



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING**

April 7, 2026

Microsoft Teams Audio/Video Conference

**MINUTES**

**Trustees in attendance via TEAMS:** W. David Halbert, Buffy Lord, Yina Moore, Yvonne Spicer

**Trustees Absent:** B. Downing

**MCLA Staff in attendance:**

James F. Birge	President
Richard Glejzer	Provost
Joshua Mendel	Chief of Staff

\*All attendees participated remotely

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 via audio/video conference, the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts met on April 7, 2026 with Chair Yvonne Spicer presiding.

Chair Spicer called the meeting to order at 8:31a.m. and requested that Provost Glejzer present the agenda items.

**Faculty Searches**

VP Glejzer began with an update on faculty searches. Academic Affairs has completed one tenure-track faculty search this academic year and with searches still in progress for: a tenure-track Nursing position, a tenure-track Computer Science position, and a Visiting Assistant Professor of Education.

**Faculty Hired:**

Dr. Laura Hancock, Biology (MS, University Massachusetts Amherst; PhD, University of Massachusetts Amherst)

## **Faculty Evaluations**

VP Glejzer refreshed the Committee on the evaluation process. Explaining that the first step in the evaluation process for faculty in years two, four and six of service, is to create a portfolio of their work. This is a narrative piece with supporting evidence. Once complete, the portfolio goes through an evaluation process consisting of:

- Peer Evaluation – This is the first review by a committee comprised of three faculty members, two from the faculty member’s home department and one that is selected by the faculty being evaluated.
- Department Chair Evaluation – The faculty member’s home department chair then evaluates the faculty member using the same criteria as the PEC and writes a letter of recommendation at the completion of their evaluation.
- Dean of Academic Affairs Evaluation – The Dean reviews the faculty member’s portfolio and writes their recommendation using consideration of the prior evaluators.
- The Vice President of Academic Affairs and President, respectively, then conduct their evaluations using the same process as the Dean of AA. The final step is the President’s recommendation to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board, followed by the full board of trustees.

## **Faculty Reappointments**

The following faculty have been recommended for reappointment by their PECs (if applicable), their department Chairs, the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the President.

### Reappointment to Third Year of Service

- Normadeane Armstrong (Nursing)
- Amir Mohsen “Mo” Danesh Yazdi (Business Administration)

### Reappointment to Fourth Year of Service

- Samuel Bruun (Psychology)
- Yavuz Ceylan (Chemistry)

### Reappointment to Fifth Year of Service

- Omotara Adeeko (Economics)
- Mariah Hepworth (History)

### Reappointment to Sixth Year of Service

- Andrew Best (Biology)

The following faculty have been recommended not to reappoint.

### Reappointment to a Fifth Year of Service

- Carter Carter (Psychology)

VP Glejzer explained to the Committee that a faculty member under consideration for a fifth-year was recommended not to be reappointed. While there were recommendations for reappointment at earlier stages, each had recommendations with reservation. VP Glejzer explained that he made the recommendation to President Birge not to reappoint. President Birge agreed and explained to the Committee that there is a thorough process contractually in place for faculty seeking reappointments.

### **Faculty Tenure and Promotion**

Three Professors applied for Tenure with Promotion to Associate Professor and three applied for Promotion to Full Professor. All candidates have demonstrated excellence in the classroom, as advisors, in their scholarship and creative work, and in service to the MCLA community. Accordingly, each has strong, positive recommendations from their PECs, their department chairs, the Committee on Tenure (where applicable), the Committee on Promotions (where applicable), the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the President.

The committee reviewed the list of faculty for tenure and promotions. The President recommends the following faculty for:

#### *Tenure with Promotion to Associate Professor*

- Dr. Whitney Gecker (Sociology)
- Dr. J. Antonio Templanza (English)
- Professor Julie Walsh (Radiologic Technology)

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, with no further discussion, following a roll call vote, it was unanimously:

**VOTED:** to recommend reappointment with tenure and promotion to Associate Professor to Drs. Gecker, Templanza and Professor Walsh, as presented.

#### *The following faculty are recommended for Promotion to Full Professor:*

- Professor Tara Barboza (Business)
- Dr. Anna Jaysane-Darr (Sociology)
- Dr. Nicole Porther (Public Health and Community Health)

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, with no further discussion, following a roll call vote, it was unanimously:

**VOTED:** to recommend reappointment and promotion to full professor to Professor Barboza, Dr. Anna Jaysane-Darr and Dr. Nicole Porther.

### **2026 Travel Courses**

There were a total of 71 students participating in the travel courses this semester. President Birge noted that many of the students traveled without any cost to themselves because of the work from the Pathways Campaign which continues to expand because this travel courses are very popular with the students and donors. President Birge went on to say that this is a great opportunity for students to travel.

Belize with trip leader Spencer Moser had six students.

Brazil travel course with trip leader David Cupery had thirteen students.  
Civil Rights bus tour with trip leaders Mariah Hepworth and Jeannette Smith had nine students.  
London travel course with trip leaders Michaela Petrovich and Jeremy Winchester had five students.  
Ireland travel course with trip leader Anthony Daly had nine students.  
Scotland and England with the Soccer team with trip leaders Laura Mooney and Adam Hildabrand had nineteen students.  
South Africa travel course with trip leader Anna Jaysane-Darr had ten students.

The Committee discussed how great this opportunity is and how the Institution will keep promoting these opportunities at events like Accepted Students Day.

**Adjournment**

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Despain