



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE
OF LIBERAL ARTS

2020
-2021

**STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | # |
|---|-----------|
| PRESIDENT’S WELCOME | 1 |
| COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT | 2 |
| INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| STUDENT RIGHTS | 5 |
| STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW | 5 |
| FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY | 6 |
| FREE SPEECH & ASSEMBLY | 8 |
| SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY AND INFORMATION | 9 |
| OVERVIEW | 9 |
| SELECTED POLICY DEFINITIONS | 10 |
| PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE | 12 |
| PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AT MCLA | 13 |
| RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO EXPERIENCE SEXUAL VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, STALKING OR RETALIATION | 15 |
| THE CAMPUS TITLE IX INVESTIGATION PROCESS | 15 |
| SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY AND ACCESS TO RELATED INFORMATION | 17 |
| SELECTED ACADEMIC POLICIES | 19 |
| ACADEMIC POLICIES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS | 19 |
| ACADEMIC HONESTY | 19 |
| ADD/DROP/WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE | 20 |
| ATTENDANCE POLICY | 21 |
| AUDIT POLICY | 22 |
| CLASS STATUS | 22 |
| COURSE LOAD | 23 |
| COURSE REPEATS/OFF CAMPUS STUDY APPROVAL | 23 |
| DECLARING/CHANGING OF MAJOR | 23 |
| DECLARING A MINOR | 23 |
| DEFINITION OF CREDIT HOUR | 23 |
| DUAL DEGREE POLICY | 24 |
| GRADE APPEAL | 24 |
| INTERNSHIP POLICY | 24 |
| LEAVE OF ABSENCE | 25 |
| MCLA SCHOLAR PROGRAM | 25 |
| OFF-CAMPUS STUDY FOR CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS | 26 |
| PROBATION/SUSPENSION | 26 |
| ACADEMIC WARNING | 27 |
| ACADEMIC PROBATION | 27 |
| ACADEMIC SUSPENSION | 27 |
| STUDY ABROAD/STUDY AWAY POLICY | 28 |
| TEACHING ASSISTANT POLICY | 29 |
| WITHDRAWAL FROM COLLEGE | 29 |
| SELECTED COLLEGE POLICIES | 30 |
| ADVERTISING POLICY | 30 |
| ALCOHOL AND DRUGS | 30 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| AMNESTY AND GOOD SAMARITAN POLICY | 35 |
| DISCRIMINATION | 37 |
| EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS | 39 |
| RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT POLICY | 40 |
| ROOM SCHEDULING | 40 |
| TOBACCO FREE MCLA POLICY | 40 |
| STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES | 42 |
| GENERAL REGULATORY STATEMENT | 42 |
| FAILURE TO FULFILL CONDITION OF ENROLLMENT | 42 |
| ACCURACY OF COLLEGE RECORDS | 43 |
| CLASS ATTENDANCE | 43 |
| COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE COLLEGE | 43 |
| COMPLETION OF REGISTRATION | 43 |
| CONDITIONS ESTABLISHED AS PART OF DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS | 43 |
| FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS | 43 |
| HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS | 43 |
| HEALTH INSURANCE | 43 |
| SPECIAL BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS AT MCLA | 43 |
| ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES | 43 |
| ASSAULT AND BATTERY | 44 |
| COMPLICITY/IMPLIED CONSENT | 44 |
| DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT | 44 |
| DRUGS & NARCOTICS | 44 |
| FALSE INFORMATION | 44 |
| FIRE SAFETY- FIRE ALARMS, EQUIPMENT AND DRILLS | 44 |
| GAMBLING | 45 |
| HARASSMENT | 45 |
| HAZING | 45 |
| MISAPPROPRIATION, THEFT AND/OR DAMAGE/DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY | 45 |
| NOISE | 45 |
| SPONSORSHIP OF EVENTS | 45 |
| WEAPONS AND FIREARMS | 46 |
| ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES | 46 |
| BUILDING HOURS, USE OF FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES | 46 |
| COLLEGE LOGO | 47 |
| FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH AN OFFICIAL REQUEST | 47 |
| GUESTS | 47 |
| ID CARDS | 47 |
| KEYS | 47 |
| MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND PARKING | 47 |
| SOLICITATIONS | 47 |
| USE OF COMPUTING AND OTHER ELECTRONIC RESOURCES | 47 |
| THE COLLEGE STUDENT CONDUCT SYSTEM | 48 |
| STUDENT CONDUCT PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, OUTCOMES, PHILOSOPHY | |
| AND PRINCIPLES of COMMUNITY, AND AUTHORITY and RESPONSIBILITY | 48 |
| OFF CAMPUS CONDUCT STATEMENT | 49 |
| POLICY STATEMENT of NON-DISCRIMINATION | 49 |
| STUDENT'S RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES | 50 |
| CONDUCT REVIEW PROCESS | 52 |
| OUTCOMES/EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES | 56 |
| COLLEGE DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES | 61 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| ACADEMIC SERVICES | 61 |
| ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY | 61 |
| CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS & ENGAGEMENT | 61 |
| ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES | 61 |
| ADVISING SERVICES | 61 |
| CAREER SERVICES | 61 |
| INTERNSHIPS | 61 |
| STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS | 61 |
| FREEL LIBRARY | 61 |
| OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR | 61 |
| COLLEGE SERVICES | 61 |
| COLLEGE BOOKSTORE | 61 |
| DINING SERVICES | 61 |
| STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES | 61 |
| STUDENT ACCOUNTS | 61 |
| VETERANS INFORMATION | 61 |
| VETERANS SERVICES | 61 |
| STUDENT AFFAIRS | 62 |
| MISSION STATEMENT | 62 |
| CENTER FOR SERVICE & CITIZENSHIP | 63 |
| COUNSELING SERVICES | 63 |
| HEALTH SERVICES | 63 |
| IDENTITY & GENDER EQUALITY CENTER | 63 |
| INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS | 63 |
| INTRAMURAL & RECREATION PROGRAMS | 63 |
| MERC & INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES | 63 |
| PUBLIC SAFETY | 63 |
| RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES (RPS) | 63 |
| SUSAN B. ANTHONY WOMEN’S CENTER | 63 |
| STUDENT AFFAIRS DIVISION OFFICE | 63 |
| STUDENT DEVELOPMENT | 63 |
| STUDENT GOVERNMENT | 63 |
| STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS & CLUBS | 64 |
| SGA SPONSORED ACTIVITIES | 64 |
| OTHER STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS | 65 |
| OFF CAMPUS SERVICES & INFORMATION | 66 |
| SELECTED CITY OF NORTH ADAMS RULES AND REGULATIONS | 66 |
| WHERE TO GET HELP IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY | 68 |
| HEALTH RELATED SERVICES | 68 |
| LEGAL ASSISTANCE | 70 |
| OTHER SERVICES | 70 |

A Message from James F. Birge, President of MCLA



Dear Students:

I would like to welcome all our new students to MCLA and to welcome back all our returning students!

As you begin this next phase of your academic journey you will be engaged, challenged, and presented with countless opportunities to expand and grow – in classrooms, in science and computer labs, on athletic fields and courts, on stage and in the studio, and working and learning in the community.

MCLA is a close-knit community with a low student-faculty ratio, where you will be supported in all facets of your life here. We encourage you to become active members of the MCLA community as well as the Northern Berkshire community. Faculty and staff are deeply invested in your success and well-being, and they are committed to preserving MCLA's environment of excellence in teaching and learning while working with you to ensure a rewarding college experience. The powerful experiences you have at MCLA will provide a foundation for the opportunities and challenges that await you after graduation.

This Student Handbook will be an important resource for you throughout the year. It includes information about MCLA policies and procedures, details on co-curricular activities, and contact information for members of the MCLA community who can address your questions and concerns. Questions are always welcome — we want to ensure you have the information to make your experience at MCLA successful.

I wish you all the very best during this academic year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Birge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James F. Birge, Ph.D.
President

MCLA Mission and Values Statement

Our Mission

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) is the Commonwealth's public liberal arts college and a campus of the Massachusetts state university system. MCLA promotes excellence in learning and teaching, innovative scholarship, intellectual creativity, public service, applied knowledge, and active and responsible citizenship. MCLA prepares its graduates to be practical problem solvers and engaged, resilient global citizens.

Our Values

Our mission guides the strategic goals that advance MCLA: Excellence in Teaching and Learning; Supportive and Inclusive Community; Responsive and Intentional Stewardship; and Public Purpose and Engagement. These goals reflect the interplay of the shared values that shape our commitment to students, faculty, staff, and our community:

Access: We believe a high quality liberal arts education should be available and affordable to all who aspire to it and are prepared for its challenges. MCLA is committed to providing this opportunity.

Discovery and Understanding: We understand intellectual disciplines and specific courses of study interact dynamically in academic and co-curricular experiences. We believe in strengthening student, faculty, and community interaction through engaging coursework, shared research, and service.

Critical Thinking: Through MCLA's role as leader, convener, and partner, we cultivate critical thinking and analysis in our learning and teaching. We promote a spirit of informed, critical, and open-ended inquiry. Our community members demonstrate consideration, deliberation, and planning in addressing challenges and opportunities in our society.

Global Awareness: We know that a liberal arts education affords students an appreciation of the wider world, both as a subject of intellectual discovery and through engagement with our society. We work to create and sustain the breadth of curriculum, experiences, and opportunities that lead us all to understand our active roles as knowledgeable global citizens.

