

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

October 15, 2019
10:00 a.m.

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

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Committee Chair Nancy Hoffman; Vice Chair Sheila Harrity; Tom Moreau (designee for EOE Secretary); Fernando Reimers; Abby Velozo (voting Student Member); and Anna Grady (non-voting, Student Advisor)

Committee Members Absent:

Board Chair Chris Gabrieli; Commissioner Carlos Santiago (non-voting, ex-officio member).

Department Staff Present:

Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success Patricia Marshall; Robert Awkward; Cynthia Brown; Ignacio Chaparro; Winifred Hagan; Elhame Kajtazi; Alexander Nally; Dena Papanikolaou; Elena Quiroz-Livanis; Kristen Stone; Angela Williams; Ashley Wisneski

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes from the June 11, 2019 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee were unanimously approved.

III. REMARKS

List of documents used:

AAC Meeting Power Point, October 15, 2019

Chair Hoffman acknowledged and welcomed students from the Harvard Graduate School of Education who were in attendance. Chair Hoffman then turned the meeting over to Deputy Commissioner Patricia Marshall for remarks.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall began with an update on five grant programs administered by the Department. Starting with the Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Program (CDEP), she stated that the DHE received 26 proposals for CDEP, totaling \$1,023,691 in requests. Applicants could apply for up to \$40,000 in CDEP funds. Of the proposals received, the review team recommended 25 for full awards, and one reduced award to better align with the number of

students the campus proposes to serve. The total award distribution was \$1,018,201. Combined, the proposals sought to serve over 2,300 students. Remaining CDEP funds will be used to support designated Early College programs. A formula-based approach will be used to determine allocation, like last year.

Moving onto the Performance Incentive Fund (PIF), Deputy Commissioner Marshall then discussed the Performance Incentive Fund (PIF), which she noted was recently renamed as the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF). The DHE received 12 proposals totaling \$2,458,706 in grant requests. To promote collaboration, only consortium grants were awarded. Of these proposals, the DHE funded six with the total grant amount being \$1,150,251. HEIF awards supporting the equity agenda included supporting initiatives such as the low-income males and males of color initiative; new approaches to assessing demonstrated knowledge, skills and competencies; and transforming student success and empowering classroom and campus leadership.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall then discussed Training Resources and Internship Networks (TRAIN). A total of 13 applications were received, including a consortium proposal comprised of partners from Greenfield, Holyoke, and Springfield Technical Community Colleges. The TRAIN grant supports long-term unemployed, under-employed, and new entrant adult workers who seek to enter/re-enter the workforce and prepares adult learners for employment in key industry sectors identified in Regional Blueprint plans. The DHE is in the process of awarding the newest round of proposals and has met its goal to bring TRAIN to all 15 community colleges.

Finally, Deputy Commissioner Marshall indicated that Bridges to College proposals are currently under review. Under this grant, funds are awarded to adult basic education providers including, but not limited to, local agencies, community-based organizations, community colleges, and correctional facilities. Candidate organizations must have demonstrated success in bridging academic gaps that affect the college entrance, retention and completion of underserved populations. Organizations must also align their programs with student workforce and career interests.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall continued by providing a high-level summary of five major projects that will be the focus of the Committee's work over the next year. These projects included advancing the equity agenda in Academic Affairs; a full transition to the new program review process for public colleges and universities; the Common Assessment Policy (CAP) and continued efforts to transform developmental education; the third *Ad Hoc Committee* for the Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP); and advancing the use of Open Educational Resources.

Committee Member Fernando Reimers thanked Deputy Commissioner Marshall for her updates and commented that the Board should reinforce all priorities under the equity agenda. He stressed that the Department's policy audit should take a broader lens and approach, instead of defining the lens of equity too narrowly. Chief of Staff Elena Quiroz-Livanis noted that the policy audit is for all policies and programs at the Department level and then followed up with a question as to whether the suggestion is to prioritize all the areas listed or just under the same umbrella of equity. Chair Hoffman responded that they should be considered under the same umbrella.

