



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE
Audio/Video MS Teams

MINUTES
October 14, 2026

Members in Attendance via Teams

Diana Rogers-Adkinson, President
Richard Glejzer
Lynette Bond
Jason Canales
Kristin Nichols
Josh Mendel
Jana Boyer
Chair, Tom Bernard
Jami Pytko
Darlene Rodowicz
Ben Downing
Buffy Lord
Richard Sabbia

1. Call to Order

Chair Tom Bernard called the meeting of the Board of Trustees Enrollment Management Committee to order at 8:31 a.m.

As permitted by executive order of the Governor of Massachusetts and in compliance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30 and Chapter 15A, Section 9, the meeting was conducted with a quorum present in person and via audio/video conference.

2. Enrollment Leadership Team and Funding Support

The committee reviewed enrollment management activities led by the following members of the Enrollment Leadership Team:

- Lynette Bond, Dean of Graduate & Continuing Education
- Jana Boyer, Executive Director of Admission & Enrollment Operations
- Jason Canales, Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning
- Kristin Nichols, Chief Marketing Officer

- Richard Sabbia, Executive Director of Student Financial Services

The committee noted that enrollment, marketing, and student retention initiatives are supported through Strategic Plan funds and State Funds Supporting Student Success.

3. Overall Enrollment and Retention

The committee reviewed Fall 2026 enrollment results, comparisons with prior years, and retention-related data. Discussion covered undergraduate and graduate enrollment, first-year recruitment, transfer students, graduate and continuing education, financial aid, marketing, and plans for Fall 2027.

A. Undergraduate Enrollment

Fall 2026 undergraduate enrollment totaled **833 students**, compared with 828 in Fall 2025 and 791 in Fall 2024.

Enrollment Category	Fall 2026	Fall 2025	Fall 2024
Continuing Students	439	461	507
First-Time Freshmen	154	142	125
Transfer Students	82	65	72
Hampshire Teach-out Transfers	19	—	—
Return from Leave/Readmit	9	15	9
Dual Enrollment (Non-Matriculated)	46	72	18
Early College (Non-Matriculated)	79	69	55
Other Non-Matriculated	5	4	5
Total Undergraduate Enrollment	833	828	791

The committee noted that undergraduate enrollment increased by five students compared with Fall 2025. First-time freshman enrollment increased from 142 to 154, and transfer enrollment increased from 65 to 82, excluding the 19 Hampshire teach-out transfers.

B. Matriculated Undergraduate Student Profile

Fall 2026 matriculated undergraduate enrollment totaled **703 students**. The committee reviewed the following student characteristics:

- 63% were in-state students.
- Students represented 31 states and eight countries.
- 25% were ALANA students.
- 56% lived on campus.
- 46% received a Pell Grant.
- 44% were from Berkshire County.
- 93% were enrolled full-time, taking 12 or more credits.

The leading majors were Business Administration, Radiologic Technology, Nursing/Pre-Nursing, Psychology, and Health Science.

C. Graduate Enrollment

Graduate enrollment totaled **111 students** in Fall 2026, compared with 95 in Fall 2025 and 102 in Fall 2024.

Graduate Program	Fall 2026	Fall 2025	Fall 2024
Master of Education	71	51	49
Master of Business Administration	22	20	16
Graduate Teacher Certification	3	2	3
Leadership Program	15	21	30
CAGS (Spring Start)	0	0	0
Non-Matriculated	0	1	4
Total Graduate Enrollment	111	95	102

The committee noted overall growth in graduate enrollment, particularly in the Master of Education program, which increased from 51 to 71 students. MBA enrollment also increased, while Leadership Program enrollment continued to decline.

4. First-Year Student Enrollment

The committee reviewed first-year application, admission, deposit, and enrollment results for Fall 2026 compared with Fall 2025.

First-Year Enrollment Metric	Fall 2026	Rate	Fall 2025	Rate
Accepted Applications	1,112	77%	1,033	73%
Deposited Students	183	17%	175	17%
Paid Withdrawal/Defer	29	16%	33	19%
Enrolled Students	154	14%	142	14%

The Fall 2026 application pool consisted of 1,442 applications. Accepted applications increased by 79, and enrolled first-year students increased by 12 compared with Fall 2025. Paid withdrawals and deferrals decreased from 33 to 29.

