



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

April 4, 2019

Murdock Hall, Room 208

The following Trustees were present:

Denise Marshall, Chair
John Barrett III
Brenda Burdick
Moohan Boodram
Lisa Chamberlain
JD Chesloff
Susan Gold
Frederick Keator
Robert Reilly
Kathleen Therrien
Eva Weeks, Student Trustee

MCLA staff in attendance:

President James Birge
Lawrence Behan, Vice President of Finance and Administration
Barbara Chaput, Vice President of Human Resources
Catherine Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Gina Puc, Director of Admissions
Emily Williams, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Robert Ziomek, Vice President of Institutional Advancement

Complying with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present, the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met at 4:30 p.m. at Murdock Hall on April 4, 2019 with Board Chair Marshall presiding.

Chair Marshall called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: December 13, 2018 Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 13, 2018, meeting of the Board and all actions contained therein.

Executive Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of December 13, 2018 and March 13, 2019

Chair Marshall reported on the activity of the meeting of the Executive Committee of March 13, 2019.

Chair Marshall reported on the activity of the Executive Committee of March 13, 2019. Vice President Behan reviewed the variance in state revenue from budget, variance in tuition and fees from budget, and the variance in expense from budget.

Mr. David DiIulis of O'Connor and Drew, PC presented MCLA's final audit report. He reviewed the changes and stated that there was no impact to the daily operations of the College. The restated figures affected only deferred liabilities related to future retirement benefits carried on our financial statements.

Upon motion duly made and seconded it was:

VOTED: to ratify the restated financial statements as recommended by the Fiscal Affairs Committee.

It was further:

VOTED: to approve the minutes of December 13, 2018 and March 13, 2019 Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Chesloff abstained from voting.

Fiscal Affairs Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of April 4, 2019

Trustee Gold reported on the activity of the meeting of the Fiscal Affairs Committee of April 4, 2019 at which financial updates on the six month period ending December 31, 2018 were provided including revenue and expense variances.

The Q2 FY19 fund report summary and detail were presented and the FY19 rolling forecast update was reviewed by the Committee. Lower enrollment and retention in the current academic year will contribute to an estimated revenue loss of \$1.5MM. MSCBA housing rental assessments are above budget due to lower occupancy. Management has committed to address spending to reduce the deficit including slowing hiring and assessing open positions,

Accounts receivable activity was reviewed. Current outstanding A/R is \$72,000, up slightly year over year, with five students making up 30% of the receivables.

A student credit overload fee was presented. A \$200 per credit fee is proposed for students enrolled in more than 18 credits beginning with students entering the College in fall 2019. Students will have the ability to appeal the fee and exceptions would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The basis for the proposal is to reduce the time to degree to four years and minimize student loan debt as financial aid is exhausted after eight terms.

Following further discussion of the impact on students and the process for implementing the fee, upon motion duly made and seconded it was:

VOTED: to approve the credit overload fee of \$200 per credit for students enrolled in more than 18 credits beginning with the students entering in fall 2019.

Trustee Weeks cast a vote against the proposed increase.

The Committee heard an update on the Campus Center project and the overages associated with the fitness center renovations. Trustees discussed options to reduce the cost of the project and alternate options to pay for the overages, including discussions with ARAMARK to fund a portion and the borrowing ability of MCLA.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: to approve borrowing authority of an additional \$1MM from MSCBA.

Trustee Keator abstained from voting.

Academic Affairs Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of March 27, 2019

Trustee Chamberlain presented the report of the Academic Affairs Committee of March 27, 2019.

The Massachusetts DHE approved MCLA's application to award the Bachelor of Arts in Communication. This degree will begin to be offered in fall 2019 with the first graduating class anticipated in 2020.

Massachusetts DESE conducted a formal review of the MCLA Education Department. Based on DESE's evaluation, the department has been granted probationary approval, which continues MCLA's authorization to endorse candidates for licensure through August 2022. Management is working to improve the education department's performance to meet our own standards of quality and DESE's standards for full approval.

The Committee reviewed faculty promotion recommendations and congratulate the following on their promotion to Associate Professor:

Kerri Nicoll, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work

Jenna Sciuto, Department of English and Communications

And promotion to Full Professor:

Chali Nondo, Department of Business Administration and Economics
Daniel Shustack, Department of Environmental Studies
Nicholas Stroud, Department of Education
Jennifer Zoltanski, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work
Ely Janis, Department of History, Political Science and Public Policy
Peter Hoyt, Department of Biology

Three professors have applied for reappointment with tenure, and the Committee on Tenure, President Birge and this Committee support all three of these applicants. Dr. Kerri Nicoll, Dr. Chali Nondo and Dr. Jenna Sciuto are this year's applicants for reappointment with tenure. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve reappointment with tenure for Kerri Nicoll, Chali Nondo and Jenna Sciuto.

The Committee reviewed a proposal for the Principles in Accounting and Principles in Network Security certificate programs to be submitted to the DHE. The courses as outlined in the proposal will be offered at MCLA Pittsfield beginning in fall 2019. Both certificate programs have been designed to allow credits to be applied toward a bachelor's degree with MCLA or an associate's degree with Berkshire Community College.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the Certificate in Principles of Accounting and Certificate in Principles of Network Security programs as recommended by the Academic Affairs committee for submission to the DHE.

The Committee reviewed the plans for MCLA to apply to the BHE to serve as the teach-out partner to SVC for their Radiologic Sciences program. The teach-out program would conclude in 2021; however, MCLA would have the option to submit a formal proposal at a subsequent date to seek permanent approval of adding this major to its offerings.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the request for MCLA to teach-out the SVC Radiologic Sciences curriculum which would conclude in May 2021.

The Committee heard a proposal to transition the Adult Basic Education program to the North Adams Public Schools system at the end of AY2020. This will be reported on further as plans are finalized.

Student Affairs Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of March 26, 2019

Trustee Burdick presented the report of the Student Affairs Committee of March 26, 2019.

Students Riley Elliott and Emily Sawtell spoke with the Committee about their experiences at MCLA from freshman arrival to now, and provided their thoughts on what their plans are after graduation.

The Committee reviewed initiatives underway to assess student experiences and satisfaction, with the goal of improving retention. An external consultant was retained to audit the campus police and RPS, comparing both to national standards. Once complete, the report will be reviewed with the two departments and individuals interviewed. Recommendations will be reviewed and plans to address these recommendations will be discussed.

A student satisfaction survey has been launched to gather aggregate data to determine what is important to students.

The Committee heard an update on Food Security Sustainability planning including the matching-fund challenge issued by a trustee. Funds have been secured to study how to make this program sustainable long term. Changes to enhance food security efforts include the expansion of dinner hours on certain days, pop-up food pantries, and the creation of a work study position in the food pantry. Dining services have been engaged to discuss access to food that would have been disposed of at the end of the day.

An update on the tobacco free campus policy was presented. There have been no reported violations and smoking cessation efforts will continue.

The progress of the Associate Dean search was reviewed.

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the March 26, 2019, meeting of the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees and all actions contained therein.

Enrollment Management Committee Chair Report on the Meeting of April 4, 2019

Trustee Boodram presented the report of the Enrollment Management Committee of April 4, 2019.

Members of the Admission Office presented enrollment updates. Accepted student days attendance is 301 vs. 179 at the same time last year. Overnight programs attendance is 145 vs. 125 at the same time last year, and overall spring visitors are 740 vs. 665 in 2018.

Fall 2019 financial aid was presented. To date, 835 FASFA applications have been reviewed with 27% of received applications having been selected for verification by the Department of Education.

The Committee heard an update on the SVC teach-out process and expressed its appreciation for the care and sensitivity MCLA staff have exhibited to the SVC community. There are 60 SVC applications received to date and several campus activities are scheduled for SVC students.

The strategic enrollment management program was reviewed. Summer registration and housing were presented. Free housing will be offered to students who stay on campus and are engaged in summer programs.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2018, meeting of the Enrollment Management Committee of the Board of Trustees and all actions contained therein.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Marshall began the Chairperson's Report with an overview of the DHE conference that was attended by Trustees Gold, Boodram and Burdick, and President Birge.

President Birge's goals document was shared with the Trustees with the material for this meeting as well as at the Board Retreat in February. An Evaluation Committee will be established consisting of the chairs of each committee, Vice Chair Chesloff and Chair Marshall. Meetings will be scheduled in April and May, and the draft evaluation will be presented at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees on May 30, 2019. The final version will then be submitted to the Commissioner by the June 30 deadline.

The Nominating Committee has been established to bring forth names at the May meeting for Chair and Vice Chair positions. The committee will be chaired by Trustee Gold, and committee members will be Trustees Therrien and Reilly.

Chair Marshall reviewed the events scheduled for the remainder of the academic year and encouraged attendance at Baccalaureate and Commencement activities.

Chair Marshall recognized and thanked Trustee Weeks for her participation as a member of the Board of Trustees.

President's Report

President Birge provided commentary on the role of college president during the current environment in higher education. Seventeen colleges in Massachusetts have closed and the change is creating confusion and anxiety. While the pressure is on, MCLA's access to resources, our visibility and our academic reputation are helpful.

MCLA's response to SVC's closing is to be commended. During a difficult time for their students and employees, our faculty and staff quickly responded with care and compassion. MCLA accepted 60 students and provided them a solid option to continue their education.

The MSCA contract has been ratified and accepted. Negotiations for the next contract will resume in January and it is hoped that all parties have learned from the process and the next will go smoother.

President Birge provided an update on MCLA Pittsfield. The BHE has approved the BA in Communications.

On June 11 and 12, MCLA is hosting a DEI conference through the efforts of VP Williams and CDO Christopher MacDonald-Dennis. Both are working hard to create a program and invite engagement around DEI. Nikki Giovanni is the guest speaker for this event.

President Birge provided an overview of the meeting with Congressman Neal he attended with Massachusetts state university presidents. Representative Markey introduced a bill for \$250mm for early college education that would allow high school students to earn college credits.

President Birge discussed the upcoming MCLA Gives day, the activity with the President's Council and the budgeting process for FY2020.

Trustees are invited to attend the next campus gathering on April 16 at 4 p.m. in the Sullivan Lounge.

President Birge announced that the public policy lecture scheduled for this evening was cancelled due to the speaker falling ill. It is unlikely that Sarah Smarsh will be rescheduled. Work will now begin preparing for the fall lecture.

Executive Session

Upon motion duly made and seconded, and by a roll call vote of the Board, it was

VOTED: to move to Executive Session to discuss legal matters as meeting in open session could have a detrimental effect on the process.

Following the discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, and by a roll call vote of the Board, it was

VOTED: to end the executive session.

With no other business being brought before the meeting, upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 pm.

All were invited to Murdock Hall Room 218 for a reception.