Inclusive Community: MCLA is committed to creating a campus climate and culture of mutual respect that represents and honors diversity in our society. We celebrate this diversity and affirm the dignity and worth of all people. We intentionally integrate topics of social, cultural, and physical diversity in the curricular, co-curricular, and work life of our community.

Innovation, Experimentation and Creativity: We promote creativity and inquiry, and the role of a liberal arts institution to provide students with the freedom and means to explore ideas and take intellectual and creative risks.

Leadership: We believe that leadership is a shared responsibility, and encourage all members of the MCLA community to develop their affinity for leadership through formal coursework, professional development, co-curricular training, and practical application. We cultivate leadership opportunities and development programs to further these goals.

Lifelong Learning: We empower learners to develop habits of learning that have integrity and engender respect for tradition. We deploy 21st century tools for learning in our academic and co-curricular programs that prepare students to be informed, engaged, and capable learners.

Practicality and Application: We believe that the disciplines of arts, sciences, and professional studies empower individuals with broad knowledge and transferable skills, and a strong sense of values and ethics. In its programs and initiatives MCLA forges the connection among academic study, experiential learning, civic engagement, and future success.

Stewardship: We manage our resources responsibly and sustainably, and offer a variety of educational, cultural, and recreational experiences for the campus and local communities. We provide unique resources for the greater Berkshire region. We encourage a spirit of service among students, faculty, staff, alumni, and trustees, and to serve as stewards of the future.

Introduction

The MCLA Student Handbook provides students with information on many facets of college life such as policies and procedures, community resources, organizations, and services. This document is written for every student enrolled in one or more classes at MCLA.

Each year, the College produces a new or revised Student Handbook to serve as an up-to-date reference for students. Policies most relevant to students, whenever possible, are printed in full in this Handbook. However, due to limitations of space, many State and Federal laws as well as some College policies and procedures are only referenced. Students are, therefore, encouraged to ask questions of appropriate offices before investing their time, money or good name in any activity about which they are in doubt. **Changes or additions to College policies, which come about after this Student Handbook is published, are announced to the College community via MCLA email; through the student newspaper, The Beacon; radio station, WJJW 91.1 FM; and on [MCLA webpage](#).**

Since a major portion of this Handbook highlights the rules and regulations governing the living standards of the College community, students are responsible for familiarizing themselves thoroughly with the contents of this Handbook. It is our belief that the information in this Handbook, if read and utilized, will enhance the experiences available to students of the College.

No claim is made that this document covers all rules and regulations now in effect at MCLA. Students are referred to the MCLA Catalog, Residential Programs & Services publications, and other department policy documents for further information.

The Student Affairs Division Office is designed to provide administrative leadership, supervision, and coordination of the Student Affairs Division (Athletics and Intramural Programs; the Center for Service and Citizenship; Counseling Services; Fraternity and Sorority Life; Health Services; the Identity and Gender Equality Center; Multicultural Education Resource Center, International & Veteran Student Services; Orientation and New Student Transition; Public Safety/Campus Police; Residential Programs & Services; Student Conduct; Student Activities; and the Susan B. Anthony Women's Center). In addition, the Student Affairs Division Office oversees MCLA Dining Services, a contracted service through Aramark,

Important for students to know, this Office also serves to ensure and protect all enrolled students' right to participate in college life, in a community which respects each student's dignity, safety, and basic human rights. Any student who believes these rights have been denied or the atmosphere has been compromised by the actions of a particular student or MCLA employee is encouraged to discuss such concerns with the Student Affairs Division Office or any Student Affairs staff member.

As a supplement to the information provided in the Student Handbook, the Student Affairs Division Office assists students who are unsure where to go for general assistance and/or answers to questions. When in doubt about where to go for help, students are encouraged to start with the Student Affairs Division Office.

Student Rights

Student Membership in the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Community

When a person becomes a student at MCLA, that person voluntarily assumes membership into a special community. A student is any person enrolled in credit bearing courses or experiences. The College, therefore, claims students at MCLA, while retaining all of their rights as United States citizens or residents, are also acquiring special rights and responsibilities in exchange for the benefits gained by becoming members of our community. MCLA is obliged to do our best to provide students with an environment that supports learning and to protect the rights of all the members of our community. To achieve these ends, MCLA is expected to bring together people and resources who will foster learning and growth and to establish and support reasonable rules and fair procedures for the governance of the community. Students, on the other hand, are expected to:

- be active participants in the learning opportunities that exist at the College including the governance system of the school;
- become familiar with and abide by the rules and regulations of the community; and
- treat themselves and all other persons with respect.

Students will also find that the MCLA community is defined, in part, by our physical borders and the fact that we are a State controlled institution primarily located on State land. This means some of the rules governing student conduct in our community include certain Federal and State laws as well as policies adopted by the Department of Higher Education, the MCLA Board of Trustees, and the administration of the College. Students may change these standards governing their behaviors by becoming active citizens at all levels of College governance, particularly in the Student Government Association (SGA) and College Committees. As rules change, they are announced to the community via the MCLA email communication system, the student newspaper, and other forms of media. For now, the current rules and regulations governing student behavior are explained in the following material in this Handbook. MCLA urges each student to take the time to read this important material and contact the Student Affairs Division Office if any questions arise about the meaning of any of this information.

Student Right to Know

The following information, while not included in this Handbook, is available to current and prospective students from the listed sources and locations.

| DISCLOSURE | SOURCE | LOCATION |
|--|---|---|
| Athletic program participation rates and financial support data | Athletic Department | Amsler Campus Center Room 109 |
| Campus policy governing use of alcohol and other drugs | Student Handbook: Alcohol and Drug Policy | Student Affairs Division Office Amsler Campus Center Room 305 |
| Campus security report Statistics of criminal offenses for the three most recent calendar years concerning the occurrence crime involving students | Campus Security Report 2018 Clery Report 2017 Clery Report 2016 Clery Report | Public Safety Department 277 Ashland Street |

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| Completion and annual graduation rates for full-time undergraduates | Data Profile 2018-2019 Factbook | Institutional Research Murdock Hall, Room 118 |
| Disability services Information on services and accommodations available to disabled students | Disability Services | CSSE Eldridge Hall |
| Financial assistance Various sources of financial aid and how to apply | Financial Aid Resources | Student Financial Services Eldridge Hall |
| General institutional information regarding the College | 2018-2019 Undergraduate Program Catalog | Admissions Office Smith House |
| Privacy practices under HIPAA | Confidentiality under HIPAA | MountainOne Wellness Center |
| Loan Deferment for Peace Corps or Volunteer Services | Financial Aid Guide | Student Financial Services Eldridge Hall |
| Rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act Right to inspect and review student's education records | FERPA | Registrar's Office Student Affairs Division Office Amsler Campus Center |
| Teacher preparation and licensure programs and requirements | Teacher Preparation Handbook | Education Department Mark Hopkins Hall |
| Voter registration Voter registration forms must be made available to all students | Voter Registration Form | Student Records Office Eldridge Hall |
| Voter Registration Forms for any state can be obtained at the following web site – https://www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-voter-registration-form/ | | |

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act - Notification of Student Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, ensures the confidentiality of student educational records and restricts disclosure of such records to third parties, except as authorized by law. FERPA also affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

- 1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access.**

A student should submit to the Registrar, Dean, head of the academic department or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The College official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records the student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student who wishes to ask the College to amend a record should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested, the College will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the College discloses personally identifiable information from the student's educational record, except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The College will disclose information from a student's education records only with the written consent of the student, except:

- **When the disclosure is to school officials with legitimate educational interests.**

A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, law enforcement or support staff position; a person or company with whom the College has contracted to perform required functions (such as an attorney, auditor, service provider or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.

- **When the disclosure is of "Directory Information."**

The College designates the following items as "Directory Information:" student name; hometown; MCLA mail box Unit #; Campus electronic mail address; Campus voicemail number; date of birth; major and minor fields of study; dates of attendance; current enrollment status (full or part time); certificates, degrees, honors, and awards received and date(s) received (including scholarships that are not need based); date of graduation; current class standing (FR, SO, JR, SR) whether or not currently enrolled; participation in officially recognized activities including conferences and sports sponsored by the College; weight and height of athletic team members; photograph, not including MCLA student identification photo.

The College may disclose any of these items without prior written consent, unless the student has submitted a written request to the Student Records Office not to release directory information pertaining to the student. Requests will be processed within 24 hours after receipt.

The College may disclose information from a student's education records without the prior written consent of the student under the following circumstances:

- To officials of other institutions in which the student seeks or intends to enroll at the request of either the student or the institution;

- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Defense (under the Solomon Amendment), U.S. Attorney General, INS, the Comptroller General of the United States, state education authorities, organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the College, and accrediting organizations;
 - In connection with a student’s application for, and receipt of, financial aid;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - To parents of dependent students as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 152;
 - To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency;
 - To the alleged victim of any crime of violence or forcible sexual assault the results of any disciplinary proceedings conducted by the College; or
 - The College may disclose the result of a disciplinary proceeding to a parent or guardian as long as the student is under the age of 21 at the time of the incident and the proceeding has resulted in a violation of College drug or alcohol policies or any local, State or Federal law.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20202-5901

Free Speech & Assembly

MCLA embraces a student’s right to free speech and assembly and recognizes an exercise of one’s freedom of expression can contribute to individual and community learning.