A. First-Year Enrolled Students

The committee reviewed the following characteristics of the incoming first-year class:

Student Characteristic	Fall 2026	Fall 2025
GPA of 3.0 or Higher	66%	58%
GPA Below 3.0	34%	42%
ALANA Students	25%	25%

Student Characteristic	Fall 2026 Fall 2025	
Hispanic Students	11%	15%
Pell Grant Recipients	44%	54%
First-Generation Students	52%	48%
Athletes Flagged at Admission	34%	40%
Early Action	31%	31%

Hispanic students represented 45% of ALANA students in the Fall 2026 class.

The incoming class showed an increase in the proportion of students with GPAs of 3.0 or higher and first-generation students. The proportions of ALANA students and Early Action applicants remained unchanged, while Pell Grant recipients and athletes (flagged at admission) represented smaller shares than in Fall 2025.

B. First Year Students Housing and Athletics

Category	Fall 2026		Fall 2025	
		%		%
On-Campus	116	74%	103	73%
Off-Campus	41	26%	39	28%
Rostered First-Year Athletes	53	34%	57	40%

The committee reviewed the increase in first-year students living on campus and the decrease in the proportion of incoming students identified as rostered athletes.

C. First Year Students Gender

The enrollment materials reported the following gender figures for Fall 2026 and Fall 2025:

Gender Category	Fall 2026 Fall 2025	
Female	152	95
Male	96	98
Nonbinary or Multiple Genders	13	12
No Value	1	5

D. First Year Students Geographic Distribution

The committee reviewed the geographic distribution of first-year applicants and enrollment, including Massachusetts, New York, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) states, other domestic locations, and international students.

The reported figures showed that Massachusetts continued to account for the largest share of accepted and enrolled students. New York and NEBHE states remained important recruitment markets. The committee noted that tuition reductions are available to students from New York and the New England states of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

E. First-Year Student Majors

The leading majors for Fall 2026 were:

- Radiologic Technology — 30 students
- Business Administration — 23
- Pre-Nursing — 19
- Education — 16
- Health Sciences — 9
- Psychology — 9

Nine percent of the Fall 2026 first-year class was undeclared.

For comparison, Fall 2025's leading majors were Business Administration (21), Radiologic Technology (19), Health Sciences (12), Pre-Nursing (11), Computer Science (8), and Psychology (8). 12% of the Fall 2025 class was undeclared.

5. Transfer Student Enrollment

The committee reviewed transfer recruitment and enrollment results.

Transfer Enrollment Metric	Fall 2026 Rate	Fall 2025 Rate
Accepted Applications	218 of 323 67%	174 of 287 61%
Deposited Students	102 48%	85 49%
Paid Withdrawal/Defer	20 9%	20 12%
Enrolled Students	82 38%	65 37%

The committee noted an increase in accepted applications and enrolled transfer students compared with Fall 2025.

The committee also reviewed transfer recruitment associated with the Hampshire College teach-out and Anna Maria College:

Institution	Applications	Acceptances	Deposits
Hampshire College	120	111	19*
Anna Maria College	5	2	2
Total	125	113	21

The Hampshire deposit figure was reported as 19, consistent with the separately reported Hampshire teach-out transfer enrollment.

A. Transfer Class Profile

The Fall 2026 transfer class had the following characteristics, compared with Fall 2025:

- Students of color: 34.6%, up from 30.8%.
- Pell Grant recipients: 54.8%, up from 52.8%.
- Transfers from Berkshire Community College: 25.0%, compared with 26.2%.
- Students aged 25 or older: 30.8%, up from 27.0%.
- Transfer students with GPAs above 3.00: 72.1%, compared with 72.3%.

The leading transfer majors were Interdisciplinary Studies (16 students, primarily from Hampshire College), Business Administration (13), Pre-Nursing (12), Education (12), and Psychology (10).

