



**Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting of November 25, 2024
87 Blackinton St, North Adams, MA
MS Teams
Audio/Video Conference**

Members in Attendance

Mohan Boodram, Chair*
Yvonne Spicer*
John Barrett*

Others in Attendance

James F. Birge, President
Lisa Lesarbeau, Board Clerk
Richard Glejzer, Provost and VP of Academic Affairs
Lynette Bond, Dean of DGCE
Jana Boyer,
Daniel Pearson, Executive Director for Admissions
Bonnie Howland,
Kristin Nichols,

*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 via audio/video-conference, the Enrollment Management Committee of the Board of Trustees of November 25, 2024, with Committee Chair Boodram presiding was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Enrollment Management team members introduced themselves to Trustees.

Provost Glejzer reviewed the Enrollment Management division structure and staffing. The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) committee has been meeting with a focus on relationship between marketing, recruitment and admissions/enrollment. This work lays the foundation for fall 2026.

Ms. Kristin Nichols joined the team and is managing marketing and communications for the division. Currently, the office of Admission is fully staffed with counselors.

Ms. Boyer commented on changes that have been made to how the division conducts open houses, with a move away from larger events to more intentional, smaller groups that allow personal contact with staff and faculty.

Fall and spring events include a mini open house, accepted student day and overnight programs, virtual accepted student day, junior open house and athletic preview day. The Division will also host weekly virtual information session starting in January, virtual one-to-one sessions with students as needed, and daily and Saturday tours coupled with information sessions.

The December 7 open house has 40 individuals registered, with 20 of those 40 being athletes.

In response to questions from Trustee Barrett regarding the cancellation of the season for Women's Basketball for this academic year, it was explained that the team had only six registered players. This small bench caused concern for the students' health and well-being and the potential for having to forfeit games. In consultation with the newly hired coach and the six players, it was agreed that the team would practice, but not compete, this season.

The newly hired coach, William Brown, is actively recruiting and is confident that a team will be in place for next season. Coach Brown has a solid reputation and experience in D1 basketball programs having appeared in five NCAA D1 tournaments.

Returning to discussion of open house event, Provost Glejzer commented on the addition of two faculty members added to the planning and running of these events. This helps faculty understand on enrollment works and how they can contribute to the process, as well as providing faculty perspective to the events.

Ms. Boyer presented spring and fall 2025 enrollment numbers. Applications, accepts and deposits for spring 25 are 120, 20 and 7, respectively, compared to spring '24 at 132, 20, and 0, respectively. Applications, accepts and deposits for Fall 25 are 419, 94 and 0, respectively, compared to fall '24 at 469, 0 and 0, respectively. As application are approved, decisions are being returned to students.

Director Pearson discussed recruitment strategies including the involvement of faculty fellows who are able to talk about the value of a liberal arts education, affirm what it means to be a student at a liberal arts school including smaller classes, deeper relationships with professors, and having faculty advocates for grad school applications, fellowships, and jobs.

Strategies are focused on cultivating and strengthening community partnerships, having stronger communication and a unified purpose with athletics, and having a full staff with a deep knowledge bench.

Ms. Nichols presented the division's marketing strategies beginning with a review of where current practices are and future strategies. An Enrollment marketing audit is in process. Work will be done with social media interns to enhance the division's social media presence. The message regarding the value of a liberal arts education will be refined with direction from the College's

strategic plan. The web experience will be improved to support and enhance brand reach and enrollment messaging. A unified project management tool will be used to improve marketing cross-pollination. Additionally, the current CRM software, SLATE, will be utilized more fully to do more personalized outreach, and to analyze and act on data that is available.

Ms. Nichols discussed the importance of financial aid messaging for both graduate and undergraduate program. Communications should explain the value and bottom-line cost of an education at MCLA.

Trustees discussed the impact of the State's announcement and focus on free community college. President Birge noted that MCLA has the same benefits, free tuition and fees, for students whose families earn less than \$75k per year. The way the DHE chose to message free community college without including four-year institutions that have the same benefit was not helpful to the State's universities.

Ms. Howland provided an update on financial aid messaging and outreach to prospective students. Financial aid assistance is provided through high school visits, information session with school counselors, and with presentations at all Admissions events.

The FAFSA application is now open, and efforts are focused on driving students to the site to complete their forms. Aid awarding begins once the FAFSA is complete.

A consultant was brought in to review MCLA's process for awarding financial aid and to ensure the College leverages funds efficiently. Administrative and procedural recommendation are under consideration for the '25-26 awarding cycle with a focus on leveraging MassGrant Plus, and utilizing tools available in Banner.

Messaging will be clear and focused on the cost of MCLA attendance and the value that MCLA presents.

Dean Bond provided a review of the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE) graduate programs. Applications, accepts, and deposits for the Master of Education program in spring '25 are 6, 2, and 2, respectively, compared to spring 24 at 1, 0, and 0 respectively.

Staff are responding to 119 emergency license holders to assist these teachers to achieve initial licensing, to assist those already licensed to earn professional licensure.

MCLA's Leadership Academy is seeing increased interest with 114 inquiries. Applications, accepts and deposits for summer '25 are 7, 0, and 0, compared to summer '24 at 5, 0, and 0, respectively.

Dean Bond noted that the conversion rate in the graduate programs is higher than it is for undergraduate programs. Most who apply, will eventually enroll to attend.

Dean Bond then provided an update on the College's Early College program with Drury High School. For Spring '25 there are 91 students enrolled for 348 credit hours. These are concurrent sessions that run in the high school and on MCLA's campus. The courses are reimbursed to the College at \$180 per credit hour.

With no other business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 a.m.