Chair Hoffman added that the timeline for the new program review process provided an opportunity for learning and tweaking in the future as public institutions use this new avenue to have their programs approved. Chair Hoffman expressed concern regarding the CAP,

suggesting that there is not currently sufficient collaboration with the K-12 system to disseminate the policy and its implementation downwards to staff on the ground. Deputy Commissioner Marshall responded that a meeting with Commissioner Riley had been arranged prior to the approval of the CAP. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis added that there is on-going collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) vis a vis the 9-16 pathway work. DESE is the leader of that work, which will include a series of regional convenings with superintendents. Additionally, a crosswalk is being created that will demonstrate assessment and placement guidelines from all public higher education institutions. The crosswalk would demonstrate the standard that the institution is using to assess and place students into college level mathematics and English courses. Institutions that want to use different measures other than those allowed in the CAP have to receive approval by the DHE. By creating this crosswalk, students, families, staff, faculty, and anyone who wants to know how their institution assesses and places them, can have access to that information.

Chair Hoffman noted that students should also be discussing these priorities and acknowledged the Student Advisory Council (SAC) representatives present. With this type of information, students can hold their institutions accountable, but the students need the right information. Ms. Quiroz-Livanis noted that SAC had extended an invite for a meeting to discuss CAP. The meeting was helpful, as it highlighted a communication gap. As the Department reviews guidelines, it is important to ensure that these documents are not only for administrators, but that they can also be easily communicated to anyone.

Deputy Commissioner Marshall then transitioned to the next item on the agenda, the OER motion and extended gratitude to Marilyn Billings from UMass Amherst and Susan Tashjian from Northern Essex Community College who co-chaired the working group on OER. Before turning the meeting over to Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment Robert Awkward, she provided a high-level summary of OER work in Massachusetts, which included the initiative at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and the community college Go Open Project funded by the TAAACCT Grant. She also emphasized the important role of students in advancing this work, referencing the resolution brought before the BHE by the SAC in April of 2018.

IV. MOTIONS

List of documents used:

AAC Meeting Power Point, October 15, 2019

AAC Motions 20-03 through 20-07

A. AAC 20-03 Receipt of the Commissioner's Open Educational Resources (OER) Working Group Final Report & Recommendations

Dr. Awkward introduced the motion and provided an overview of the Working Group's Final Report and Recommendations. He highlighted the key elements of OER being pursued in Massachusetts, which include accessible materials in multiple mediums; open license in the public domain; no-cost access; and no or limited restrictions. These elements ensure that those operating in the sphere of OER can access no-cost solutions because of the abundance of resources. The OER working group was launched back in November 2018 with two co-chairs: Marilyn Billings from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Susan Tashjian from Northern Essex Community College.

Dr. Awkward referenced other DHE activities related to OER, including the professional development sessions offered through the UMass-Amherst PIF-funded consortium. He

highlighted OER as part of the equity agenda with its focus on the elimination of financial barriers for students who cannot afford costly textbooks and other course materials. He added that the cost of textbooks rose four times the CPI from 2006 to 2016. Research indicates that a high number of students are unable to enroll or successfully complete a course because of the high cost of books and materials. After providing an overview of the rationale for advancing the use of OER, Dr. Awkward reviewed the charge to the committee, explained the subcommittee structure used to generate the report, and provided a summary of the recommendations in the report.

Board Vice Chair Sheila Harrity inquired how the working group addressed students unable to access OER due to lack of technology. Dr. Awkward said the working group did consider this barrier and addressed the concern by adding long-term recommendations to include increased funding for technology infrastructure at campuses. However, the working group was also clear that institutions should not increase the technology fee to students as this would eliminate savings from the use of OER.

Vice Chair Harrity asked how students or professors update materials for courses and whether OER would be hosted at the institution or state level. OER Working Group Co-Chair Marilyn Billings responded that librarians and instructional technologists at each campus will support faculty with this type of work. Many libraries have lending programs where students can borrow a laptop, and faculty are able to get assistance with where they can locate OER. Part of the regional workshops that UMass Amherst has been hosting also included talking with faculty about these opportunities, defining OER, open licensing, and listing related components.

Chair Hoffman then asked whether data was available on the percentage of students that do not own or have access to a laptop. OER Working Group Co-Chair Susan Tashjian responded that NECC has had a laptop initiative since 2014 to encourage students to use financial aid to purchase a laptop or tablet through the bookstore. Many students are now doing that in lieu of purchasing a textbook, as the laptop or tablet can be used for all classes. Chair Hoffman then inquired as to the laptop/tablet price point. OER Co-Chair Tashjian responded that it ranges, but that tablets are typically at the low end at about \$150, whereas laptops are more expensive.

