



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

November 17, 2022
Murdock Hall, Room 208
375 Church St, North Adams, MA

Trustees in attendance:

Mohan Boodram*	Taylor Hope	Denise Marshall
John Barrett III*	Frederick Keator*	Robert Reilly
Brenda Burdick	Karen Kowalczyk	Franklyn Reynolds*
Jean Clarke-Mitchell		

Trustees absent:

Kathleen Therrien

MCLA Staff in attendance:

James F. Birge, President
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Joseph DaSilva, VP, Administration and Finance
Richard Glejzer, VP, Academic Affairs
Gina Puc, VP, Strategic Initiatives and Enrollment Management

*Denotes remote participation

As allowed by executive order of the Governor of Massachusetts, in compliance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and 15A, Section 9, and with a quorum present in-person and via audio/video-conference, the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met on November 17, 2022 with Board Chair Burdick presiding.

Chair Burdick called the meeting to order at 3:50 p.m. with a review of the items in the consent agenda as presented, and asked if there were items in the meeting materials that members wish to be removed and discussed individually. Hearing none, Chair Burdick then asked for corrections to the minutes as provided from the prior meetings listed on the agenda as item 2a, and other reports listed as item 2b. Hearing no corrections, upon motion duly made and seconded, following a roll-call vote, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Committee Action Items

Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing

President Birge presented the Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing program update beginning with an overview of the College's and State's governance/approval process.

The nursing program was first submitted to All College Committee (ACC) on September 9, 2022. It was then assigned to the Curriculum Committee (CC) on September 15, approved by CC on October 19 and advanced to ACC. The proposal was approved by ACC on November 3 and advanced to the President. Both internal committee approval recommendations were accepted and the President advanced the proposal to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees on November 7. The proposal was reviewed at the November 10 meeting of the ACC and recommended for advancement to the Board of Trustees for final consideration at today's meeting.

Concurrently, dependent upon the action of this Board, the proposal will be advanced to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (MADHE) in phase one for their review and consideration in late fall 2022/early winter 2023, and to the Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) for consideration in late fall 2022/early winter 2023. Once the program advances through both of these reviews, the MA DHE will make a final decision on the program.

President Birge noted that the process for the nursing program began at the inquiry of then Berkshire Health Systems CEO David Phelps as to whether or not the College would entertain the idea of a BSN. College administrators explored the idea and discovered that MCLA receives about 200 inquiries a year asking if the College has a nursing program. Further exploration was done on the workforce needs of the region. It was determined that there was an initial population interested and that the market existed for the program.

Marketing and student recruitment will begin once program approval is received and will include targeted efforts to build program awareness, social media advertising with geo-farming, specialized nursing events, specialized collateral pieces, and high school counselor program announcements.

A four-year budget showing revenue for high and low attendance forecasts was presented. Revenue estimates range from a low of \$64k in year one to a high of \$678k in year four.

Curriculum for the first year will be for a pre-nursing major with 13-16 credits per semester in core and general requirements. Nursing specific courses begin in year two, and while the curriculum is intensive, it allows for flexibility for electives in line with a liberal arts education. This program, in comparison to peer institutions, has similar credit requirements with a lower cost to students.

The College currently has over \$3M in funding for the program consisting of cash-in-hand, pledges and deferred gifts. As well as \$700k in grant funding predominately for equipment. Congressmen

Richard Neal has included funding for the program through a Community Projects grant. Additional funding exists through upcoming state grants and competitive funding opportunities.

In response to staffing questions, President Birge state that we anticipate some challenges in attracting faculty and will need to offer compelling salaries. Administration has received inquiries from individuals expressing interest in instructing in the nursing field.

Trustees discussed options for additional partners if needed. At this time, the College is focused on working with Berkshire Health Systems.

Trustees discussed similar programs that exist in the county at Berkshire Community College and McCann Technical School, and the potential to partner with these programs.

Whereas, the Bachelors of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree has received all internal approvals and will be submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing and the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (MADHE) for approval;

Upon motion duly made and seconded, with no further discussion and upon a roll call vote, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the Bachelors in Nursing Degree, and the College's application to the Board of Registration in Nursing and the MA Department of Higher Education for awarding BSN degrees.

