

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

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April 24, 2018  
9:00 a.m.

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

**Meeting Minutes**

**Committee Members Present:** Committee Chair Nancy Hoffman; Board Vice Chair Sheila Harrity; Board Chair Chris Gabrieli; Fernando Reimers; Commissioner Carlos Santiago; J. D. LaRock; Paul Mattera; Student Board Member Danielle Dupuis; Tom Hopcroft (participating remotely, by phone, for the sole purpose of listening in)

**Committee Members Absent:** Henry Thomas; Secretary of Education James Peyser

**Special Guests:** Lane Glenn, President of Northern Essex Community College

**Department Staff Present:** Katy Abel, Stacy Bougie, Suchita Chadha, Keith Connors, Winifred Hagan, Jonathan Keller, Christine Maher, Patricia Marshall, Clantha McCurdy, Sarah Mealey, Constantia Papanikolaou, Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Arlene Rodriguez, Thomas Simard, Angela Williams, Ashley Wisneski

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Chris Gabrieli, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and welcomed everyone present. He followed his welcome by informing the Board and attendees that the meeting was repurposed to allow for a public hearing on the closing of Mount Ida College following a presentation by DHE staff. Chair Gabrieli also informed those gathered that some members of the public might record the meeting and, as such, he wanted to make sure everyone was aware and comfortable with this fact. He went on to explain that Massachusetts' Open Meeting Law permits a member of the public to make a sound or video recording of a public meeting, subject to certain notification requirements. Following this information, Chair Gabrieli invited remarks from Commissioner of Higher Education Carlos Santiago.

**II. REMARKS**

Commissioner Santiago provided background to the Mount Ida closure saying the DHE only found out about the closure on April 6, 2018, through the news media and not through direct contact by Mount Ida officials. Mount Ida had a fiduciary responsibility to the Commonwealth, and to the students, to warn of the possible school closure and they failed. The Commissioner invited DHE General Counsel Constantia (Dena) Papanikolaou, Assistant General Counsel Ashley Wisneski, and Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success Patricia Marshall, to provide members with current updates and planned actions. He explained that the presentation would warn of more school closings due, in part, to declining student

enrollments and stated that the DHE would do its best to mitigate the negative impact of such actions on students and families. He also highlighted the DHE's role in the proposed acquisition of Montserrat by Salem State University which, although it did not go through, resulted in a collaborative assessment of the situation and a successful outcome.

### III. PRESENTATION

#### A. Mount Ida College Closure

List of documents used:

*AAC Meeting PowerPoint, April 24, 2018*

General Counsel Papanikolaou began the presentation, providing an overview of institutional closures managed by the DHE in Massachusetts over the last five years; the important role that the DHE plays in institutional closures (including the DHE's closure policy and guidelines); a detailed timeline of the events surrounding the Mount Ida closure; and the steps that the DHE has taken thus far to manage this abrupt and unanticipated closure. She stressed that the primary role of the DHE is to assist students, and that Mount Ida remains responsible for identifying and facilitating multiple, appropriate transfer options. She also highlighted particular issues and challenges faced by students that were newly admitted to Mount Ida, as well as transfer issues related enrolled students who are in the more advanced stages of their studies (e.g., juniors and seniors). General Counsel Papanikolaou stated that Mount Ida will be required to address these and other issues in their closing plan. She then turned to Deputy Commissioner Marshall and asked her to discuss certain specialized programs currently offered at Mount Ida that are posing complex issues.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall addressed issues related to credit mapping and outlined the challenges specific to Mount Ida's specialized programs of study, including the veterinary technology, funeral services and dental hygiene programs. She stated that several of Mount Ida's specialized programs do not have nearby equivalents, and she stressed the importance of Mount Ida students having local options so that they do not incur additional expenses related to travel and on-campus housing. She informed committee members that the DHE is working diligently to ensure that students in these specialized programs have viable options to continue their programs of study at nearby institutions and without increased time to degree completion. She added that the DHE will work quickly to approve new programs and that conversations are underway with both public and private institutions that are ready and willing to assist displaced Mt. Ida students.

