

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS - NORTH ADAMS, MA

# COMMENCEMENT GUIDE



MCLA



## **To the Class of 2019 Graduates:**

Congratulations! On May 18, 2019, with your friends, families, and mentors looking on, you will commemorate a major milestone together. Earning your degree is a major achievement, and I will be proud to celebrate with you at our 120th Commencement Ceremony.

After spending hours studying, working on presentations and research, making new friends, exploring your passions and discovering new ones, you now join an alumni community that is 18,000 strong. As you prepare for life after college, I encourage you to seek out connections with other MCLA alumni. They would love to hear from you. I also encourage you to stay involved with MCLA as alumni; there are many ways for you to get involved through the MCLA Foundation, and through volunteer opportunities, mentorships, and more.

As you peruse this guide, which outlines important information regarding your Commencement ceremony, remember the time you have spent here, and all the memories you have made here. You will look back on those memories again and again as you continue on your own path.

Before you graduate, please share this guide with your Commencement guests, who will also find it useful. Information is included about parking, reserving tickets, what family members can bring into the ceremony, and more. If you need additional information, please see the contact numbers for additional information printed on page 14.

On behalf of our faculty, staff, and administrators, congratulations! I look forward to seeing you and your families at our Commencement ceremonies.

My Best,

James F. Birge, Ph.D.  
President, MCLA

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# Countdown to Commencement

- February 1** Deadline to file Intent to Graduate.
- March 25-April 8** Packages for Senior Days go on sale.
- April 16** Purchase cap and gown from Bookstore. Undergraduate and Master's package will include cap, gown and tassel. Master's hood purchased separately.
- April 24, 25, 26, 30** Pick up tickets for the Commencement Ceremony. Each student will receive a maximum of five tickets. If you are no longer on campus, you can call 413.662.5224 to have your tickets mailed to you. Candidates can enter the "extra ticket lottery" while picking up their tickets. Students can apply for up to two extra tickets. **Extra tickets are not guaranteed.**
- May 2** Lottery results will be emailed to graduate's MCLA email address.
- May 3 and 4** Lottery tickets will be handed out in the Campus Center.
- May 13** Alumni Reception
- May 13-18** Senior Days
- May 17** Commencement Ceremony Information meeting at 10 a.m. in the Amsler Campus Center Gym.
- May 17** Baccalaureate Ceremony at 2 p.m. in the Amsler Campus Center Gym. Lineup begins at 1:30 in Sullivan Lounge. Doors open at 1 p.m. No tickets needed.
- May 18** Commencement Ceremony at 11 a.m. in the Amsler Campus Center Gym. Graduate Lineup is at 10 a.m. in Venable Gym. Amsler Campus Center Gym Doors open at 9:30 a.m. Tickets required. (Simulcast locations open at 9:30 a.m. No tickets required.)
- May 18** Commencement Celebration at 1 p.m. on Murdock Lawn. Rain location in Venable Gym. No tickets needed. All Guests Welcome.

# Schedule for Commencement Activities

## Friday, May 17

- 10 a.m. Commencement Information Meeting for all graduates in the Campus Center gym.
- 1 p.m. Amsler Campus Center Gym doors open for Baccalaureate Ceremony guests. No tickets needed.
- 1:30 p.m. Graduates line up in Sullivan Lounge. Academic regalia required (gown only).
- 2 p.m. Baccalaureate Ceremony begins.
- 3 p.m. Baccalaureate Reception in the Campus Center Marketplace.