1. All students have a right to demonstrate on College premises provided no such demonstration shall materially disrupt class, work or other College business or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.
2. Students are prohibited from blocking free entry to or free exit from buildings, interfering with free movement or presenting obstacles to regular College activities. Interfering with free movement is defined as any physical denial or restriction of a person’s ability to freely reach or leave a given geographical area. Obstacles are defined as physical devices, bodies or signs causing interference with free movement or sounds preventing normal oral communication.
3. Any demonstration within a Campus building may take place only during normal operating hours of the building, and any demonstration in a building or area is limited to the number of persons the area can reasonably accommodate on grounds of public safety, as determined by a College official.
4. There shall be no interference with a demonstration on the grounds of content of speech, except for any speech or demonstration that incites immediate violent actions, represents a clear and present danger to the campus community, is motivated by hate or bias and may constitute a violation of state law.
5. No student shall intentionally and substantially interfere with the freedom of expression of another person on College premises or at College sponsored activities.
6. Violation of this Policy constitutes a violation of Campus conduct and may subject a student to dismissal from the College or such lesser sanctions as may be deemed appropriate by the College.

Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy & Information

The complete [University System EO Plan](#) is available here. Below is an outline of the policy as it relates to sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation.

1. Overview

MCLA is committed to creating and maintaining an environment where sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation are not tolerated, are strictly prohibited, and where all members of the College community are educated in preventing and reporting such incidents. All complaints of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation will be investigated and, if substantiated, result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the College. The College will provide a prompt, fair, and impartial investigation and resolution of any and all complaints.

Acts of sexual harassment are violations of Commonwealth law; the State University Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan; and Title IX. Any person charged with an act of sexual harassment may be prosecuted under Massachusetts criminal statutes. An MCLA student may also be sanctioned following a Title IX investigation in accordance with the State University Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan. These laws and policies are violated in the case of same sex conduct as well. If found responsible following a Title IX investigation, a student could be removed from College residence areas and/or suspended or expelled from the College. Even if criminal justice authorities choose not to prosecute an alleged respondent, disciplinary action may be pursued if the College believes a policy violation occurred.

If the College suspects a violation under the State University Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan was committed by an enrolled MCLA student, the College may immediately suspend the respondent from the residence areas and/or College pending the outcome of a formal investigation. Alternative academic or living arrangements for the respondent and/or the complainant may also be made by the College, regardless of whether the respondent is an enrolled student, if appropriate and reasonably available.

Many survivors of sexual harassment experience emotional distress. Victims become survivors by regaining control of their lives. The process of surviving begins by making sure individuals receive the physical and emotional care needed. Also, it is important for individuals to learn about their rights. A student, staff or faculty member who is the victim of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or retaliation is strongly encouraged to immediately report the crime to the Department of Public Safety. The College provides support through a variety of resources including the Title IX Coordinator, Counseling Services, Health Services, the Department of Public Safety, Residential Programs & Services, the Student Affairs Division Office, and Human Resources. It is each individual's decision to report these crimes to the police, but the College urges reporting take place to help ensure a safe living and working environment for the entire College community. Even if one does not wish to pursue a criminal prosecution or initiate a formal complaint, the College urges the individual to notify Campus authorities so appropriate support services may be accessed in an informed manner.

2. Selected Policy Definitions

Sexual Harassment: MCLA prohibits conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following conditions:

1. An MCLA employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of MCLA on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or,
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to MCLA's education program or activity.

Additionally, the behaviors outlined below constitute sexual harassment under the Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy.

Sexual Assault: An offense classified as a forcible or non-forcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Attempts to commit any of these acts are also prohibited.

(i) **Sexual Assault – Rape**

The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus, with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person without the consent of the victim (or attempts to commit the same). This includes any gender of victim or Respondent.

(ii) **Sexual Assault – Fondling**

Fondling is the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances in which the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age and/or because of temporary or permanent mental incapacity

(iii) **Statutory Rape**

Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent, which is 16 years old in Massachusetts.

(iv) **Incest**

Non-forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

Dating Violence: Any act of violence or threatened violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) the length of the relationship, (ii) The type of relationship, and (iii) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual, emotional or physical abuse, or the threat of such abuse.

Domestic Violence: Includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family

violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

Retaliation: Neither MCLA nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title IX or this policy.

Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this policy, constitutes retaliation.

MCLA will keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sexual harassment, any Complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sexual harassment, any Respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the FERPA statute, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; or FERPA regulations, 34 CFR part 99; or as required by law; or to carry out the purposes of Title IX and this policy, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

Exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this policy does not constitute retaliation; however, a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

Affirmative Consent: Consent is an understandable exchange of affirmative words or actions, which indicate a willingness by all parties to participate in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Consent must be informed, freely and actively given. It is the responsibility of the initiator to obtain clear and affirmative responses at each stage of sexual involvement. Whether an individual has taken advantage of a position of influence over a complainant may be a factor in determining consent. For example, a position of influence could include supervisory or disciplinary authority. Silence, previous sexual relationships or experiences, and/or a current relationship may not, in themselves, be taken to imply consent. While nonverbal consent is possible (through active participation), it is best to obtain verbal consent. Similarly, consent to one form of sexual activity does not imply consent to other forms of sexual activity. Consent to sexual activity may be withdrawn at any time, as long as the withdrawal is communicated clearly.

Force: Force is the use of physical strength or action (no matter how slight), violence, threats of violence or intimidation (implied threats of violence) as a means to engage in sexual activity. A person who is the object of actual or threatened force is not required to physically, verbally or otherwise resist the aggressor.

Coercion: Coercion is unreasonable pressure or emotional manipulation to persuade another to engage in sexual activity. When someone makes it clear that they do not want to engage in sexual behavior, or they do not want to go beyond a certain point of sexual activity, continued pressure beyond that point can be considered coercive. Being coerced into sexual activity is not consent to that activity.

Incapacitation: An individual who is incapacitated by alcohol and/or drugs both voluntarily or involuntarily consumed may not give consent. Alcohol or drug related incapacitation is more severe than impairment, being under the influence, or intoxication. Evidence of incapacity may be detected from context clues, such as slurred speech, bloodshot eyes, the smell of alcohol on the breath, shaky equilibrium, vomiting, unusual behavior or unconsciousness. While context clues are important in determining incapacitation, they alone do not necessarily indicate incapacitation.

The use of alcohol or drugs to render another person mentally or physically incapacitated as a precursor to or part of a sexual assault is prohibited. The use of alcohol, medications or other drugs by the respondent or accused does not excuse a violation.

Persons unable to consent due to incapacitation also include, but are not limited to: persons under age sixteen (16); persons who are intellectually incapable of understanding the implications and consequences of the act or actions in question; and persons who are physically helpless. A physically helpless person is one who is asleep, blacked out, involuntarily physically restrained, unconscious, or, for any other reason, unable to communicate unwillingness to engage in any act.

3. Preservation of Evidence

The College strongly urges any person who experiences sexual violence to take steps to preserve evidence of the incident. After an incident, individuals are encouraged to:

- Go to a safe place and tell someone you trust what happened.
- It is your choice to report the crime to the police and/or MCLA. Please know, however, that action against a perpetrator can prevent others from becoming a victim. If you would like to report an incident, you may call MCLA Public Safety/Campus Police or the North Adams Police Department. You may also make a report to the Title IX Coordinator or another MCLA staff member. Many MCLA employees are obligated to report if they know or suspect a sexual harassment has occurred.
- Don't shower, bathe, douche or brush your teeth.
- Don't throw away any clothing or objects that might contain evidence. Save every article of clothing worn during the attack without laundering or altering it and place them into a paper bag if available. If you choose to go to the hospital, bring the bag with you.
- Seek medical attention either at the hospital or MCLA Health Services. Not all injuries are evident, so for your well-being, it is recommended you receive a medical exam as soon as possible. Medical staff can help assess your needs including prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), pregnancy, and emotional counseling.
- Be a good witness. Even though it may be hard, try to remember details. The sooner you tell, the sooner the perpetrator can be caught.
- Seek support from trusted friends or family. Go to Counseling Services to confidentially talk with a counselor.

- Other supports on campus include the Title IX Coordinator, Student Affairs Office, and Residential Programs & Services.
- Refrain from self-isolation.
- Be patient. It takes time to recover and trust again.
- Refrain from blaming yourself. The person who committed the assault is responsible.

4. Procedures for Reporting Sexual Harassment at MCLA

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment. Reports may be made in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, electronic form (if available), or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the reporting options available at the time of the report. Reports do not constitute a formal complaint under this Policy unless they meet the criteria specified in the Title IX Complaint and Resolution Procedures.

The Title IX Coordinator will assist Complainants in notifying law enforcement, if requested by the Complainant.

The Title IX Coordinator, or designee, is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures and is responsible for receiving and responding to requests for disability accommodations related to supportive measures and participation in the grievance process. The Title IX Coordinator may collaborate with other appropriate offices on campus to provide necessary accommodations under this policy.

MCLA encourages all criminal actions or other emergencies occurring on Campus to be reported to the Department of Public Safety. Public Safety will assist individuals in reporting alleged acts of sexual violence to other appropriate agencies. The emergency telephone number is (413) 662-5100, ext. 5100 from on Campus or 911. If one experiences an act of sexual violence and decides not to notify Public Safety, please:

- Get to a safe place.
- Seek immediate emotional support.
- Seek immediate medical attention.