Sabbatical Applications

VP Glejzer reviewed the AY 2023-2024 sabbatical applications submitted by faculty members who have completed six years of full-time service to the College:

- **Ms. Tara Barboza**, Associate Professor of Accounting, Fall 2023
- **Ms. Pamela Contakos**, Digital Services Librarian, Fall 2023
- **Dr. Hannah Haynes**, Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Spring 2024
- **Dr. Peter Hoyt**, Professor of Biology Fall 2023
- **Dr. Anna Jaysane-Darr**, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Spring 2024 (deferred from Fall 2022)
- **Dr. Erin Kiley**, Associate Professor of Mathematics, AY 2023-2024
- **Dr. Rita Nnodim**, Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Spring 2024
- **Dr. Victoria Papa**, Assistant Professor of English & Visual Culture, AY 2023-2024
- **Dr. Nicole Porther**, Associate Professor of Biology, Spring 2024
- **Dr. Graziana Ramsden**, Professor of Modern Languages, Fall 2023
- **Dr. Elena Traister**, Professor of Environmental Science, AY 2023-2024

The number of sabbatical applications is only slightly higher than typical and most courses will be covered by existing faculty. There are no anticipated costs associated with these sabbaticals as requested.

Trustees discussed the process for reviewing work post-sabbatical and it was noted that the current application includes a process to address this.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, with no further discussion and upon roll call vote, it was unanimously:

VOTED: to approve all sabbatical applications as recommended by the Academic Affairs Committee.

President's Report

Reserve Fund Investment Strategy

President Birge discussed the College's investment strategy for reserve funds as guided in the Investment Policy approved by the Board of Trustees. The reserve fund has a current balance of approximately \$20M. An advisory council made up of President Birge, VP DaSilva, Trustee Keator, and Mr. Donald Walker, an outside investment consultant, met and developed a request for proposal (RFP) for investment management firms. Of the 17 proposals received, four firms were selected to present their RFP to President Birge and VP DaSilva.

Once an investment manager has been selected, the College will begin investing with \$10M. These funds will be placed in treasury and other type bonds in a laddered structure that will remain relatively liquid. It is anticipated that this strategy will generate four times the current return. Cash funds will remain in Berkshire Bank for operating capital.

Food Security Fund Match Challenge

At this Board's prior meeting, Trustee Keator established a \$5K match for the College's food security fund. The match period ends on November 29, and anyone wishing to make a donation should contact VP Ziomek.

Honorary Degree Recipients and Commencement Speaker

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees met to discuss honorary degree recipients and commencement speaker selection. The Committee's role is to recommend HD recipients to the Board of Trustees for their consideration, which will take place at the next meeting of the Board.

Clery Report

Chief Daniel Colonno presented the College's annual Clery Report (2022 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report) for reporting year 2021 noting that the full report is available at the College's website and was provided to the College community on October 3, 2022. He provided a summary of the reporting requirements and the Clery Act for disclosure of campus security policy and campus crime statistics.

In 2021, there were three reports of sex offenses – forcible - rape, fondling; one report of burglary, one report of domestic violence, and one report of stalking, for a total of six reportable criminal offenses on campus. These numbers are the same for the criminal offenses – on-campus, residence halls, and are not cumulative.

There were no arrests on campus. There were 16 total disciplinary actions/judicial referrals; 10 drug law violations and six liquor law violations. The 10 drug violations were from four instances involving 10 students, and the six liquor law violations were from three incidents involving six students. There were no fires in any of the College's residential areas and each had two fire drills.

Additional instances on campus that were not required reporting included two hate related crimes involving the drawing of swastikas on furniture in the Campus Center dining area, and one intimidation of a student who was harassed via text about their sexual orientation.

With regard to collaboration with police authorities in North Adams and Pittsfield, Chief Colonno stated that Clery reporting requires Campus Police to gather information on incidents that happen within the campus perimeter and encompasses the adjacent area from sidewalk, street, to sidewalk.

President Birge commended Chief Colonno for his actions that saved the life of a person in North Adams. Chief Colonno was between patrolling the College's properties on Main and East Main Streets when he was waved down by a citizen seeking help for a person unconscious near the McDonald's restaurant. Chief responded immediately and administered NARCAN as it appeared the person was suffering from an overdose.

Trustees discussed the impact of Massachusetts' police reform on campus police. Chief Colonno stated that the College had undergone reform on its own and met seven of the "Eight Can't Wait" criteria established under President Obama.

Chief Colonno departed the meeting.

Chairperson's Report

Chair Burdick provided information on the Trustee's confidentiality and conflict of interest forms in follow-up to the October 13, 2022 meeting of the Trustees. In discussion with the College's

counsel, it was proposed to discontinue the use of these forms as Trustees are required to complete conflict of interest forms with the State. As well, the State requires the completion of training courses for all Trustees and ethics and conflict are covered in these courses.

Trustees Burdick and Boodram will discuss further the need for Trustees to complete the conflict of interest form to document for New England Commission on Higher Education that ethics are addressed at the Board level.

Adjournment

A tour of the new space occupied by Academic Advising and Support Services will begin at 5 p.m. The reception for the Public Policy lecture is scheduled for 6 p.m. in the Feigenbaum Center for Science and Innovation, followed by the lecture in the Church St. Center at 7 p.m.

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 5 p.m.