

MSCA Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
December 3, 2021
Virtually using Zoom

Present: Caffrey, Chenault, Ciano-Boyce, Diakite, Eve, George, Hegbloom, Hibbert, Krishnamurthy, Leone, Mitroka Batsford, O'Connell, O'Donnell, Ramsden, Riel, Rosero, Seceleanu, Smith, Weeks
Guests: Michelle Corbin (Worcester), Chris Gullen (Westfield), Roberta James (MTA)

Approval of the Orders of the Day:

It was moved and seconded to approve the orders of the day. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes: November 5, 2021:

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2021 MSCA Board meeting with edits. The motion passed.

Visiting Speakers:

There were no visiting speakers.

Chapter President Reports:

Bridgewater

The chapter continues its work to get the library's mold issue addressed by university administration. University administration did not want to admit there was a problem and claimed high humidity in the library during the summer months as the culprit. Two inspectors concurred with the MTA affiliated inspector that the library's high humidity in the summer months and subsequent mold were due to the aging HVAC system.

A student revealed significant mold issues in a dormitory during a campus meeting focused on mold concerns in campus buildings. In addition, there has been media attention on this issue, including an article in the Boston Globe.

As a result of the activism to get the problem addressed, university administration has earmarked \$5 million in ARPA funds to replace the library's HVAC system.

There are mask enforcement and contact tracing problems on campus.

The contractual safety committee has been meeting.

The Art faculty have requested an air filter for their facility for a long period of time. The \$12,000 needed for the filter has been granted by the university administration due to the chapter's hard work.

Conversations were had about potential changes to the \$600 in additional funds that full-time faculty receive for each DGCE course taught. This payment was initiated by president, Dana Molher-Faria in roughly 2005.

Fitchburg

A resolution written at a chapter meeting was presented to the university president and Board of Trustees. The resolution focused on enrollment decreases, finances and the lack of a plan to address these problems. During the meeting Board members asked the auditor if there was a financial issue at the university. After a quick denial, there was no further discussion at the meeting.

There is concern that the university is drawing on the university reserves each year. A meeting with the comptroller, CFO and other administrators was held and provided the chapter with additional information about the financial status of the university.

There continue to be concerns about the Conlon Building and its ventilation. University administration claims the issues have been taken care of. The chapter would like verification that the issue has indeed been resolved.

Students are not wearing masks correctly.

There were concerns that C4 forms were sent out in digital modality, in violation of the contract.

Framingham

Both the university president and provost will be leaving in June. Searches for their replacements are underway.

The university had a \$5 million surplus; \$4 million was put into savings and \$1 million to addresses student recruitment. No money will be put into retention. The administration has surmised that students are leaving due to problems adapting to college. There are concerns about admission and enrollment management.

Department chairs have been told by non-academic administrators that they must work over the winter break.

The university administration is questioning whether the university should be a Hispanic-serving institution due cost associated with that designation.

MassArt

The chapter president will be on sabbatical next semester. Jennie-Rebecca Falcetta will be serving as acting chapter president during the Spring 2022 semester.

MCLA

There are mold problems in Mark Hopkins Hall. Work to replace the roof will begin next week. Faculty were moved out of the building in October.

Students are testing positive for COVID-19.

The enrollment crisis continues. There is no clear plan.

MMA

The campus is preparing for the cruise. Faculty will not be working on holidays on the ship.

Salem

There continue to be problems with the university president.

A student posted a video on TikTok about a lack of campus accessibility.

There have been problems with the timing of sabbaticals and deferrals.

Westfield

The new university president is becoming familiar with the CBA and campus environment.

The number of COVID-positive cases is increasing. There was a spike after Halloween.

The deficit still exists. There is a major enrollment crisis. There are concerns about the enrollment management.

The VP of student affairs has left the university.

Dining Commons has a staffing issue due to some staff refusing to get COVID-19 vaccinations.

The first draft of the NECHE report has been completed.

There have been three racial incidents on campus. The new university president dealt with the issues adequately.

Worcester

There is a chapter-wide grievance on sabbaticals. All sabbaticals have been deferred this year citing finance issues.

The university administration has formed a task force on financial sustainability.

Based on most recent enrollment numbers, enrollment is down 4.6%. However, this enrollment is up compared to last academic year.

There have been a number of racial incidents on campus.

MSCA Reports:

Organizing and Unity Leader - Krishnamurthy

Work on recruitment continues. Customized letters have been created for various faculty classifications including DGCE. There is a plan to put together materials from union members to urge union membership, such as testimonials.

An unemployment reminder for part-time and DGCE faculty will be sent out this month.

Union membership numbers will be provided to Board members once Leader Krishnamurthy receives the figures from the MSCA Treasurer's Office. Recruitment is going well with part-time faculty. The drop in full-time faculty members may be the result of hiring freezes and retirements.

DGCE Bargaining – Seceleanu

The contract was ratified. The contract language was updated and finalized and approved by the team and shared with management. There is hope that the retro (2.5% back to Spring 2021) will be paid in the near future.

Elections – Mabrouk

No report.

Grievance - Donohue

No report.

Legislation – Dodge

No report.

Librarians – George

No report.

Day Bargaining – Hegbloom

Mid-term bargaining on a new student evaluation instrument will begin this winter. The task force identified two vendors.

Bargaining Action Leader – Gullen

No report.

MSCA Officer Reports:

President – O'Donnell

Committee Nominations

It was moved and seconded to approve the following committee nomination:

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Health and Safety Committee – Rala Diakite (Fitchburg)

The motion passed.

The Investigative Budget Committee will be called to meet soon.

The funding request for the Day contract is still in the governor's office.

The budget season is just starting.

Vice President – Hegbloom

Vice President Hegbloom thanked those who contacted legislators regarding ARPA.

She recently completed ActUp training through the MTA and thought it was excellent.

Treasurer

Treasurer Weeks reviewed the monthly expense report.

Secretary

No report.

MTA Reports:

Consultants – James

Consultant James is looking for signatures on cards in support of the Fair Share Amendment.

Health and Welfare Trust - George

No report.

Board of Directors – Hegbloom

The Board will be meeting tomorrow. It would be useful to have someone from MTA provide us with information in a meeting format on the Fair Share Amendment.

Old Business:

The Review of MSCA Employee Leave Policy

This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Non-elected statewide MSCA positions

Information on this will be sent out again. Please send comments to Vice President Hegbloom.

New Business:

Day and DGCE contract issues

A smaller group will examine how the Day and the DGCE units relate to each other. There is concern that some universities classify all online courses as DGCE courses.

Group members:

Kate Caffrey

Maria Hegbloom

Katie Riel

Luis Rosero

Aruna Krishnamurthy

Amy Smith

Part-time faculty

There is interest in surveying part-time faculty so that we can advocate for them in an informed way.

Officer Elections

It was moved and seconded that President O'Donnell ask Elections Chair Mabrouk to recommend an MSCA member to serve as the candidate forum coordinator.

The motion passed

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy George

MSCA Secretary