General Counsel Papanikolaou continued the presentation with an overview of authority issues related to the closure of Mount Ida College. She stated that while the BHE does not have authority over the University of Massachusetts when it comes to the purchase of land or property, or the allocation of resources between and among campuses, the BHE does have authority over use and program approval. She also provided an overview of how DHE staff has been handling complaints related to the closure, pointing out that, to date, the DHE had received 128 complaints. She stated that many of these complaints focus on the lack of information related to the closure, and many of them involve requests that fall outside of the BHE's authority, such as stopping the sale or keeping Mount Ida open. She assured the Committee that DHE staff is responding to all of the complaints and that any complaints that involve violations of law or policy will be forwarded to the appropriate enforcement entity. Commissioner Santiago provided final thoughts, assuring the Committee that DHE staff is responding to the Mount Ida closure by implementing the following: 1) the accelerated

approval of teach out proposals at other institutions; 2) waiving the time requirements for when new programs can be submitted by public institutions to ensure that programs will be approved with sufficient time for Mount Ida students to transfer successfully; and 3) looking at the long-term impact and deliberating on policy and procedural recommendations to address the DHE's ability to monitor institutional health and limit the impact of abrupt closures.

#### **IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Chair Gabrieli announced that he would call each speaker forth, and that they would each have three minutes to speak.

##### **1. Becky Bridges**

Ms. Bridges shared that she is the mother of a daughter just finishing her sophomore year in the 4-year Bachelor of Veterinary Science Technology program. Her daughter chose the program because it was "the" school of choice for anyone looking to become a veterinarian technician with the guarantee of a 100% job placement rate after a year of internships. The small classes, attentive professors, tight knit community, and location close to home were also strong factors in her choice. Now she and her daughter are scrambling to find a program that will accept her while simultaneously trying to complete her semester. Ms. Bridges said she feels someone needs to be held accountable and do what is right for the students. She stated that the students were given scholarships and a commitment by the school, and they deserve to be able to finish the programs they started and leave with the degree they were promised.

##### **2. Laurel Collins**

Ms. Collins shared the heartache of her daughter not having the breadth of options of other students for finding an alternative school because her daughter does not drive. The reason her daughter picked Mount Ida is because it is local and she felt at home with the small class sizes, small student body, focus on students with learning needs, and a caring faculty. She stated that Mount Ida is not even offering the students counseling during the transition, making her concerned for the students' emotional and physical needs. Further, since the majority of Mount Ida's student body is comprised of middle-class families, it provided them an affordable alternative to a public school education. Ms. Collins asked that the Board take care of these students.

##### **3. Chris Connolly**

Mrs. Connolly's daughter, Hannah Coco, is currently a freshman majoring in Commercial Photography at Mount Ida College. Hannah had been on an individualized education plan (IEP) since elementary school. She chose Mount Ida because of the small class sizes, access to special education assistance with her IEP, location, cost, and courses available for her to accomplish her career goals. UMass Dartmouth (UMD) is not a good alternative because their photography program is art not commercial and they also do not have the same equipment, which would add additional cost if the student had to purchase the missing items. Her daughter has submitted an application to Lesley College, but timing is critical. Ms. Connolly pointed out that the window of time for decisions is quickly disappearing, limiting time for research and the ability to make sound decisions. She also has limited days off to tour colleges with her daughter and limited funds.

4. John Driscoll

Mr. Driscoll is a sophomore at Mount Ida majoring in criminal justice; he said he loves the school and wants to continue with his studies. In that vein, he proposed a “teach-out” where all current students at Mount Ida continue their program at the school under the UMass Amherst (UMA) ownership until all the current students complete their programs. He also expressed his concern for those students for whom there is no comparable program at UMD. Mr. Driscoll asked the Board to allow all Mount Ida students to finish their majors, retain all their course credits, and have the opportunity to receive their degrees.

