



My College. Right from the Start.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
April 23, 2014
President's Office Conference Room**

Members in attendance

William Dudley, Chair
Mohan Boodram (via conference call)
JD Chesloff (via conference call)
Susan Gold

Others in attendance

Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
James Stakenas, Vice President of Administration & Finance
Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs
Kristina Bendikas, Associate Dean for Assessment and Planning
Suzanne Hunger, Associate Dean, Center for Student Success and Engagement
Manat Wooten, Assistant Director, Center for Student Success and Engagement
Roberta McCulloch-Dews, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 10:31 a.m. by Trustee Dudley.

Fiscal Year 2015 Budget and Student Fees

Vice President Stakenas presented an update on the state budget process for FY 2015.

If the increase appropriate to the state university system is not funded at the requested level, the College anticipates a fee increase will be necessary. The Fiscal Affairs committee will advance a fee recommendation to the Board for consideration.

Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE)

Associate Dean Suzanne Hunger provided an overview and outcomes of CSSE's initiatives and programs to support students through academic completion in four years, including several in alignment with the Performance Incentive Fund (PIF) program.

These initiatives include 30 Credits in 3 Semesters program (30 in 3); MCLA in 4 degree plans; tutoring; and support for undeclared and transfer students.

Outcomes of these efforts include a reduction in students placed in math developmental courses and an increase among students entering the fourth semester with a declared major. Trustee Dudley noted the progress of students and acknowledged the consistent work to achieve these outcomes since the inception of CSSE three years ago.

Monica Joslin noted that CSSE has become a foundation for students through its many offerings, and acknowledged the leadership of CSSE staff in its support of students.

Assistant Director Manat Wooten provided an update on internships, particularly these connected to the State University Initiative Incentive Program. She noted a steady increase in internship participation among students since spring of 2013, attributed partly to faculty and staff effort to increase awareness among students about the benefits of internship experience.

CSSE continues to generate a list of businesses and organizations in the Berkshires interested in offering internships.

Trustee Chesloff noted the results of recent survey by the Mass Inc. Polling Group taken by business executives that affirmed the need for internships. He commended Manat for this work, which aligns with the needs of the business community.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Associate Dean Kristina Bendikas discussed outcomes from the College's accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and shared updates on MCLA's campus level assessment work, College participation in statewide assessment efforts, as well as the Vision Project.

The NEASC team report identified information literacy as an area that needs to be more clearly defined and assessed in the College curriculum. This work will begin this summer.

Faculty professional development is an essential component of the MCLA assessment program. In fall 2013, the Assessment Advisory Group met engaged in a peer-review process. On April 22nd, the College held the 2nd annual data retreat, using a model from Advancing a Massachusetts Culture of Assessment (AMCOA), and faculty from nine departments attended and explored new ways of student learning.

At the state level, MCLA participates in the AMCOA initiative. Several faculty attended a workshop in February on writing and critical thinking; the next workshop will be held June 5. Faculty and staff continue to participate in this and other Vision Project meetings and initiatives.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:34 a.m.