



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, November 16, 2016
Bowman Hall 217**

Members in attendance

Lisa Chamberlain, Chair
John Barrett III
Denise Marshall

Others in attendance

Susan Gold, Board Chair
Dr. James Birge, President
Cynthia Brown, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Monica Joslin, Dean of Academic Affairs
Ginger Menard, Clerk

Trustee Chamberlain called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Sabbatical Applications 2017-2018

Vice President Brown reviewed the sabbatical process and presented the faculty requests for 2017-2018. Applicants must have completed 6 years of service to the college and can then apply for a sabbatical every 6 years. Faculty can apply and request a deferment to preserve the right to apply again in 6 years as the timing is based on application date rather than the actual leave. All applications must be reviewed and approved by the department chair unless it is the department chair making the request in which case the request is submitted to the VP of Academic Affairs.

The Committee discussed the process and the post-sabbatical requirements which include the filing of a report by the faculty member within 3 months of the completion of the sabbatical. Additionally, faculty will often present on their research/projects as well as update and redesign courses based on their research, and publish articles/books that contribute to their disciplines.

The Committee discussed the structure of covering course offerings for faculty on sabbatical as well as the funding that is needed to support them. The budget for these sabbaticals will be determined when budgeting for the next fiscal year.

The following faculty members submitted proposals for semester long sabbaticals for 2017-2018:

Mike Birch, Professor of English/Communications (spring 2018)

Paul LeSage, Professor of English/Communications (spring 2018)

Dana Rapp, Professor of Education (requesting deferment until after 2018-2019)

Ann Scott, Professor of Education (spring 2018)

Nick Stroud, Associate Professor of Education (fall 2017)

Ben Wood, Associate Professor of Psychology (spring 2018)

Academic program development updates

Dean Joslin provided an update on additional academic programs that are being developed. The first is an accelerated 3-year business administration program to be launched in fall 2017. A rollout plan with marketing and communications is now being developed. The program will require summer courses and/or internships. The committee discussed the varying needs for transfer and non-traditional students entering this program and the synergy between the liberal arts and a business degree. President Birge shared that MCLA, then NASC, was the first school in the state university system to offer a business degree and now we will be the first to have an accelerated 3-year program.

There are two additional majors being developed in the Biology department – Community Health Education and Health Science. The curriculum has been developed for both and they are now proceeding through the College governance process. The programs must be externally evaluated before they can be brought to the Board of Trustees for approval. Following Board approval, the final step is submission to the Board of Higher Education (BHE) for approval.

Finally, the College is discussing the development of an electrical engineering track within the Computer Science department which currently offers 4 concentrations. Dean Joslin noted that almost half of last year's graduates in Software Development are employed locally at General Dynamics. As a major area employer and leader in the field, the College has consulted with them about the development of the new electrical engineering concentration.

First Year Title III grant activities

Vice President Brown reported that the focus of the funds from the first year of the five-year Title III grant will be the acquisition and training on DegreeWorks software. This software will allow students to easily explore scenarios to change their major or add a major or minor. It will also provide faculty and staff with the tools to better advise students and identify any gaps or issues in the advising/scheduling process. Additionally, the use of Canvas learning management system in advising will be expanded as well as the use of the Aspire EDU's Dropout Detective software. The latter program uses analytics to identify students in danger of failing so that faculty and staff can reach out proactively. We anticipate that all advisors will be using Canvas for advising by the end of the third year of the grant.

A project manager has been hired to coordinate the tracking of projects related to the grant and to write and submit the required reports to the Department of Higher Education.

Emeritus faculty process

Vice President Brown thanked the Committee for their support of this process. She will begin reaching out to all eligible retired faculty and in the spring a slate of names will be brought to the Board for approval.

Maker space update and tour

The Committee met with Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Adrienne Wootters, for a tour of the Maker's Space in Bowman Hall.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.