5. Richard Freeland

Dr. Freeland expressed his admiration for Chancellor Subbaswamy and his commitment to UMA. However, he questioned the UMass Trustees’ decision to purchase the Mount Ida campus, wondering if the Trustees had determined whether the benefits of the purchase outweighed the negative impacts on other campuses. He encouraged the Board to examine UMA’s plan in depth and to use its statutory authority and public platform to advance the best possible outcome. Dr. Freeland expressed serious reservation over the purchase of the Mount Ida campus by UMA in light of shrinking enrollments, especially for undergraduates. He fears a UMA satellite campus in Boston might result in the cannibalization of enrollments at UMass Boston (UMB). Dr. Freeland expressed skepticism of the purchase and felt very strongly that, until the questions he raised are fully addressed, the purchase should not be allowed to move forward.

6. Brian Herson

Mr. Herson’s son is a junior at Mount Ida. The family chose Mount Ida after careful consideration of many schools because of the quality of its programs, the intimate size of the campus, the ability for their son to fit in well, the generous financial assistance they received, and the overall value for their money. Now that Mount Ida is closing, his family is devastated. They recognize the purchase is inevitable and that they need to move forward, but they want a clear path without experiencing a challenging increase in their expenses. So far, Mount Ida has not provided comprehensive and clear information, communication has been chaotic, and reaching an administrator has been difficult. They want to make sure all Mount Ida courses are transferrable to UMD. More broadly, they want answers to why this happened to avoid a similar sudden school closure happening to other families, and they also expressed the desire to see some degree of accountability for those involved with the closure.

7. Taylor Higgans

Ms. Higgins is a Mount Ida student who shared that she is hard of hearing and Mount Ida provided the type of supportive environment that helped her thrive academically and emotionally. Mount Ida’s sudden closure devastated her, and other educational options are not financially feasible. The stress and worry of the impending closure has disrupted her current semester. She asked the Board to stop the sale of the campus.

8. Laura Gibson

Ms. Gibson represented her daughter, Melissa, who is a sophomore in the education program with the goal of getting into special education. Ms. Gibson said she did not come before the Board to debate or question the reason for the closure, but rather to advocate for the fair treatment of every student, professor, and staff member. Mount Ida violated her daughter's privacy by sharing her information with UMD, a school her daughter has no interest in attending and which does not have her major. Melissa is a focused, dedicated, caring sensitive person who struggled in high school to find her way. She blossomed and became more secure and independent at Mount Ida and found her focus and path. She was excited for her junior year and had solidified her roommates and class schedule. Now, rather than being focused on her finals, she is focused on visiting campuses, completing applications, and worrying about finances, housing, being assigned a roommate and making friends, and feeling welcome at a new school where other students may resent her for taking a spot. There has to be some recourse and it starts with a complete review of this sale and closure. Full transparency needs to be given to the members of the Mount Ida community who have called this institution home. The students and staff had put their complete trust and faith into the President and Board of Directors and they have been let down. Now, due to this decision, families will struggle with additional financial costs and, more than likely, extra courses as what was taken towards their major degree at Mount Ida may now only be considered electives.

9. Brigid Horrigan

Ms. Horrigan is a student and an incoming freshman. The closure of Mount Ida is causing her a multitude of problems including new college searches when most colleges have already completed their admissions process. She feels the Board should be asking Mount Ida the following questions: "Why is there such a lack of transparency?" and "Does the current deal between Mount Ida and UMA meet the needs of all the students and, if not, what plan is in place to assure needs are met?"