## Saturday, May 18

- 9:30 a.m. Education Department Pre-Commencement Breakfast for Master of Education and CAGS degree candidates will be held in the Education Conference Room, Mark Hopkins Hall Room 209. Families welcome. RSVP required. RSVP to Michelle Delisle at [m.delisle@mcla.edu](mailto:m.delisle@mcla.edu).
- 9:30 a.m. Amsler Campus Center Gym doors open for Commencement Ceremony guests. Tickets are required. Sullivan Lounge doors open for simulcast with air conditioning for Comment Ceremony guests. No tickets required for simulcast.
- 10 a.m. Students arrive in Venable Gym. They pick up their card with their name and degree from the Registrar's table and then line up behind their chosen major. Academic regalia is required (cap and gown); Masters and CAGS candidates should carry their hoods. Note: bachelor's degree candidates wear tassels on the right; graduate degree candidates wear tassels on the left.
- 10:45 a.m. Procession begins.
- 11 a.m. Commencement Ceremony.
- 1 p.m. Ceremony ends. (*approximately*)
- 1 p.m. Commencement Celebration on Murdock Lawn

## Commencement Events

**Senior Days:** Senior Days is a final opportunity for members of the graduating class to spend time together socializing, recalling memories of their experience at the College, and celebrating their individual and collective achievements. Students participate in the senior-only events leading up to and including the Commencement Ceremony. **Students wishing to participate in Senior Days must register for the program.**

**Baccalaureate:** This program allows members of the graduating class to formally give thanks and reflect on their years of education at MCLA with family, friends, and members of the college community who are in attendance. The program includes a series of readings of Ivy poems and orations written by previous graduating classes and is a time for the class to debut their written poem for the college community.

**Ivy:** During the Baccalaureate Ceremony graduates are given sprigs of ivy, which represent learning and growing. The indirect route that ivy takes as it grows is a metaphor for the educational journeys of our students. During MCLA's history, an ivy sprig used to be planted at the base of Murdock Hall and over time came to cover the building. Since the College no longer plants ivy at the base of Murdock, graduating students are given ivy, then give leaves to those they feel have positively impacted their education at MCLA.

**Commencement Ceremony:** Often referred to as "Graduation," the Commencement ceremony is an academic exercise in which diplomas are conferred. This ceremony is for students projected to successfully complete all of their graduation requirements by the end of that spring or summer semester. Students completing all their requirements by the end of the previous fall semester may also participate in the upcoming spring ceremony.

You will not receive a diploma at the Commencement ceremony; you *will* receive your official diploma cover. Conferral of a degree occurs when the registrar finalizes the student's academic record and confirms that all requirements have been satisfied. Participation in the Commencement ceremony does not constitute conferral of the degree. Similarly, inclusion of a student's name in such publications as the Commencement program does not confirm eligibility for the degree.

**Regalia:** Graduates participating in MCLA Commencement ceremonies are required to wear official MCLA regalia (cap, gown and tassel) available exclusively through the MCLA Bookstore. Professional dress and appropriate footwear is strongly recommended for all Commencement ceremony participants. **MCLA reserves the right to request that graduates change inappropriate attire before they will be allowed to participate in the Commencement ceremony.**

**Cap Decorating:** The top of a graduate's cap may be decorated. Decorations should represent the graduate and the institution with dignity, decorum and pride. The College requests that caps are not decorated in a way that would impede the view of those students sitting behind one's cap.

**Honor Cords:** Honor Cords are tokens of achievement consisting of twisted cords with tassels on either end. Cords are awarded to members of honor societies or for various academic and non-academic achievements, awards, or honors. Usually cords come in pairs with a knot in the middle to hold them together. They are worn over the gown at the Commencement Ceremony and Celebration. Similarly, Spirit Cords are given to honor those students who support the College with a gift. Cords are not needed for the Baccalaureate Ceremony.

**Commencement Celebration:** The Commencement Celebration is a post-Commencement ceremony party with music and refreshments held on the Murdock Lawn. You may bring as many guests as you like to celebrate your accomplishment. No tickets are needed.

#### **Commencement Ceremony Viewing Options**

Guests who do not have tickets are able to watch the live stream ceremony in the Amsler Campus Center in Sullivan Lounge or the Marketplace. Both locations are air-conditioned and allow strollers. Tickets are not required. The Campus Center Gym requires a ticket, is not air-conditioned and does not allow strollers. *See map on page 16.*

There will be a live stream of the Commencement ceremony and keynote address on the College YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/mclaedu](http://www.youtube.com/mclaedu). Please check MCLA.edu or this page for a direct link to the live stream on the day of Commencement.

