

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
AMHERST•BOSTON•DARTMOUTH•LOWELL•MEDICAL•LAW•ONLINE**

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

**Wednesday, September 29, 2021; 10:00 a.m.**

**Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Pursuant to the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting  
Law, G.L. c.30A, §20 dated March 12, 2020**

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Paris Jeffries; Vice Chair Scheibel; Trustees Bates, Bhandari, Dyer, Epstein, Houle, Kunda, Lewis, Osterhaus-Houle, Peter, Ramos Gagliardi; Mr. Moreau (Trustee Peyser's representative)

**Committee Members Absent:** Trustees Okwara and Peyser

**University Administration:** President Meehan; General Counsel Leone; System Chancellor Newman; Chancellors Subbaswamy, Suárez-Orozco, Fuller, Moloney and Collins; Provosts McCarthy, Berger, Goodman (Acting), Hartman and Flotte

**Faculty Representatives:** Professor Hoagland, UMass Amherst; Professor Kim, UMass Boston

**Documents Used:**

- Meeting Minutes: May 26, 2021 (Open & Executive Session)
- Appointments to Named Professorship and Endowed Chair, UMass Amherst, Doc. T21-042
- Faculty Council Constitution, UMass Boston, Doc. T95-050, as amended
- Research Commercialization, Doc. T21-041

Chair Paris Jeffries convened the meeting at 10:17 a.m. and stated that the Board continues to meet remotely under the Governor's executive order issued on March 12, 2020. All necessary and required Action Items for Board vote in open session, and where required, in Executive Session will be addressed.

Any member of the public wishing to address the Board regarding an agenda item or issue related to the agenda, or to make an audio or video recording of the open public session of the Board meeting, was provided notice by the Secretary of the Board through a posting indicating that such written requests needed to be received no later than 24 hours prior to this Board meeting. Under the law, the Chair has complete discretion in granting or denying the request to speak, and may limit the duration that the public has to address the Board.

Chair Paris Jeffries stated that he granted a request by System Chancellor Newman to record the discussion portion of the meeting. The participants consented to be recorded.

Chair Paris Jeffries then provided instructions for the Zoom meeting.

**Consideration of Minutes of the prior meeting of the Committee**

Chair Paris Jeffries stated that the Committee was provided with the draft minutes of the May 26, 2021 meeting's Open and Executive Session and asked for any corrections. With no corrections, the minutes were approved.

Chair Paris Jeffries then announced the meeting's agenda: a discussion item, two action items, and four items for action in Executive Session, and reports from President Meehan, System Chancellor Newman, and Trustee Bhandari.

**President's Report**

President Meehan recognized Chair Paris Jeffries for his work, as President and CEO of King Boston. He welcomed the Student Trustees: Barkha Bhandari from UMass Amherst, Joshua "Jake" Bates from UMass Boston, Derek Houle from UMass Lowell, Zach Dyer from the Medical School, and Narcisse Kunda who is returning to represent the UMass Dartmouth students. President Meehan reported that Trustee Bhandari will present on the experiences that students have had on their return to campus later in the meeting.

President Meehan highlighted the remarkable fundraising month that September has been for the University of Massachusetts:

Board Chair Rob Manning and his wife Donna, gifted \$50 million to the University with \$15 million going to support UMass Boston's School of Nursing and Health Sciences. The funds will be used to support student diversity and ensure that the new cohort of nursing professionals are champions of equitable patient care. President Meehan quoted Donna Manning, an oncology nurse at Boston Medical Center for 35 years who said, *"For the majority of my career in Boston, I was struck by the fact that most of the nurses looked like me while most of the patients didn't...UMass Boston plays a critical role in supporting diversity in Boston, and I have seen first-hand how diversity in the nursing workforce can improve patient care and address health inequities."*

Chancellor Collins, Chair Manning, and President Meehan were joined by Governor Baker to announce a \$175 million gift to the Medical School from the Chan family and The Morningside Foundation. President Meehan quoted Gerald Chan who spoke on behalf of his family and issued a challenge in announcing the gift. *"In 1862, Congress saw education as the answer to the nation's problems and created the land-grant colleges. We find ourselves today in a similar moment. Beset by many problems of a national, or even a global scale, strengthening education is still the answer. The gift is both an affirmation of and a call to renew, our support for public higher education."*

UMass Amherst announced a \$21.5 million gift from the Elaine Nicpon Marieb Charitable Foundation to advance the University's innovative Nursing Engineering Center. The largest cash gift in UMass Amherst history. President Meehan quoted Chancellor Subbaswamy who said, *"This gift is an endorsement of the vital role that the College of Nursing plays in preparing nurses for leadership in healthcare. It comes at a time when our society is confronted with unprecedented challenges — challenges that we strive to overcome through innovation, learning and discovery inspired by one of our most distinguished and beloved graduates."*

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President Meehan then reported on the return to the campuses. He noted the achievement of approaching a 100% vaccination rate of students, faculty, and staff. He expressed his gratitude to the Chancellors for their leadership, their teams, and the UMass faculty and staff for their dedication. He also spoke to issues around racial injustice, sexual assault, climate change, political polarization, and economic inequality that are stressing institutions, families and individuals.

