizing that the program is well conceived and represents an important new direction for the College of Information and Computer Sciences.

Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Informatics program. Committee Chair Hoffman noted that this program and the communications program from MCLA represent crosscutting skills that are useful in a wide range of areas.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-17 APPLICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATICS**

**VOTED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of the **University of Massachusetts Amherst** to award the **Bachelor of Science in Informatics**

Upon graduating the first class for these programs, the University of Massachusetts Amherst shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, §9(b).

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success.

**F. AAC 19-12 Cape Cod Community College Associate in Science in Funeral Service**

Associate Commissioner, Winifred M. Hagan, presented the program. In July 2018, Cape Cod Community College was granted authority to teach-out the Associate in Science in Funeral Service degree program at Mount Ida College. In addition, the American Board of Funeral Service Education approved Cape Cod to teach-out students in the program.

Cape Cod reports that the proposed program aligns with its mission, answers a workforce need, and continues a tradition of service to community.

In teaching-out the Mount Ida Funeral Service program, Cape Cod invested academic and financial resources, demonstrating a commitment to provide individuals interested in a funeral service career with a rigorous course of study that aligns with accreditation standards for the field. It is expected that the proposed program will prepare students for positions in the funeral service industry. Graduates will be eligible to sit for the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Board and for licensure as a Funeral Director and Embalmer.

External reviewers agreed the proposed program is consistent with the Cape Cod mission, and found it to be academically rigorous, and providing valuable clinical experience and thorough preparation for board exams. They noted that the coursework provides a coherent pathway and is sufficiently well-rounded. The reviewers found the program to be well-aligned with accreditation requirements, creating a positive influence toward student pass-rates on the national board exam. The team suggested that Cape Cod increase students' active participation in funeral director duties in addition to observation. Cape Cod responded in appreciation of the thorough review of the program and submitted an adjusted curriculum to increase and emphasize more active participation by students.

Staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation submitted by Cape Cod Community College and the external reviewers. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed Associate in Science in Funeral Service program.

Secretary Peyser recognized and expressed appreciation for Cape Cod's ability to step up and provide a program to students in need from Mount Ida, providing a positive program that benefits the campus, students, and the region.

Dr. John Cox, President of Cape Cod Community College, acknowledged the Secretary's remarks and added that the program is up and running, and he is looking towards making it fully operational for the fall semester with Board approval. He added that there are currently five students from Mount Ida finishing their program and graduating in May; with the approval of the Board, this program offers Cape Cod the ability to move ahead and recruit new students, subject to final ABFSE accreditation. Dr. Cox also noted that two faculty from Mount Ida had joined Cape Cod to assist in the process of setting up the program. He added that historical materials from the old New England Institute, which dates back to the 1800s, are on display in the new facilities.

Commissioner Santiago noted that there will be a tour of the new facilities for the program at the next Board of Higher Education meeting.

Committee Chair Hoffman acknowledged President Cox, his team, and the faculty that came from Mount Ida to assist in the setup of the program. She noted the progress being made to support students and faculty.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-12 APPLICATION OF CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO AWARD THE ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE IN FUNERAL SERVICE**

**VOTED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of **Cape Cod Community College** to award the **Associate in Science in Funeral Service**.

Upon graduating the first class from this program, Cape Cod Community College shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, §9(b).

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D. Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success

**G. AAC 19-18 Approval of Academic Affairs Committee Motions AAC 19-12, AAC 19-14, and AAC 19-15 to AAC 19-17 on a Consent Agenda**

The following motion was brought forth, seconded and unanimously approved:

**AAC 19-18 CONSENT AGENDA**

The Board of Higher Education approves the following motions on a consent agenda:

**VOTED:**

- AAC 19-12 Cape Cod Community College  
Associate in Science in Funeral Service
- AAC 19-14 Fitchburg State University  
Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health
- AAC 19-15 Holyoke Community College  
Associate in Applied Science in Culinary Arts
- AAC 19-16 Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
Bachelor of Arts in Communications
- AAC 19-17 University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Bachelor of Science in Informatics