# Graduation Information

## Degree Requirements

Currently enrolled students can apply for graduation online through Banner Self-Service. From the portal page, select "Banner" in the header bar. From the student menu, select "Student Records" and then select "Apply for Graduation."

Students can also download the graduation application form from the Registrar's Office site: <http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/registrar/>

## Graduation Requirements

Students should review the requirements for graduation to ensure they will have completed all of the necessary steps in order to graduate. This information can be found at <http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/registrar/graduation/index> or through the Registrar's Office at (413) 662-5216, or [registrar@mcla.edu](mailto:registrar@mcla.edu).

## Graduation with Distinction

Students of superior academic achievement graduate with distinction according to their quality point average earned at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts only.

Summa cum Laude	3.800 - 4.000
Magna cum Laude	3.600 - 3.799
Cum Laude	3.300 - 3.599

## Transcript Request Policy

MCLA policy prohibits faxing transcripts. Please allow 3-5 days processing or up to 3 weeks during peak processing time. Transcripts are mailed first class postage only. Transcripts include all academic history. Transcripts are signed and stamped with the college's official seal. Transcripts are mailed in individual envelopes stamped as official. Processing fee is \$5 per copy for paper requests delivered or mailed to the office. Transcripts will **NOT** be processed if there are outstanding obligations to the College or holds on student records.

This information can be found at <http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/registrar/records-forms/transcripts>.

## Diplomas

Diploma covers are distributed at the ceremony. Diplomas will be mailed after the ceremony.

# **Ticket Information**

## **Who Needs a Ticket?**

Tickets are **not** required for graduates who are participating in processional for the Commencement ceremony.

Tickets are required for anyone age three (3) and older. Children under age 3 will be expected to sit on the lap of a parent or guardian.

Students will be allotted up to five (5) tickets for family and guests.

## **How Do I Get My Tickets?**

Tickets will be handed out in Amsler Campus Center Marketplace during the following dates and times. All students **must have their MCLA ID** in order to pick up tickets. If you would like tickets and cannot pick them up at these times, you must call 413-662-5224 or email [advancement@mcla.edu](mailto:advancement@mcla.edu) before 5 p.m. on Monday, April 29, 2019. **No tickets will be available via phone or email after 5 p.m. on Monday, April 29, 2019.**

Wednesday, April 24, 2019 from 1-5 p.m.

Thursday, April 25 from 12-5 p.m.

Friday, April 26 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, April 30 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

## **Can I Get Extra Tickets?**

While picking up their tickets, students may enter a ticket lottery for up to two extra tickets. Students entering the ticket lottery will submit their name, MCLA email address and cell phone (optional, for texting). All lottery entries must be made via the ticket pickup times, dates and options listed above. Those who receive tickets through the lottery will be contacted by 10 a.m. Thursday, May 2, 2019 by email and text listed on their entry. **All recipients must claim their tickets by 10 a.m. on May 3, 2019.**

## **What if I Lose My Tickets?**

**Lost tickets are not replaceable.** All guests (3 and older) must have a ticket in order to enter the Amsler Campus Center Gym for the Commencement Ceremony. Guests without tickets may view the ceremony in air-conditioned simulcast locations.

# Commencement Ceremony Lineup and Reader Card Instructions

## Lineup

Reader cards for bachelor's and master's degree graduates are available for pick up during Commencement lineup in Venable Gym.