Student Member Abby Velozo commented that the Dean of Students at her institution is examining the possibility of putting an “OER” seal on courses. The Dean is unsure of the possibility of connecting tenure and OER. Deputy Commissioner Marshall noted that contractual issues exist when referencing tenure, though there has been movement when considering community engaged scholarship as part of the tenure and promotion process in the MSCA contract.

Committee Member Reimers noted the importance of this initiative and collaboration fostered between faculty, students, and the institutions. Given that textbook prices have increased four times the rate of the CPI, communicating these important facts from the department or the task force to leadership at campuses and faculty is important. These important communications will demonstrate the need for OER for students who are unable to afford textbooks. This message will also provide an opportunity for faculty and leadership to strategize on how to transition to OER – perhaps starting at 50% OER courses instead of 100%. Student Member Velozo added that a large portion of professors have heard about OER but are unsure as to how to find the resources. Chair Hoffman noted that an infographic about cost, basic information, and website access would be helpful.

Vice Chair Harrity and Chair Hoffman both asked about the resources available to find and update OER. OER Co-Chair Billings responded that tools exist – one of which is part of Open CUNY’s project, OASIS. George Mason also created an OER meta-finder. Many of these tools are available on UMass Amherst’s website. OER Co-Chair Tashjian noted that there is a program at Rice University in partnership with Open Stacks that offers OER materials for 25 of the highest enrolled courses at the university.

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

AAC 20-03 RECEIPT OF THE COMMISSIONER’S OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

VOTED: The Board of Higher Education receives the final report and recommendations of the Commissioner’s Open Educational Resources Working Group.

The Board thanks the members of the Working Group, including co-chairs Marilyn Billings of the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Susan Tashjian of Northern Essex Community College, and DHE lead staff Robert Awkward, Ph.D. for their work. The Working Group’s findings and recommendations provide a wealth of information about open educational resources issues, challenges, and practices.

The Board directs the Commissioner to continue to work with key stakeholders, including faculty, staff, administration, students, legislators and the leadership at our institutions of public higher education, to implement the short-term recommendations in the report. Further, the Board asks the Commissioner to conduct additional research, coordination, and due diligence on the mid-term and long-term recommendations in the report and to develop a plan of actionable items for Board consideration, as he may deem appropriate. The Board further directs the Commissioner or his/her designee to periodically report back to the Board on the Department’s progress in this regard.

Authority: M.G.L. c. 15A, §9(c) and (u)

Contact: Patricia A. Marshall, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success
Robert J. Awkward, Ph.D., Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment

**B. AAC 20-04 Greenfield Community College
Associate in Science in Adventure Education**

Associate Commissioner Winifred Hagan presented the program. Greenfield Community College’s proposed Associate in Science in Adventure Education program intends to prepare students for immediate employment and serve as a transfer pathway for students pursuing bachelor’s degrees in the field of outdoor leadership and education.

The proposed program also intends to meet the needs of first-generation college students at the beginning of learning about outdoor industries, and meets the needs of graduates of the existing Outdoor Leadership Certificate program (OLP) who wish to complete an associate degree.

Themes of leadership and environmental responsibility are at the core of the proposed Adventure Education program and are central to Greenfield's commitment to value-based, ecologically conscious education.

Reviewers found the proposal to be thorough, carefully considered, timely and supported by the history and resources of the institution. They also underscored the value of Adventure Education as an academic program and recognized its economic value. The proposed program also provides an incentive for students to consider a future career in Adventure Education which, in an era of climate change, provides an academic program that can have an immediate and substantial impact on public awareness and the need for action to preserve natural resources. However, reviewers recommended a more intentional and explicit emphasis on climate issues in the program.

Reviewers also identified a strength of the program; the program provides a focus for the local population to learn in the classroom and/or engage in outdoor recreation opportunities as an introduction or recruitment into a direction, and source of employment in an area that is rich with career options from public education to the recreational and commercial activities. The team found that Greenfield Community College has full capacity to support the proposed program, with a long history of offering outdoor education programming and resources to students and the general public. They also found the course syllabi to be sufficiently detailed and comparable to course offerings at other institutions with adventure education programs and degrees.

Greenfield responded to the review team's report and recommendations and has implemented a more intentional focus on climate change by introducing to students a "Green Compass" tool that measures the impact of a range of activities on the natural world.

