

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**AMHERST•BOSTON•DARTMOUTH•LOWELL•WORCESTER**

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

**Wednesday, April 21, 2004; 8:00 a.m.**  
**Board Room**  
**One Beacon Street - 26th Floor**  
**University of Massachusetts**  
**Boston, Massachusetts**

**Committee Members Present:** Chair White; Vice Chairs Boyle and Sheridan; Trustees Brathwaite, DiBiaggio and Fatemi

**Committee Members Absent:** Trustees Austin, Cassel, Giblin, Kennedy, Mahoney, Marcalo, Morand and Reed

**University Administration:** General Counsel O'Malley; Associate Vice President Harrington; Executive Vice President Julian; Chancellors Lombardi, Gora and MacCormack; Provosts Seymour, Fonteyn, Esposito and Wooding; Linda Slakey, Dean, Honors Program, UMASS Amherst

**Faculty Representatives:** Professor May, UMASS Amherst; Professor Schwartz, UMASS Boston; Professor Carter, UMASS Lowell

**Guests:** Lisa Franks and Kristen Ierardi, UMASS Amherst; Walter Martinez, UMASS Boston; Amelia Thomas, UMASS Dartmouth; Rebecca Spolarich, UMASS Lowell

Chair White convened the meeting at 8:05 a.m.

The first item on the agenda was **Consideration of the Minutes of the Prior Meeting of the Committee.**

It was moved, seconded and

**VOTED:** To approve the minutes of the January 21, 2004 meeting of the Committee.

Dr. Harrington then gave the **President's and Vice President's Report.** She first congratulated UMASS Boston for the opening of its new Campus Center. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and attended by many special guests. The Boston campus will be holding a special fundraising event on April 26<sup>th</sup> at the Campus Center featuring singer Judy Collins and the presentation of Exemplary Leadership Awards to notable alumni.

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The 2005 Edition of “America’s Best Graduate Schools” by US News and World Report contained good news for two of our campuses: UMASS Amherst College of Engineering posted five places in the new engineering disciplines rankings: 29 for chemical engineering, 26 for computer systems engineering, 43 for electrical engineering, 23 for environmental engineering, and 53 for mechanical engineering. The English Department’s MFA Program ranks among the top ten MFA programs in the country, according to the same issue of rankings. The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) was ranked third in primary care among the nation’s 125 medical schools. UMMS, which has held a spot near the top of the category since the magazine began its rankings in 1994, was tied with the University of Wisconsin-Madison for third; the University of Washington and Oregon Health & Science University were first and second, respectively.

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, UMASS Boston hosted a community breakfast at which the Quinn Award for Outstanding Community Leadership was given to Isaura Mendes, a mother, grandmother, and anti-violence leader. The Quinn Award was established in honor of Robert H. Quinn, whose record includes years as Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Massachusetts Attorney General, and Chair of the UMASS Board of Trustees.

ABC News commentator George Stephanopoulos recounted his experiences as both a policy maker and a journalist before a crowd of 200 participants at “Dangerous Intersection: Where the Media and Public Policy Collide”, the debut conference of the Center on Media and Society at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, the New England Board of Higher Education presented its prestigious 2004 Excellence Award to Dr. Robert Waxler of UMASS Dartmouth and his colleagues for their innovative alternative sentencing program “Changing Lives Through Literature”. The Changing Lives Through Literature program is a nationally recognized alternative sentencing program for male and female criminal offenders. It evolved out of a unique research partnership between Dr. Waxler, a professor of English literature at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and the court system in southeastern Massachusetts. Dr. Waxler has been a recipient of the Presidential Public Service Awards and had his picture hanging in the Board room.

NASA has awarded a \$1.7 million, three-year grant to the Center for Atmospheric Research at UMASS Lowell, for participation in the Jupiter Icy Moons Orbiter (JIMO). The interplanetary mission will explore indications that liquid water may underlie the ice caps, using unique low- and high-frequency radio sounding instruments developed in the Center.

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Institutions of Higher Education recently granted UMASS Lowell continuing accreditation, following a rigorous evaluation. The report notes that among the campus’s “outstanding assets are a clearly defined mission...; a dedicated and talented faculty; an ambitious and loyal student body; and an experienced, committed administrative leadership team.”

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After years of intense research and testing, a new HIV vaccine, developed by scientists at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) and [Advanced BioScience Laboratories, Inc. \(ABL\)](#), and funded by the [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases \(NIAID\)](#), has been designated as an investigational new drug (IND) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The FDA has also given UMMS the green light to begin a clinical trial to test the vaccine's safety and immunogenicity in people.

Dr. Harrington informed the Committee that copies of the Fall 2003 Student Profile has been distributed for their information. This report provides a great deal of information about our student body. It helps us understand who our students are and track their progress over time. Dr. Harrington thanked Barbara Velardi in Academic Affairs who prepared this document.

