



**MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING**

May 22, 2025

**MINUTES**

Present: Dr. Jean Clarke-Mitchell – Chair, Mohan Boodram, Buffy Lord

Staff Present: J. Birge, R. Glejzer, K. Kozak, J. Mendel, J. Smith

Guests: A. Bayer, future Student Trustee

As allowed by executive order of the Governor of Massachusetts, in compliance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present via audio/video-conference, the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees with Chair Clarke-Mitchell presiding was called to order at 8:31 a.m.

Chair Clarke-Mitchell invited Dr. Smith to present on the following topics:

1. Gratitude for Trustee Garrity J. Smith
  - a. The Committee noted appreciation for the work of Trustee Garrity representing and supporting student concerns this year as well as noting his service to campus and his community.
2. Welcome new Student Trustee Trustee Bayer
  - a. The Committee welcomed Allie Bayer who has been elected as the new student Trustee as of July 1. Ms. Bayer introduced herself to the Committee. She is a student athlete with a double major in Psychology and Political Science. She is from Oregon and has also done an internship in a local law office. The Committee welcomes her and looks forward to working with her.
3. An update on the Beacon
  - a. President Birge introduced the topic noting that the Beacon and the Berkshire Eagle have recently published about the future of the Beacon. President Birge had provided an email update to campus correcting some inaccurate information. VPs Glejzer and Smith provided further detail on the support that the college is providing for the future of the Beacon. It is a student-led organization, and it has both support and responsibilities under the SGA process. The SGA, the Student Affairs and Engagement team, Academic Affairs, and faculty advising are all available to them. Journalistic autonomy and professional development opportunity are also important

to this program. There was also discussion that students are learning the process and we are here to support them. VP Glejzer also expressed concern for the vulnerability of the students in the public media and also how they were advised by some faculty. Academic Affairs is addressing the concerns with faculty.

There was discussion about the internal response being shared externally. Administration feels it is accurate and appropriate and the information could be shared if necessary. Chair Boodram remains the sole spokesperson for the full Board. President Birge and Chair Clarke-Mitchell thanked VPs Glejzer and Smith for their leadership and support in this process. Trustee Garrity also noted he is hopeful for the future of the Beacon. There was a brief discussion of the SGA budgeting process and that new Communications Chair Haynes has already reached out to student leaders in journalism.

VP Glejzer left the meeting.

4. Housing Facilities Update – J. Smith
  - a. All construction HVAC projects in townhouses are complete including a new generator.
  - b. Berkshire Gas is installing a gas line from the street to upgrade service.
  - c. Public Safety will remain in the Townhouses and Facilities building next year. The old Public Safety building is being demolished, and the plan is for a new space for Public Safety on Ashland Street.
  - d. There was discussion of long-term planning for the future of the Townhouses which is part of the Strategic Planning proposal. This process will involve the Board if it moves forward. For now, Housing and Admissions are coordinating placements in THs as admissions grows.
5. Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Update – VP Smith detailed usage statistics for our Health Services, Health Promotion, and Counseling Services. A positive aspect of the program is that MCLA students have unlimited visits. We have also activated the UWILL online counseling program. We also offer services through Tapestry.  
VP Smith presented on UWILL statistical analysis that will inform our FSEM (First-Year Seminar) curriculum and student wellness programming. There was also discussion of the process to manage transition of care as students graduate. For local students we have connections with local agencies, for non-local students we work on supporting them in transition including family supports.

The Committee also noted appreciation for the success of the recent commencement.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:28a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kelli Kozak  
Clerk