

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

AMHERST•BOSTON•DARTMOUTH•LOWELL•WORCESTER

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, September 3, 2008; 12:00 noon
Amherst Room
225 Franklin Street – 33rd Floor
Boston, Massachusetts**

Committee Members Present: Chair Thomas; Vice Chair DiBiaggio; Trustees Carlin, Endich, Gerson, Koffman, Kulenovic, McCluskey and Pearl; Chairman Manning

Committee Members Absent: Trustees Braceras, King-Shaw, Osterhaus-Houle and Tocco

University Administration: President Wilson; General Counsel Bench; Executive Vice President Julian; Senior Vice President Williams; Vice Presidents Gray and Lenhardt; Associate Vice President Brancato; Chancellors Holub, Motley, MacCormack, Meehan and Collins; Provosts Langley, Garro and Abdelal; Executive Deputy Chancellor/Provost Terence Flotte; Associate Vice President Harrington; Dr. Carol Coleck, Dean, Graduate School of Education, UMass Boston; Kevin Kelly, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, John Mullin, Dean of the Graduate School, UMass Amherst; Kathleen Teehan, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management; Don Honeman, Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management, UMass Dartmouth; John Cunningham, Deputy Provost, UMASS Amherst

Faculty Representatives: Professor O'Connor; Professor May, UMass Amherst; Professor Tirrell, UMass Boston; Ms. Gibbs, Librarian, UMass Dartmouth; Professor Carter, UMass Lowell

Chair Thomas convened the meeting at 12:03 p.m. and announced that due to a full agenda and the need to keep the meeting moving forward in a constructive manner, any members of the Committee or others who wish to speak please do so through the Chair.

The next item was the **President's Report**. President Wilson indicated that it is that time of year again when all the excitement of a new academic year is as much in the air as the first signs of fall. Once again, we note record numbers of applicants and a strong academic profile for our new classes.

We are awaiting fall 2008 figures, but today as part of a panel discussion, we will be presenting firm data from last year and previous years.

Senior Vice President Williams and her team have organized the information in a way that we hope makes clear the relationship between the data and the way it is used by the campuses in

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decision-making around recruitment, retention, and persistence to graduation. As part of the presentation, senior campus officials will also share their perspectives on these key issues.

President Wilson highlighted a few of the opportunities our students have had, just over the past few months. The classes entering this fall will soon discover that they are joining an amazing University of Massachusetts family with ample possibilities for academic, cultural and research enrichment.

This summer, 36 undergraduate engineering students from the flagship UMass Amherst campus worked closely with faculty members engaged in compelling research – improving wind turbines; alternative fuels; water safety; and communications. Through the Research Experience for Undergraduates program, the participating students received a stipend for their efforts and had the opportunity to have their work showcased. Dean Malone has observed that these opportunities are often “defining moments for students.”

Two students from the Masters of Science in Public Affairs (MSPA)-international relations track at the McCormack Graduate School at UMass Boston had the rare opportunity to be present for the Helsinki-2 talks, convened by Professor Padraig O’Malley, who holds the Moakley Chair in Peace and Reconciliation at UMass Boston. I know the experience is one that Nancy Riordan and Andrea Crowell will not forget. Nancy was also able to go on to Bagdad for the signing of the agreement of 17 principles that define the framework for conducting future negotiations in Iraq.

On the UMass Dartmouth campus Sabra Moniz, a sociology/anthropology major, and Samuel Adams, a Spanish major, will be assisting Professor Lisa Knauer with her research, “Central Americans in New Bedford: Politics, Communities and Identities.” The study strives to understand the impetus behind this particular migration and the kinds of communities and lives being formed in the area. Professor Knauer and the students understand their effort in the context of the University’s mission and the campus’ strategic plan, calling for the campus to be embedded in the community. In addition to the interviews, observations, and informal conversations, the research also involves a two-week trip to the Guatemalan home region of most of New Bedford’s Maya population.