Making No Report

Individuals have the right not to make a report to anyone. MCLA, however, strongly encourages individuals to seek medical attention, counseling and support. Individuals are always welcome to file a report at a later date, but please note a delay in reporting could weaken the evidence necessary to determine whether the accused is found responsible for committing an act of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or retaliation.

Where to Receive Confidential Medical Assistance

Individuals who feel they experienced sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or retaliation should report the matter to and seek medical and emotional assistance from any of the following offices or community agencies:

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| MCLA Health Services | (413) 662-5421 | |
| MCLA Counseling Services | (413) 662-5331 | |
| Berkshire Medical Center Satellite Emergency Facility – North Adams | (413) 664-5256 | |
| The Elizabeth Freeman Center | 24-hour hotline (413) 401-2425 | A rape crisis center providing assistance and victim advocacy with offices in North Adams and Pittsfield |

Where to Receive Non-Confidential, Private Assistance

MCLA offers a variety of resources to those community members who have experienced sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or retaliation. While the following resources are not bound by confidentiality, they will maintain one's privacy within the limited group of MCLA personnel necessary to address the matter presented.

| | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
| MCLA Department of Public Safety | (413) 662-5100 ext. 5100 on Campus 911 | 277 Ashland Street | The Department of Public Safety can also provide information concerning civil and criminal proceedings. |
| MCLA Title IX Coordinator, Nicole Comstock | (413) 662-5571 | Venable Hall 309C | |
| MCLA Residential Programs & Services | (413) 662-5249 | Flagg Townhouse 89 | |
| MCLA Student Affairs Division Office | (413) 662-5231 | Amsler Campus Center 305 | |

5. Rights of Individuals Who Experience Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment, Gender-Based Harassment, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking or Retaliation

Individuals who experience sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation have the following rights regardless of whether they choose to file a complaint:

- an explanation of the options available;
- referrals to confidential assistance and support services from both on- and off-campus resources, including 24-hour services;
- a change in on-campus residence and/or an adjustment to their academic schedule if such changes are reasonably available;
- request that the College impose no contact/communication orders or other supportive measures;
- choose whether or not to make a formal complaint, which would initiate a formal investigation, unless the College deems it necessary to investigate to protect the safety of the community or in compliance with applicable law;
- file no complaint with the College, but receive supportive measures from the College;
- a prompt, thorough, and equitable investigation and resolution of a complaint;
- the confidentiality of the investigation process to the extent possible (reference to confidentiality section);
- know, in advance, the names of all persons known to be involved;
- an advisor of their choice who can be present at any time during the complaint resolution proceedings, including the Administrative Investigation. In addition, this Advisor will participate in the live hearing as the representative of the Complainant who shall cross-examine the Respondent and any witnesses, but whose participation in the process is otherwise limited as outlined in this Policy;
- an advisor provided by the College during the live hearing if you do not have one;
- reasonable accommodations for a documented disability during the process;
- not to have irrelevant sexual history discussed;
- be present at certain meetings and inspect, review and respond to evidence before completion of the investigative report;
- speak and present information on their own behalf, including inculpatory and exculpatory evidence;
- provide witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses;
- submit questions for the Administrative Investigator to ask witnesses;
- know the status of the case at any point during the process;
- be provided with a copy of the Investigative Report and an opportunity to respond to the report in advance of the live hearing;
- be informed of the outcome of the process in a timely manner;
- an appeal from the outcome of the process (if proper grounds for appeal exist);

- file a police report and/or take legal action separate from and/or in addition to the University discipline process;
- seek and enforce a harassment prevention order, restraining or similar court order;
- be assisted by the College in seeking assistance from or filing a complaint with local law enforcement;
- not file a complaint or seek assistance from local law enforcement, but receive supportive measures from the College;
- be free from any behavior that may be construed by the College to be intimidating, harassing or, retaliatory; and
- have the matter handled in accordance with College Policy.

6. The Campus Title IX Investigation Process

Complaints of violations of the State University Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinators. All complaints must be in writing, preferably using the formal complaint form.

Any Title IX investigation will be conducted by officials who receive annual training on:

- the definition of sexual harassment under this policy,
- the scope of the University's education program or activity,
- the Title IX Complaint Resolution Procedures, including how to conduct investigations, hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable, and
- how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.

The evidentiary standard used in cases of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation is the preponderance of the evidence.

Respondents are entitled to these additional rights within the Campus Title IX Investigation Process:

- an explanation of the allegation(s) against them, including sufficient details known at the time;
- sufficient time to prepare a response to the allegation(s) before any initial interview;
- referrals to confidential assistance and support measures from both on- and off-campus resources, including 24-hour services;
- request that the College impose no contact/no communication orders or other supportive measures;
- receive a copy of the complaint filed against them;
- know, in advance, the names of all persons known to be involved;
- be presumed not in violation of College Policy and that a determination of responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- the confidentiality of the investigation process to the extent possible (reference to confidentiality section);
- an advisor of their choice who can be present at any time during the complaint resolution proceedings, including the Administrative Investigation. In addition, this Advisor will participate

in the live hearing as the representative of the Respondent who shall cross-examine the Complainant and any witnesses, but whose participation in the process is otherwise limited as outlined in this Policy. Pursuant to Weingarten, Respondent unit members may exercise their right to a union representative or other University employee at meetings which the unit member reasonably believes may result in discipline, in addition to an advisor of their choice unless such advisor is also the Weingarten representative;

- an advisor provided by the College during the live hearing if you do not have one;
- reasonable accommodations for a documented disability during the process;
- not to have irrelevant sexual history discussed;
- be present at certain meetings and inspect, review and respond to evidence before completion of the investigative report;
- speak and present information on their own behalf, including evidence inculpatory and exculpatory evidence;
- provide witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses;
- submit questions for the Administrative Investigator to ask witnesses;
- know the status of the case at any point during the investigation and resolution process;
- be provided with a copy of the Investigative Report and an opportunity to respond to the report in advance of the live hearing;
- be informed of the outcome of the process in a timely manner;
- an appeal from the outcome of the process (if proper grounds for appeal exist);
- be free from any behavior that may be construed by the College to be intimidating, harassing, or retaliatory; and
- have the matter handled in accordance with College Policy.

The College will simultaneously notify the complainant and respondent, in writing, of:

- The outcome of the investigation;
- The procedures for the complainant and respondent to appeal the results;
- Any change in the results occurring prior to the time the results become final;
- When the results become final.

7. Sex Offender Registry and Access to Related Information

The federal Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act, enacted on October 28, 2000, went into effect October 28, 2002. The law requires institutions of higher education to issue a statement advising the campus community where law enforcement agency information provided by a state concerning registered sex offenders may be obtained. It also requires sex offenders already required to register in a state to provide notice to each institution of higher education in that state at which the person is employed, carries on a vocation or is a student. In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, convicted sex offenders must register with the Sex Offender Registry Board. Information concerning offenders registered with the Sex Offender Registry Board may be disclosed to any person 18 years of age or older requesting information on a specific individual in accordance with the law. Information regarding a specific person requested pursuant to the law shall be disseminated upon receipt of an official request form, which may be obtained through the City of North Adams Police Department. Information concerning offenders

may also be available electronically through contact with the appropriate web site related to the Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board. The pertinent web site address for securing related information is: www.state.ma.us/sorb/

For additional information about MCLA’s Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy or the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan, please contact:

The Title IX Coordinator, Nicole Comstock, Venable Hall 309C, (413) 662-5571

A written explanation of the rights and options will be provided to students or employees who report to the College they have experienced one of the aforementioned crimes.

SELECTED ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Policies and Ethical Standards

For detailed information pertaining to current policies and procedures regarding academic standards for students, including such matters as grade appeals and academic honesty, prohibitions against plagiarism and other inappropriate behaviors, students can visit the Registrar's Office in Eldridge Hall or review these online at www.mcla.edu/registrar.

All of these policies are available in the Student Records Office, but selected academic policies are included below. In most instances, cases arising under the provisions of academic policies are processed by the Registrar. Cases arising under College policies relating to these matters may, however, be referred by the Registrar to the Academic Affairs Division Office and the Student Affairs Division Office for processing under the provisions described in this Student Handbook.

Academic Honesty

A college is a community of students and faculty interested in the search for knowledge and understanding. Essential to that search is a commitment to honesty and integrity. Honesty on the part of every college student has and always shall be an integral part of the plan of higher education at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. Acts of dishonesty conflict with the work and purpose of the entire College and are not merely a private matter between student and instructor.

Violations of academic honesty include but are not limited to:

- Submitting the work of others as one's own
- Plagiarism (as defined below)
- Communication during an examination
- Using crib notes in an exam, except as allowed by the instructor
- Obtaining prior knowledge of examination questions
- Substitution of another student in an examination
- Altering College academic records
- Knowingly using false statements for academic benefit
- Collaborating on material after being directed not to collaborate
- Forging a signature of a College official or faculty member
- Soliciting an official signature under false pretense

Plagiarism - The academic departments of the College have varying requirements for reporting the use of sources, but certain fundamental principles for the acknowledgment of sources apply to all fields and levels of work. The use of source materials of any kind and the preparation of essays or laboratory reports must be fully and properly acknowledged. In papers or laboratory reports, students are expected to acknowledge any expression or idea that is not their own. Students submitting papers are implying that the form and content of the essays or reports, in whole and in part, represent their own work, except where clear and specific reference is made to other sources. Even if there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment may constitute plagiarism. Any quotation - even of a phrase - must be placed in quotation marks and the precise source stated in a note or in the text; any material that is

paraphrased or summarized and any ideas that are borrowed must be specifically acknowledged. A thorough reordering or rearrangement of an author's text does not release the student from these responsibilities. All sources that have been consulted in the preparation of the essay or report should be listed in the bibliography.

