



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, April 22, 2015
President's Office Conference Room**

Trustees in attendance:

Dr. Will Dudley, Chair
Lisa Chamberlain (via phone)
JD Chesloff (via phone)
Mohan Boodram (via phone)

Others present:

Cynthia Brown, Interim President
Monica Joslin, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs
Jim Stakenas, Vice President of Administration & Finance
Lisa Donovan, Professor, Arts Management
Diane Scott, Assistant Professor, Arts Management
Ginger Menard, Clerk

Trustee Dudley called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

At the March Academic Affairs Committee meeting Trustee Chamberlain requested further opportunities for the Board to interact with faculty and also receive information about academic departments and programs. Professors Donovan and Scott were invited to share details of the Arts Management major – a growing major at the College.

Arts Management Major

Professor Donovan extended her appreciation and excitement at recently receiving the news of her tenure. She feels the Arts Management program is poised for real growth. She reported to the committee on curricular changes, the community engagement aspects of the major, and opportunities available to the students.

Professor Scott offered that she was attracted to MCLA because of its unique position in an area brimming with cultural organizations. MCLA is one of the few institutions of higher education in the nation to offer an undergraduate degree in Arts Management, as it is a relatively new academic discipline.

At MCLA students are immersed in all areas of arts management and learn about issues such as business, marketing, and grant writing from an arts management perspective as well as individualized advising and internships linked to their interests. After completing the series of arts management foundation courses, students explore specific areas of interest based on their career goals including concentrations in the curatorial practices in visual arts, performance, and community engagement.

MCLA's location and connectedness to the cultural organizations in the Berkshires are major features of this program that set it apart from others. MCLA is poised to be a regional model in terms of community engagement and arts education. The size of the student body and the community allow for opportunities to be tailored based on student interest.

Professor Donovan shared an example regarding a convening on Creative Youth Development, the result of a grant written by a student for a grants and fundraising class. This event happened in April at MASS MoCA. The discussion focused on sharing highlights of the emerging conversation on the Creative Youth Development field at the state and national level and to look at next steps to move this work forward. Following this event, the students provided a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), synthesized the results and reported back to the field.

As a department, they will also be collaborating with MASS MoCA and The Clark Art Institute on the Massachusetts Arts Educator Association Conference in North Adams in November 2015. This conference will provide a forum for arts educators to highlight the unique opportunities and deep expertise available in Berkshire County.

Work is also ongoing with the MCLA Readiness Center in response to an Improving Teacher Quality grant to link arts integration with STEM disciplines for early childhood education. A summer institute on arts integration is being created in conjunction with Professor Chris Himes of the Education Department. Additionally, a Collective Impact grant was received from the National Endowment for the Arts entitled "Leveraging Change: Improving Access to Arts Education for Rural Communities." The Arts Management program is working in conjunction with MCC, Vermont Arts Council, and Berkshire Readiness Center to add to the emerging body of literature on rural arts education initiatives. Students have also completed marketing research for the Berkshire Cultural Resources Center.

Trustee Chesloff inquired about the transition of students to the workforce and whether they remain in the Berkshires. Professor Donovan shared that one of the core courses on writing in the arts requires at least one internship, work on resume building, and the creation of an active Linked-In profile. They are also working with Advancement to connect students with alumni. BHIP tracking indicates about 30% of the students who have completed the program received jobs in arts-related fields in the Berkshires. Currently there are approximately 54 students in the major. Many theater and music majors add Arts Management as a minor to provide another skill set to complement their degree.

Student Fees

Vice President Stakenas provided an update on the budget for the upcoming year and the likely need for an increase to student fees.

As a result of 9c cuts from the Governor's office continuing into FY2016, and the lack of funding provided in the state budget for collective bargaining, we will not have sufficient funds to avoid a fee increase. The range that will be presented to the Fiscal Affairs Committee is \$0 to \$500.

The College is obligated to pay collective bargaining increases as these were negotiated between the state and the unions. In past years resources have been allocated by the state to cover these costs but none is included for the coming year.

There are three potential scenarios at this time. If the Senate's budget does not include collective bargaining the maximum increase will be needed. If a portion of collective bargaining is included in the budget the increase might be reduced to \$350. If collective bargaining were fully funded a fee increase might not be needed. It is highly likely that some increase will be necessary.

There has also been some discussion of reevaluating the technology and/or capital fees.

Interim President Brown noted that we are trying to keep any increases moderate and in line with the other state universities.

There is some additional performance-based funding available through the Board of Higher Education and VP Stakenas is serving on the committee to establish a distribution formula among the nine state universities.

It is important to note that MCLA has the largest percentage of Pell eligible students in the state university system.

Decisions on fees must be made by July 1 for billing purposes.

Faculty search updates

Interim Vice President Joslin shared that the following new faculty have been hired for fall 2015:

Kebra Ward, Physics Department

David Cupery - Political Science and Public Policy program

Amber Engelson and Shawn McIntosh, English/Communications Department

Ruby Vega, Psychology Department

All were tremendous candidates with a wide breadth of experience. There are currently two open searches in Business Administration and Computer Science.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.