10. Jeffrey Marshall

Professor Marshall is an associate professor of Art Foundation at Mount Ida, and he made it clear he was speaking for himself, not the entire faculty. The closing of Mount Ida is sad but the way it is closing is tragic and disgraceful. It was negligent of Mount Ida not to tell students, faculty, and staff at the beginning of the year that the college would possibly close or go through a major change. The choice to withhold information deprived all parties of the right to plan their futures in a thoughtful way. While the lack of communication was negligent, the awarding of next year's contracts to full-time faculty, just last month, was cruel. Faculty were not given the chance to plan their future even though that future was known by the college and many other parties, including the UMass system. In considering the purchase of Mount Ida's property, it is important that UMA and, and by extension, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, realize they have the responsibility to honor these contracts. The faculty and staff have made taking care of their students' future the highest priority; now Mount Ida, UMA, and the Commonwealth must make the faculty and staff of Mount Ida their highest priority. Professor Marshall will continue to teach his students until the college closes. Similarly, he expects the school and state to sit down with the Mount Ida faculty and staff to ensure their needs are addressed and that their contracts are honored.

11. Lisa McClain

Ms. McClain's daughter was an incoming freshman who chose Mount Ida because she wants to be a veterinarian and Mount Ida's program had a reputation as one of the best in the region. Mount Ida promised her daughter very generous scholarships, including \$30,000 in financial aid and \$7,000 in scholarships each year leaving an annual cost to the family of only \$6,000. The college closing not only wiped out the generous financial package, but it also added expenses for the costs incurred traveling to student orientation and paying for lodging. Mount Ida never informed the family of its impending closure before they incurred these costs and the college still has not sent incoming students a formal announcement of closure. Ms. McClain asked the board to explore why Mount Ida gave such generous student scholarships when it was teetering on bankruptcy.

#### 12. Katelyn Mitrano

Ms. Mitrano is an undergraduate at UMB and president of the student government. She shared the outrage felt by UMB students after hearing of the UMass Board of Trustees' approval of UMA's anticipated purchase of the Mount Ida campus. The students' anger resides in the UMass system's total disregard for the debt UMB carries that impacts the quality of their education while UMA can purchase an entire college campus standing only a few miles away from the existing Boston campus at a cost of tens of millions of dollars. This action cuts directly into UMB's market share, creating even more competition for students, donors, internships, and job opportunities in Boston's already aggressive higher education landscape. If UMA truly wanted to give their students opportunities in Boston, they would have used the UMass exchange program, which would give UMA students the means to study in Boston at no cost to the system. Ms. Mitrano made the additional point that by being given automatic acceptance and credit transfer to UMD and not UMB, even though UMB is significantly closer to Mount Ida than UMD, the UMass system is clearly indicating they do not believe in UMB or its students.

#### 13. Marlene Kim

Dr. Kim is a professor of economics in the College of Liberal Arts at UMB. She suggested that the purchase of the Mount Ida campus by UMA is through the use of state/taxpayer money without regard to making sure all Massachusetts students in the UMass system were being served. She added that it is unacceptable that UMA's plans for using the property keep evolving while giving no consideration to UMB. No one on the receiving end likes this deal, especially Mount Ida students who are unable to complete their degree. Lasell College was a much better fit, and that merger was a better scenario that would have served all students. The Mount Ida deal does not help students, it hurts them. Dr. Kim asked the Board to take the following actions: 1) pause the deal, 2) conduct a public hearing, 3) be transparent about UMA's plans, and 4) solicit public comment by other UMass campuses and the other state higher education institutions.

#### 14. Colleen Moroney

Ms. Moroney is a first-year dental hygiene student. Her main concern is knowing whether the closing will include a "teach-out" so that she and her classmates can at least finish their program. Finding and being admitted into new, accredited program at another schools is difficult. Ms. Moroney gave the example of speaking with the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) where she learned MCPHS is not accepting students into their program. Finding a program might mean traveling to another state, which would be prohibitive for many students, including her, as she is a mother with young

children. She asked the BHE to move quickly to help her and her classmates find a suitable solution. This urgency was further supported by learning delayed course-taking could trigger student loans to become due.