Upon an occurrence of alleged academic dishonesty instructors may exercise **their discretion in imposing a sanction**. Instructors may **further** file charges with the Academic Appeals Committee against students if they believe that additional sanctions would be appropriate. Instructors shall notify the Registrar in writing of any occurrence of academic dishonesty whenever they have imposed sanctions. Such notification shall include the student's name, course title, date of occurrence, type of dishonesty, sanction(s) being imposed, **and any further action requested**. This notification shall be effected within fourteen days after discovery of the incident. A copy of said notice shall be sent to the student involved, including the charges made against the student and the grounds, if proven, that would justify failure or other academic sanction. If the student involved wishes to appeal the sanction imposed by the instructor, the student must initiate an appeal within two weeks after receipt of this notification. The Academic Appeals Committee shall consider as a basis for a hearing that: a) the student claims not to have been academically dishonest; b) the student claims the instructor imposed an inappropriate sanction; c) the nature of the offense merits further action. In academic dishonesty cases the Committee may receive requests for hearings from students, from individual faculty and staff members, and from the Registrar. The Academic Appeals Committee reserves the right not to hear any appeal in any case where data is not sufficient, the necessary steps have not been followed, and when the committee jurisdiction is not clear.

Further information regarding instructor and student rights and responsibilities and appropriate procedures to be followed in applying this policy may be obtained from the Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs or the Registrar.

Add/Drop/Withdrawal from Courses

Addition of Courses

Students may add courses during the first seven academic days of each semester.

Dropping of a Course

Students have seven academic days to drop from a full semester course with no academic penalty and no notation that they were enrolled in the course on their records. Courses running less than an entire semester will have varying drop dates based on the length of the course.

Withdrawing From Courses

Students who withdraw after the drop period ends and prior to the 50% completion point of the course will incur no penalty as far as the quality point average is concerned but will have a notation of "W" on their permanent record. No student may withdraw from a course after the 50% completion point of the course. Any student not attending a course and not officially withdrawing will be issued a grade of "F" on his/her record. The "F" grade will be used in computing the student's grade point average.

The [**Add/Drop Form**](#) is used for the above actions.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all of their classes. They must also be aware of course requirements. Whenever possible, students should notify their instructors prior to an absence from class and make up missed work within a reasonable length of time after their absence. Students who expect to be absent from classes for three days or longer should contact the Center for Student Success and Engagement for help notifying their instructors.

Eligible Absences

Absences of students from scheduled classes will be considered excused for the following listed reasons.

- Participation as a representative of the College in a scheduled intercollegiate athletic event. It will be the responsibility of the athletic department to notify instructors of the student's participation and absence in advance of the anticipated absence.
- Participation as a representative of the College in a scheduled intercollegiate club competition or professional/academic conferences, travel courses, or field trips scheduled as part of a course. The club must be a recognized campus club. It will be the responsibility of the club advisor or the sponsoring academic/administrative department to notify the student's instructors of the student's participation and absence in advance of such absence.
- Health and/or disability-related absences for which a valid reason is presented. Judgment of the validity of the excuse is left to the instructor.
- Any student of the College who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirement shall be excused from any such examination or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement, provided that it shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the College.

Accommodations for Eligible Absences

Each instructor will develop an excused absence policy, which follows the statement of eligibility above. In lieu of such individual policy, a department may choose to develop a departmental policy.

- The absence policy shall be made a part of the course syllabus and shall be made available in print to all enrolled students within the first two weeks of the semester.
- No student having an excused absence shall be penalized for such absence on account solely of being absent. Nothing in this policy is intended to excuse a student from the responsibility to make up missed work within a reasonable length of time.
- A student with excused absences due to participation as a representative of the College (see 1 and 2 under Eligible Absences) may be held to deadlines for submitting class work provided that such deadlines are a part of the course syllabus and were available to the student within the first two weeks of the semester.
- Students anticipating absence because of participation in an eligible event shall make arrangements prior to their absence to make up any missed work.

Policy on Attendance at Out-of-Class Events

In providing a rich cultural education, MCLA recognizes that a total college experience extends beyond regularly scheduled instruction in a formal classroom or laboratory setting. There are a number of educational events or activities that occur outside these settings (e.g., concerts, plays, field trips, etc.) which are an important part of the student's liberal arts education. Attendance at out-of-class events may present hardship for some college students, especially those with jobs and families. Therefore, reasonable accommodations shall be made for all students with respect to such events, with the following provisions:

- Instructors may schedule out-of-class experiences as they deem necessary to achieve the purposes and goals of the course for which the event is scheduled. Students should be given the option of attending the out-of-class experience or their regularly scheduled classes.
- Insofar as possible, all out-of-class events at which student attendance is expected are to be included on the course syllabus. In any event, reasonable advance notice of such expected attendance must be given.
- If the out-of-class event is an exam, the student may opt to take the exam at another time. This other time shall be mutually agreeable to the instructor and the student and must be arranged prior to the original exam date.
- Students for whom attendance at any such event will constitute a hardship with scheduled classes and/or family or employment responsibilities, shall be granted an opportunity to complete an equivalent alternative assignment to meet the course requirements without penalty.

Audit Policy

A student may audit a course with the approval of the chairperson of the department and the consent of the instructor. Auditors are subject to any conditions established by the department or the instructor. No credit is awarded for audited courses. Such courses are officially reported on the student's transcript with the notation "AU" (Audit-No Credit) when all course conditions are met. Auditor status cannot be changed.

Students register for audit during the first week after the Add Period using the [Audit Form](#). A student who wishes to attend class before audit registration may do so with the consent of the instructor. Students are responsible for all course fees when auditing a course. Students who have registered for a grade have enrollment preference over auditing students.

Class Status

Matriculated students are assigned class status according to the total number of earned credits at the conclusion of each semester.

| <u>Credits</u> | <u>Class</u> |
|----------------|--------------|
| 0-29 | Freshman |
| 30-59 | Sophomore |
| 60-89 | Junior |
| 90 or more | Senior |

Course Load

Fifteen (15) credit hours is the normal academic course load at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. Students may enroll for up to eighteen (18) credit hours without special permission. Students wishing to enroll for more than eighteen (18) credit hours must secure the permission of their advisors. The Dean of Academic Affairs must approve any request above 21 credits. The [Course Overload Form](#) can be found here.

Course Repeats/Off Campus Study Approval

A course may be repeated. If the course is required and the student received an F, the course must be repeated. The grade earned in a repeated course replaces the original grade in the student's quality point average even if the repeated grade is lower. (The grade earned each time the student took the course remains on the student's transcript, but the course is marked "RX", and the originally attempted credit is not calculated into the quality point average.)

Students must complete a [Repeat Course Form](#) for each course they repeat. Repeat course work taken off campus must be approved prior to the course being taken.

Declaring/Changing of Major

Students wishing to change their major must secure a [Change of Major/Minor Form](#) from CSSE/Advising. This form requires the approval of the chairperson of the new department and must be filed with the Registrar's Office before the change of major takes effect.

Declaring a Minor

Students who are completing the requirements of a minor program must complete a [Change of Major/Minor Form](#).

Definition of Credit Hour

An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

MCLA in accordance with the federal regulations and commonly accepted practices in higher education operates on a 50-minute hour as it relates to direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two additional hours per week as it relates to other non-direct instructional activities (laboratory, internships, etc.)

- Each unit of internship requires a minimum of forty-five (45) hours of on-site experience for each credit hour (See Policy on Internships)
- Laboratory courses must maintain a minimum of 45 contact hours per unit of credit.

- Field trips are to be counted hour-for-hour as laboratory meetings.

Dual Degree Policy

Matriculated MCLA students may earn a Bachelor of Arts degree and/or a Bachelor of Science degree. Students completing more than one major within either the BA or BS programs at MCLA will have the additional major(s) noted on their transcript but will not receive another degree and/or another diploma and cannot participate in another graduation ceremony.

This Policy is effective immediately upon the approval of the President and supersedes all previous college policies regarding second degrees and dual degrees.

The All College Committee requests that the implications of this policy be made clear to students by the appropriate institutional offices.

Grade Appeal

In cases involving appeals of a course grade, a student has one month into the following semester to initiate an appeal relating to grades earned in the regular Fall or Spring semester. In all other cases (e.g. summer) the student has one month after receipt of the grade to initiate an appeal. No grade appeals can be made after these deadlines. The [Undergraduate Grade Appeal Form](#) is found at this link.

Internship Policy

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS: An internship is a new learning experience provided for selected and specially prepared individuals who aspire to become professional practitioners, apply their academic skills and knowledge to work environments, and explore vocations. It is an experience of "reality" in which the knowledge, the skills, and the judgment of the intern are put into play in solving problems which characterize professional practice.

Departmental Programs

Each academic department may establish an internship program within the confines of the characteristics given in this document. If they choose to do so, they must develop stated objectives, strategies for meeting these objectives, and criteria for evaluation. The department would then submit the internship program proposal simultaneously to the Curriculum Committee for approval of the objectives, the strategies for meeting these objectives, and its relationship to the curriculum and to the Academic Policies Committee for approval of the evaluation criteria. The recommendations of these Committees on each internship program would be forwarded to the All-College Committee and finally the President for his/her approval.