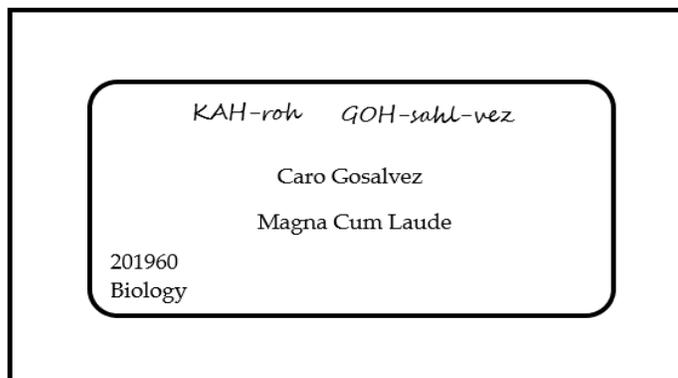
When graduates arrive at Venable gym they should head to the Registrar located at a table in the back of the gym to pick up their reader card with their name and degree.

During the ceremony, reader cards are handed to the announcer who will read your name and any honors as you walk across the stage.

Once graduates have their cards, they can line up behind the signs for their majors, located on stanchions throughout the gym. If the graduate has a double major, they may line up with whichever major they choose. Be sure to keep track of your reader card until you hand it to the official who is reading names during the ceremony. The procession will be two people across. Graduates will be seated with the people standing in front of them and behind them, not the person standing beside them.

## Example of a Reader Card

During individual recognition, graduates should hand their reader card to the announcer. The card is preprinted with the graduate's major and name and any distinction. If the graduate's name is difficult to pronounce, the graduate should clearly print the phonetic pronunciation on the card. If you believe your name might be mispronounced, you may call 413-662-5176 and record your name. You will be asked to spell your name and then say it three times. This will help our Commencement announcer pronounce your name as accurately as possible. This voicemail will accept names until midnight on May 12, 2019.



*Example of a Commencement Reader Card*

# **Processional, Recognition, and Instructions**

## **Graduate Processional**

College staff will direct line-up activities and will be available to assist graduates before and during each Commencement ceremony.

The procession from Venable Gym will begin at 10:45 a.m.

## **Individual Recognition**

Throughout the ceremony, graduates will appear before family, friends, fellow graduates, and business and professional leaders from our community. Graduates should represent themselves and the College with dignity, decorum, and pride. *The College reserves the right to ask anyone to leave the ceremony.*

## **Recessional**

Graduates will not be able to leave the ceremony early and should plan to meet their guests on Murdock Lawn (or the rain location in Venable Gym) once the ceremony concludes. The recessional will be led by the platform party and faculty, followed by graduates. Guests are asked to wait to leave the gym until all graduates have exited.

## **Photography and Recording Equipment**

MCLA has arranged for Grad Images to take professional pictures of all graduates as they cross the stage during the ceremony. Graduates will be contacted at a later date with purchasing information, but are under no obligation to purchase photos. Guests are required to photograph or shoot video from their seats only and must not obstruct the view of others.

## **Information to Share With Your Guests**

Commencement information is available online at [mcla.edu/Commencement](http://mcla.edu/Commencement).

Early arrivals will have the best choice of seating in the Amsler Campus Center Gym. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. Guests interested in sitting together should arrive together. All guests (age 3 and older) must have a ticket.

First Aid is located in the rear of the Amsler Campus Center Gym. Paramedics will be available on-site throughout the ceremony.

Lost and Found is located in the Amsler Campus Center Marketplace Info Booth.

MCLA is proud to be a tobacco free/smoke-free campus.

All adult-aged campus community members participating in Commencement activities and guests attending Commencement activities must have a valid form of government-issued identification with them at all times. Guests under 18 years old are not required to meet this standard.

Bags and personal items are prohibited in any areas where Commencement activities - including Baccalaureate - are taking place. All personal items brought into these areas are subject to search.

