



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday, April 5, 2018

5:30 p.m.

Murdock 208

The following Trustees were present:

Susan Gold, Chair; JD Chesloff, Vice Chair; Mohan Boodram; Brenda Burdick; Lisa Chamberlain; Frederick Keator; Denise Marshall; Rob Reilly; Mitchell Chapman, Student Trustee

The following Trustees were absent:

John Barrett III

Kathy Therrien

Staff/Faculty present:

James F. Birge, President; Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President; Larry Behan, Vice President of Administration & Finance; Cindy Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Dan Colonno, Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police; Cathy Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs; Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs; Molly Fannon Williams, Interim Vice President of Institutional Advancement; Bernadette Alden, Director of Marketing and Communications; Chris MacDonald-Dennis, Chief Diversity Officer; Professor Mariana Bolivar; Professor Justin Golub; Professor Amber Engelson; and Professor Diane Scott

Other Guests:

Matt Noyes, Director of Trustee Relations

Chair Gold called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

She noted that the Board would be entering into Executive Session after the President's Report and would not reconvene in open session. The purpose of the Executive Session is to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto as designated in purpose #4 of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law Guide.

Chair Gold then welcomed three new trustees at today's meeting – Brenda Burdick, senior manager of marketing and public relations at General Dynamics Mission Systems and Frederick Keator, Managing Partner of the Keator Group; who both bring a wide range of expertise and experience along with the new student trustee, Mitchell Chapman.

Complying with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present, the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met at 5:30 p.m. at Murdock Hall on April 5, 2018 with Board Chair Gold presiding.

She then introduced Matt Noyes, Director of Trustee and Government Relations with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and thanked him for attending today's meeting and introduced the faculty members in attendance.

Approval of Minutes: December 7, 2017 Board of Trustees meeting

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 7, 2017, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein with one abstention.

Report on the Minutes of the February 27, 2018 Student Affairs Committee Meeting

Chair Gold reported on behalf of the committee. The committee received an update from Heidi Riello, Director of the Counseling Center, on the nationwide trend of increased need for mental health services for college students. She shared that MCLA has added staff each of the last two years to address the increased need.

The committee discussed issues related to providing services such as staff capacity and the lack of availability to see students more regularly, cost of providing services to students (which are free of charge), and the availability of clinicians for off-campus referrals which often include transportation issues. They also heard about processes in place for dealing with emergencies and received information on a potential tool that the College is exploring, TAO (Therapist Assisted Online), a suite of online mental health tools that more colleges are using.

The committee then heard from sophomore Julie Gambill and freshman Juliana Henault about their desire to establish a campus food bank to address food insecurity on campus. They shared their personal stories and why they are interested in this topic. The goal is to have this be a service that is available with minimal information required to access. Additionally, the students are talking with Aramark, the College's food service provider, about establishing a community meal swipe card.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the February 27, 2018, meeting of the Student Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the December 7, 2017 Enrollment Management Committee Meeting

Trustee Boodram reported on behalf of the committee. The meeting opened with an update from Director of Admission, Gina Puc, on fall events including Open Houses and Preview Days. The December John and Abigail Adams Scholarship reception for Berkshire County drew the largest attendance to-date and overall the Admission Office saw an 11% increase in fall semester visitors.

A full slate of events is planned for the spring which includes the addition of a fourth Scholarship as well as a Multicultural Overnight for students from the Boston area.

Berkshire County high school applications are seeing an early increase and the academic profile remains strong with a 10% increase in awarded Presidential Scholarships. Dean Joslin reported on the fall freeze numbers and current data on spring registrations which is in line with previous years.

The committee had a demonstration of Degree Works and learned about the advantages it holds for students and academic advisors.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 7, 2017, meeting of the Enrollment Management Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the March 21, 2018 Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Chamberlain reported on behalf of the committee. Asst. Prof. McIntosh shared plans regarding the establishment of a Communications major. Currently, students who wish to focus on Communications receive a bachelor of Arts in English with a concentration in Communications. The establishment of this new major is in response to students interested in a stronger focus on studying broadcast and journalism and was vetted through focus groups involving all students in that department. A concentration in Digital Media Innovation has been added as well which will include courses in digital production and management.