Student Member Velozo asked whether other institutions have this program and whether they have been successful in administering the degree. Program Coordinator Bob Tremblay responded that several schools offer four-year programs, including Westfield State University, Salem State University, University of New Hampshire, Prescott College, and Washington County Community College in Maine. Prescott College offers both a BA and MA.

Designee Moreau requested clarification as to whether the materials contain a typo, as they refer to Westfield State in Maine. Chair Hoffman noted that it was indeed a clerical error, and asked that this be corrected in the record.

Designee Moreau then asked about the names of the programs at other institutions, such as the one at Salem State. Mr. Tremblay responded that nomenclature has changed since the 70s and that there has been a wide variety of terms (e.g., outdoor education, outdoor leadership, outward leadership). Over the years, the term "adventure education" has come to the forefront and is now the standard for this field of study. Prescott College also refers to their degree as "adventure education," which reflects the fact that this term is now more commonly used by the industry as well as by other institutions of higher education.

Committee Member Reimers then inquired as to whether there is a teacher preparation program at Greenfield for this type of program and/or whether there is an opportunity to develop a connection between this program and others that would help classroom teachers. Mr. Tremblay responded that by adding a second-year option – given that Greenfield has only offered a one-year certificate program – this program will offer a pathway to four-year schools for those pursuing a career in becoming a classroom teacher.

Vice Chair Harrity inquired as to whether the certificate program would continue, and whether the degree program considered industry-recognized credentials when creating its curriculum. Mr. Tremblay responded that the certificate would continue to be offered, and that there are industry-recognized credentials being offered (e.g., wilderness first responder, professional rock climbing, postal kayaking instructors, and river instructors). He also stated that there is an outdoor emergency certification in development through a joint effort with the national ski patrol. There are 16 ski areas within a 50-mile radius of the institution, so this offers an opportunity to centralize a training location and enroll students. Mr. Tremblay added that employers have considered the one-year certificate program as a provider of an entry-level workforce. By adding a second-year option, there will be more qualified graduates, and the program will set up students for more long-term professional success.

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

AAC 20-04 APPLICATION OF GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO AWARD THE ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE IN ADVENTURE EDUCATION

VOTED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of the **Greenfield Community College** to award the **Associate in Science in Adventure Education**

Upon graduating the first class for this program, the 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, Section 9(b)

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval

**C. AAC 20-05 University of Massachusetts Amherst
Bachelor of Science in Managerial Economics**

Dr. Hagan presented the program. The proposed program in Managerial Economics degree is expected to concentrate on the application of economic principles to decision-making processes. The University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst) intends for its students to develop expertise in microeconomics and quantitative analysis, as well as develop skills in accounting, finance, business strategies, and market demand analysis. The proposed program will also prepare students for post baccalaureate degree programs in economics, mathematics, or statistics. UMass Amherst anticipates that graduates will have career opportunities in research, planning, marketing, and managerial positions.

The review team found the proposed program to have well-delineated goals and means of measuring success, and that the curriculum is congruent with program goals. The team found no major omissions or problems but suggested that including a course on managerial accounting as a requirement rather than as an elective may be a good idea. Reviewers also underscored that the proposal documents provided evidence of a strong need for and interest in the proposed program. In response, UMass Amherst declined the suggestion that Managerial

Accounting be included in the curriculum as a required course. While in agreement that this course is relevant and useful for most students, UMass Amherst found it appropriate not to make the course an absolute requirement for every student, instead emphasizing work with individual students through the advising process.

Referring to a statistic on page 15 of the motion, Vice Chair Harrity requested clarification as to the number of students involved in the program in comparison to the number of students returning that did not graduate. Farshid Hajir, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at UMass Amherst, responded that the program currently exists as a concentration within economics, thus taking an existing program and elevating it to a degree as opposed to maintaining it as a concentration. Students currently in the concentration will switch to the major.

Designee Moreau then asked if there will be a higher demand for the major versus its status as a concentration. Dr. Hajir responded affirmatively, noting that this new model offers an opportunity to market the major better to students. Currently, many students might declare economics or business as their major, but they can now discover this intersectional discipline through the advising process. By having the name of the major listed on the Common Application, it will also increase marketing so more students will enroll in the major as opposed to later switching from one major to another or declaring multiple concentrations. This will in turn provide better access to students and higher rates of success as students will have been on their pathway from the start.