President Meehan reported that the Committee will hear from Katherine Newman about the University's technology commercialization initiatives. He reported on the launching of UMass Global earlier this month. UMass Global is a non-profit affiliate of the University that will focus on building a new degree completion pathway for adult learners. The Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, and the Associated Industries of Massachusetts have enthusiastically endorsed the initiative. President Meehan quoted AIM CEO John Regan, who said in a message to AIM's 3000 member companies, *"UMass Global will be a powerful talent engine that will drive economic mobility for adult learners, respond to employer needs for skilled workers, and keep Massachusetts companies competitive in a rapidly changing global economy."*

President Meehan provided campus highlights. At UMass Amherst, the Class of 2025 is the most diverse in its history, with 37% ALANA students and 19% underrepresented minority students. UMass Boston launched a new Social Justice Case Study Competition bringing together its faculty, staff, and students, and peers throughout the Greater Boston area to create new knowledge related to issues involving bias, discrimination, diversity, equity, and inclusivity related to the college experience. Associate Professor Julia Fang from UMass Dartmouth received \$2.7 million from the National Institutes of Health Research Project Grant. She leads a national research team in compiling large dietary datasets from studies that analyzed chronic diseases like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. Under the direction of Physics Professor Supriya Chakrabarti, 100 UMass Lowell students designed and built a miniature satellite that was delivered to the International Space Station in August and is scheduled for launch into Earth's orbit in mid-October. At the Medical School, Dr. Roger J. Davis and his team received \$2.8 million from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center for the purchase of an advanced cryo-electron microscope to advance bio-medical research being conducted at the facility.

**Discussion Item: Research Commercialization**

System Chancellor Newman introduced the discussion on Research Commercialization. The discussion will focus on the intersection of industry and the academy, and ways to increase the investment of government and the private sector in University projects. System Chancellor Newman noted the success of UMass Boston's Venture Development Center in attracting venture capital, UMass Amherst's Institute for Applied Life Science for hosting dozens of companies, Mass Lowell's Applied Research Corporation, set up to attract major federal contracts, and diagnostics, therapeutics and medical devices developed at the Medical School.

System Chancellor Newman introduced and provided the background for Carl Rust, the Executive Director of Industry Engagement and Business Development. Mr. Rust will use his experience in research commercialization in collaboration with principal investigators, Provosts, Chief Research Officers, and Center Directors. System Chancellor Newman noted that following Mr. Rust, Chief

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Data Strategist and Director for Academic Affairs and Economic Development Ismael Carreras will discuss how his group is evolving to be able to measure the impact of research investment.

Mr. Rust presented on industry engagement and proposed future pathways for UMass. He noted the key challenge to overcome the cultural divide between industry and universities. Mr. Rust stated that the Endless Frontiers Act now under consideration by the U.S. Congress would accelerate advancement of research into products, and create regional research hubs. Focus areas of the Act correspond well with existing UMass departments and strength areas.

Mr. Carreras spoke to the expansion of his group's data and analytic portfolio to track and analyze metrics and trends regarding economic development and UMass' role in the area. He introduced Senior Data Warehouse Specialist Preethi Lodha and Senior Economic Data Analyst Victor Owusu-Nantwi to discuss key metrics.

Ms. Lodha presented research and development highlights across the UMass system, which included results by academic area and how UMass compares to peer New England institutions. Mr. Owusu-Nantwi presented on key indicators of UMass' intellectual property as a result of research and development activity, and metrics of downstream economic activity and impact.

System Chancellor Newman described a competitive grant program that was restarted in 2021 to enable UMass scientists and engineers to take their discoveries from the invention phase to the prototype phase, to gather data needed to convince investors of the viability of their technologies and performance to bring the products to market.

System Chancellor Newman introduced Michael Malone, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement from UMass Amherst; Bala Sundaram, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives, and Dean of Graduate Studies from UMass Boston; Michael Goodman, Acting Provost from UMass Dartmouth; Julie Chen, Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation from UMass Lowell; and Terry Flotte, Deputy Chancellor, Provost, and Dean from the UMass Chan Medical School.

Vice Chancellor Malone introduced and provided the background for Dr. Sloan Siegrist, Assistant Professor of Microbiology at UMass Amherst. Assistant Professor Siegrist presented on Bacterial Capture and Amplification, a system for rapid detection of bacteria and assessment of their antibiotic susceptibility. She described a familial experience with medical sepsis as being a typical instance of the slowness of diagnosis and treatment for this condition in U.S. health systems.

