



My College. Right from the Start.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 2, 2013
President's Office Conference Room**

The following Trustees were present:

William Dudley, Chair
Mohan Boodram (via conference call)

The following Trustees were absent:

JD Chesloff
Susan Gold

Others present:

Mary Grant, President
Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs
Celia Norcross, Director of Student Activities
Kristina Bendikas, Associate Dean for Assessment and Planning
Gerol Petruzella, Academic Technology Coordinator
Thomas Bernard, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 11:50 a.m. by Trustee Dudley.

MCLA NEASC Accreditation Update

Cynthia Brown and Celia Norcross provided an update on the College planning process related to the 10-year accreditation visit by a team representing the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) which will take place November 3rd-6th, 2013. The self-study document that forms the foundation of the visit was submitted to NEASC and the visiting team members in late September; a copy of the self-study also was provided to each member of the Board. Cindy and Celia thanked the committee and the Board for their engagement with the NEASC process over the past two years of planning.

President Grant noted that the self-study reflects a thorough process of campus engagement. She informed the committee that the NEASC self-study is closely aligned with the College strategic plan, itself an outgrowth of MCLA's 2003 NEASC review. It highlights both the accomplishments and progress that MCLA has made over the past decade, but also the areas where there are opportunities to do additional work and provide additional focus. In particular,

the self-study identifies opportunities to build on MCLA's progress in the area of learning outcomes assessment.

She thanked Cindy and Celia for their leadership as MCLA's NEASC co-chairs. She also acknowledged the work of the more than 100 members of the campus community who contributed to the development of the self-study by serving on Standard teams.

President Grant informed the committee that there will be opportunities for the Board to connect and engage with the visiting team at a welcome reception and dinner on the evening of Sunday, November 3rd, and also noted that the Board is invited to attend the team chair's report that closes out the visit on Wednesday, November 6th.

Presentation on Institutional Assessment and ePortfolio

Academic Technology Coordinator Gerol Petruzella provided committee members with an overview and demonstration of the ePortfolio tool (digiication) used at MCLA. He noted that as part of the First Year Experience course, new students are provided with an ePortfolio template and encouraged to use it as a platform to collect and demonstrate their academic and co-curricular experiences. He also highlighted the role of student ePortfolio Fellows who serve as mentors to their fellow students in the use of the ePortfolio.

Associate Dean Kris Bendikas discussed the role of the ePortfolio in the context of MCLA's overall assessment efforts. The committee discussed faculty involvement in assessment efforts and the time commitment that requires as well as the question of how effective MCLA's ePortfolio platform is in serving students with accessibility needs.

Faculty searches overview

Vice President Brown informed the committee that search process work is underway to recruit faculty in several departments. She explained that the College expects to complete five searches during the current academic year; three positions related to faculty retirements and two new positions, including a re-posting of a search from last year that did not result in a hire. She noted that the decision about which searches to advance reflects departmental needs assessments as well as opportunities to pursue joint appointments in some areas.

The committee discussed the search process, efforts to ensure a diverse applicant pool during the search process, and the regional challenges and unique opportunities related to faculty recruitment at MCLA.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.