15. Margo O'Dea

Ms. O'Dea is a single mother representing the face of many parents whose child only has one semester or academic year remaining, and the devastation the closing of Mount Ida is causing her and other families. Ms. O'Dea's son is in the funeral director program and only has one semester to go. She has another son who was just accepted into college, which now causes financial stress. Mount Ida's leadership has shown no regard for the difficult situation the school closing has laid at the feet of students and families. Ms. O'Dea asked the BHE to: 1) review the current laws and rules to stop Mount Ida's closing, and 2) keep Mount Ida open for at least one more year so a better closing plan can be adopted.

16. Timothy Oleksiak

Professor Oleksiak couldn't attend the hearing so his statement was read. Mr. Oleksiak is an assistant professor at UMB. His statement highlighted the fact that UMB is the only 4-year public institution of higher education in Boston, yet the UMass Board of Trustees have shown little support or respect for the school. In his opinion, the only way the relationship with the UMass system will change is through supportive actions such as additional funding for the school instead of the purchase of Mount Ida.

17. Joseph Ramsey

Mr. Ramsey is a faculty member at UMB and part of the coalition to save the school. He spoke about UMB's upcoming celebration of Phyllis Wheatley Day and reflected on the irony of her struggle as a black slave brought to America as a seven-year old in 1761 who rose to prominence through the publication of her poetry. He drew parallels between Wheatley's struggle and that of trying to save UMB through the fight by a diverse campus with the old guard UMass Trustees. He made note that Wheatley Hall at UMB is named after Phyllis and is one of the buildings in disrepair with an estimated repair bill of \$300M – reflective of the failing system. In addition to infrastructure concerns, Mr. Ramsey also noted rising tuition, faculty layoffs and limited resources. He urged the Board to deny the purchase of the Mount Ida campus by UMass Amherst.

18. Joan Singarella

Ms. Singarella's daughter attends Mount Ida. Mrs. Singarella expressed her frustration with the lack of information from Mount Ida, and she wondered if Mount Ida had heard any of the stories shared by the distraught students and families. Mount Ida was a good fit for her daughter because of its size and support of students with learning disabilities. On the day of her daughter's acceptance to the school, the family rejoiced because of the \$27,000 in tuition assistance and also because of the special attention she would receive. It greatly upset Ms. Singarella to inform her daughter about the school closing, as this news caused her daughter serious depression. Ms. Singarella hopes the BHE can help students like her daughter.

19. Philip Varlese

Mr. Varlese is a stepfather of an incoming student who drove from New Jersey to testify. He spoke on how his daughter found her way to Mount Ida identifying these factors as the reason: 1) financial aid package, 2) location, 3) program offerings for her major, 4) school size, 5) caring faculty, and 6) miscellaneous factors like the campus feel and proximity to Boston. The schools his stepdaughter turned down now either have no room or cannot offer the same financial package. His step-daughter has been accepted by a new school, but it does not offer the same veterinary program. As such, she will have to start with a biology program before acceptance into the veterinary program costing her more money and time. Mr. Varlese is not alone in his frustration with the college, mentioning over 7,000 signatures to an online petition protesting the school closure and purchase of the campus by UMA. The issue that bothers Mr. Varlese the most is “the outright lie” by Mount Ida projecting the health of the school and accepting students for the 2018-19 school year when the school knew it was bankrupt. Further, Mount Ida warned students not to attend this hearing, which Mr. Varlese forwarded to Atty. Gen. Maura Healey. Mr. Varlese asked the BHE to assure students: 1) acceptance into a comparable institution, 2) a comparable program and 3) a comparable financial package. He further asked the Board to hold off the approval of the pending purchase until all these issues have been addressed.

20. Bob Young

Mr. Young, speaking from the employer perspective, is a proprietor of a funeral home in the area who has hired Mt. Ida graduates. He spoke to the issue of Cape Cod Community College offering Mount Ida students in the funeral service program the opportunity to apply for acceptance into CCCC’s program. One concern, however, is that CCCC cannot guarantee enrollment/acceptance into the program. For the funeral service program to proceed at CCCC, there is a monumental need for many checks and balances to happen including: 1) UMA agrees to continue the full funeral service program at Mount Ida until CCCC is ready and 2) BHE fast tracks CCCC’s program so it is ready by the fall semester.