Vice Provost Sundaram introduced and provided the background for Dr. Jonathan Celli, Associate Professor of Physics at UMass Boston. Associate Professor Celli presented on a Smartphone-controlled Battery-powered Portable Medical Device for Image-Guided Intraoral Photodynamic Therapy. The device is a response to high incidence and mortality rates of oral cancer in South Asia, and to a need for a low-cost, effective therapy that does not rely on extensive medical infrastructure. Photodynamic Therapy is an FDA-approved treatment for skin precancers. With OTCV support, a confidentiality agreement with Immortalight has been executed and licensing is being discussed.

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Acting Provost Goodman introduced and provided the background for Dr. Amit Tandon, Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Estuarine & Ocean Sciences at UMass Dartmouth. Professor Tandon presented his work on Aurelia, a low-cost depth-changing vehicle for sensors to be used for gathering oceanic data. The device would require minimal technical skill to operate, and would be used for scientific exploration and environmental monitoring.

Vice Chancellor Chen introduced and provided the background for Dr. Anna Yaroslavsky, Associate Professor of Physics at UMass Lowell. Associate Professor Yaroslavsky presented on an optical sensor for monitoring temperature-induced changes in biotissues. The sensor's application would reduce risks associated with directed-energy treatments, such as those using lasers.

Provost Flotte introduced and provided the background for Dr. Kate Fitzgerald, Professor and Vice Chair of Research in the Department of Medicine at the UMass Chan Medical School. Professor Fitzgerald presented on a treatment for rare monogenic inflammatory diseases with a novel small molecule inhibitor of STING. STING is the master regulator of the cellular warning system. Overactive STING causes untreatable inflammatory diseases; the novel molecule is designed to inhibit the action of overactive STING, and may have applications for common inflammatory diseases as well as rare ones.

System Chancellor Newman acknowledged and thanked the faculty for their presentations and noted the importance of OTCV funding.

**Student Trustee Presentation**

Chair Paris Jeffries introduced Trustee Barkha Bhandari to discuss the importance of social support in returning to campus and college affordability. Trustee Bhandari spoke on behalf of the Student Trustees and discussed issues in reconnecting students returning to the college experience, the affordability of attending UMass, and provided an update on the recent protests on the Amherst campus.

Trustee Bhandari spoke to the importance of engagement and connection as students return to in-person classes. She noted that the Student Trustees are working to ease the process for the two classes of students currently on campus for the first time...the class of 2024 and class of 2025. She noted that UMass Dartmouth is implementing a peer-to-peer mentoring program and the need for such program on the other campuses. She spoke to the various challenges of college that affect students' ability to excel academically.

Trustee Bhandari spoke to the affordability of attending UMass for some student populations and its effect on students such as food insecurity, housing insecurity, and lack of access to centers for support. She urged the Trustees to advocate for more state funding to make it easier for students to be on campus without having to take extreme measures for their education. She mentioned the Debt Free Future Act legislation which would make tuition and fees free, and make it easier for the UMass administration to support its students.

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Trustee Bhandari provided an update on recent protests against sexual assaults and against racism on the Amherst campus. She noted a disturbing email sent to students and black student organizations. She reported that students are protesting because of the lack of transparency from the administration, and are demanding to see structural changes in Greek life, for rape culture, and racism on campus. Trustee Bhandari commented on the importance for all of the campuses to take action against sexual assault and racism.

**System Chancellor for Academic Programs Report**

System Chancellor Newman expressed her appreciation to the Student Trustees for their service and communicating student interests and concerns. System Chancellor Newman reported on the undertaking of a feasibility study of the University's engagement with the Commonwealth's Early College program, with the support of the Smith Family Foundation.

System Chancellor Newman reported the launching of UMass Global earlier this month. She introduced Victor Owusu-Nantwi to the Committee, and commented on her group's work to support UMass Global. She announced the creation of a new Campus Online Leadership Group, which consists of the Online Program Directors across the campuses, and colleagues from UMassOnline. System Chancellor Newman reported on efforts underway for a new Zoom Summit that will focus on the 90 core facilities across the campuses that serve cutting edge research needs and industry partners. The Massachusetts Business Roundtable will co-sponsor the summit.

System Chancellor Newman stated that the Committee will be renamed as the Committee on Academic Affairs and Economic Development (CAAED), with Board approval.

**Action Item # 1: Appointments to Named Professorships including Chairs, UMass Amherst, Doc. T21-042**

Chair Paris Jeffries asked for a motion to approve the Appointments to Named Professorships including Chairs at UMass Amherst. The motion was moved by Vice Chair Scheibel and seconded by Trustee Ramos Gagliardi.