On the Lowell campus, John Fraser, a graduate student in Regional Economic and Social Development program has had the opportunity to work with Professor David Turcotte gathering and analyzing data involving affordable living units in the Jackson/Appleton/Middlesex areas of Lowell to ensure that the supply of market-rate affordable housing remains secure. John experienced the satisfaction of having his data and analysis praised by Lowell’s Chief Planner, knowing it will be used in the decision-making process.

Recently, 40 students from the Worcester campus traveled to 18 countries to engage in health education programs and community service—such countries as Malawi, Micronesia, Brazil, Zambia, Uganda, Nicaragua, Ghana—and other countries in South America, Central America,

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and the African continent. Two weeks ago, the reception area of the Medical School was a hub of activity and excitement, as the students shared with the rest of the campus community some of their experiences visiting local clinics, working in hospitals, analyzing medical data, and assisting with HIV/AIDS education. Many of the countries the students visited have large immigrant populations in Massachusetts. As a result of their experiences, these young men and women will become better physicians in their service in the Commonwealth and beyond.

Through a generous gift to the University, Trustee Ruben and Patricia King-Shaw supported over 20 of the students. The King-Shaw's have expressed the hope that their gift will inspire others to join in supporting such life-changing international opportunities for students.

President Wilson indicated that these examples demonstrate that we continue to enhance the student learning experience; strengthen the University's research enterprise; develop a leadership role in public service; and maintain our focus on diversity and positive climate.

He thanked the Trustees, Chancellors, Senior Vice President Williams and Provosts for their work last year and welcomed our new UMass Amherst Chancellor, Robert Holub to his first CASA meeting.

Chair Thomas indicated that these are great examples of academic excellence and breadth of University excellence. Let the record show our thanks to the King-Shaw's for their contribution.

Chair Thomas then asked for a motion to **Consider the Minutes of the Prior Meeting of the Committee.**

It was moved, seconded and

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the May 20, 2008 meeting of the Committee.

The next item was the **Senior Vice President's Report.** Senior Vice President Williams began her report by noting the excitement of possibility at the beginning of every new academic year. Trustees have asked for more in depth look at student profile data. Today will focus on use of data in decision making process in admissions, retention and graduation of students. The data will serve as a useful tool to think about processes and inform decisions. Today's data are historical data - Fall 2008 will be available later in year. Trajectories over time and comparisons to campus peers will be evident today. Campuses strive to be better than they were the previous year. Data come largely from the Student Profile and Annual Indicators Report, both of which were in the Annual Report received in June.

Senior Vice President Williams Introduces the two new Provosts, Ahmed Abdelal, UMass Lowell and Winston Langley, UMass Boston, and Dr. Neena Verma, Director of Institutional Research in the President's Office.

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Chair Thomas then welcomed three new student Trustees: Lindsay McCluskey, UMass Amherst, David Koffman from UMass Lowell and Kristin Gerson from UMass Worcester.

Chair Thomas introduced the item for action, **B.A. in Early Education and Care in Inclusive Settings, UMass Boston**. Dr. Carol Coleck, Dan, Graduate School of Education, presented the program. Future freshman's learning begins at birth and the education they receive at an early age makes a difference. Governor Patrick has focused on early education as a strategy for minimizing gaps in early education. We already have an early education licensure program but there is a large cadre of those who do not require licensure but require bachelor's degrees. Accreditation agencies and state are requiring more advanced preparation. In the Boston area, we have a greater gap in those providers who have a bachelor's degree. Faculty have developed a strong program with five tracks which will complement existing licensure plan and complement articulation with local community colleges. Reviewers came from Worcester State and Wheelock and EECIS is poised to become a lighthouse program, a beacon for improving early education and care.

There were several questions from the Committee members: Trustee DiBiaggio noted that this is an impressive program and fits with the mission. Do these people have to be certified? Dean Coleck indicated that they do not need to have a license but they might choose that; other locations not require license but a higher level of preparation.

Other questions about the program included:

- Will these students will be a diverse population? A number of students will be parents themselves, non traditional age, and have English as a second language.
- Can we complete on a part-time basis? Yes.

Trustee Carlin indicated his support of the program and asked that the Chancellors always consider dropping a program when a program is added.