### **Prohibited items at activities in the Amsler Campus Center include:**

- Bags, backpacks, large handbags, briefcases, duffle bags, luggage, and all like articles
- Balloons, posters or other view obstructing material (there will be an area outside of the venue to tie up balloons, which can be given to a graduate during the celebration on Murdock Lawn.)
- Noise makers (air horns, vuvuzela, etc.)
- Coolers
- Parcels
- Pets (only service animals allowed)
- Alcoholic beverages, drugs, or illegal substances
- Strollers (stroller parking area outside of venue)
- Laser pointers
- Firearms
- Weapons in violation of the College's weapons policy or any object that is a weapon per se (stun guns, firearms, Tasers, handcuffs, brass knuckles, sticks, clubs, batons, martial arts instruments, pepper spray, knives, etc.)
- Fireworks or any explosive/incendiary device
- Glass or metal containers
- Canes, chains, or sticks of any length not intended for medical use

Law enforcement and the College reserve the right to restrict any item not specifically mentioned in the list on page 12.

Community members or guests found in possession of the above-mentioned items may be turned away and/or asked to leave the Commencement ceremony. All items will be confiscated and disposed of where applicable. The College and law enforcement **will not return items of an illegal nature** to anyone and reserves the right to file criminal charges for possession of illegal items when warranted.

No storage or check area will be provided for prohibited items. Prohibited items that are NOT ILLEGAL should be stored in the trunk of a vehicle or other safe location outside of the Commencement area.

### **Safety Guidelines:**

- No standing is allowed in the back area of the Amsler Campus Center near the gymnasium doorways, hallways, or exits at any time. The campus center patio or secondary viewing area may be used for that purpose.
- Building access will be limited to those areas where Commencement activities are taking place. All other campus buildings will be secured and will require contacting Campus Police for access.
- No vehicles may be left standing unattended at any time. Unattended standing vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense.
- No personal property may be left unattended at any time. Unattended property will be confiscated, inventoried and brought to Campus Police Headquarters at 277 Ashland Street for safe keeping.

**All MCLA community members and guests are strongly encouraged to report any suspicious activity to Campus Police by calling (413) 662-5100 or extension 5100 from any campus phone.**

All MCLA community members and guests attending Commencement activities are expected to comply with the reasonable requests of law enforcement and College officials. Failure to do so may lead to removal from Commencement and/or criminal charges being filed.