To recommend that the Board take the following action:

To concur with the President in the appointment of Professor Giuseppe (Joe) Labianca to the Berthiaume Chair in Business Leadership at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

And, further,

To concur with the President in the appointment of Professor Kathryn A. McDermott to the Dwight W. Allen Distinguished Professorship in Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Provost McCarthy provided the background information on candidates.

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The Secretary then called the roll with each Trustee asked to vote yes or no. Chair Paris Jeffries voted for the motion as did Vice Chair Scheibel; Trustees Epstein, Houle, Kunda, Lewis, Osterhaus-Houle, Peters, Ramos Gagliardi; and Mr. Moreau, representing Trustee Peysner.

**Action Item # 2: Amendments to Faculty Council Constitution, UMass Boston, Doc. T95-050, as amended**

Chair Paris Jeffries asked for a motion to approve the amendments to UMass Boston's Faculty Council Constitution. The motion was moved by Vice Chair Scheibel and seconded by Trustee Ramos Gagliardi.

To recommend that the Board take the following action:

To approve the amendments to the Faculty Council Constitution at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Provost Berger summarized the proposed changes to the Faculty Council Constitution. Non-tenure stream faculty are now eligible to run for and serve in elected positions; the membership has expanded from 28 members to 36; the responsibility for holding membership elections has shifted from the colleges to the Faculty Council in order to standardize the electoral process; and the Chancellor and Provost will continue to be invited to meetings but as guests.

Trustee Bates expressed concern with the changes to the Faculty Council Constitution with the addition of 8 at-large seats that allows one college to acquire all of the at-large seats. He expressed concern with the election process during the pandemic, noting a petition by 100 faculty to establish a committee to review the election results and the constitution amendments, and a vote of no confidence by the College of Management. He stated that the election should be redone and urged the Committee to table the motion or vote no on the motion.

Trustee Ramos Gagliardi asked if Trustee Bates' concerns could be addressed. Provost Berger spoke to the Faculty Council's authority to conduct the process, noting that many of the concerns were heard and addressed. Additionally, the Faculty Council voted on whether there was a need to go back and adjust the vote based on the concerns. After extensive discussion, the Faculty Council voted to proceed as recommended.

Vice Chair Scheibel asked about the rationale for having the Chancellor and the Provost invited to meetings as guests and no longer as ex officio. Provost Berger stated that it removes the need for special meeting sessions to be called. Trustee Epstein asked if the Chancellor and Provost were in favor of the proposed changes. Provost Berger noted his belief that some of the changes strengthen the Constitution. Chancellor Suárez-Orozco stated that the amendments to the Faculty Council Constitution would bring UMass Boston in line with the other UMass campuses, as well as with other campuses in the country.

The Secretary then called the roll with each Trustee asked to vote yes or no. Chair Paris Jeffries voted for the motion as did Vice Chair Scheibel; Trustees Epstein, Lewis, Osterhaus-Houle, Peters,

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Ramos Gagliardi; and Mr. Moreau, representing Trustee Peyser. Trustees Houle and Kunda voted against the motion.

**Consent Agenda**

Chair Paris Jeffries asked for a motion to place Action Items #s 1 & 2 on a Consent Agenda for the Board meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The motion was moved by Vice Chair Scheibel and seconded by Trustee Lewis to place the Action Items on a Consent Agenda.

The Secretary then called the roll with each Trustee asked to vote yes or no. Chair Paris Jeffries voted for the motion as did Vice Chair Scheibel; Trustees Epstein, Houle, Kunda, Lewis, Osterhaus-Houle, Peters, Ramos Gagliardi; and Mr. Moreau, representing Trustee Peyser.

**Executive Session Announcement**

Chair Paris Jeffries asked the Committee for a roll call vote to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 75, Section 4, for the purpose of considering Appointments with Tenure, UMass Amherst, Boston, and Chan Medical School; Awards of Tenure, UMass Amherst and Chan Medical School; Transfers of Tenure, UMass Boston; and Honorary Degrees, UMass Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, Lowell, and Chan Medical School. He announced that the Committee would not reconvene in open session. The motion was moved by Trustee Epstein and seconded by Trustee Peters.

The Secretary then called the roll with each Trustee asked to vote yes or no. Chair Paris Jeffries voted for the motion as did Vice Chair Scheibel; Trustees Epstein, Houle, Kunda, Lewis, Osterhaus-Houle, Peters, Ramos Gagliardi; and Mr. Moreau, representing Trustee Peyser.

Chair Paris Jeffries then announced that the Zoom meeting will be closed by the host and instructed those participating in the Executive Session to join that Zoom meeting with the specific link that was provided.

The time was 11:56 a.m.

Zunilka Barrett  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees