



*My College. Right from the Start.*

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
Thursday, October 7, 2010  
Admissions Office Conference Room**

**Members in attendance:**

Tyler Fairbank, Chair  
Jane Allen  
Jameek Clovie, Student Trustee  
Mary K. Grant, ex-officio

**Others in attendance:**

Charlotte Degen, Dean of Students  
Thomas Bernard, Clerk  
Lyndsay Isham, Executive Assistant, Dean of Students  
Dianne Manning, Director of Residential Programs and Service  
Spencer Moser, Coordinator of Service Programs and Activities  
Scott Nichols, Director of Athletics  
Celia Norcross, Director Student Development  
Theresa O'Bryant, Assistant Dean of Students Community Development

The meeting was called to order at 8:59 a.m. by Trustee Fairbank.

**Overview of Student Affairs Division**

**Introduction**

Dean Degen provided an overview of the mission of Student Affairs. She noted that the division helps students capitalize on the opportunities available to them as they grow and achieve their potential. She noted the importance of partnerships within the division and across campus in supporting this work. She acknowledged the members of the Student Affairs team present at the meeting.

Dean Degen offered a summary of the challenges and opportunities facing students and practices in higher education student affairs.

President Grant acknowledged Dean Degen's leadership and the work of the Student Affairs team.

## **Residential Programs and Services (RPS)**

Dianne Manning noted that residence life encompasses meeting student needs and facilitating the creation of a living learning community. Through RPS, students have opportunities to become involved in advisory boards, serve as resident advisors (RAs) and participate in over 300 RPS sponsored programs per year.

President Grant acknowledged Dianne Manning's work in building strong relationships with the Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) in concert with her dedication to managing and cultivating a vibrant residential living program.

## **Athletics**

Student-athletes at MCLA are involved with academic work, leadership development and community service. The program encompasses much more than what takes place on the field. The program also places emphasis on peer education through the NCAA CHOICES (substance abuse prevention program), and on leadership through the Student Athlete Advisory Committee and NCAA leadership programs.

Participation in Division III athletics has grown steadily, with all teams at or near roster capacity and all teams performing competitively on the field.

Scott Nichols thanked the Trustees and President Grant for strong their support, and for investing in athletic programs and facilities.

Athletics also manages intramural/recreation programs and manages the campus fitness center, which recently purchased state of the art fitness equipment.

The President noted that Scott has led the department through many years of service and has effectively contributed to the development of the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference (MASCAC). In particular she underscored the balance of scholarship, leadership, service, and performance promoted under Scott's leadership.

## **Community Development**

Theresa O'Bryant discussed Greek life at MCLA. Currently, the college recognizes one fraternity and one sorority. The Inter-Greek Council (IGC) is the link between the College and Greek organizations. A goal of these organizations is to reinforce the primacy of academic achievement as a component of Greek life.

As assistant dean, Theresa O'Bryant also has responsibility for enforcing student conduct standards. In this capacity the focus is on dealing with issues from a developmental perspective.

President Grant noted that Theresa focuses her work on fostering relationship and trust building with students and parents, and brings a valuable perspective as an alumna of the College to her work.

Celia Norcross discussed student development. She likened the department to a hub of activities across campus and the community. This includes activities and programs, and also collaboration with offices across campus. Student development begins with orientation, as students are welcomed into the MCLA community.

Leadership development is a key aspect of student development. The College offers an array of student leadership opportunities from programs such as Orientation Leaders, Peer Advisors to participation in club and organization executive boards, and elected service through the Student Government Association. Through these opportunities embedded with training, coaching and experience, students develop leadership, communications, and life skills.

President Grant noted that Celia Norcross participates in assessment activities supporting the whole student development paradigm at MCLA, thereby strengthening the connections between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

### **Multicultural Education Resource Center**

Dean Degen spoke about the growing diversity of the MCLA community, and the participation in student life and the progress being seen in the areas of college involvement, success and graduation rate among students from diverse backgrounds. Programs based in the Multicultural Education Resource Center support diverse students and facilitate cross cultural communication and understanding. Thomas Alexander, Coordinator of ALANA and International Student Services was unable to attend the meeting. The President noted that he brings a deep sense of caring to his work in the center.

### **Center for Service and Citizenship**

Spencer Moser noted that service opportunities range from one time volunteer participation in community projects to full engagement in service learning projects where students earn academic credit for service work. MCLA has been recognized in the nation and in the region and has received several awards and recognitions for service programs.

A goal of all service programs is to support students as they develop the skills, awareness, and abilities to be productive members and leaders in their communities and to provide a means for them to understand social contexts, explore their role as citizen and apply what they are learning in their classes to meet community needs.

President Grant acknowledged the work Spencer Moser has done to advance civic engagement programs at MCLA, as well as to build strong partnerships with faculty

engaged in service learning and to develop deep connections with community leaders and service agencies.

### **Discussion**

Trustee Allen noted the campus wide engagement and partnerships that exist to support student success at MCLA. She observes that this presentation illuminates that the many stages of self actualization and development are clearly being supported and student growth is at the center of the division mission. With new committee assignments among the Trustees this year, she discussed the opportunity this presents for Trustees to gain a comprehensive perspective on the College.

Trustee Fairbank asked about how MCLA would assess its Student Affairs program relative to other institutions. President Grant noted that within the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), an important network of peer institutions, MCLA has some programs that stand as best practices, and sees opportunities to explore some programs at other institutions for how they might apply to MCLA.

Trustee Clovie reflected on the student engagement demonstrated in conversation with Secretary of Education Paul Reville last spring, as well as to the sense of connectedness he has experienced within the campus and surrounding community.

Trustee Fairbank expressed the appreciation of the committee to the Student Affairs team.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 a.m.