

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**  
**REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION**

**COMMITTEE:** Strategic Planning

**NO.:** SPC 18-02

**COMMITTEE DATE:** October 24, 2017

**BOARD DATE:** October 31, 2017

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**APPROVAL OF MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS STRATEGIC PLAN**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the **Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts “Strategic Plan 2017-2022”** and authorizes the Commissioner to forward the same to the Secretary of Education for final approval pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 9(l) and 22(l).

**Authority:** Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Sections 7, 9(f), 9(l) and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d) and Article III.

**Contact:** Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D.  
Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

## **Background**

A fundamental responsibility of the BHE is to provide overall direction to the state's system of public higher education. The Board enacts this responsibility by establishing statewide goals and regularly measuring and reporting progress toward these goals building upon the foundation of the Vision Project. Articulating statewide goals has no impact unless these goals and performance metrics are embraced by the individual colleges and universities and incorporated into their strategic plans. Massachusetts state statute therefore charges the BHE and the Secretary of Education with reviewing and approving campus strategic plans. M.G.L. c. 15A, §§9(f), 9(l) and 22(l); BHE By-Laws, Article I, Section 3(d) and Article III.

### **Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Planning Process**

The MCLA process of strategic planning that began in the fall of 2016 was an all-inclusive one which included surveys, open forums and an intranet site. A board retreat, steering committee events and open dialogues throughout the spring 2017, including an open forum with Commissioner Santiago, led to a draft plan that was vetted campus-wide for further commentary and feedback in April 2017.

Touch Point II took place on May 30, 2017. Strategic Planning Committee Chair Fernando Reimers and member Paul Toner, Commissioner Carlos Santiago and Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success Winifred Hagan, met with President James Birge, Dean of Academic Affairs Monica Joslin, Director of Admissions Gina Puc and strategic planning leadership teams from 2 other institutions. Commissioner Santiago noted distinctions in style and approach in each of the plans. He underscored the importance of the new performance metrics, and establishing benchmarks with peer institutions, stating that the new metrics will reflect the success of the system, because the success of the system depends on the success of its institutions. MCLA returned to campus to revise portions of the plan, refine short-term priorities, identify 'low-hanging-fruit' and defined the key performance indicators that MCLA will use to track progress toward goals.

On September 14, 2017 the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Board of Trustees approved the strategic plan. On September 19, 2017 President Birge submitted the plan to Commissioner Santiago and on September 25, 2017 the plan was distributed to the Strategic Planning Committee. On October 24, 2017 the BHE Strategic Planning Committee approved BSU's 2018 Institutional Strategic Plan.