21. Richard Jamison

Mr. Jamison’s son would have been a senior at Mount Ida. The task of finding a new school to attend, with the same program, has been extremely difficult. Often the obstruction is that similar programs only exist out-of-state and have residency requirements. Also, the costs of attending a new school will be higher. Mount Ida said UMD would be cheaper or comparable but this statement has not been true in many cases because of Mount Ida’s tuition assistance and because of student disability barriers.

22. Haley Hastings

Ms. Hastings is a junior at Mount Ida who expressed her support for the purchase of the Mount Ida campus by UMA.

Chair Gabrieli thanked everyone who came forward to express their thoughts and concerns on the sudden closure of Mount Ida College. Acknowledging the struggle the closure puts on students and families, Chair Gabrieli assured all those affected that the DHE would continue its extensive efforts to help students and families through the transition. He made clear that UMA’s acquisition of the Mount Ida campus is a separate issue from UMB’s concerns, saying the BHE/DHE has little authority when it comes to the UMass system because the UMass campuses answer to their own Board of Trustees. Nonetheless, Chair Gabrieli said it was unconscionable for any student or parent to be blind-sided by a sudden closure of an

institution of higher education. Going forward, Massachusetts should be able to provide assurances that enrollment in any institution of higher education in the Commonwealth is safe. He promised the BHE and DHE would review the laws and policy on institutional review and closures in an effort to prevent similar events in the future. He added that currently the BHE does not have authority to prevent the purchase of the Mount Ida College campus by UMA, as the authority rested with the UMass Trustees.

Board Member LaRock spoke next expressing his anger over the injustices visited upon the Mount Ida and UMB students as a result of the ongoing events. He described the system oversight authority the BHE has under law, including its authority over strategic planning, and referenced the BHE's responsibility to consider the larger landscape in general in all its decisions and, particularly, around school closings. He urged his fellow board members to consider the authority granted to the Board under M.G.L. Chapter 15(a) as the Board considers ways to more proactively prevent sudden school closures.

Board Member Reimers expressed his concern for the Mount Ida and UMass students and urged the Board to ask President Meehan to come before the BHE to answer questions.

Committee Chair Hoffman highlighted the many financial concerns expressed by Mount Ida students and parents in their testimony, including tuition discounting. Mount Ida, as an institution, clearly gave generous scholarships, and the loss of those scholarships translates into hardship for many families and the possible end to pursuing a college education for some. She said the BHE/DHE needs to consider the impact of tuition discounting on the financial health of an institution and the loss of scholarships and financial aid to students and families as it examines its policy around school closing to make sure students are well-supported.

Board Member Mattera added he heard and empathized with the concerns expressed by the Mount Ida parents and students, and he agreed with the comments from his fellow Board members. He especially liked the idea of looking into the BHE's authority for taking certain actions to help the students.

Board Vice-Chair Harrity spoke of her heavy heart as a parent and educator to hear of the pain the sudden closure of Mount Ida has caused so many people, and she expressed her appreciation for the many personal stories shared. With awareness that more and more small private schools are struggling because of decreasing enrollments and other factors, she echoed the sentiments for the need for the Commonwealth to plan for the best way to assist students and their families. She encouraged the DHE to look closely at the data as a way to help predict which schools are teetering on the edge financially so early intervention can begin. Early actions hopefully will help ensure all students have a campus home.

Board Member Dupuis expressed her commitment to ensuring the next student BHE representative (her replacement) is fully informed on this matter, so that he/she will be positioned to advocate for students and parents.

Commissioner Santiago wrapped up the public testimony by commending the BHE for offering the opportunity for public comment. He also thanked the students and parents for taking the time to share their stories. Commissioner Santiago assured the BHE that the DHE is committed to helping every Mount Ida student and promised the agency would do so with full transparency. He also committed to working on a system that will alert DHE staff on imminent closures.

