



My College. Right from the Start.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, November 13, 2012
President's Office Conference Room**

The following Trustees were present:

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

The following Trustees were absent:

JD Chesloff
Tyler Fairbank

Others present:

Mary Grant, President
Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Joseph Charon, Director of Public Safety
Roberta McCulloch-Dews, Web Communications Manager
Thomas Bernard, Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by Trustee Dudley.

Public Safety Update

Director Charon updated the committee on the work that had been done to comply with the February 2012 Board of Trustees vote authorizing the arming of campus police officers. He outlined the training and preparation that led up to the arming of officers in December 2012. He noted that the response of the campus police officers and the campus community to this transition has been professional and respectful. President Grant noted that MCLA's campus police officers have been thoroughly trained in their duties and responsibilities as armed officers and that this training is ongoing.

The February 2012 vote to authorize the arming of campus police officers included a condition that the president would provide a report to the board within one year of officers being armed. President Grant will present this report at the December meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Sabbatical Requests 2014-2015

Vice President Brown presented faculty sabbatical requests for 2014-2015. She noted that due to a recent contractual change, faculty are now eligible for sabbaticals on a six-year rather than a seven-year cycle. As a result, there is a greater than usual number of faculty eligible to apply for sabbaticals for the coming academic year. This is true across the state university system. The following faculty members submitted proposals for semester long sabbaticals for 2014-2015:

Fall 2014

- Tom Byrne, Professor of Psychology
- Anthony Daly, Associate Professor of History

Spring 2015

- Sue Birns, Professor of Sociology
- Michael Dilthey, Associate Professor of Fine and Performing Arts – Music
- Anne Goodwin, Associate Professor of Biology
- Kailai Huang, Professor of History
- David Langston, Professor of English/Communications
- Jim Moriarty, Associate Professor of Business Administration
- Dan Shustack, Assistant Professor of Environmental Science

In addition, Melanie Mowinski, Associate Professor of Fine and Performing Arts – Art, has deferred an eligible sabbatical until the 2015-2106 academic year.

Following a discussion of all requests, the committee agreed with the recommendation to support these requests, subject to funding. Vice President Brown will work with the department chairs concerning the planning, scheduling, and budget implications of the sabbatical requests.

NEASC Visit Debriefing

President Grant and Vice President Brown commented on MCLA's NEASC accreditation visit that was held November 3rd-6th. The president thanked the Trustees who were able to attend a welcome reception and dinner with the team on Sunday, November 3rd and thanked the entire Board for their support throughout the NEASC planning process.

The visit was highly successful, and was the culmination of two years of planning and preparation. In her report to the campus community, the visiting team chair, Dr. Theo Kalikow, president of the University of Southern Maine, both affirmed both the many accomplishments of which the MCLA community deserves to be proud as well as those areas where there are opportunities for improvement.

Vice President Brown highlighted several recommendations in the team chair's report that focused on the academic affairs sphere:

- MCLA has an opportunity to do more in the areas of information literacy education.

- In the areas of assessment, the team at MCLA must continue the transition to the next phase of assessment, the systematic use of the data that is collected.
- In the library, the effective planning process must be matched with implementation efforts around materials, physical plant, and staffing. This work will require strategic decision making to manage resource constraints.
- As the College continues to advance the strategic plan, the chair highlighted the engagement of faculty in the evolution of the Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE) as a model.
- MCLA has significant deferred maintenance needs; the MCLA team knows what needs to be done, but requires the resources to do the work. This is a statewide issue that will require statewide attention. The chair noted that this is a significant systemic challenge across higher education.

President Grant noted that several of the concerns the team identified – such as a need an opportunity to focus increased attention on deferred maintenance needs – are systemic challenges across public higher education in the Commonwealth and regionally.

The president outlined the next steps in the accreditation process. Dr. Kalikow will prepare a draft report that outlines institutional strengths and concerns at MCLA as identified by the team. The report will be provided to the College for a review of factual accuracy. Once edited, the report is submitted to NEASC. Presidents Grant and Kalikow will meet with the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) in spring 2014, after which the Commission will provide an accreditation decision to MCLA, along with recommendations for areas of focus and required reports to demonstrate progress in these areas.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:26 a.m.