



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
Monday, March 23, 2015  
President's Office Conference Room**

**Trustees in attendance:**

Shirley Edgerton, Chair  
Susan Gold  
Alyson Stolz

**Others present:**

Cynthia Brown, Interim President  
Denise Richardello, Executive Vice President  
Theresa O'Bryant, Interim Vice President of Student Affairs  
Mary Ellen Olenyk, Director of Human Resources  
Lyndsay Isham-Morton, Coordinator of Student Conduct  
Griffin Labbanca, Residence Director – Hoosac Hall  
Ginger Menard, Clerk

Elizabeth Doughty- NRHH Member, Class of 2015 President  
Rachel Durgin- Hoosac Hall Advisory Board President  
Brendan Peltier – President, Student Government Association

Trustee Edgerton called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

**Residential Programs & Services**

Residence Director, Griffin Labbanca, provided an overview to the committee on Residential Programs & Services (RPS) and reported on opportunities for student engagement. RPS is committed to providing a safe and comfortable living experience as well as an out of the classroom environment that fosters personal growth and the development of positive self-esteem. As success is directly linked to student involvement, there are many avenues by which students can become involved including the residence hall advisory boards, RPS committees, community development activities, and internal and external residence hall organizations. Three students joined Labbanca to share their experiences.

Brendan Peltier shared his experience with NACURH (National Association of College and University Resident Halls) and NEACURH (Northeast Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls). NACURH is the largest student run organization in the world and provides a

unique opportunity for students to learn from other students. During his junior year, Peltier served on the NEACURH regional board, the first MCLA student to serve in this capacity. As a board member he had the opportunity to work with other schools within New England and engage in community programs and conference organization. He extended his thanks for RPS for supporting his involvement.

Labbanca noted that this organization holds three conferences each year, two regional and one national. In order to involve the maximum number of students they cannot attend more than two conferences during their time at MCLA.

Another organization that recognizes student excellence is NRHH (National Residence Hall Honorary) of which the MCLA chapter is Rho Pi Sigma. Membership at MCLA is capped at 20 and students must be in the top 1% to be considered. Liz Doughty shared that NRHH is heavily involved in residence life and works with all residence halls collectively to achieve a shared residence life experience. NRHH also provides an outstanding resident scholarship which is funded, in part, by a variety of campus fundraisers.

Another option for student involvement is the advisory board of each residence hall. Rachel Durgin, President of Hoosac Hall's Board, shared how her involvement has allowed her to be a voice for the entire building. The board plans events for the residents, holds fund raisers, and participates in community service projects. Durgin shared examples of the Hoosac Advisory Board's recent focus on recycling and elimination of water waste.

Labbanca shared that RPS does not promote involvement as a progression to another opportunity, but rather they strive to help students identify and serve in the area that is of most interest. Additionally, each residence hall advisory board has a community service chair and must plan a minimum of one service event each year. RPS also has a number of evaluative tools in place to receive feedback from the students.

Trustee Edgerton thanked the students for sharing their experiences with the committee. She noted how impressed she is by all of their hard work and made special note of their community service work which is so critical and meaningful.

### **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) - update on training**

HR Director Olenyk provided an update on campus education and training as required for compliance with new state requirements regarding training and investigation. Training is required for everyone on campus via an online training module. Information was sent via email to all students, faculty and staff. HR Director Olenyk has overseen the faculty and staff completion and Coordinator of Student Conduct, Lyndsay Isham-Morton, has been the point person for students. Two thirds of the campus community have completed the training including 75% of the student body as of today. Reminders are currently being sent to those who have not yet responded.

Interim Vice President O'Bryant noted that all state universities are requiring this training and that the policy is in response to federal law. As this must be completed annually, Olenyk noted

that they are investigating other training tools as well as working to identify the timing to conduct training each year. Incoming students will also receive training on this issue during First Days.

In addition to online training, student leaders and student employees have undergone additional in-person training. Bystander intervention training has also taken place with select groups such as peer advisors, athletes, and RA's. The Trustees will receive training that their retreat on March 31.

### **Update on VP SA search**

HR Director Olenyk shared the search for the Vice President of Student Affairs is entering the campus interview phase. The position was posted in mid-January and over 100 applicants responded. MCLA worked with the search firm of Spelman & Johnson to vet the resumes. HR Director Olenyk and Executive Vice President Richardello served as co-chairs of the search committee. The committee pre-screened nine candidates via Skype and have invited four to campus. Candidates visiting campus will meet with the search committee, executive staff, and student leaders in addition to open meetings for both students and staff. President-elect Summers will also be interviewing the 4 finalists.

Interim Vice President O'Bryant also shared that the new Athletic Director, Laura Mooney, would be starting in early April. She noted that Mooney is accomplished and respected within the field and we look forward to having her join the team.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.