Dean Joslin reviewed the process to have a new major approved by the Board of Higher Education. The next step is to have two peer reviewers evaluate the College's proposal. The goal is to have the new major voted on at the June Board of Higher Education meeting.

It was noted that faculty personnel items and the requirements for each step (reappointment, promotion, and tenure) are designated in the faculty contract with the Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA). Reappointments are required each year until the sixth year when faculty must apply for tenure. Faculty can apply for tenure early, before their sixth year of service. There is also an option for early promotion based on the exceptional clause and this option applies to Prof. Justin Golub who is seeking promotion to Associate Professor as well as applying for tenure.

The following faculty have been recommended to the President for fifth, fourth, third, and second year reappointments.

Reappointment to a 5th year

Kerri Nicoll, Sociology, Anthropology; and Social Work and Jenna Sciuto, English/Communications

Reappointment to a 4th year

David Cupery, History, Political Science and Public Policy; Shawn McIntosh, English/Communications; Ruby Vega, Psychology; and Kebra Ward, Physics

Reappointment to a 3rd year

Eric Doucette, Biology; Anna Jaysane-Darr, Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work; Erin Kiley, Mathematics; Chali Nondo, Business Administration; and Samantha Pettey, History, Political Science and Public Policy

Reappointment to a 2nd year

Tara Barboza, Business Administration; George Hamaoui, Biology; Hannah Noel, English/Communications; Victoria Papa, English/Communications; and Nicole Porter, Biology - Community Health Education

The committee then reviewed the list of faculty for promotions and had no questions. The following faculty have been recommended to the President for promotion:

Promotion to Full Professor

Ann Billetz, Biology; Sharon Claffey, Psychology; Michael Dilthey, Fine and Performing Arts; Dale Fink, Education; Melanie Mowinski, Fine and Performing Arts; and Elena Traister, Environmental Studies

Promotion to Associate Professor

Justin Golub, Biology

Trustee Chamberlain provided a summary of the four professors applying for reappointment with tenure, and noted that the Committee on Tenure strongly supports all four of these applicants. Faculty who meet the minimum requirements in service and time at rank, can apply for tenure with automatic promotion rather than having to go through each process separately. Professors Amber Engelson and Diane Scott among this year's applicants meet these criteria, so a vote to reappoint them with tenure will also result in their promotion to Associate Professor.

Trustee Chamberlain noted that it was very helpful for the committee to have met these individuals and heard about their work at previous Academic Affairs Committee meetings. As the annual tenure vote is an important component of the committee's work, those opportunities to interact with faculty are very important.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED Unanimously to recommend reappointment with tenure for Mariana Bolivar, Amber Engelson, Justin Golub, and Diane Scott

The Board acknowledged Professors Bolivar, Engelson, Golub, and Scott who were in attendance for this accomplishment.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the March 21, 2018, meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Report on the Minutes of the March 21, 2018 Fiscal Affairs Committee Meeting

Trustee Marshall reported on behalf of the committee. She noted that Laurie Brown is retiring this month after 18 years of service to MCLA. The Administration and Finance staff is grateful for all of her work and contributions to the campus community. The Board joins her colleagues in thanking her for her service and wishing her all the best in the future.

The second quarter financials are strong and the budget is on track for the 12-month budget cycle. Most variances in revenue and expense lines are due to timing issues regarding the receipt or expenditure of funds.

The Committee discussed purposes for which the reserve fund should be used and the importance of continuing to increase it. VP Behan reported that based on current numbers he does not foresee the need to draw from reserves to balance the FY 18 budget.

Director of Student Accounts Bonnie Howland reported that the current outstanding balance for student bills is \$25,000. This is down from \$178,000 at this time last year, a decrease of 86%.

VP Behan provided an update on a recent repair to the water main that feeds Venable Hall. The College worked with the city to re-route water service from another source to avoid a shutdown of water to Venable Hall while the repairs were being made. The leak also affected the patio area between Venable Hall and the Campus Center. The College received emergency funding from DCAMM to cover the costs of this project.