## **Information for Accessibility Needs**

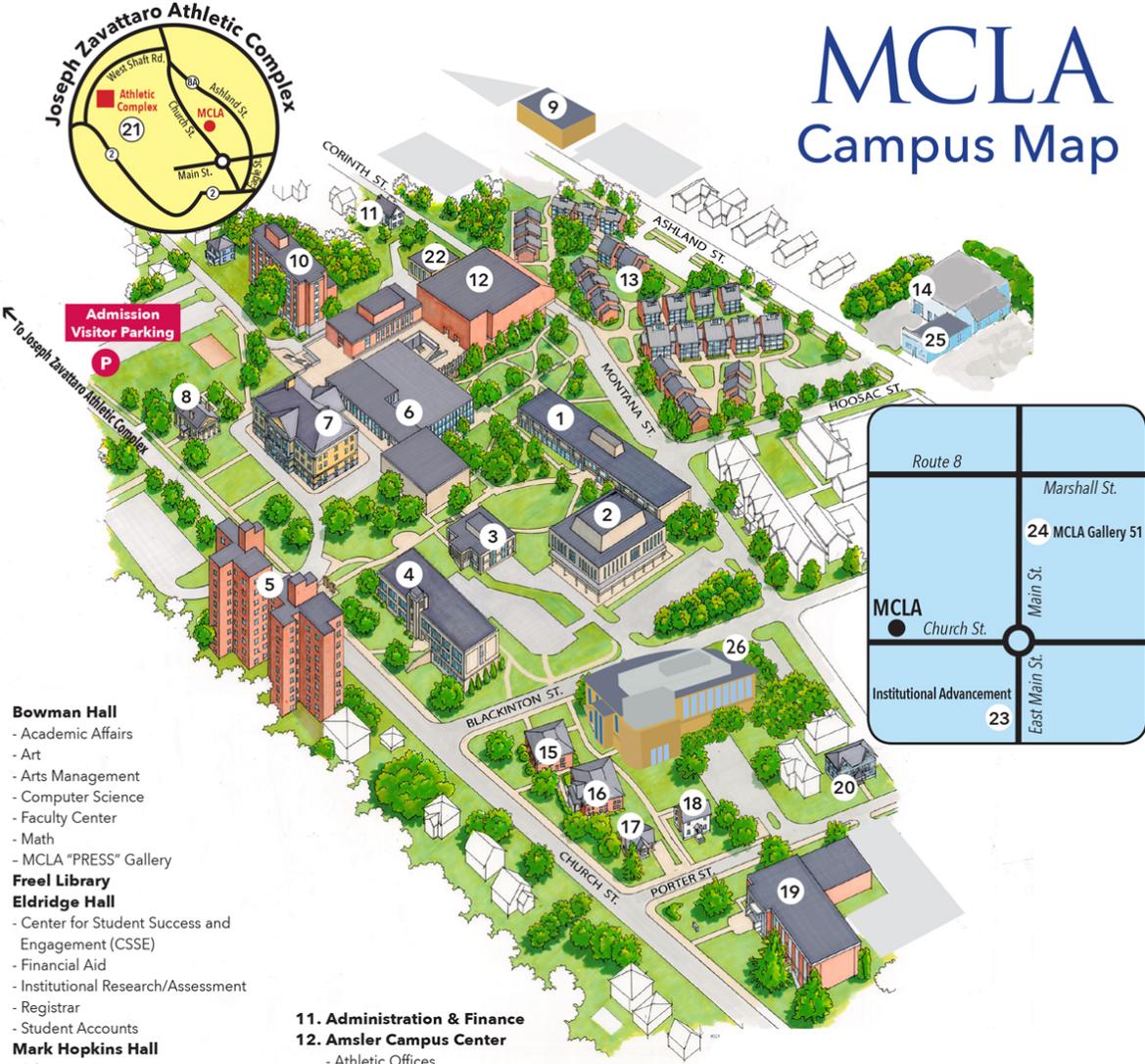
Parking is available behind Murdock Hall with additional parking behind Bowman Hall. Seating is available in the first section to the left as you enter the gym; this section is reserved for handicapped persons plus one guest only on a first come, first served basis.

Parking is allowed in all MCLA lots and legal street parking. Parking behind Murdock Hall is reserved for Handicap parking.

## **Important Phone Numbers**

- Graduate Registration - Registrar's Office, 413.662.5216
- Graduate or Parent Questions - Student Development, 413.662.5129
- MBA Graduate Questions - Nancy Ovitsky, 413.662.5306
- M.Ed. Graduate Questions - Michelle Delisle, 413.662.5381
- Parking / Handicapped Access / Wheelchair Requests - Public Safety, 413.662.5284
- General Commencement Event Questions – Jackie Kelly, 413.662.5201
- General Senior Days and Baccalaureate Questions – Natty Burfied, 413.662.5120

# MCLA Campus Map



- 1. Bowman Hall**
  - Academic Affairs
  - Art
  - Arts Management
  - Computer Science
  - Faculty Center
  - Math
  - MCLA "PRESS" Gallery
- 2. Freel Library**
- 3. Eldridge Hall**
  - Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE)
  - Financial Aid
  - Institutional Research/Assessment
  - Registrar
  - Student Accounts
- 4. Mark Hopkins Hall**
  - Education
  - English/Communications
  - Honors Center
  - Human Resources
  - TV Studio
- 5. Berkshire Towers**
  - Student Housing
- 6. Venable Hall**
  - Athletic Training
  - Shipping and Receiving/Mailroom
  - Venable Gym
  - Venable Theatre
- 7. Murdock Hall**
  - Academic Technology Center
  - Business Administration
  - Computer Support Services
  - Sociology/Anthropology/Social Work
  - Writing Center
- 8. Smith House**
  - Office of Admission
- 9. Facilities Management**
- 10. Hoosac Hall**
  - Student Housing