Committee Member Reimers then asked for clarity as to when students declare interest. Dr. Hajir noted that students must declare a major by sophomore year. He also added as an aside that currently admissions into the School of Management is extremely competitive given the number of highly qualified students who are not currently admitted. This major provides a pathway to study business and economics without acceptance into the Isenberg School.

Chair Hoffman noted that the major appeared as an emerging field that combines business and economics but with economics as the title. There being no further discussion, the following motion was duly made, seconded and approved unanimously by all board members present.

AAC 20-05 APPLICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN MANAGERIAL ECONOMICS

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

Upon graduating the first class for this program, the 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, Section 9(b)

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval

**D. AAC 20-06 University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Bachelor of Science in Interior Architecture and Design**

Dr. Hagan presented the program. The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, College of Visual and Performing Arts seeks full authority to offer a Bachelor of Science in Interior Architecture and Design. The closing of Mount Ida College led to UMass Dartmouth being approved for teach-out authority of the Interior Architecture and Design (IAD) program. This degree is a blend of learning through discipline-specific courses, studio art experiences, and general education requirements.

The proposed program is aligned with UMass Dartmouth's mission to distinguish itself as a vibrant, public research university dedicated to engaged learning and innovative research. The proposed degree also supports the goals of the institutional strategic plan - to promote interdisciplinary teaching and to adopt advanced pedagogical and technological approaches that enhance student learning and assessment. The proposed program meets Council for Interior Design Accreditation indicators and National Association of Schools of Art and Design Essential Competencies, Experiences, and Opportunities. The program is intended to expand the institution's role in promoting the local creative economy; and develop new opportunities that will promote an economic impact, community engagement, new research endeavors and community engagement and service-learning opportunities.

External reviewers validated that the proposed curriculum and structure is consistent with the program goals and that admissions and degree requirements are clearly articulated. The team noted that the facilities, equipment, and library resources are adequate; and commended both the considerable financial commitment made to create a solid foundation during the teach-out period and the expansion for a second computer lab.

The team expressed reservations regarding the number of full-time faculty members, suggesting that two would be insufficient for accreditation standards and that a schedule for four full-time faculty should be more clearly articulated. UMass Dartmouth responded that while tenure-track faculty cannot be hired for teach-out programs, once BHE approval is obtained for full degree granting authority, the search process for additional tenure-track faculty will begin. Staff recommendation is for approval of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Interior Architecture and Design program.

Three representatives from UMass Dartmouth were present: Mohammad Karim, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Stephanie McGoldrick, Lecturer; and Rose Mary Botti-Salitsky, Lecturer. Both lecturers were originally at Mount Ida College.

Student Member Anna Grady inquired as to how the program will fit into UMass Dartmouth when no other public institution offers this program. Dr. Karim responded that it was an advantage to be the sole public program in the New England area and the only college in all of Massachusetts to offer this program. The program is located within an institution with a strong engineering department, and there is an expected future partnership between engineering and this program.

Vice Chair Harrity expressed her appreciation that the program was taken on from Mount Ida and inquired as to the process by which UMass Dartmouth accepted credits from students who transferred and may have been seniors. Dr. Karim responded that eleven students graduated last May and that the faculty senate took a vote to accept all credits before the decision was made to bring the program to UMass Dartmouth.

Designee Moreau noted UMass Dartmouth's presence near Roger Williams – a private school with a competing program – and asking whether there was concern over competition and marketing. Dr. Karim responded that they did not consider Roger Williams as competition because as a public university, there is an inherent advantage of price and affordability at UMass Dartmouth.

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

AAC 20-06 APPLICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

VOTED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the application of the **University of Massachusetts Dartmouth** to award the **Bachelor of Science in Interior Architecture and Design**.

Upon graduating the first class for this program, the 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, Section 9(b)

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval

E. AAC 20-07 Approval of Academic Affairs Committee Motions AAC 20-04 through AAC 20-06 on a Consent Agenda

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

AAC 20-07 CONSENT AGENDA

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

- AAC 20-04 Greenfield Community College
Associate in Science in Adventure Education
- AAC 20-05 University of Massachusetts Amherst
Bachelor of Science in Managerial Economics
- AAC 20-06 University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Bachelor of Science in Interior Architecture and Design
- AAC 20-07 Approval of Academic Affairs Committee Motions AAC 20-04 through AAC 20-06 on a Consent Agenda

Authority: Article III, Section 6, By-Laws

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

There was no other business.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.