6. Looking Ahead to Fall 2027: Undergraduate Recruitment

The committee reviewed planned undergraduate recruitment strategies for Fall 2027.

Planned initiatives include:

- Maintaining a fully staffed admission counselor team and expanding targeted recruitment travel.
- Building on more than 450 college fairs and high school visits conducted during Fall 2026.
- Targeting mission-aligned high schools, including charter schools.
- Developing dual enrollment memoranda of understanding with Boston Public Schools and Boston-area charter schools.
- Following up with the 29 school counselors who visited campus through the School Counselor Overnight program.
- Strengthening relationships with community-based organizations through counselor visits, campus bus trips, and athletic partnerships.
- Establishing a dedicated counselor for New York City recruitment.

B. Application Review and Early Decisions

The committee reviewed plans to provide admission decisions to completed applicants at upcoming recruitment events, including the October 12 Athletic Preview Day and the October 24 and November 14 Open Houses.

The first round of electronic admission decisions was scheduled for the week of October 19, approximately one month earlier than the prior year.

C. Search, Marketing, and Student Experience

Planned initiatives include:

- More strategic purchasing of prospective-student names, with an emphasis on students more likely to enroll.
- An international housing waiver initiative.
- An updated virtual campus tour.

- Continued improvements in institutional visibility and online reputation.

The committee noted that the institution's Niche institutional score had improved from a C to a B, strengthening its online reputation and visibility among prospective students.

7. Graduate and Continuing Education Enrollment

The committee reviewed graduate recruitment, dual enrollment, and Early College outcomes, along with strategies to support growth in these areas.

A. Graduate New Student Enrollment

The committee reviewed application and enrollment results for graduate programs in Fall 2026 compared with Fall 2025.

Fall 2026

Program	Applications	Acceptances	Deposits Paid	Deposits	Yield
Education	39	37	36	32	82%
Business	14	14	11	9	64%
Leadership (Summer)	22	21	17	15	68%

Fall 2025

Program	Applications	Acceptances	Deposits Paid	Deposits	Yield
Education	22	20	16	15	68%
Business	18	17	15	13	72%
Leadership (Summer)	23	23	23	21	91%

The committee noted growth in Education applications, acceptances, deposits, and yield. Business and Leadership enrollment outcomes reflected lower yields than the prior year.

B. Graduate Recruitment Plans for 2027

Planned strategies include:

- Increasing email and text campaigns through Slate.
- Visiting Education and Business classrooms to promote the MBA, Master of Education programs with and without licensure, and the accelerated Moderate Disabilities +1 MEd program.
- Expanding targeted outreach to school districts through drip marketing, school and employer visits, and networking events.
- Continuing to include faculty and advisors in online information sessions to address licensure pathways and align prior coursework during question-and-answer sessions.

- Developing targeted employer campaigns using the message, “Invest in Your People: Strengthen Your Company.”
- Promoting new MBA electives in accounting and healthcare sector management to respond to workforce needs and support career advancement.

C. Dual Enrollment

The committee reviewed dual enrollment activity for Fall 2026 and Fall 2025.

Metric	Fall 2026	Fall 2025
Started Applications	127	253
Acceptances	45	72
Paid Outside of Grant	0	3
Students Matriculating to MCLA	14	7

The committee noted that 14 dual enrollment students matriculated to MCLA in Fall 2026, compared with seven in Fall 2025. Application starts and acceptances declined year over year.

D. Early College

The committee reviewed the institution's “wall-to-wall” Early College partnership with Drury High School, in place since fiscal year 2023.

- Fall 2026 enrollment totaled 79 students: 29 on campus and 50 concurrently enrolled.
- Fall 2025 enrollment totaled 69 students: 20 on campus and 49 concurrently enrolled.
- Five Early College students matriculated to MCLA in Fall 2026, compared with seven in Fall 2025.

The program's enrollment increased by 10 students year over year, primarily through growth in the on-campus cohort.

8. Financial Aid and Scholarships

The Committee reviewed financial aid packaging and institutional scholarship strategies.

