



December 16, 2016

Dear campus community members:

President Birge has asked Vice President of Student Affairs Cathy Holbrook and myself to reconvene a College-wide task force made up of faculty, staff, and students to ensure that we carry out the commitments embodied in the MCLA Diversity Statement adopted by the College in December 2014, a copy of which is attached to this memorandum.

The role of this Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force is to assess our campus climate, policies, and practices and recommend the implementation of strategies to enhance its diversity and inclusiveness, enact equitable practices, and ensure our learning, teaching and living environments provide meaningful experiences for all of our students and colleagues.

The President is charging the Task Force to focus on:

- Reviewing, discussing, and taking action on the findings of the Supportive and Inclusive Community Climate Survey being administered in January 2017, after the findings have been shared with the President.
- Engaging in the strategic planning process to integrate the data and information obtained from the survey into the College's new strategic plan to ensure that diversity and inclusion are key pillars of the plan.
- Establishing a structure that creates working groups to address areas of focus that might include:
 - The recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, administration, and members of the Board of Trustees, Alumni Association Board of Directors, and MCLA Foundation Board of Directors.
 - Student recruitment practices and diversity support structures that foster retention and success of all students, in and out of the classroom.
 - Campus programming that brings diverse speakers and trainers to MCLA and where appropriate the wider community to facilitate campus conversations on diversity and inclusion and that promotes structured dialogue on important issues that may be difficult or divisive.
 - Curricular review that promotes the examination of diverse points of view in course content.
 - Creation of MCLA's Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Advisory Committee as required under the State University Equal Opportunity Plan. A summary of that requirement is attached to this memorandum.

- Regular review of College policies and practices to ensure they are equitable and reflect up to date, research-based strategies and objectives.
- Developing structures that allow for regular input from and communication with the MCLA community.
- Considering ways to interface with the wider North Adams and Northern Berkshires community regarding the importance and furtherance of diversity, equity and inclusion.

The work of this task force is critical to furthering the mission and goals of MCLA, and Vice President Holbrook and I are committed to this convening and the ongoing advocacy and development that this work entails. We will be reaching out directly to past members of the Diversity Task Force. We will also invite self-nominations of others interested in active participation in this group, for faculty and staff via your union leadership and for students via SGA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia Brown', written in a cursive style.

Cynthia Brown
Vice President of Academic Affairs

MCLA Diversity Statement

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) is committed to creating a campus climate, as well as a culture that values, represents, and honors diversity in our society. We actively endeavor to recruit and retain diverse students, faculty, and staff.

MCLA fosters meaningful dialogue both in and out of the classroom in order to encourage critical awareness and respect for similarities and differences. MCLA's inclusive education and informed pedagogy reflect and draw from the knowledge and empowerment of all individuals and the diverse groups that make up our college community.

MCLA critically addresses dynamics of inequality, exposing ways in which privilege and under-privilege are produced and maintained over time in society. We create and participate in forums and activities that both model and further equity in an informed manner. We also work to foster equity on campus and in the larger Berkshire community.

Members of MCLA are defined by and/or represent a variety of intersecting and diverse identities and groups, including but not limited to:

- Age
- Class/Socioeconomic Status
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression
- Nationality
- Race
- Religion
- Sexuality

MCLA strives to integrate topics of social, cultural, and physical diversity in the curricular, co-curricular, residential, and work life of the MCLA community. In so doing, MCLA works towards collaboration and purposeful engagement to achieve social justice on campus and in the wider community.

(December 2014)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, DIVERSITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The President of each University shall appoint an Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Advisory Committee. This Committee shall consist of members representing the respective campus constituencies of administration, faculty and librarians, and staff, and should attempt to include student(s).

The Committee shall include appropriate representation of persons of color, women and persons with disabilities. Each President shall consult with his or her EO Officer with respect to these appointments. The EO Officer of each University shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee.

PURPOSE

The purposes of the Advisory Committee are:

1. to serve as an advisory group to the President;
2. to make recommendations to the President as well as to respective campus and governance committees concerning effective implementation of the Universities' Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan;
3. to evaluate institutional compliance with respect to all equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action programs and to recommend appropriate strategies to the President; and
4. to keep informed as to federal and state laws and regulations as well as institutional policies impacting equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Advisory Committee include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. to establish its own rules of order with respect to election of officers, meeting times, quorum restrictions, etc.;
2. to furnish a report of its activities and recommendations to the President upon her/his request, but at least annually;
3. if the EO Officer deems it appropriate, to appoint a member to sit on a search committee as a non-voting member to assure that the search committee complies with affirmative action/equal opportunity policies and regulations; and

4. each University will develop its own policies with respect to additional functions or tasks which may be assigned to this Committee and with respect to Committee members sitting on search committees.

i This EO Plan incorporates by reference, and where applicable, the requirements of: Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1968; Titles I and II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its regulations found at 34 C.F.R. part 106; the Equal Pay Act of 1963; 72 1520495_1 Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988; Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; Section 402 of the Vietnam-era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended; the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; the reauthorized Violence Against Women Act, Pub. Law No. 113-4 (2013); the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act; the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; Federal Executive Order 11246 of 1965, as amended by Executive Order 11375 of 1967; Federal Executive Order 12900 of 1994; Federal Executive Order 13145 of 2000; Federal Executive Order 13160 of 2000; Federal Executive Order 13166 of 2000; Massachusetts Civil Rights Act; Massachusetts General Laws Chapters 151B, 151C, and Chapter 149; St.2011, c. 199 (H3810), An Act Relative to Gender Identity; directives of the BHE, the Universities' Boards of Trustees and the Commonwealth; and other applicable local, state and federal constitutions, statutes, regulations and executive orders.

ii Section 106.13 of the Title IX regulations provides: "This part does not apply to an educational institution whose primary purpose is the training of individuals for a military service of the United States or for the merchant marine." 34 C.F.R. § 106.13. Massachusetts Maritime Academy voluntarily complies with the provisions of this EO Plan that incorporate the requirements of, or make reference to compliance with, Title IX

Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan
Implemented March 15, 2015