Operational Guidelines

1. Application into an internship program requires that a student be a matriculated junior or senior with a 2.00 GPA. Academic departments have the option to require higher GPAs.
2. No more than fifteen (15) credit hours of internship can count toward a degree. Programmatic exemptions to the credit hour limit require approval of the governance process. The Medical Technology program is exempt from the credit hour granted.
3. A minimum of forty-five (45) hours of on-site experience are required for each credit hour limit.

4. The internship must be a new learning experience. If the internship is within an organization or location where the student has previous experience, the student must demonstrate in his/her application how the intern position differs from previous experience.
5. The credit granting department may establish reasonable additional criteria for accepting students as interns, and also have the option of offering the internship on a pass/fail basis.
6. To apply for an internship, the student must fill out an Internship Application. This form will require the following information:
 - a. the student's educational and career objectives
 - b. the educational and experiential objective of the internship
 - c. the on-site work to be completed during the internship
 - d. the number of hours of on-site work
 - e. the number of credit requested
 - f. any information regarding prior experience relevant to the internship
 - g. a plan for evaluating the internship experience.
7. The faculty sponsor upon acceptance of the student's proposal will submit it to the department chairperson for approval.
8. The internship application will then require the approval of the Dean of Academic Affairs.
9. Evaluation Requirements. ...each internship must contain a writing component, interim evaluations by faculty sponsor (e.g. site visit(s), evaluation by the site director/supervisor, and a final evaluation by the faculty sponsor.

Leave of Absence

A student whose personal, family, or medical circumstances require a temporary interruption of college study may apply for a leave of absence for up to two semesters. To apply for a leave of absence a student must complete an application through CSSE/Advising. Recommendations regarding requests will be made by Advising Services to the Dean of Academic Affairs. The Dean will make the final decision on the request.

A leave of absence may only be granted to students who are matriculated and in good academic and financial standing. All students returning from a leave of absence must contact the Registrar's Office no later than December 1 for reactivation in the spring semester and August 1 for reactivation for the fall semester. Students who are granted a leave of absence before the end of the drop/add period will have no notation on their record for that semester. Students granted a leave after the add/drop period and through the last day of classes will have a grade of "WX" on their record for that semester.

*Students are advised to contact Student Accounts and Financial Aid regarding refunds, loan deferment/repayment and eligibility for further aid.

MCLA Scholar Program

A growing number of MCLA students engage in significant independent scholarly work during their undergraduate years with little formal recognition of their achievements. The purpose of this program is to recognize the outstanding work of these students by conferring the MCLA Scholar designation at graduation and on their official college transcripts. This designation will assist students in their future career

and educational endeavors. This program will also provide clear standards for independent work and scholarship to which prospective and current students can aspire and work towards.

Program requirements:

- At least two semesters (minimum of 6 credits) of Independent Study or equivalent experience in one academic discipline. This work must be independent, substantive, and conducted under the supervision of a faculty mentor.
- Evidence of professional scholarship in the form of one of the following: a presentation at the MCLA Undergraduate Research Conference, a presentation at a regional/national undergraduate or professional conference, a public art show, exhibit, or performance, or work on art commissions.
- Application by the student. The deadlines will coincide with the graduation application deadlines in the Fall and Spring of each academic year.
- A minimum GPA of 3.30 or the equivalent of the cum laude graduation honor.
- A letter of support from the independent study faculty advisor. A review committee of two faculty (from different disciplines and selected from individuals serving on the Undergraduate Research Advisory Board) and the Dean of Academic Studies will review all the applications and letters to confer the MCLA Scholar designation. The MCLA Scholar designation should also be indicated on the students' official transcript.

Off-Campus Study for Currently Enrolled Students

Matriculated students who wish to enroll in coursework at another accredited institution while still enrolled at MCLA must receive approval from MCLA prior to enrolling in such courses. Approval is granted through the Registrar's Office in consultation with the department chair. Coursework in which the student received a grade of C- or above is transferable, provided that the student's overall grade point average is a 2.0 or higher (based on a 4.0 scale) at the other institution. The [Off Campus Study Form](#) can be found at this link.

Probation/Suspension

Academic Standing at MCLA - A student's cumulative MCLA GPA, combined with credits earned, will determine the academic standing category at the end of each semester according to the following standards:

| Earned credits | GOOD STANDING | PROBATION | SUSPENSION |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| 0 - 30 | 2.000 or above | 1.500 -1.999 | under 1.500 |
| 31-75 | 2.000 or above | 1.750 - 1.999 | under 1.750 |
| 76 and above | 2.000 or above | no probation | under 2.000 |

Earned credits include transfer credits and MCLA credits (at the 100 level and higher) in which a passing grade was earned.

Students who are suspended and successfully appeal their suspension will be so designated by a separate category of academic standing that reflects academic probation following a successful appeal of an

academic suspension. The following designations reflect MCLA's Policy on Academic Standing in accordance with a student's cumulative MCLA GPA:

- Academic Good Standing - cumulative GPA of 2.00
- Academic Probation - student on academic probation
- Academic Probation following Appeal - appeal of suspension approved
- Academic Suspension - student academically suspended
- Academic Dismissal - student dismissed (permanently) from MCLA

Academic Warning

A student with a semester GPA less than 2.0 but a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater will be issued an Academic Warning. A letter of Academic Warning will be sent to the student and copied to the student's advisor explaining the potential consequences of poor academic performance (including successive semesters of Academic Warning or future Academic Probation or Academic Suspension). For each semester in which an Academic Warning is received, the student must meet with his or her academic advisor and complete an Academic Success Plan, which will be submitted to CSSE/Advising for review and appropriate referrals.

Academic Probation

A student who fails to achieve a 2.0 cumulative GPA, while achieving a GPA higher than the Academic Suspension cutoff will be placed on Academic Probation. A student on Academic Probation or Academic Probation Following Appeal must adhere to certain conditions designed to promote academic success. These conditions may include: (1) course load of not more than 15 credits; (2) academic schedule changes to allow repeat courses; (3) meetings with an academic advisor, learning services, and/or advising services to complete an Academic Success Plan that will monitor student progress; (4) attendance at academic success workshops (e.g. study skills, time management, etc.); and (5) restrictions on certain extracurricular activities as determined by the Office of Academic Affairs or its designate (for the first semester on Academic Probation, a student will remain eligible for participation in extracurricular activities unless individual departments or activities have higher standards).

Academic Suspension

Students suspended under this policy may appeal their suspension. The Registrar notifies students of their suspension and of their right of recourse to the appeal process. Suspended students may not enroll at the College for one semester. They may then apply to the Admissions Office for readmission. The College requires that they complete a minimum of 6 credits with a minimum GPA of 2.0 at another institution before reapplication. Students must complete an off-campus readmission form available from the Registrar. Approval is required prior to enrollment in courses. Students re-applying after sitting out one semester on suspension will be evaluated on an individual basis based on the entire Massachusetts College academic experience and coursework completed at another college. Students suspended at the end of the spring term may not take courses at MCLA in the summer or fall, and must re-apply through admissions.

Study Abroad/Study Away Policy

Students who study abroad/study away must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 30 credits earned (sophomore status)
- Minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA
- No holds on student accounts
- Must complete the International/Domestic Travel Statement of Consent Form (the statement is included below for informational purposes but is not part of the policy)

Travel Liability Waiver

Statement of Risk - Study Away and/or participation in a Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA)-sponsored travel course is voluntary and not required by the institution for completion of any major or minor academic program. Students should be aware of the potential risk associated with international and domestic travel. MCLA does not encourage, nor promote, the participation in unsafe activities such as sky diving, off-roading, handling of exotic animals, eating unsafe foods, etc. Students are encouraged to make sure their country of interest is not on the [U.S. Department of State Alerts and Warnings list](#).

In addition, students should remain abreast of social, economic, and political issues in their country of interest and should be familiar with the laws governing said country. MCLA assumes no liability for incidents and accidents involving the students studying away from the MCLA campus or participating in a MCLA sponsored Travel Course. Students are encouraged to take precautions when traveling away in terms of preparation for emergencies and unforeseen incidents. The College affiliated student health insurance program does not cover international travel, but covers the United States, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Students who are traveling outside of the coverage area are encouraged to purchase health insurance independently or through one of the college's affiliated third party providers: CISAbroad, International Studies Abroad, Semester at Sea.

Code of Conduct

Since academic credit is awarded upon the successful completion of MCLA sponsored Travel Courses or Study Away programs, students are held to MCLA's code of conduct standards regardless of their location. Students represent MCLA and should act in accordance with the MCLA code of conduct. The following is taken from the MCLA Student Handbook found on the MCLA website under Student Life/Resources. Violations of College policy whenever the conduct in question occurs in any of the following circumstances may be subject to College disciplinary action; - if it occurs while the student who is charged was attending or participating in any college-related activity (such as athletic contests, field trips, study abroad programs or social events).

Assumption of Liability

I am participating in the above captioned study away or MCLA sponsored travel course, and hereby release, waive, indemnify, defend, and hold harmless all MCLA Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, agents, and assignees from and against any and all claims, for bodily injury demands or causes of action of any type whatsoever, including property damage or personal injury, damages, losses and expenses, including but not limited, to attorneys' fees, arising out of or in any way related to participation in this trip with which I choose to participate in. I am aware that there are possible risks and dangers associated with my participation. I assume full responsibility for any injuries or damages I may sustain as a result of my participation, including travel to or from the trip destination. In addition, I assume liability for and agree to indemnify and to hold MCLA Board of Trustees, faculty and staff harmless for all claims or damages

caused, in whole or in part, by me and any negligent, intentional, or other act of omission on my part. By signing this waiver of liability and release, I acknowledge that I have read and understood this document and the assumption of liability for students attending MCLA programs. I fully agree and understand all terms and conditions in this document.

