



**Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of January 29, 2024**  
**87 Blackinton St, North Adams, MA**  
**Audio/Video Conference**

**Members in Attendance**

Mohan Boodram\*, Chair, Brenda Burdick\*

**Members absent**

Robert Reilly

**Others in Attendance**

James F. Birge, President  
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk

Richard Glejzer, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Brigid Lawler, Executive Director of 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 Enrollment Management Committee of the Board of Trustees of January 29, 2024, with Committee Chair Boodram presiding was called to order at 8:34 a.m.

**Spring and Fall 2024 Enrollment**

ED Lawler provided a review of Spring and Fall 2024 enrollment. She commented on what she perceives as a shift in the enrollment funnel with fewer inquiries and deposits level year over year.

Inquiries are up 50%, applications for the fall have increased year over year, and yield has improved. Early numbers from increased retention efforts are encouraging for overall enrollment.

Enrollment for ice hockey and nursing programs was discussed. The impact of ice hockey will be less as there is less effort needed to recruit a full team. Interest in the nursing program is anticipated to increase as Fall 2024 is the first full year in this recruitment cycle.

In response to questions regarding the variance in deposits and applications year over year, it was stated that the payer mix remains unchanged.

With regard to the closing of the museum at University of New Hampshire, MCLA's marketing team will begin geofencing to reach students in the area who may be looking to transfer.

New hires have been made in the Office of Admission and all staff have been cross trained in processing transfer applications.

### **FAFSA Support for Students**

The FAFSA filing remains complicated since launch, and concerns continue around the process. Staff continue to actively reach-out to students and families to encourage completion of the FAFSA filing and to offer assistance with the same.

### **Readmit Policy**

ED Lawler reviewed changes made to the College's student readmit policy. In the past, students applying for readmission would do so through the Office of Admission. Reapplying will now be handled through Office of the Registrar with this policy change. The policy is on the agenda for consideration with the College's Academic Policies Committee.

### **Student Persistence and Retention**

VP Glejzer reviewed retention rates for first-time, full-time, first-year students for 2021, 2022, and 2023 cohorts which are 79.9%, 84.7% and 92.6% respectively. In Fall 2023, the college introduced an enhanced student advising program for all new students as opposed to advising for those who had undeclared majors as was past practice.

For the fall to spring semester, of the students affected by the change in the academic suspension policy, 44 were first year students and 37 of those would have been suspended under the former policy, which disproportionately impacted students of color, first generation students and those from marginalized communities. The elimination of the appeal process for the fall to spring semester removes a barrier for students to continue their education.

To support this policy change, the College has improved the infrastructure for advising, coaching, and supporting students. The Thriving in College Course is a requirement of all students who are on academic notice, as are mandatory weekly meetings with a success coach.

Trustee Boodram requested that Kayla Hollins present at a future meeting more on the division's retention efforts including the types of intervention being done, what she has found to be

working, what gaps exist, and what the division is doing to overcome challenges seen in student retention.

### **Other Business**

VP Glejzer defined SEM (Strategic Enrollment Council) and provided an overview of the work of this group, membership of which consists of all areas of the institution. SEM examines ways to correct institutional policies that impact the student experience.

Chair Burdick requested a discussion at a future meeting on how the College connects with Berkshire County and messaging on attending MCLA.

### **Adjournment**

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