The annual University Scholars reception will be held on May 26<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m. at the State House. The Scholarship was offered to 163 students from a pool of 522 nominees. Trustees will be receiving invitations to the reception.

Dr. Harrington then discussed the 2004 annual Performance Measurement Report which Trustees will receive shortly in the mail. The Performance Measurement Report is not only an instrument for reporting large quantities of data, but it is a tool that Chancellors, Provosts, and others use to manage the campuses. This report, compiled each spring and sent to the Board prior to the May meeting, is just one of the means by which the University demonstrates its accountability to the Board and to other constituencies. The Performance Measurement Systems is comprised of indicators grouped into five broad areas: Academic Quality, Student Success and Satisfaction, Access and Affordability, Service to the Commonwealth, and Financial Health. There are indicators within these areas that are reported at the system level, some at both the system and the campus level and some only at the campus level. The full report contains information on campus performance, trends and peer comparisons. Dr. Harrington then highlighted a few indicators related to Academic Quality, Student Success and Satisfaction, and Access and Affordability.

The freshman retention and graduation rates of UMASS campuses are generally similar to or slightly higher than those of their peer institutions. Both of these measures have received some publicity within the last few months and it would be helpful to review what these measures indicate. Retention measures the number of first-time, full-time students enrolled in one year who return for the next. Graduation rate measures the percent of first-time, full-time first year students who entered in a given fall and had graduated within six years. Many students today do not begin and finish at the same institution. Research shows that nearly 60% of undergraduates attend more than one college and only about 40% of them complete a degree within the six year measured time frame. One of the most significant ways in which retention and graduation rates can be influenced is through the admissions policy. The rising academic profile of students entering UMASS, as noted by the statistics relative to high school GPA and SAT, indicate that the campuses have been intentional with respect to admitting students whose grades indicate a high degree of probable degree attainment. But many other factors can and will cause students

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to leave an institution, either to move to another higher education institution, or to drop out entirely or for a period of time. It is noted in the full report that the campuses are very aware of the importance of assisting students to persist in achieving a degree, and take retention and graduation rates very seriously.

Retention and graduation rates are a measure of those students who enter an institution as full-time, first-time students. The population of a campus is also a factor when considering this indicator. Campuses which enroll higher numbers of transfer students and/or part-time students may perform less well on this indicator. UMASS Boston and UMASS Dartmouth have decided to include in their campus indicators both the retention and graduation rates of transfer students in recognition of the significant number of these students in their populations. There is no comparable peer data available for these measures. Retention rates for transfer students at these campuses are comparable or better than retention of first-time students. Graduation rates are higher than for first-time students, a possible indication that students transferring to either UMASS Boston or UMASS Dartmouth have committed to earning a degree at these institutions.

Despite increases in tuition and fees, UMASS continues to remain affordable relative to median family income in the state and compares favorably with New England public universities and Massachusetts private universities. The vast majority of UMASS undergraduates (87%) continue to come from Massachusetts, compared with just over a quarter of undergraduates in the state's private university sector.

The proportion of UMASS undergraduate students who are African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, or Native American (21%) compares favorably with the state's population of high school graduates.

Trustee DiBiaggio had a question about the drop in applications at the Amherst campus. Chancellor Lombardi reported that the campus tracks the quality of the students that attend the Amherst campus rather than the students that apply. Dr. Harrington pointed out that recent events played a factor in the drop off last year such as some negative publicity and recent budget cuts. It was noted that the numbers are up this year. Chancellor Lombardi also noted that any change in admission standards has an impact on potential students.

Dr. Harrington then introduced the **Discussion Item: With Honors: Undergraduates.** Excellence is a hallmark of the University of Massachusetts. The University strives to excel in all of its endeavors, in particular, offering students an excellent education – all students, all campuses. Within the framework of excellence, there are some students who desire more, who want to engage intensely with learning, and who, as the Commonwealth College Academic Philosophy states: “want to encourage discovery, creativity, initiative, responsibility, collaboration, leadership and independent thought. For those students, the University offers honors education.

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Honors education offers to students an enriched, rigorous education distinguished by attention to student inquiry, writing, critical thinking and oral presentation. Honors programs are offered at each of the University undergraduate campuses. Students may enter the honors program as freshmen or transfer students, or at any other point within their academic experience at the University. Students chosen for honors program participation evidence strong academic performance and desire already, whether in high school or college. There are over 3,500 honors students in the system.

The majority of these students are at Commonwealth College, which serves 2,600 students. Each entering class is approximately 500 students. Another 200 students each year enter as sophomores. Last year's class included 51 valedictorians and salutatorians. Commonwealth College also provides leadership for honors education among the 28 undergraduate public higher education institutions in the Commonwealth. Commonwealth College has worked with the other colleges to develop a consistent set of standards among honors programs. These standards both ensure a high level of quality in the honors programs at each institution, and also enable students to transfer from one to the other easily.

