



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

December 6, 2019

87 Blackinton

Committee members in attendance:

Brenda Burdick
Robert Reilly
Kathleen Therrien

Others present:

James F. Birge, President
Denise Marshall, Chair
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Ely Janis, Interim Dean of Academic Affairs
Theresa O'Bryant, Dean of CSSE (joined at 9 a.m.)

Trustee Burdick called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. beginning with introductions of members in attendance.

Sabbatical Applications

Dean Janis presented the following candidates who have applied for sabbaticals:

- Dr. Mariana Bolivar, Associate Professor of Modern Languages, Fall 2020
- Dr. David Braden-Johnson, Professor of Philosophy, Spring 2021
- Dr. Emily Maher, Professor Physics, AY 2020-2021
- Dr. Kerri Leyda Nicoll, Associate Professor of Social Work, Spring 2021
- Diane Scott, Associate Professor of Arts Management, Spring 2021
- Dr. Jenna Scuito, Associate Professor of English Communications, Fall 2020
- Dr. Thomas Whalen, Associate Professor of Business Administration, Spring 2021

Each candidates' sabbatical plans were reviewed as presented in the material for the meeting. Course coverage during absences have been reviewed and approved.

Dean Janis provided an overview of the process for applying for sabbatical leave including the MSCA contract timeline for sabbatical applications, meetings with department chairs and administration, and written formal proposal submission.

With regard to presentations of the sabbatical work post leave, Dean Janis discussed the Faculty Brown Bag Lunch series which will be reintroduced in fall 2020.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to accept the sabbatical applications, as presented, for advancement to the Board of Trustees.

Faculty Searches

President Birge reviewed seven open faculty positions and the current searches being conducted. He discussed the hiring of adjunct and full time faculty, noting that MCLA remains within the 15% adjunct faculty calculation per MSCA contract.

Advertising practices and logistics were reviewed. The College uses relevant publications for faculty searches and other local venues for all.

Academic Affairs Update

Dean Janis provided an update on organizational changes made within DGCE. Staffing has been optimized to leverage the MCLA Pittsfield Campus on 66 Allen St. Josh Mendel was transferred to Institutional Advancement as Director of Corporate Engagement and Strategic Partnerships but will continue to consult with DGCE on K-12 programs and outreach.

Core redesign remains a focus for Academic Affairs and the subcommittees continue to work through the multi-year process. Finalized plans for the new core curriculum are anticipated to begin the governance process in fall 2020, with implementation in fall 2021.

Dean Janis outlined the broad details of the core redesign, explaining how the idea embedding integrative learning throughout the various tiers of the core curriculum is driving organizing principle of the core redesign. Integrative learning is developing the ability to make, recognize, and evaluate connections among disparate concepts, fields, or contexts. The initial planning behind the core curriculum redesign came from two groups of MCLA faculty and staff who attend AAC&U conferences on general education.

Reappointment portfolios for 2nd year faculty have been reviewed by Dean Janis. He has begun the review of promotions and tenure portfolios, and portfolios for 3rd, 4th and 5th year review are due in January 2020.

VP Wootters will conduct post tenure portfolio reviews and first year reappointments.

Dean O'Bryant provided an overview of her transition to the position of Dean of CSSE from Student Affairs, and the organizational structure of the CSSE department. CSSE's work centers around careers, advising students with undeclared majors, peer tutoring, disability resources, accessibility, and outreach for students who experience academic performance issues and concerns.

The division has held career fairs and invited employers to campus for student internships and employment searches. Handshake software has been introduced to improve career placement.

Dean O'Bryant outlined the work being done with admission staff on disclosing learning disabilities to help CSSE act and provide services earlier in college careers.

Additional training related to academic support and disability services will be conducted for faculty and staff.

The Associate Director for College Readiness and Success position has been posted and two candidates are scheduled for on-campus interviews in the next week.

Other Business

President Birge presented for approval the appointment of Professor Matthew Silliman to faculty emeritus status. Professor Silliman meets the qualifications under policy guidelines and has been endorsed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and President.

Upon motion duly made and seconded it was unanimously:

VOTED: to recommend to the Board of Trustees approval of emeritus status for Professor Matthew Silliman.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.