Teaching Assistant Policy

The College recognizes the value of Teaching Assistantships as an educational experience. To this end, each academic department may establish Teaching Assistantships in accordance with College policy. A student interested in becoming a Teaching Assistant (TA) must be in good academic standing. The student must also have demonstrated competency in the subject area in which he/she will be assisting. Academic Departments offering Teaching Assistantships may specify additional requirements.

Faculty must then approve the student's involvement in the Teaching Assistantship and the student will then enroll in a department-sponsored course (1 - 3 credits, with one credit defined as 45 hours per semester) specifically designed for the Teaching Assistant experience and approved on a form signed by the student, faculty member, department chair, and Academic Dean. In this course context, a learning agreement will be developed which describes the duties, academic work and authority of the Teaching Assistant; the Office of Academic Affairs will develop a common form for all Teaching Assistantships that will include guidelines for credit and space for detailed description as well as spaces for the appropriate approval signatures. Teaching Assistantships have the option of being either letter graded or taken as pass/fail courses. Students may apply no more than six credits as Teaching Assistants toward graduation. INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO USE THEIR DISCRETION REGARDING APPROPRIATE CREDIT EARNED AS WELL AS GRADING MODE.

Students enrolled in a credit-bearing Teaching Assistantship will not be eligible for College work study funds or any form of remuneration for the conduct of work done as a Teaching Assistant. While Teaching Assistants may be allowed to review student coursework to learn about the grading process, only Faculty shall evaluate student coursework and assign grades.

Withdrawal from College

Students leaving the College must complete a Withdrawal from College form obtained from CSSE/Advising. Students officially withdrawing before the first day of final examinations will receive a notation of WX in all courses. After this time students will receive a final grade in all courses.

Note: A student is not officially withdrawn from the College until the appropriate form has been completed and has been validated by the Registrar's Office.

SELECTED COLLEGE POLICI

Advertising Policy

Bulletin boards for advertising services and activities are available in a variety of locations across Campus. Bulletin boards within classrooms and those designated as departmental bulletin boards may not be used for displaying general advertisements. Centennial Room monitors, banner space, and Centennial Room table tents are also vehicles for advertising. All flyers, banners, and table tents require approval from the Office of Student Development before being displayed.

Approved advertisements receive a stamp indicating an expiration date. Each item must be stamped individually and may not be reproduced. The Office of Student Development will post approved advertisements and remove expired advertisements as long as materials are received one week prior to the event date.

Advertisements may be displayed for up to three weeks. Upon approval, advertisements for an extended series of activities and advertisements for services that are not time specific may be posted for up to one month. Each group or specific event is limited to one advertisement per board. Semester-long advertisements are not permitted.

Upon approval, larger posters may be displayed on bulletin boards for a limited period of time. Banners are limited to 5' x 8'. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to remove the banner within 24 hours after the event.

Advertisements may only be placed in approved areas. Displaying advertisements on windows, doors, walls, and in bathrooms is prohibited.

All business/company postings unrelated to a College program or event will be posted on the "community boards" located in the Campus Center, Mark Hopkins, Freel Library, Bowman Hall, and Murdock Hall. All flyers must be approved by the Office of Student Development prior to posting.

Advertisements promoting the sale or use of alcohol or containing material deemed inappropriate or offensive to the Campus community will not be approved for posting.

Alcohol and Drugs

1. Pre amble: Policy Principles

MCLA is a community dedicated to the academic and personal development of its members and is committed to educational and social programs promoting these ends.

The use of illegal drugs and abuse of alcohol at the College workplace, on College property or at College activities both on and off campus impairs the safety and health of community members, inhibits the personal and academic growth of students, and undermines the public's confidence in the College. Only in an environment free of illegal drugs and alcohol abuse can the College fulfill its mission of developing the professional, social, cultural, and intellectual potential of each member of its community. For these reasons, it shall be the policy of MCLA that all College activities, College

property, and the College workplace shall be free of the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol. MCLA recognizes the definition below of alcohol and other drug abuse.

The College considers substance abuse (alcohol and other drugs) to be a maladaptive pattern of substance use manifested by recurrent and significant adverse consequences related to the repeated use of substances. For example, there may be repeated failures to fulfill major role obligations, repeated use in situations in which it is physically hazardous, multiple legal problems, and recurrent social and interpersonal problems. Typically, these problems occur recurrently during the same 12-month period. In other words, criteria for substance abuse includes the harmful consequences of repeated use (as cited in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5th edition, DSM V, 2013).

Responsible use of alcohol will be allowed at College activities and on College property only under specified conditions. First, possession and consumption are limited to persons of legal age and are confined to particular locations and/or events. Second, events where alcohol is served, shall be managed through Campus Dining Services. Third, resident students who are of legal age shall observe the regulations controlling the possession, use or distribution of alcohol within residence areas. Students should refer to the Student Handbook and Guidelines for Community Living for these regulations.

The College affirms that fundamental responsibility for personal behavior associated with the use of alcohol rests with the individual; however, the College will provide constructive leadership for promoting a positive environment for its members. In addition, the College will maintain and enforce rules and regulations deemed appropriate and necessary to preserve conditions essential to academic and personal well-being.

The principle aims of College policy concerning the use of alcoholic beverages on Campus include:

- Providing balanced support for activities and programs for those who, by choice or by law do not use alcoholic beverages.
- Reducing pressures on those who do not wish to use alcohol in social settings.
- Formulation and enforcement of regulations for social events and individual conduct encouraging responsible, moderate, and safe use of alcoholic beverages.
- Providing for discipline of those whose use of alcohol is associated in any way with infringements of the rights of other community members to pursue academic, personal, and social endeavors.
- Provision for information, educational programs, and counseling services to support community interests and values affected by social and individual use of alcohol, to minimize problems associated with alcohol use, and to assist all students in pursuing their goals for educational and personal development.
- Provide opportunity for community-wide participation in the formulation, dissemination, and enforcement regulations.

2. Prohibited Conduct

The students and employees of MCLA shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use controlled substances or alcohol on College property in conjunction with any College activity or in the College workplace. No alcohol shall be present at any employee or student meetings or events where College business related efforts are being conducted. Responsible use of alcohol is allowed in this policy and is limited by the three conditions listed in section 1. Any individual who violates this prohibition will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the College's policies. Further, any employee or student employee must notify the Human Resources Director within five (5) days of

being convicted of violating a criminal drug statute in the workplace. The College will notify appropriate authorities as required that an employee or student employee has been convicted of a drug-related offense within ten (10) days.

All College guests are expected to adhere to College policies throughout their visit to Campus or attendance at Campus events and programs.

3. Alcohol and Other Drugs: Effects and Abuse Prevention Resources

Substance abuse programs which apply to the College as both an educational institution and a workplace are designed to:

- establish and enforce clear policies for students and employees that promote an educational environment free from the abuse of alcohol and the use of illegal drugs
- educate all members of the Campus community about the health risks associated with the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol
- create a campus environment that promotes and reinforces healthy, responsible living and respect for community and Campus standards and regulations
- provide intervention for alcohol abusers and users of illegal drugs through counseling, treatment, and referral

Counseling Services and Health Services provide education on substance use and abuse. If students and employees have questions concerning the health risks associated with the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol, they should contact Counseling Services, Health Services, the Employee Assistance Program or personal health care providers.

4. Help and Information Concerning the Health Risks Associated with Drug and Alcohol Use

The use of drugs and alcohol, even infrequently, may damage one's health. A listing of the health risks associated with the use of alcohol and drugs is enumerated under Part 5 of this policy. Counseling Services, Health Services or one's health care provider can describe the effects specific substances have upon one's health.

Help concerning drug and alcohol-related problems are available from several sources. Individuals in need of assistance, who know of someone who needs help or have questions concerning alcohol and drug abuse may contact any of the following:

Counseling Services, MountainOne Student Wellness Center, (413) 662-5331

Health Services Office, MountainOne Student Wellness Center, (413) 662-5421

Website: www.mystudentbody.com

MCLA Director of Human Resources, Mark Hopkins Hall, (413) 662-5598

Drug and Alcohol Hotline, Substance Abuse Division, Information and Referrals, (800) 327-5050

Alcoholics Anonymous, For more information on local meetings, call Pittsfield (413) 443-0212, or Berkshire Intergroup (413) 448-2382. Each Saturday, The Transcript has a complete listing of all AA groups and other 12-step self-help groups.