Authority: Article III, Section 6, By-Laws

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success

#### **H. AAC 19-19 Atlantic Union College – Revocation of degree granting authority**

Kristen Stone, Assistant Director for Academic and Veterans Affairs, presented the revocation motion. Atlantic Union College (AUC) was a small, private, non-profit Christian institution located in Lancaster, Massachusetts, founded and owned by the Atlantic Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) terminated AUC's accreditation effective July 31, 2011. AUC had been on probation since February 2008 for failure to meet NECHE's standard on financial resources. Due to the loss of accreditation, AUC closed effective June 30, 2011. At that time, appropriate plans were made to teach-out courses for existing students and/or to assist students in transferring to other institutions.

The Department of Higher Education (DHE) notified AUC in September 2011 that its degree granting authority would be officially revoked in December 2011. However, after discussions with AUC regarding its future plans, DHE agreed to withhold a recommendation for formal revocation of degree granting authority pending receipt of a petition by AUC for new authority under 610 CMR 2.07. In June 2013, the Board of Higher Education (BHE) conditionally approved AUC to offer the Bachelor of Science in Health Science/Biology and the Bachelor of Arts in Theology/Religion for a period of five years provided that, if AUC did not show significant measurable progress toward meeting the goals set forth in connection with its petition to the BHE and its compliance with the conditions of its approval, the BHE would take appropriate steps to withdraw the College's authority to grant degrees, consistent with 610 CMR 2.10.

In May 2017, AUC requested an extension of the five-year conditional period. Though AUC received conditional approval in June 2013, it did not begin enrolling students until Fall 2015 and requested an extension so AUC could complete five years of academic offerings before it would be required to show that it had complied with the DHE's conditions and was sufficiently stable to receive nonconditional degree granting authority. After an initial review of AUC's supporting documentation for this request, DHE staff were reluctant to recommend extension and requested certain affirmations about AUC's financial stability, including continued support from the Conference, which AUC was unable to provide. Discussions with AUC regarding this request were still in progress when DHE staff were informed in February 2018 that the AUC



Mount Ida was left with insufficient cash flow to continue operations into fall 2018, and it did not have a significant endowment from which it could draw. After exploring other options, Mount Ida decided to sell its Newton campus to the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; as part of the sale agreement, Mount Ida arranged for many of its students to be able to transfer to the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth (“UMD”). Pursuant to the agreement with UMD, automatic offers of enrollment were extended to all Mount Ida students in good standing. However, because many Mount Ida students’ programs did not align sufficiently with UMD offerings, and because of the geographic distance between the Mount Ida and UMD campuses (and the reality that many Mount Ida students were commuters or reliant upon public transportation), Mount Ida entered into nearly 50 other transfer agreements with public and private institutions to provide its students with transfer options in substantially all of its programs. With the assistance of DHE staff, Mount Ida also arranged for certain program adoptions by other institutions, ensuring that some of its specialized programs would continue.

Since its closure, Mount Ida has attempted to track where its students ended up; as can best be determined by the limited data available, 87% of Mount Ida students were able to enroll at another institution by November 2018, and Mount Ida students transferred to approximately 140 institutions. At the time of its closure, Mount Ida offered over 40-degree programs and enrolled more than 1100 students (after May 2018 graduation).

Commissioner Santiago inquired as to who currently holds authority over the student records. Counsel Wisneski responded that the student records from Mount Ida were transferred to UMass Amherst

Committee Chair Hoffman inquired as to whether the Board of Higher Education will continue to track students to see how many will complete their degree. Counsel Wisneski responded that information regarding where students ended up originated from Mount Ida – of which about 87% comes from the Clearinghouse – thus, there is limited data and certain institutions do not report or track students who do not receive financial aid. She also stated that Mount Ida has reached out to students to ask where they went through a survey, but it is not mandatory.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-20    REVOCATION OF THE DEGREE GRANTING AUTHORITY OF MOUNT IDA COLLEGE**

**VOTED:**    The Board hereby revokes the legal authority of **Mount Ida College** to operate and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts retroactive to January 31, 2019.