- 11. Administration & Finance**
- 12. Amsler Campus Center**
  - Athletic Offices
  - Bookstore
  - Cafeteria
  - Convenience Store
  - Fitness Center
  - Gymnasium
  - Radio Station
  - Student Affairs
  - Swimming Pool
- 13. Flagg Townhouse Apartment Complex**
  - Student Housing
  - Residential Programs & Services Office (RPS) - TH #89
- 14. Shipping and Receiving/Freight**
- 15. 87 Blackinton Street**
  - President's Office
- 16. Mountain One Student Wellness Center**
  - Health & Counseling Services
- 17. 100 Porter Street**
  - Interdisciplinary Studies/Modern Languages/Philosophy
- 18. 94 Porter Street**
  - Fine & Performing Arts
- 19. Church Street Center**
  - Eleanor Furst Roberts Auditorium

- 20. 72 Porter Street**
  - History/Political Science
- 21. Joseph Zavattaro Athletic Complex**
  - Ron Shewcraft Turf Field:
    - Men's & Women's Soccer, Women's Lacrosse
  - Baseball Field
  - Softball Field
  - Tennis Courts
- 22. Power Plant**
- 23. Institutional Advancement/Alumni Relations**
  - located at 228 East Main Street in North Adams
- 24. MCLA Gallery 51**
  - located at 51 Main Street in North Adams
- 25. Campus Police Department**
- 26. Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation**
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Environmental Science
  - Physics
  - Psychology

## Overnight Accommodations

### North Adams, MA 01247 (Area Code 413)

Blackinton Manor B&B	1391 Massachusetts Avenue	663-5795
Holiday Inn- Berkshire	40 Main Street	663-6500
The Porches Inn	231 River Street	664-0400
Whitcomb Summit Retreat	229 Mohawk Trail	664-0007
The Inn on East Main Street	182 East Main Street	664-2099

### Williamstown, MA 01267 (Area Code 413)

1896 House (Barnside & Pondsides)	910 Cold Spring Road	458-1896
Berkshire Hills Motel	1146 Cold Spring Road	458-3950
Clover Hill Farm	249 Adams Road	458-3376
Cozy Corner Motel	284 Sand Springs Road	458-8006
Green Valley Motel	1216 Simonds Road	458-3864
House on Main Street	1120 Main Street	458-3031
Howard Johnson's Express Inn	213 Main Street	458-8158
Journey's End Lodge	61 Cobbleview	202-802-0880
Maple Terrace Motel	555 Main Street	458-9677
Northside Motel	45 North Street	458-8107
The Orchards Hotel	222 Adams Road	458-9611
The Birches at Steep Acres Farm	522 White Oaks Road	458-8134
The Villager Motel	953 Simonds Road	458-4046
Upland Meadow House B&B	1249 Northwest Hill Road	458-3990
Williamstown Motel	295 Main Street	458-5202
Willows Motel	480 Main Street	458-5769

### Adams, MA 01220, Cheshire, MA 01225, Lanesborough, MA 01237, Pittsfield, MA 01201 (Area Code 413)

Bascom Lodge on Mt. Greylock	30 Rockwell Road, Lanesborough	743-1591
Harbour House Inn	725 North State Road, Cheshire	743-8959
Lanesborough Country Inn	499 South Main Street, Lanesborough	442-1009
Weathervane Motel	475 South Main Street, Lanesborough	443-3230
Berkshire Inn	150 West Housatonic Street, Pittsfield	499-3000
Best Western Berkshire Hills Inn & Suites	1350 West Housatonic Street, Pittsfield	442-8714
Berkshire Plaza Hotel	1 West Street, Pittsfield	499-2000

*MCLA does not endorse or rate these businesses. This list is intended as a reference guide for those seeking overnight lodging.*