



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**October 8, 2019**

**87 Blackinton**

**Committee members in attendance:**

Brenda Burdick  
Robert Reilly  
Kathleen Therrien

**Others present:**

James F. Birge, President  
Adrienne Wootters, Interim VP of Academic Affairs  
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk  
Christopher MacDonald-Dennis, Chief Diversity Officer  
Kebra Ward, Assistant Professor of Physics  
David Cupery, Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Hannah Noel, Assistant Professor of Multi-Ethnic Studies and the Digital Humanities  
Ruby Vega, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Trustee Burdick called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. beginning with introductions of members in attendance.

**Tenure Candidacy**

Tenure candidates presenting at this session were:

- Dr. David Cupery, Ph.D. - Department of History and Political Science
- Dr. Hannah Noel, Ph.D. - English and Communications Department
- Dr. Ruby Vega, Ph.D. - Psychology Department, Faculty Development Fellow
- Dr. Kebra Ward, Ph.D. - Physics Department

Each tenure candidate introduced themselves to the Committee members, provided an overview of their background, scholarly work including publications and major presentations, and service, and responded to questions from the Trustees.

Faculty departed the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

### **Core Curriculum Redesign**

Dr. Wootters provided an overview of the college's core curriculum redesign. Redesign efforts began in 2016 with a focus on creating more current course work that incorporates high impact practices, project based learning, and integrated experiences that begin with a student's first year of college. Courses approved for core will be approved by faculty peers.

Dr. Wootters explained that the redesign process had been hindered by work to rule resulting from MSCA contract negotiations. At this time, a committee is in place and working to further the core curriculum redesign with a fall 2021 target for roll-out.

Dr. Wootters responded to questions from Trustees.

### **Title III Initiatives**

MCLA is in year four of five of Title III funding which was awarded \$450,000 per year for five years. The focus of awards granted from Title III funding is on persistence to graduation with the goal of closing the graduation rate gap for ALANA and Pell eligible students.

Projects that have received funding from Title III include the core redesign, software applications including DegreeWorks, and equipment purchases including a thin client server that allows access to software applications via the internet.

Programs to improve retention through living and learning communities for first year student will launch next year. Block cohorts will be developed whereby students will have classes together allowing them to begin building community.

### **Radiology Concentration**

Dr. Wootters provided an update on the radiology concentration resulting from the College's teach-out agreement with SVC. She noted that the course of study is such that the core is taught in first and second years, followed by a concentration in radiologic sciences in the third and fourth years. This model aligns with the College's Health Sciences major offering, and allows MCLA to transition radiology as a concentration within health sciences instead of creating a radiologic sciences major. This concentration will be presented to college governance for approval.

### **Other Business**

In response to questions regarding the recent Education Department evaluation by DESE, Dr. Wootters informed the Trustees that efforts continue to address all areas of concern noted in the evaluation and an improvement will be seen at the next review.

Dr. Wootters reviewed efforts to elevate the office of CSSE and the services they offer students. CSSE should be a one stop shop for all students, all the time, and not viewed as a resource for students experiencing difficulty. A name change is being considered to College, Career and Life Readiness and Dr. Wootters provided a draft pamphlet detailing the services offered through CSSE.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.