Authority:        Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 69, Section 30 et seq.

Contact:         Patricia A. Marshall, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success  
Ashley H. Wisneski, Esq., Deputy General Counsel

**J.    AAC 19-21    University of Phoenix – Revocation of degree granting authority**

Ashley Wisneski, Deputy General Counsel, presented the revocation. The University of Phoenix (the “University”) is a for-profit college founded in 1976 and headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona.

It was approved by the BHE to open a physical location in Massachusetts and offer the Bachelor of Science in Business and the Master of Business Administration in March 2000. A Bachelor of Science in Information Technology was approved in October 2002.

The University's main Massachusetts campus was located in Braintree, and it had branch campuses in Burlington and Westborough. At the time of the closure, its only physical campus in the Commonwealth was in Braintree. On July 31, 2015, the University's Board of Trustees voted to close the College. The University ceased new student enrollments at the campus effective August 6, 2015, and BHE staff was notified of the planned closure and teach-out via email that same day. Initially, the University anticipated that it would close in October 2017. This date was adjusted several times, and the institution's last day of instruction associated with its final physical location in Massachusetts was August 8, 2018.

As part of the teach-out, students were given the opportunity to complete their academic programs by August 2018. All but three students either completed their programs by that time, converted to an online program, moved and became associated with a different University location in another state, or withdrew from the institution. The final three students were able to continue their academic studies through the University's online offerings.

The University is not ceasing operations, but rather it no longer plans to enroll new students at its Braintree campus or provide instructional services at any physical location in Massachusetts. The University will continue to offer education to students nationwide through online instruction, and it continues to be able to enroll Massachusetts students in its online programs through the University's and Massachusetts' membership in SARA.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-21      REVOCATION OF THE DEGREE GRANTING AUTHORITY OF UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX**

**VOTED:**      The Board hereby revokes the legal authority of the **University of Phoenix** to operate a physical instructional location and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts retroactive to September 15, 2018.

Authority:      Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 69, Section 30 et seq.

Contact:      Patricia A. Marshall, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success  
Ashley H. Wisneski, Esq., Deputy General Counsel

**K.      AAC 19-22      Approval of Academic Affairs Committee Motions AAC 19-19 through 19-21 on a Consent Agenda**

The following motion was brought forth, seconded and unanimously approved:

**AAC 19-22      CONSENT AGENDA**

**VOTED:**

The Board of Higher Education approves the following motions on a consent agenda:

AAC 19-19 Revocation of the degree granting authority of Atlantic Union College

AAC 19-20 Revocation of the degree granting authority of Mount Ida College

AAC 19-21 Revocation of the degree granting authority of the University of Phoenix

Authority: Article III, Section 6, By-Laws

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success

#### **L. AAC 19-23 2019 Common Assessment Policy**

Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Chief of Staff and Director of Academic Policy and Student Success, presented the motion. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis noted that this motion is a follow up to the January presentation on Accuplacer. The 2019 Common Assessment Policy (CAP) replaces and supersedes a 21-year-old policy (originally enacted in 1998) and is the culmination of 5 ½ years of work. The policy creates a comprehensive approach to developmental education reform.

Campuses have piloted the use of GPA as a placement measure, co-requisite support, and multiple pathways, and the work is now in the final stage of transitioning from pilot to policy. The revised standards for placement in English and mathematics courses use SAT scores, GPA, and Accuplacer scores. The only exception is that GPA cannot be used to place students into calculus I. If the motion is approved, the DHE intends to convene groups of campus stakeholders to determine if faculty are interested in developing a statewide homegrown exam.

