



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

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

**MINUTES**

**Members in Attendance:** B. Burdick, F. Keator, Y. Spicer

**Staff in Attendance:** J. Birge – President, K. Kozak – Clerk, R. Glejzer – VP, Academic Affairs, J. Mendel – Chief of Staff, J. Smith – VP Student Affairs, R. Ziomek – VP Advancement

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 Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees with Chair Keator presiding was called to order at 8:32 a.m.

Chair Keator invited Dr. Glejzer to present on the following topics:

**Faculty Research Support and Incentive Awards**

Dr. Glejzer noted faculty incentive awards. Some funds will be used for collaborative projects that will be planned over the summer.

**Creative Civic Learning & Engagement Award (\$2,000 each)**

- Greg Scheckler- Pictures within Pictures: Migrations in Time
- Lisa Donovan- Developing an Open Educational Resource (OER) for Community Arts Engagement and Education

**New Course and Program Development Awards (\$2,000 each)**

- Dr. Justin Golub- “Pre-Professional Pathways at MCLA”

**Research Awards for tenure-track faculty (\$3,000)**

- Dr. Sam Bruun- “Theoretical Framework and Methodology”

**Sabbatical Research Awards for approved sabbatical projects (\$4,000 each)**

- Ms. Michaela Petrovich- “Reimagining the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Casket”
- Dr. Ely Janis- The Battle of New York: Henry George, Abram Hewitt, Theodore Roosevelt and the 1886 New York City Mayoral Campaign

### Three-credit Research APRs for Spring 2026

- Carter Carter- “Field Theory: Agrarianism and Analysis”
- Dan Shustack- “Testing predictions of differential migration with a common songbird in Western Massachusetts”
- Drew Best- “Does sweat gland density matter?”

The following faculty have been elected by their department and then appointed by the President to serve a three-year term as department chair:

- Dr. Tom Whalen, Department of Business Administration.
- Dr. Justin Golub, Department of Biology.
- Dr. David Eve, Department of Computer Science.
- Dr. Thomas Byrne, Department of Psychology.
- Dr. Jerome Socolof, Department of Fine and Performing Arts.
- Dr. David Cupery, Department of History and Political Science.
- Dr. Hannah Haynes, Department of Communication and Intercultural Studies.
- Dr. Liz Hartung, Department of Math.

Trustee Spicer joined the meeting.

### **Kleefeld Gift Statement**

VP Ziomek presented details developed in response to further questions from the Board including a confidential document detailing donor specifics that are not public information. Administration would like this to be brought forward to the full Board. Specific questions from Trustees have been addressed and this document allows Administration to provide this as consolidated information. This information (except the confidential information) has been shared in other formats with the Berkshire Eagle as well. Chair Boodram noted that this documentation organizes all details and this is an exciting and transformational gift. It was noted that the Foundation is a separate entity but they are closely tied by mission and function to the College. The proposed board action is a commendation to the Foundation, not an approval of the transaction as the Trustees have no legal standing to vote to approve the gift to the Foundation. It was also noted that academic freedom of the faculty as to how, when, or if, to utilize the art in this building has been a part of this discussion.

### **Journalism Program and Campus Media**

VP Glejzer noted there was recently an article in the student run newspaper regarding the future of the Beacon that was also picked up in local media. We are currently working to update the program to more modern methods of media consumption including technology. There has been substantial change to the program. There have been previous funding challenges in student programming that has been picked up and supported by academic affairs.

VP Smith noted the process for student activities – like the Beacon, including budgeting and resource allocation that is managed by SGA as an elected student body. There is extensive training and communications for clubs and orgs leadership.

The Beacon is a club and is not an academic class. Administration has supported the print and digital platform for publication. The digital platform is the current priority and is managed by the students who are supported by the SGA process. This has been communicated to the faculty advisor as well. The reporter for the Beacon had not researched the background with the administration or asked them for any response to any of the questions prior to publication.

There have been management consultant reviews of the Communications program that resulted in changes to the program. There have also been recent changes in faculty and faculty status. The administration feels that the local media coverage has been unfair to the students.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:29a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kelli Kozak  
Clerk