

MCLA

Moving Forward
Building on Excellence

MCLA STRATEGIC PLAN



My College. Right from the Start.

Moving Forward Building on Excellence

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA), the Commonwealth's designated public liberal arts college, provides a transformative education in a rich and inclusive living learning environment. With a focus on academic excellence and a commitment to innovation and experiential learning, MCLA prepares students to become successful and engaged global citizens.

The MCLA Strategic Plan is based on four interconnected goals, each supported by a series of strategies designed to advance the institution.



Excellence in Teaching and Learning

GOAL

Engage students through a dynamic and transformative liberal arts education that encourages excellence, innovation, and student success in academic and co-curricular programs.

STRATEGIES

A central strategy for accomplishing this goal is to **offer high quality, innovative programs and services that enhance intellectual discovery and social conscience as central to the experience and application of the liberal arts.** Strengthening the core curriculum, creating new programs, aiming for continuous improvement, supporting collaboration and partnerships, creating inspiring environments, and strengthening academic support are all essential elements of this strategy.

At the same time, it is vital to **strengthen MCLA's rich co-curricular environment and leverage it to further enhance student learning and experience.** This will include an emphasis on experiential learning, leadership, enhanced mentoring and engagement, and attracting both faculty and students who share these values.

Underlying success is the need to **invest in faculty, staff, and student development.** Creating a supportive culture that reflects MCLA's values and celebrates successes is imperative. An emphasis on lifelong learning for faculty and staff, and expanded resources and technology, will allow everyone to reach their potential.

In providing excellence, MCLA also must be known for its excellence. MCLA will thus **utilize integrated and innovative communication strategies to promote the value of MCLA as an institution of excellence.** Building awareness of MCLA and its mission, emphasizing the high impact experiences it offers, promoting the value of our membership within the Council of Public Liberal Arts College (COPLAC), and enhancing internal communication are important to this strategy.

Finally, MCLA will **create an environment of excellence to enhance student success and retention.** An emphasis on advising and continuing to build strong faculty-student connections are fundamental for this strategy. Annual goals, informed decision making, and alignment of resources and services in support of student achievement are essential components of this commitment to excellence.





Supportive and Inclusive Community

GOAL

Embrace and sustain the diverse communities that support MCLA's educational, cultural, and social environment.

STRATEGIES

To sustain these diverse communities, MCLA is committed to **provide students with a community-centered public liberal arts education that enhances their MCLA experience and prepares them to be successful global citizens.** Enhancing the First Year Experience and strengthening support for students' developmental needs throughout their college career are key to success in this area. In addition, it will be important to encourage students to embrace new challenges and to become loyal MCLA alumni.

MCLA must continue to **create a culture that will attract, orient, engage, honor, and retain MCLA faculty and staff.**

This will include nurturing the traditions and cultures that support individual groups across the campus, enhancing recognition of faculty and staff accomplishments, and supporting

meaningful interactions among colleagues and peers in divisions and departments.

Achieving this sense of community will require MCLA to **capitalize on the talents and expertise of faculty, staff, and students to develop and implement programs that build community.** In doing this, MCLA can build on existing programs and encourage members of the campus community to lead innovative activities that promote community.

MCLA will **continue to build a diverse campus community across all dimensions.** The institution is committed to diversity and cultural competence. It will emphasize diversity in employee recruitment and the importance of appropriate support services for all members of the MCLA community.

Responsive and Intentional Stewardship

GOAL

Secure MCLA's future through the innovative, strategic, and informed development of our human, ecological, and financial resources.

STRATEGIES

Underlying this goal is the need to **strengthen sustainable financial investment.** This will require strategic management of resources and deliberate financial practices and investments. It is essential that MCLA continue to advocate for increased support for public higher education.

A critical need for the future is to **work toward environmental sustainability.** MCLA will continue to promote environmental responsibility as a core institutional value, and to show this commitment in its plans. Sustainability will also be interwoven into curricula and student life.

Through its record of achievement, MCLA has increased the level of engagement and philanthropic commitment among alumni who can be a resource to the institution. Continued progress and success will require the institution to **create a culture of stewardship as an MCLA value that inspires us to give back and help strengthen and sustain the institution.**

Finally, realizing the vision for a culture of stewardship must include **encouraging students, faculty, and staff to feel ownership of MCLA and embrace their role as stewards,** and building loyalty through professional development and training.





Public Purpose and Engagement

Please join us as we continue to move forward with excellence.

GOAL

Promote and ensure access to MCLA's programs and resources and prepare students for personal and professional success over a lifetime of learning and citizenship.

STRATEGIES

As we advance the value of the liberal arts, MCLA will continue to **demonstrate the connection between liberal arts education and future success.** We will do this by focusing on the importance of access and opportunity, educating students about civic engagement and the public good, and the value of their education in relation to these important responsibilities.

MCLA is committed to **ensure broad access to educational opportunities for all students to succeed and graduate.** Building awareness of educational opportunities and providing support services, internships, and opportunities for growth are all important. In addition, MCLA will continue to engage the local community in its educational and cultural offerings. Building on existing strengths, opportunities abound to **promote MCLA as an innovative thought leader, convener, and partner.** This might include expanding its convener role and supporting faculty and staff interactions with community programs.

The College is committed to **maintain access to MCLA's educational offerings.** This strategy encompasses increasing financial aid resources through advocacy and philanthropic engagement, expanding dual enrollment programs, and further facilitating the seamless transition from community colleges. Given its public purpose, it is appropriate that MCLA **encourage a spirit of service.** The college will promote civic and philanthropic activities of students, faculty, and staff.

All members of the MCLA community are encouraged to contribute to the implementation of this plan and to moving MCLA toward its vision of excellence.

This is an ambitious plan that will require the engagement and support of students, alumni, faculty, staff, trustees, and stakeholders in the wider community. MCLA is very proud of its accomplishments and we look forward to delivering on the promise outlined in this plan.

Some of the specific next steps anticipated include:

- Implementation of division action plans, and annual review of progress
- Reflection and self-assessment in preparation for the College's next accreditation visit by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
- Alignment of the MCLA Sowing Seeds for Success Capital Campaign for the Sciences and Humanities with the Strategic Plan



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MCLA is committed to our vision of excellence. We are proud to share with you our plan to achieve that excellence. For more information on the Strategic Plan for Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, please contact the President's Office at 413-662-5201.



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

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