The Campus Center pool project was delayed due to the aforementioned water main issue as the pool could not yet be drained. Now that the water main issue is resolved the College will proceed.

The House 2 budget was released earlier this year and included a 1% increase in appropriation for MCLA— approximately \$160,000. The next step is the release of the House & Senate Ways & Means budget followed by the conference budget.

Trustee Gold inquired about the status of the College's submission to DCAMM for Hopkins Hall. President Birge believes the decision will likely be made in May/June.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the March 21, 2018, meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee and all actions contained therein.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Gold thanked those who were able to attend the Clint Watts reception and lecture last evening.

As mentioned in her March 15 correspondence to the Board, she has asked the Executive Committee to assume responsibility for the 2018 Presidential Evaluation. The Executive Committee met prior to the Board meeting and discussed the process. They will set any other necessary meeting dates in April and May and a draft of the evaluation will be discussed with the full Board at our annual meeting on May 24. The evaluation must be submitted to Commissioner Santiago by June 30 deadline

Trustees Lisa Chamberlain, Kathy Therrien, and Denise Marshall have agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee this year to bring forth names at the May meeting for Chair and Vice Chair. They will be meeting on May 15 at 9:30 a.m.

Chair Gold reminded the Board that there are many end of year events and she hopes they are able to attend as many as possible. Trustees have also been invited to the 16th annual Undergraduate Research Conference on Thursday, April 19, where over 200 students representing all academic fields will be presenting their research and creative work to the college community.

Commencement is on Saturday May 12 and we are honored to have NASA astronaut Stephanie Wilson as the Commencement speaker. She grew up in the Berkshires and is a graduate of Taconic High School in Pittsfield. In addition to Stephanie the College will be presenting honorary degrees to State Rep. Pignatelli, Executive Vice President Denise Richardello, and as well recognizing the late State Rep. Gailanne Cariddi with a posthumous degree.

President's Report

President Birge then shared updates on some new policies and programs. The first is the Tobacco-Free campus initiative that will be implemented in the fall. The second is a pilot free summer housing program for students who are taking eight credits or more or participating in an internship. There is also a new program initiated by student leaders to address food insecurity by establishing a food pantry on campus. They also worked with Aramark to set up a community dining card that can be accessed by those in need which is being funded by private donations.

The Executive Staff held a retreat recently to discuss strategic planning priorities. These will be shared with the Board at the May 24 meeting and there will be a campus-wide strategic planning retreat that morning as well. A request will be forthcoming to the Board to request additional support from reserves for the implementation of these priorities.

One item that emerged from the planning process was the need for new marketing initiatives. The College has contracted with SimpsonScarborough to conduct market research. The work begins with a survey that will be launched next week that the Board, faculty, staff, students, and alumni will receive along with incoming students and select high school guidance counselors.

President Birge also provided an update on the College's Mellon Foundation planning grant. One item that has emerged is the creation of a Berkshire Humanities Council which will create a cultural asset map among other things. A full proposal is currently in development. This work has attracted Google through the involvement of their Arts & Culture app.

Four MCLA art students were recently recognized by the Berkshire Arts Association in their annual show and there were seven alumni included in the recent "40 under 40" awards.

The search for a Vice President of Academic Affairs is ongoing. There are currently 80 regional and national applicants. The search committee meets tomorrow to select up to ten candidates for offsite interviews with a goal of inviting three to five candidates to campus for interview.

Finally, MCLA is excited to welcome Ta-Nehisi Coates to campus next fall and his book "Between the World and Me" will be the summer reading for the incoming class.

Trustee Reilly asked about student support of the tobacco-free campus policy. Student Trustee Chapman shared that SGA will be adding a non-binding referendum as part of spring ballot to get a sense of current feelings on campus though the policy was previously passed by SGA.

Executive Session

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, and a roll call vote of the Board, it was

VOTED: the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto as meeting in open session could have a detrimental effect on the process.

Following the discussion and upon a motion duly made and seconded and a roll call vote of the Board, it was

VOTED: To end executive session.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m.