Chair Gabrieli announced the closure of this section of the meeting and thanked everyone for their time. He called for a 15 minute break before continuing with the rest of the meeting agenda.

## **V. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

The meeting was called back to order at 11:58 pm. On a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the February 27, 2018 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee were unanimously approved.

## **VI. MOTIONS**

### **A. AAC 18-27      Saint Louis University Master of Social Work**

Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success Winifred Hagan presented the motion. St. Louis University (SLU) is an out-of-state private, non-profit institution located in St. Louis, Missouri. SLU has filed a Foreign Corporation certificate seeking degree granting authority in Massachusetts to offer the Master of Social Work (MSW), which it has offered on campus at SLU as a Council on Social Work Education-accredited program since 1952. SLU proposes to offer two distinct MSW program options in Massachusetts. First, the Foundation program proposes to offer a full 57 credit-hour option for students who have not earned a Bachelor of Social Work degree from an accredited program. Second, the Advanced Standing program is proposed to offer a 39 credit-hour option for students who have earned a BSW from an accredited program. SLU has petitioned that the courses will be offered both online and on the campus of Elms College, located in Chicopee, MA. It is expected that students could participate in the proposed program on a full or part-time basis.

An external review of the proposal evaluated SLU's ability to support the program in the context of faculty, equipment, financial organization, leadership and all standards mandated by MA regulations for independent institutions of higher education. Several recommendations for improvement were made by the external reviewers, including clarification of SLU's planned oversight for the Massachusetts-based program and the institution's plan for review and quality control of faculty teaching in the proposed program. The reviewers also noted the potential need for additional technological resources and librarian support for SLU students participating at the Elms College site. In its response to the review, SLU responded fully and substantively to the evaluators' concerns and adjusted the proposal to accommodate them.

After a thorough evaluation of all documentation submitted by SLU and the external review team, staff recommend approval of the proposed Master of Social work program.

Committee Chair Hoffman asked SLU why they chose Elms College in Massachusetts to offer their degrees. Dr. Hagan turned the question over to the SLU representative who responded by saying SLU has partnerships with many schools across the country, but saw there were no Catholic-based MSW programs in Massachusetts, which provided a good opportunity to meet a market need. Chair Gabrieli inquired about the health of SLU's similar program in OH and learned the program is doing very well. Following-up on this response, Chair Gabrieli asked how the proposed partnership benefits Elms College. SLU shared that they did not seek out the partnership but, rather, it happened serendipitously. SLU and Elms were attending the same conference and struck up a conversation in which Elms College mentioned that it was

looking to develop and offer a MSW program. Elms College was unable to pursue this goal because of cost concerns, an unfortunate limitation because their surveys showed significant interest in such a program. The offer by SLU to partner with Elms and add the program thus benefitted both schools and the community at large, as the region has a high need for clinical social workers. The SLU representative also added that SLU and Elms College will share the revenue.

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

**AAC 18-27 APPLICATION FROM SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY TO AWARD THE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of **Saint Louis University** to award the **Master of Social Work**.

Upon graduating the first class for this program, Saint Louis 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

**VII. DISCUSSION**

**A. Revised Program Approval Process for Public Institutions**

List of documents used:  
*AAC Meeting PowerPoint, April 24, 2018*

Deputy Commissioner Marshall began the discussion by thanking individuals from our public colleges and universities who shared their feedback on the revised program approval process for public institutions at the January AAC meeting. She stated that while much of the discussion at the January meeting focused on the role of both local boards and the Board of Higher Education in the approval of fully-developed programs, Board members continued to express a strong desire to conduct a more high-level review of academic programs at the outset of the process. Ideally, the Board's reviews would focus on the rationale for the program and its connection to system-level goals, and not on the details of the curriculum. Deputy Commissioner Marshall affirmed that a Board decision at the Letter of Intent (LOI) stage offers a way to balance both points of view and to meet the objectives of our campuses and the Board.

