



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting of April 28, 2020
Tele/Video Conference**

Members in Attendance

Mohan Boodram
Denise Marshall, Board Chair
Jacob Vitali, Student Trustee

Members Absent

Frederick Keator, Chair

Others in Attendance

James F. Birge, President
Cathy Holbrook, Vice President of Student Affairs
Lisa Lescarbeau, Board Clerk

President Birge called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

Student Belongings Return

VP Holbrook began with a discussion of the student move from campus residence to home, and the process for managing the return of their personal belongings. Students were allowed to return to campus to gather their belongings, or to petition the College to remain on campus in exception to the order to vacate residences. Some students' belongings were packed by staff and stored until arrangements can be made for their return.

There are currently 10 students residing on campus. Housing arrangements for the summer months will be addressed and either students will be allowed to remain on campus or other housing arrangements will be made.

Resiliency Fund

The Resiliency Fund is being used to support students who have indicated a need for assistance to return home and continue with classes. These needs included financial assistance with the physical trip home, and technology/internet access and equipment. Grants have been given to 77 students with immediate need and to 20 for technology assistance.

A new resiliency fund was launched on April 27 and will be funded primarily by the CARES Act. Students were notified last evening and 45 applications for assistance were received within a few hours of that announcement. The application review process will begin later this week.

Virtual Community and Student Engagement

Jake Vitali commented on his experiences in the virtual environment. The radio station continues to broadcast as a result of students utilizing their production skills and producing content entirely from home. They hold online meetings, and have discussed leadership of the radio station and E-board membership. As well, Mr. Vitali and his friends continue to find ways to maintain connections and their friendship. They use technology to socialize and do homework in ways they might have if they were still roommates, or able to gather on campus.

Mr. Vitali stated there is common frustration among students with completing course work as there is not a standardized platform across the College. Faculty members are missed and the extra efforts of many professors to assist students is greatly appreciated.

VP Holbrook commented on the efforts being made by the Student Activities Committee including an upcoming virtual bingo game. Staff are looking into options to launch e-sports this summer. Fitness suggestions are shared and the student affairs offices hold virtual office hours twice weekly. Student Government will conduct their elections completely online.

Counseling and health services continue to be available remotely. Health services have experience low usage, while Counseling has been holding session with 30 to 40 people weekly and will develop ways to continue providing services through the summer. Technology has been challenging and better options are being investigated.

Commencement

Natty Burfield, Kate Gigliotti and Jackie Kelly have been talking with members of the senior class to determine how activities to commemorate the postponed May 16 commencement ceremony can be conducted remotely and in real time. Senior class officers have committed to remain engaged through the rescheduled commencement.

Planning for Fall 2020

A committee will be established to discuss scenarios and establish a process for a return to campus in the fall. Student Affairs is focused on housing reassignment process and determining the best living arrangements with a focus on the likelihood of single rooms for all residents. A return will also require reviewing and establishing different processes for cleaning and dining, and whether face coverings will be required for all members of campus.

The Council of Presidents meet daily and efforts to provide unified processes are made where possible. As well, the VPAA state group meets frequently and share proposed practices for a return to campus in the fall.

Committee members discussed the impact on athletes. Coaches talk frequently with student athletes checking on their health, connecting them to resources and counseling as needed, and recommending activities. The annual athletics banquet will be held virtually in May. At this time all colleges and universities are waiting on MASCAC for their decisions regarding fall sports.

President Birge provided a brief update on continued construction in the campus center. This is considered public work and as such, workers are considered essential. Work continues on pace for a summer completion. The current environment has encouraged creativity to deal with issues as they arise, for example: as a result of hotels being closed, MCLA provided housing to painting contractors to allow their work to be completed.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 a.m.