



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD of TRUSTEES
Enrollment Management Committee Meeting
October 19, 2017
Murdock Hall, Room 208**

Members in attendance:

Mohan Boodram, Chair
Buffy Lord

Others Present:

James F. Birge, President
Susan Gold, Board Chair
Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President
Gina Puc, Director of Admission
Elizabeth Petri, Director of Financial Aid

The meeting was called to order at 2:30pm. Chair Boodram opened the meeting.

Admissions Update

Travel Season Trends

G. Puc shared that the Admissions staff has been noticing a shift in certain student behaviors in their travels. Students continue to hesitate to sign-up for college mailing lists and prefer to browse at their leisure online. In addition, cost continue to be a major concern for families and there seems to be an increased number of parents attending college fairs for their students while they attend afterschool activities. Majors of interest that students are inquiring about: nursing, engineering, game design, photography, and graphic design.

Campus Visits

G. Puc reported that there are a number of student visit trends shaping the way Admissions constructs campus events. Students are visiting later in the cycle, after acceptance. Students are looking for more personalized visits that they have a say in scheduling, including class visits/access to faculty and lunch with a current student, and they are looking for opportunities to post on their social media feeds. More students are showing up unannounced and “secret shopping” institutions. Diversity and inclusion continue to be important topics raised by families.

Commonwealth Commitment Updates

G. Puc shared that the state expanded the program to 40 majors for 2017-2018 and shared highlights of the program, including what students commit to versus what the state program provides (including a freeze on tuition and a tuition rebate). G. Puc shared that this program covers about 25 agreements with Berkshire Community College across multiple majors and that there are a number of other articulation agreements with top feeder community colleges, particularly in NY.

Digital Marketing

G. Puc reported that there has been close collaboration with the Marketing Office to run Facebook and other digital ads based on important college fairs throughout the fall. Video is embedded in all of these ads and the call to action is for students to attend a fall event. There are also ads targeted directly to transfer students, based on their community college locations (geo-targeting). G. Puc also shared that this fall, Marketing is working on videos for 5 academic programs to roll-out in the New Year. Other departments will follow.

Financial Aid Trends

E. Petri shared that the Office of Financial Aid began receiving Fall 2018 files on October 2nd and that the Priority Review date for these FAFSA's is January 1st based on last year's cycle. Packaging updates to Banner (student information system) will be implemented in the first week of November. Director Petri also shared an update on the Perkins Loan program that “sunset” in September. She reported that the federal level talk again is of the “one loan, one grant” program to simplify the aid process for students. Director Petri shared that there are still a number of questions about the sunset process, including the leftover aid in the revolving funds and how institutions will handle this. This prompted discussion with the committee over how these funds have been rectified in the past and discussion of how our peer institutions are handling this. Director Petri also shared that MCLA, like other institutions will be losing the administrative

allowance that came in tandem with the Perkins program. These funds were in the Office of Financial Aid operating budget.

Other Business

Trustee Boodram asked for final clarification on overall fall 2017 enrollment numbers. EVP Richardello reported that as of the enrollment “freeze date” MCLA’s total enrollment was 1,592 total students (1,407 undergrads, 185 graduate students). This is a loss of 50 undergrads and 20 graduate students from fall 2016.

The meeting adjourned at 3:11pm