Chair Thomas inquired about the demand for the program. Dean Colbeck indicated that the survey anticipates about 1000 bachelor-prepared providers in the next 10 years. Chair Thomas also noted that Trustee Braceras would ask if the program is consistent with the strategic plan? Provost Langley responded that the program is consistent with the strategic plan; it extends the focus on preparation of teachers in particular settings in the urban areas as well as preparing students to deal with a more competitive environment. We envision developing signature programs and this will be one of those.

It was moved, seconded and

VOTED: To recommend that the Board take the following action:

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To approve the B.A. in Early Education and Care in Inclusive Settings at the University of Massachusetts Boston as contained in Doc. T08-073.

Chair Thomas then moved to the **Discussion Item: Data-Driven Decision-Making**. Participants in the discussion will be Kevin Kelly, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, John Mullin, Dean of the Graduate School, UMass Amherst; Kathleen Teehan, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management; Don Honeman, Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management, UMass Dartmouth; Ahmed Abdelal, Provost, UMass Lowell; and Terry Flotte, Provost, UMass Worcester.

Senior Vice President Williams began by noting that Trustees have received much data in the Annual Report; two of the items were the Student Profile and the Annual Indicators Report of the Performance Measurement Report. We are now looking at data taken primarily from those two Reports to use the examples of admissions, retention and graduation data and how those data inform decision making about each of those activities. She reviewed seven slides with data on applications, acceptances and yield rates; application, acceptance and yield rate of white vs. students of color; and graduate students of color headcount and percentages.

Kevin Kelly, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, UMass Amherst presented regarding what data they have used to expand the pool. Alana applications have increased 68% with a 5.5% increase in ALANA enrollment. They have become very heavy users of direct mail using College Board Search Program that allows us to follow up with students and invite them to campus and events. Fourteen percent of 150,000 student names are ALANA. Recruiting travel has expanded over last several years – there is a clear priority to recruit students of colors. We are hosting students at receptions and spending time at community colleges. Seventeen percent of the transfer pool is ALANA. Fall open house has grown from 2500 to 4500. Fifty or so tours a year are for special groups which are working with disadvantaged students. Tour guides are selected as well for diversity. UMass is member of National Common Application which is used by 76% of all students and 85% of Alana students; this has helped to expand the pool of all students.

Terry Flotte, Provost, UMass Medical School, presented information regarding the applicant pool at the Medical School. They have a specific focus on increasing the number of underrepresented students studying medicine. The Medical School has several programs at the K-16 level aimed at increasing the number of students. A discussion of a joint BS/MD program has begun with the four other UMass campuses.

Senior Vice President Williams then presented data on retention at the four undergraduate campuses. Retention refers to those students enrolled in fall semester as first time students who return the following fall. Each of the campuses has a retention rate comparable to its peers.

Don Honeman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management spoke about the principles for using data; types of retention and attrition that are looked at; and programmatic

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initiatives. We keep in mind that data must be looked at in context; not just how we compare to peers but to our own institution trend data. We also need to look at distinctions between good attrition and bad attrition. It is not always a bad thing when a student decides to leave a campus. It is important to go from high level data to disaggregated data and to understand sub-populations of students; patterns may be different in sub-populations. It is also important to understand the various categories of retention, why students leave. Approximately 75% of all students who begin a degree achieve it at some point. The first to second year transition is a point of greatest vulnerability; students don't come back for either academic categories or for other reasons. Students leave to pursue another program, go to their first choice institution, or for poor academic performance. In the other categories it may be family and life circumstances such as finances, family difficulties, quality of student life, etc. Strategies to improve attrition such as comprehensive first year experience have been started at UMass Dartmouth. Students of color have historically had more difficulty making the transition. We have developed a College Now program specifically to address those challenges. We have also developed financial management workshops. Making good admissions decisions impact retention numbers as well.

