



Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting of December 2, 2021
87 Blackinton St, North Adams
Audio/Video Conference

Members in Attendance

Robert Reilly, Chair
Mohan Boodram, Chair of the Board of Trustees
Frederick Keator

All trustees attended virtually.

Others in Attendance

Gina Puc, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Jana Boyer, Director of Enrollment Operations
Kayla Hollins, Director of Admission
Bonnie Howland, Director of Student Financial Services
Bernadette Alden, Director of Communications

Upon establishing a quorum of the Enrollment Management Committee Members present, Chair Reilly called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. with a quorum present.

VP Puc began with a review of the agenda for today's meeting including updates on marketing/communications, admissions, and student financial services.

Ms. Alden provided an update the College's marketing and communications efforts. Simpson Scarborough has been contracted to assist with the paid digital advertising campaign being undertaken. Key takeaways for their early work include click through conversion, increased engagements, and requests for information. The best performing tactic is social media and lowest is YouTube. YouTube has been paused and focus is on search engine marketing ads which is already showing improved performance.

The budget for the College's digital campaign is approximately \$100k, and is the bulk of the marketing budget.

Simpson Scarborough is conducting an enrollment communications flow audit including emails, text, print and PURLs (personal URLs). The results of this work will be reported and include recommendations for improving communications.

Advertising work continues with a focus on sharing the US News and World Report rankings. Billboards, campus signage and print/digital media all are avenues being used to market this information. Examples of the advertising in these areas were shared in a presentation.

With regard to advertising in the New York market, the areas of interest were noted as being mainly in the Albany capital region, eastern NY through New York City. Efforts to break into the Boston market are underway with a meeting scheduled for this afternoon to continue conversations with an expert in that market.

Ms. Hollins provided an update from the Office of Admission. Counselors have visited over 350 high schools and 30 community colleges in New England and New York. Inquiries have seen an increase of 1,500. Attendance at Fall events have increased from 190 in 2019 to 223 in 2021. Two open houses have been held, as well as four Saturday tours, daily tours and virtual open houses.

Early action numbers show inquiries for first year students at 6,877, an increase of 22%, and applications at 472, an increase of 28%. Majors performing ahead in interest are art, communications, science, English, physics, performing arts, and sociology. The GPA in the applicant pool has increase from 3.37 to 3.54. Interest from Suffolk and Berkshire Counties has seen a decrease, while overall MA, NY, CT and VT are on the rise. Focus has been placed on improving Suffolk and Berkshire County recruiting efforts.

In response to a question regarding tuition for NY state residents and the Empire Promise, Ms. Hollins stated that efforts have been made to increase communications in the NY region with a focus on the tuition reduction program offered at MCLA.

Ms. Boyer reviewed Spring yield events including dates for scholarship overnight and accepted student days, Saturday tours, a Berkshire County Scholarship Reception and continued one-on-one meetings with high school counselors.

Ms. Howland provided an update from the Office of Student Financial Services and Registrar. FASFA filings for 2022/23 are trending equal to the same time last year. National trends still estimate that FASFA filings will be down for 2022/23.

Aid awards to current and new students are ready to begin and will follow the same matrix as last year based on high school GPA and need. Need based funding is done primarily from student financial services with merit awards being managed through Admissions.

At this point in time, there are 66 undergraduate students who have not completed registration for Spring 2022, which is an improvement over the same time last year when there were 230 unregistered students. More proactive steps are being taken to continue to lessen this number.

The most recent round of federal aid of \$943K was dispersed to 991 students. Disbursements were made through a newly implemented system allowing for direct deposit into student accounts as opposed to paper checks. The amounts awarded are based on financial need assessed from the FASFA on file. Students are able to use this money as they wish, with many choosing to pay down current student debt or toward future college expenses.

In response to a question regarding the number of students on categorical waivers, Ms. Holland stated that there are currently five in the elderly category with tuition waivers, and 19 enrolled

Veterans. While the tuition for Veterans is waived, the College does still receive payment of fees from the VA.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.