



Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
BOARD OF TRUSTEES ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting of December 12, 2019
Murdock Room 208

Members in Attendance

Mohan Boodram, Chair
JD Chesloff
Kathleen Therrien

Others in Attendance

James F. Birge, President
Gina Puc, Dean of Enrollment and Community Relations
Lisa Lescarbeau, Clerk
Jana Boyer, Associate Director of Admission Operations
Kayla Hollins, Associate Director of Freshman Admission
Ely Janis, Dean of Academic Affairs
Bonnie Howland, Director of Student Financial Services

Call to Order

Chair Boodram called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. and began with introductions of staff and trustees.

Ms. Hollins began with a summary of early action applications as of December 2, 2019. She provided a copy of the student accept package that will be in the mail today. She reviewed the contents of the mailers which are personalized to each student.

The early action deadline was December 1. Prospects and suspects are ahead by 55% prospects and suspects, inquiries are even, there are more completed applications, and less early action applications. Despite the decrease in early action applications, early action accepts are even. The enrollment goals are 275 first year and 145 transfer students for fall 2020.

Ms. Hollins provided further data on FAFSA filers which is down nationwide. Undeclared are behind for the same period last year. She reviewed application number specific to smaller programs and for athletes.

Work has begun to track revenue margins of the students in the higher academic application sector.

With regard to student profile, Ms. Hollins noted that racial diversity remains the same as the prior year.

Ms. Hollins provided an overview of the spring yield events including scholarship overnight, accepted student days, scholarship receptions, vacation visits and Saturday tours. She also discussed the use of ChatBot – Admit Hub, which is cutting edge technology in the field for communicating with students.

Ms. Howland next provided a financial aid update. For the 2020/21 academic year overall applications are down about 10%. There were 1,204 FAFSA filers of which:

- 370 were returned complete for review,
- 158 are new students ready for review,
- 47% of applicants are Pell eligible (same as 19-20), and
- 23% have been selected for verification (on par with last year).

She provided an overview of efforts being made to get students to complete their FAFSA filing.

Management is working closely with RNL and a new matrix for incoming students has been developed. Merit aid has been scaled back to reduce institutional spend on merit. Work will continue with admission staff to manage spend by awarding funds differently, including a housing grant to be given at the time of acceptance to entice students to reside on campus. As well, other timelines will be shift to award after a student has registered.

Ms. Hollins provided a handout of the new student offer packet and reviewed updates and changes made from last year including the additions of a payment plan view and balance.

Dean Puc provided an overview of first-time/full-time retention including strengths: females, white students, students who receive merit awards, and early action; and weaknesses: students of color, students who receive a Pell grant, first generation students, and students with a high school GPA below 3.00. MCLA's fall 2018 cohort has retained at 73%, which is an increase over the 2017 fall cohort.

Dean Janis reviewed retention strategies, which included a peer review and benchmarking. Efforts will focus on redefining transitions from acceptance to day one of classes, an overhaul of the orientation process, establishing an academies week, and cohort programs. Additional programming will be developed to continue through the critical first six-weeks of a new student's transition to college. In addition, academic skill lessons for note taking, time management, and other life and academics have been proposed. Professional development courses for faculty and a strong assessment program will be set in place for these revisions.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.