John Mullin, Dean of the Graduate School, UMass Amherst reported that graduate education is different as it can't be looked at in the whole because decisions are made at departmental level. Forty-seven percent of all doctoral students nationally never graduate. Half of those drop out for job opportunities. We have NEAGEP (NorthEast Alliance Graduate Education for the Professoriate) program to address diversity in STEM programs; ninety percent of those students have been retained. We are working on a tracking system that will track the number of credits being taken and funding being provided and improving mentoring opportunities as well. We also have a small pool of funds to support graduate students whose researchers may lose funding and a pool as a bank against future funding awards. Many students leave usually for financial or family reasons, and it is hard to know what that means. We are doing surveys to collect data for a better understanding of the reasons for the attrition.

Trustee Carlin inquired about asking about the faculty providing poor instruction? Mr. Honeman responded that the information usually emerges.

Senior Vice President Williams then provided an overview of graduation rates for the four undergraduate campuses. Graduation rates are calculated on those first-time, full-time students who graduate from the same institution within six years. Graduation rates at the UMass campuses are comparable to their peers.

Provost Abdelal reported that the persistence of students is a national challenge. Most of us support assisting students to achieve a measure of success. Poor academic performance is one indicator for lack of persistence. Looking at data on student performance and grade point averages; the lack of success contributes to attrition. We need to focus on enhancing student success and look at gateway courses and determine if there are ways to move students through the courses in greater numbers. We often say that students are not prepared but perhaps there needs to be a re-thinking of the curriculum pathway. Student engagement is also a key indicator

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of likely persistence. Students need to connect to the campus, a faculty member, or to other students. First year learning communities are one way to establish the connectivity. Unmet financial need is a third key reason for dropping out. Fourth area is ineffective articulation with other colleges to ensure that transfer students make the transition more smoothly.

The presentation concluded with information regarding transfer retention and graduation rates.

Kathy Teehan, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management, UMass Boston reported that transfer enrollment is a significant portion of undergraduate enrollment. Transfer students tend to have better transfer and retention rates though that generally refers to those students who transfer at the upper division level. Transfer students have better persistence because they have a more established direction and commitment to a degree program, more connection to a planned outcome, sometimes older, and more likely to be self-supporting. Yield rates for transfer students at Boston are higher than for freshmen. We used data to determine the interventions and strategies to determine how to maintain yield and persistence rates. We are looking at improving systems, technology and services. We have created a transfer center which manages all recruiting and advising functions, creating new articulation agreements with five feeder community colleges and purchased key pieces of technology to assist with processing transfer students.

Trustee DiBiaggio noted that some would argue that the reasons that transfer students have a higher success rate is that community colleges do a better job with teaching and advising; this is an issue that deserves that attention.

President Wilson reported on a study that showed it was more about motivation than educational quality in community college. We have a very forgiving system of higher education in this country but not always have good data measures.

Trustee Kulenovic inquired about students who drop out for financial reasons – do we have any data on these students? Provost Abdelal responded that we have just looked at unmet financial need; those students with higher unmet need tend to drop out in higher percentages.

Professor Michael Carter, the Faculty Representative from UMass Lowell indicated that we need a more complex analysis; we need to gather data on number of hours students work off campus.

Senior Vice President Williams thanked Associate Vice President Kate Harrington for her efforts in preparing the presentation and all the campus panelists for their participation in the discussion and presentation. Data are not just the data but are useful in helping do the work that we need to do better all the time.

Chair Thomas announced that the Committee would enter into **Executive Session** to consider

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Appointments with Tenure, UMass Amherst, Lowell, Worcester and Awards of Tenure, UMass Amherst, Lowell, Worcester and Transfer of Tenure, UMass Dartmouth.

The Committee will not reconvene in Open Session, and the Secretary will call the Roll.

It was moved, seconded and

VOTED: To enter into **Executive Session** for the purpose of considering **Appointments with Tenure, UMass Amherst, Lowell, Worcester** and **Awards of Tenure, UMass Amherst, Lowell, Worcester** and **Transfer of Tenure, UMass Dartmouth**.

Chair Thomas voted for the motion as did Vice Chair DiBiaggio and Trustees Endich, Kulenovic and Pearl. Chairman Manning also voted for the motion.

The time was 2:05 p.m.

Barbara F. DeVico
Secretary to the Board of Trustees