A. State Grant Funding

The committee discussed reductions to MASSGrant and MASSGrant Plus funding. The state reduced allocations to account for funds not spent in prior years and applied an additional 5.5% reduction.

Students were notified that their financial aid awards would decrease for the spring semester.

B. Scholarships

The committee reviewed institutional aid strategies designed to incentivize on-campus residency.

Based on recommendations, merit aid for students entering in Fall 2026 was limited to on-campus students, and the aid matrix was adjusted to focus on students with higher GPAs.

The institution planned to continue the 2026–2027 institutional aid strategy for the next award cycle. The first round of financial aid awards was targeted for mailing in mid-December, compared with early February in the previous year.

9. Marketing, Recruitment Operations, and Institutional Brand

The Committee reviewed digital marketing, enrollment pipeline management, research, and institutional brand development initiatives.

A. Enrollment Pipeline and Recruitment Operations

Planned and ongoing improvements include:

- Developing additional Slate reports to improve visibility into recruitment conversion performance.
- Expanding forecasting and dashboard tools to support more accurate enrollment projections and strategic decision-making.
- Improving access to real-time enrollment metrics to monitor applications, deposits, and yield trends.

B. Digital Awareness Strategy

The institution continued its partnership with Manaferra to optimize digital awareness and support student recruitment.

Website and digital marketing enhancements remained focused on lead generation, conversion, and alignment with enrollment objectives and the evolving institutional brand strategy.

C. Institutional Brand Refresh

The committee reviewed the ERI-led institutional brand refresh initiative, which was progressing through stakeholder engagement and discovery activities.

Campus focus groups and listening sessions were being used to identify institutional strengths, key themes, and differentiators. The goal is to establish a unified brand platform that strengthens market position, supports enrollment growth, and improves institutional visibility.

D. Strategic Priorities Through FY27

Key priorities include:

- Completing the institutional brand strategy and messaging framework.
- Continuing enrollment funnel optimization.

- Expanding Slate reporting and forecasting capabilities.
- Advancing graduate enrollment opportunities, including MBA expansion.
- Strengthening alignment among brand strategy, marketing, recruitment, and enrollment operations.

10. Committee Discussion and Questions

The committee discussed marketing investments, enrollment projections, retention, and the need for more actionable use of enrollment data.

A. Advertising and Marketing Effectiveness

Chair Tom Bernard raised a question regarding billboard advertising, noting that state financial support may cover billboard expenses and that the college may not be billed directly for a state billboard.

Kristin Nichols explained that the marketing team evaluates initiatives using available measurable metrics. However, billboards are difficult to track and attribute directly to enrollment outcomes.

B. Committee Engagement and Actionable Strategies

Chair Bernard emphasized that, given the critical importance of enrollment and retention to the institution's future, the committee should consider a more active role in supporting this work rather than limiting its involvement to receiving enrollment data.

He noted that the data presented was valuable but stressed the importance of translating the information into actionable strategies and recommendations.

President Rogers-Adkinson also raised the need for a more substantive discussion of student retention, including identifying which academic programs demonstrate stronger student persistence and understanding the factors contributing to differences in retention outcomes.

C. Fall 2027 Enrollment Projections

Richard G. emphasized the importance of establishing reasonable expectations for Fall 2027 enrollment and using Jason Canales's data analysis to guide decision-making.

The preliminary projections discussed included:

- Growth in continuing students from 439 to 448.
- A targeted 10% increase in first-year students and transfer students.
- Total matriculated undergraduate enrollment of 716 students.

The committee recognized the importance of using enrollment data to establish realistic targets, monitor recruitment performance, and inform strategic decisions.

D. Early Recruitment and Student Financial Considerations

Richard G. noted that students are making college decisions earlier, and the institution has adjusted its recruitment and admission approach accordingly.

Kristin Nichols raised the importance of considering the full spectrum of family income levels as the institution moves recruitment and admission activity earlier in the cycle.

11. Other Business

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees Enrollment Management Committee was scheduled for **November 24, 2026**.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Tom Bernard adjourned the meeting at **9:46 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,
Jami Pytko