She then presented a slight variation on the proposal-- an option for Board action at the LOI stage in which the AAC would vote to determine whether a proposal would follow the "fast track" or the "standard process." If a proposal were to follow the "fast track" the Board would delegate authority to the Commissioner, and DHE staff would review the full proposal after being approved by the local Board of Trustees. She clarified that "fast track" proposals would not need to come before the Board for final approval. She then outlined the steps for the "Standard Process," which would essentially be the process that we follow now. The AAC would provide

feedback, the institution would prepare a full proposal, and the full proposal would come before the Board for final approval.

Committee Chair Hoffman asked if this proposed process would be a change for the University of Massachusetts. Deputy Commissioner Marshall stated that local Board of Trustee approval of the LOI would be a change for UMass. After further discussion, members of the AAC agreed to modify the language on the Power Point slide from “Local BOT approval of the LOI” to “Local approval process.” Committee Chair Hoffman indicated that the decision on “Fast Track” versus the “Standard Process” should be the decision of the AAC and not of the local boards. Chair Gabrieli agreed with Committee Chair Hoffman and stressed the importance of the AAC providing input on program proposals at an earlier stage in the process. Committee Chair Hoffman stated that the LOI template will be important and needs to focus on how the program will help the system. It was determined that the next step in the development of the revised program approval process would be for the committee to take a close look at the LOI template and to integrate feedback from the field.

## **VIII. PRESENTATION**

### **A. Police Education and Training**

#### List of documents used:

*AAC Meeting PowerPoint, April 24, 2018*

*Commissioner's Ad Hoc Committee on Police Education and Training: Final Report and Recommendations (June 2017)*

The Commissioner acknowledged President Lane Glenn's important work as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Police Education and Training. He also recognized Clea T. Andreadis, Associate Vice Provost for Bunker Hill Community College and Chair of the Working Group, and thanked her for her leadership.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall provided an overview of the Department's work in the space of police education and training that highlighted the PCIPP/Quinn bill, the 2003 DHE Guidelines for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Programs, and the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Police Education in November of 2016. She outlined the rationale for the creation of the ad hoc committee, focusing on the changing landscape of higher education which allows for more access to a credential through the development of PLA and various other forms of credit. She reminded the committee that the PCIPP guidelines explicitly disallow awarding credit for prior learning experience, military experience, or police academy training toward classes or degrees in criminal justice. Deputy Commissioner Marshall stated that police training has become more complex, requiring skills in interpersonal communication, psychology, cultural competency, and other disciplines. Before turning the presentation over to President Lane Glenn, she outlined the composition of the ad hoc committee and the timeline for the committee's work.

President Glenn summarized the committee's charge, final recommendations, and the campus feedback on the final report. The final recommendations include a minimum of an associate's degree in Criminal Justice, a related field, or a field of study authorized by the hiring department/agency and the amendment of the PCIPP Guideline to allow credit for prior learning, such as military experience or police academy training. Campus feedback regarding the minimum educational requirement of an associate's degree was favorable, and stakeholders

agreed that credit for prior learning should be handled at the local/institutional level based on an assessment of student learning outcomes and to ensure the appropriate level of rigor.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall continued the presentation with an overview of the charge to the Working Group to revise the 2003 PCIPP Guidelines. Specifically, the Working Group was charged with revising the 2003 Guidelines to allow for the assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning and to determine what proportion of a degree may consist of prior learning credits. Deputy Commissioner Marshall also provided details on the next steps related to this work: the working group will conclude its work and submit a final report to the Commissioner; the report will be circulated to stakeholders for feedback; both reports, the ad hoc committee report and the working group report, will be brought forward to the BHE for consideration at the June 2018 meeting.

Committee Chair Hoffman asked what percentage of police officers does this cover. President Glenn responded that it would cover more than half because of the demise of the Quinn Bill.

**IX. OTHER BUSINESS:**

No other business was raised.

**X. ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.