

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

NO.: BHE 24-40

BOARD DATE: March 19, 2024

REVOCATION OF THE DEGREE GRANTING AUTHORITY OF PARK UNIVERSITY

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby revokes the legal authority of **Park University** to operate and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts retroactive to December 31, 2023.

ACTION: Motion approved and advanced to the full BHE by the Executive Committee on 3/11/2024; and adopted by the BHE on 3/19/2024.

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

Contact: Cynthia Farr Brown, Ph.D., Associate Commissioner of Regulatory and Veterans Affairs

Background

Park University, of Parkville, Missouri, was approved by the Board of Higher Education to offer an on-the-ground program in Massachusetts in 2005. Specifically, Park University was approved to offer the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Bachelor of Science in Management/Computer Information Systems, the Bachelor of Science in Management/Human Resources, and the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration at Hanscom Air Force Base located in Bedford, Massachusetts.

In October 2023, Park University notified the Department of Higher Education that it had not offered on-ground courses at its campus center at Hanscom Air Force Base since July 2022 and would cease its operations in Massachusetts effective December 31, 2023. There are no active Park University faculty or staff at the Hanscom Air Force Base campus, and no students are currently enrolled at this location.

The required Notice of Closure documentation was submitted to Department staff on November 16, 2023, and has been deemed thorough and complete. The University is not ceasing operations nationally; rather, it no longer plans to provide instructional services at any physical location in Massachusetts. The University will continue to offer education to students at its instructional locations in other states and through online instruction. Park University continues to be able to enroll Massachusetts students in its online programs through the University's and Massachusetts' membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). Throughout the closure process, the University worked closely with Department staff to ensure compliance with state requirements related to the closure of Park University's Massachusetts campus.

Department staff has determined that an institution that no longer has an active physical presence in Massachusetts should have its degree-granting authority revoked as the institution is no longer operating as a degree-granting entity in Massachusetts, and the revocation of that authority is no longer required due to the institution's closure of its Massachusetts operations. On January 2, 2024, Park University leadership was informed of this proposed action and of its right to request an adjudicatory hearing pursuant to M.G.L. c. 69, § 30A, which it declined. Staff posted the required public notice on January 11, 2024; no comments were received.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board revoke the authority of Park University to operate and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts retroactive to December 31, 2023.