Ms. Quiroz-Livanis also noted that data collection and measuring progress will be vital to this new policy. She noted there are new metrics in the performance measurement system to align with this work. Additionally, when looking at updated statewide goals, even if institutions are meeting these targets, the Department will disaggregate the results to ensure the results are equitable and should inquire if academic institutions are meeting the target for all students who they serve. Eliminating achievement gaps, especially for students of color, is vital and campuses can work to create materials easily understood by students while also being transparent with students about options when determining if they are college ready. Institutions have until December 1<sup>st</sup> to meet the standards established by this new policy, and the DHE will be working with them to implement these new policies.

Secretary Peyser inquired about the language in the policy where it says that “institutions of public higher education should use the following standards to place students directly into college-level, credit-bearing English and mathematics courses.” He asked about expectations around consistency of implementation, and how the institutional guidelines would be evaluated. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis responded that institutions have the ability to identify their own placement hierarchies, as long as they are using standards identified in the policy. In terms of evaluation of their policies, she said institutions would need to demonstrate thoughtful implementation of the

three-pronged approach to transforming developmental education in order to meet statewide goals.

Ms. Teixeira noted that Ms. Quiroz-Livanis accepted an invitation to come and speak with the Student Advisory Council (SAC) regarding the CAP. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis' presentation provided unknown information, which surprised many of the students. Committee Chair Hoffman asked why students were surprised by this information. Ms. Teixeira responded that the students didn't know what questions to ask, or who to ask prior to the SAC meeting. The BHE dialogue about the Common Assessment Policy has not trickled down to the students on the campuses and it appears as if there is a lack of understanding about campus placement processes. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis noted that having campuses submit their placement guidelines for review by the DHE would provide institutions with the opportunity to have an intentional conversation at the local level on how these elements interact with one another, and how the information gets communicated to relevant stakeholders, like students and advisors.

Committee Chair Hoffman noted that while it may be difficult for consistent communication to exist, other states seem to know about and admire the Department's efforts on developmental education redesign. Secretary Peyser agreed with Committee Chair Hoffman in recognizing the work and stated that while multiple pathways exist for the mathematics at the postsecondary level, those need to be backwards mapped and emphasized the need for curricular alignment between K-12 and higher education. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis stated that DHE staff have worked with partners at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to organize statewide and regional convenings focused on mathematics curricular alignment. She added the importance of ensuring students arrive to the high school ready to take Algebra I, including providing all students with the opportunity to complete rigorous coursework, including pre-algebra, before ninth grade.

Secretary Peyser also noted that this policy could fit well with innovation pathways and early college. He asked how this change would affect a high school student's eligibility to enroll in a college level course and inquired as to whether this information should form part of the guidelines being requested from campuses. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis responded that the question could be posed as part of the guidelines request. She also stated that NECHE standards allow institutions to implement placement policies for high school students so long as they are using the same standards for the students on their campuses. Committee Chair Hoffman and Secretary Peyser both noted that clarification and feedback from the institutions would be necessary to determine how standards will apply to high school students. Deputy Commissioner Marshall noted North Shore Community College's placement model for early college students looks at curricular alignment. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis also noted that the last page of institutional placement guidelines and standards of assessing college level ready coursework could be for high schools and early college.

Committee Chair Hoffman recalled the beginning of the work being met with resistance – but that the fostered conversation, research, and national dialogue have changed the course to where we are today. She thanked Ms. Quiroz-Livanis for all her hard work.

There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

**AAC 19-23 2019 COMMON ASSESSMENT POLICY**

**VOTED:** The Board of Higher Education (BHE) hereby adopts the “2019 Common Assessment Policy.” The BHE further charges the Commissioner to work with institutions of public higher education to build upon work already underway to transform developmental education.

The 2019 Common Assessment Policy is effective upon adoption by the Board and will supersede any past policies or practices of the BHE governing the same subject.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 6, 9, and 32  
Contact: Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Chief of Staff and Director of Academic Policy and Student Success  
Patricia A. Marshall, Deputy Commissioner of Academic Affairs and Student Success

**V. OTHER BUSINESS:**

There was no other business.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.