Each year, Commonwealth College organizes the annual Undergraduate Conference. Student from across the Commonwealth, in community colleges, state colleges and the University are invited to present their research and creative works. Today we have five students representing the system's honors programs. They are joined by Dean Linda Slakey of Commonwealth College, UMASS Amherst.

Rebecca Spolarich from the Lowell campus began her report and talked about her research examining nineteenth century ideals of masculinity in American art and literature.

Walter Martinez from the Boston campus talked about his independent research which was presented this past weekend at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research in Indianapolis. The report examined the forces that contributed to judicial restraint exercised by the Supreme Court in cases that involved tariff issues with the United States and Puerto Rico.

Mr. Martinez expressed his gratitude to UMASS Boston and the Honors Program for everything that he has learned and the doors that have been opened.

Lisa Franks and Kristen Ierardi, from the Amherst campus talked about their work with after school programs in the Western Massachusetts region. Some of the subjects that were studied included: child autonomy, the choices the students get to make while in the program and student interaction with teachers.

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Amelia Thomas from the Dartmouth campus talked about her work with biochemistry creating an oral vaccine for botulitem neurotoxin which is the bacteria that creates botulism. Used as a weapon of terrorism, this agent could affect millions of people. Ms. Thomas is working with the Army, Department of Defense and the FBI on a vaccine and currently has an experimental hypodermic vaccine.

The students were asked what led them to attend the University and to their entry into the Honors Program; their responses included the University's reputation, financial reasons, the need to live and attend school in a different state and the challenge of the work of an Honor's student.

Chair White commended the students for this informative presentation that was followed by a round of applause.

The first item for action was **Revisions to the Code of Student Conduct, UMASS Amherst**. Chancellor Lombardi reported that the revisions have been reviewed and approved by the Student Affairs Judicial Issues Committee, University Counsel, the Dean of Students and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The revisions include the section on Endangering Behavior which will allow the University to charge students that engage in riotous behavior.

The revision to the Firearms section is due to the increasing popularity of "paint ball". The guns used to play paint ball are being construed as being a real weapon.

The last revision regards Parental Notification and the Buckley Amendment that allows for parental notification of any rule of policy of an institution governing the use of alcohol. The proposed change reads "If any student is found to be in violation of the University alcohol and drug policies for possession of a keg or large volume, for dispensing alcohol to a minor, or for possession or distribution of controlled substances, the parents or legal guardians of dependent students under 21 will be notified. If any student violates the University alcohol policies for underage possession or open container in public space for a second time, the parents or legal guardians of dependent students under 21 will be notified".

Trustee DiBiaggio had a question about a letter sent to the members of the Board from Jared Nokes, President of the Student Government Association. Mr. Nokes objected to the process that did not allow the revisions to come before the full Student Government Association for approval. Mr. Nokes also stated that the University should treat its students as adults and notifying parents is not an acceptable form of punishment.

Chair White called on Trustee Fatemi from the Amherst campus for her views on the subject. Trustee Fatemi informed the Committee that she supports the revisions and believes it is in the best interest of the students to change the climate on campus as far as issues with alcohol. She also informed the Committee that Mr. Nokes failed to notify her of his objections and that

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students played a large role in the process with student input on the Student Affairs Judicial Issues Committee. General Counsel O'Malley noted that the Buckley Amendment has not thus far been challenged.

It was moved, seconded and

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

To approve the revisions to the Code of Student Conduct of the University of Massachusetts Amherst as contained in Doc. T94-059, as amended.

The next item for action was **Appointment to Named Professorship, UMASS Amherst.** Provost Seymour reported on this item and first noted that today's Honor Students are sure to be candidates for future Named Professorships.

Professor Thomas P. Russell is a graduate of the Amherst campus and has an excellent record in research, teaching and services. He has established himself as a world-renowned leader in polymer science and has been a role model for students and postdoctoral fellows that have gone on to have exceptional careers.

There was a question about the significance of being named to a professorship. Provost Seymour reported that the award increases the University's visibility when recruiting and is used as a tool when funding awards.

It was moved, seconded and

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

To concur with the President in the appointment of Thomas P. Russell as a Distinguished Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. (Doc. T04-028)

Chair White then announced that the Committee would enter into **Executive Session** to consider **Appointments with Tenure, UMASS Amherst and UMASS Boston** and **Awards of Tenure, UMASS Amherst and UMASS Boston.** He indicated that the Committee would not reconvene in open session.

It was moved, seconded and

**VOTED:** To enter into **Executive Session** for the purpose of considering **Appointments with Tenure, UMASS Amherst and UMASS Boston** and **Awards of Tenure, UMASS Amherst and UMASS Boston.**

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Chair White voted for the motion as did Vice Chairs Boyle and Sheridan and Trustees Brathwaite and DiBiaggio. The time was 9:25 a.m.

Barbara F. DeVico  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees