

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs

NO.: AAC 16-18

COMMITTEE DATE: January 19, 2016

BOARD DATE: January 26, 2016

REVOCATION OF MARIAN COURT COLLEGE DEGREE GRANTING AUTHORITY

MOVED: The Board hereby revokes the legal authority of **Marian Court College** to operate and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts retroactive to December 31, 2015.

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

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

Background

Originally founded in 1964 as Marian Court Secretarial School for women, Marian Court College evolved over the years to a junior college, and then in the early 1990's to a two-year college, accredited by NEASC, granting the Associate in Science degree to both men and women. Due to low enrollment and insurmountable financial difficulty, on June 22, 2015 the College's Board of Trustees voted to close the College as of June 26, 2015. As of June 26, 2015, all instruction ceased, and no employees remained at the College.

Due to the sudden nature of the closure and lack of funding to pay staff and faculty after the aforementioned closure date, no teach-out period was offered to students. However, Department staff worked with representatives of the institution and Marian Court College subsequently established articulation agreements with North Shore Community College and Salem State University so that students would have the opportunity to complete their associate and baccalaureate degrees. As of July 21, 2015 approximately 10 associate degree students and 12 baccalaureate degree students were expected to complete their degrees by December 31, 2015. To enable those students to earn a Marian Court College degree and to have that degree come from an accredited institution, withdrawal of the institution's accreditation with the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education remained effective until December 31, 2015.

Throughout the closure process, Marian Court College worked closely with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to ensure compliance with state requirements related to the closure of the College. In September, a meeting was held to close out all of the Massachusetts state aid programs, and a final archive agreement plan for financial and academic records was established with Salve Regina University. The deadline for the complete transition of accurate records to Salve Regina University is June 30, 2016.

In compliance with M.G.L., c. 69, § 30A and 610 CMR 2.10, a public hearing regarding the closure of Marian Court College was scheduled for Monday, January 4, 2016 at 2:00 p.m., Room 1401, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board revoke the authority of Marian Court College to operate and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts retroactive to December 31, 2015. This date is agreeable to Marian Court College representatives and it aligns with the revocation of the College's NEASC accreditation.