Employee Assistance Program, (413) 499-4481 or (800) 255-2599

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services of the Berkshires, (413) 499-1000

McGee Unit at Hillcrest Hospital, 165 Tor Court, Pittsfield, MA, (413) 443-4761 or (800) 222-1664, Ext. 154

Narcotics Anonymous, (413) 443-4377

5. Health Risks Associated with Use of Alcohol and Other Drugs

Alcohol

- addiction (particularly for individuals with alcoholism in their families)
- every drinking episode results in some irreversible damage to brain cells
- fetal alcohol syndrome (birth defects caused by women drinking during pregnancy)
- increased risk of cirrhosis, ulcers, heart disease, injury by accident, cancer of mouth, esophagus, liver and stomach
- blackouts
- development of personality disorders
- increased tendency to abusive behavior
- impaired judgment may lead to life-threatening situations (physical alcohol/unwanted pregnancy)
- loss of inhibitions
- malnutrition and resultant damage to muscle, bone and other tissues
- circulatory impairment
- depression of central nervous system function
- increased effect of narcotics/tranquilizers when used together
- alcohol poisoning leading to possible coma and death

Marijuana

- psychological addiction depending on patterns of use
- stored in body fat for 4-6 weeks
- disruption of brain function is caused by a motivational syndrome (loss of energy and enthusiasm including short-term memory loss and impaired depth perception and time/space orientation)
- lung damage due to tar and other chemicals
- increased heart rate
- increased appetite which can lead to weight gain
- idiosyncratic constriction of air passages in lungs of asthmatics
- disruption of reproductive organ function in men and women

Stimulants (Ephedrine, Crystal Meth, Crack, Cocaine, Ritalin, etc.)

- extremely addictive
- development of overwhelming, uncontrollable compulsion to repeat use (with “crack” cocaine)

- central nervous stimulant
- increased heart rate, respiratory rate and blood pressure
- possible death-producing fibrillation of the heart
- possible death-producing seizures and strokes
- impairs judgment
- anxiety, restlessness, apprehension, hyperactivity, impulsiveness, exhaustion, delusional thinking
- increased tendency of abusive behavior

Hallucinogens (LSD, PCP, mushrooms, Ecstasy)

- paranoid thoughts, anxiety, panic, depression
- delusions, time and visual distortions
- depersonalization
- extreme suggestibility while under the influence of the drug
- intensification of any pre-existing psychosis
- ataxia (unsteady gait/balance problem)
- impaired memory
- alteration of electrical activity of brain
- changes in levels of brain chemicals

Inhalants (Diverse group of chemicals, including solvents, aerosols, gases, and volatile nitrites)

- depression of the central nervous system, can lead to death from a single use
- psychologically and physically addictive
- headache, muscle weakness, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, nosebleeds, tremors
- heart, lung, kidney, and liver impairment/damage
- brain and nervous system damage and paralysis

Heroin

- prolonged psychological dependence
- rapid tolerance and physical addiction
- depression in central nervous system, suppression of pain sensation and relief from anxiety
- possible collapsed veins and infections such as hepatitis, endocarditis, or HIV/AIDS due to needle infection transmission
- irregular heartbeat and breathing
- drowsiness which may progress to coma and death depending on dose
- possibility of severe health consequences depending on the inert chemicals with which the heroin is combined

The above information on health risks was compiled by the Health Services Office.

6. Criminal and Legal Sanctions Associated with Drug and Alcohol Use

The Department of Public Safety maintains a list of the legal sanctions associated with alcohol and drug abuse. In general, severe sanctions may be imposed upon an individual who manufactures, distributes or possesses controlled substances such as marijuana, cocaine, crack or prescription drugs. The penalties may be doubled for offenses occurring on or near the College. These penalties include fines and imprisonment.

The illegal purchase of alcohol, the illegal possession of alcohol or providing alcohol to minors carries penalties including fines and imprisonment. Specific references may be obtained from the Department of Public Safety.

Further, the Department of Higher Education's Alcohol Policy (BHE 99-02) incorporated into the guidelines for Campus safety and security and Campus codes of conduct adopted by the Board in May 1997, call on campuses to add to the list of zero tolerance offenses third offense underage possession or consumption of any alcoholic beverage following progressive discipline for the first two offenses.

Additionally, this Handbook describe minimum mandatory sanctions that result from responsible findings in alcohol violations.

Amnesty and Good Samaritan Policy

1. Policy Statement

Student health and safety are primary concerns of the MCLA community. Students may be reluctant to seek help in incidents of crisis or medical emergency because of potential student conduct consequences for themselves, the person in need of assistance or the organization hosting the event where the situation occurs. Since these emergencies are crisis related and/or potentially life threatening, MCLA seeks to reduce barriers to seeking assistance. MCLA students are expected to care for themselves and for others in the MCLA community by getting help from appropriate officials even when violations of the Community Standards have occurred.

To this end, the Amnesty and Good Samaritan Policy was developed. In crisis situations involving alcohol, drugs, and/or sexual assault, the College strongly considers the positive impact of taking responsible action when determining the appropriate response for alleged policy violations relating to the incident. This means no formal disciplinary actions will be assigned to the reporting student(s) or student in need of assistance for alcohol or drug possession violations relating to the incident. The incident will be documented. Additionally, educational and/or health interventions will be required as a condition of deferring disciplinary sanctions.

2. Purpose

The Amnesty and Good Samaritan Policy represents the College's commitment to increasing the likelihood that community members will call for assistance when faced with a crisis or an alcohol or drug-related emergency. The policy also promotes education for individuals who receive emergency medical attention related to their own use of alcohol or drugs in order to reduce the likelihood of future occurrences.

3. Sexual Assault

In a situation where a sexual assault (nonconsensual sexual penetration or nonconsensual sexual contact according to the sexual assault policy) is alleged to have been committed against any individual(s), students are encouraged to (1) contact MCLA Campus Police (413) 662-5100 or (ext. 5100), The Title IX Coordinator, Residential Programs & Services (RPS) Staff, MCLA Counseling Services, the Student Affairs Division Office or other emergency officials to report the incident; (2) remain with the individual(s) needing support and cooperate with emergency personnel as long as it is safe to do so; and (3) meet with appropriate College officials after the incident and cooperate with any College investigation.

4. Alcohol/Drugs

Signs of serious intoxication/impairment include:

- Inability to rouse the person with loud shouting or vigorous shaking
- Passed out
- Semi-conscious; person goes in/out of consciousness
- Slow (< 8 breaths/minute) or irregular breathing or lapses in breathing of 10 seconds or more
- Cold, clammy or bluish skin
- Vomiting while passed out, not waking up after vomiting or incoherent while vomiting

Medical Emergency Reporting Procedures - Students are expected to contact the MCLA Campus Police (413) 662-5100 or (ext. 5100) when they believe assistance for a seriously intoxicated/impaired person is needed on Campus. Students should seek immediate help if any of the above signs are present as they indicate a potentially life-threatening emergency. MCLA Campus Police will assist seriously intoxicated/impaired individuals by facilitating transport to medical facilities or by taking other protective measures. In case of an off-campus medical emergency, students should call 911 for assistance by local police or medical professionals. If the seriously intoxicated/impaired individual is located within a residence area, a Resident Advisor (RA) or Residence Director (RD) should also be notified after MCLA Campus Police is called. A seriously intoxicated/impaired individual should never be left alone; therefore, at least one person should stay with the seriously intoxicated/impaired individual while another person makes these notifications.

5. Process

Whenever a student assists an alleged victim of sexual assault or a seriously intoxicated/impaired person in procuring the assistance of MCLA Campus Police, local or state police, RPS staff, medical professionals or any aforementioned party, neither the seriously intoxicated/impaired individual nor the individual or organization who assists will be subject to formal College disciplinary actions for using and/or possessing alcohol/drugs. This protocol does not preclude disciplinary action regarding other violations of College standards, such as causing or threatening physical harm, sexual assault, damage to property, harassment or hazing. Students should also be aware that this policy does not prevent action by local and state authorities. Campus Police and RPS staff will record names of intoxicated students to enable any follow-up deemed necessary to ensure the wellbeing of students involved. Other information may also be needed.

In order for this policy to apply, the intoxicated student(s) must agree to timely completion of recommended alcohol and/or drug education activities, assessment, and/or treatment depending on the level of concern for student health and safety. In addition, if the student is under 21 years of age the student's parents may be notified (of alcohol and drug matters only). If the student does not follow these stipulations, the student has violated the Amnesty and Good Samaritan Policy and is subject to the complete range of sanctions and penalties as outlined in the MCLA Student Handbook for any policy violations.

The Amnesty and Good Samaritan Policy may be used more than once. Students and organizations that help others in incidents of crisis or medical emergency are not limited to one use of the Amnesty and Good Samaritan Policy, as they should always feel empowered to help those in need. Serious or repeated incidents, however, will prompt a higher degree of medical concern and formal response from the College which may include an intervention and/or conduct action.

Questions regarding the MCLA Amnesty and Good Samaritan policy should be directed to the Students Affairs Division Office.

Discrimination

The full policy can be found at [the State University EO Plan](#) on the MCLA website.

1. Policy Statement on Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination

The Department of Higher Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (DHE) is responsible, pursuant to Chapter 15A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the overall governance of the public higher education system, which includes the nine State Universities. MCLA is committed to maintain and promote a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, political belief or affiliation, and veteran status.

This policy incorporates by reference, and where applicable, the requirements of: Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1968; Titles I and II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its regulations found at 34 C.F.R. part 106; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988; Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Section 402 of the Vietnam-era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA); Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended; Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993; Federal Executive Order 11246 of 1965, as amended by Executive Order 11375 of 1967; Federal Executive Order 12900 of 1994; Federal Executive Order 13145 of 2000; Federal Executive Order 13160 of 2000; Federal Executive Order 13166 of 2000; Massachusetts Civil Rights Act; Massachusetts General Laws Chapters 151B, 151C, and Chapter 149; directives of the DHE, the Boards of Trustees of the State Colleges and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and other applicable local, state and federal constitutions, statutes, regulations and executive orders.

Where to Get Help

Students are encouraged to talk with the Equal Opportunity Officer, Student Affairs Division Office or other Student Affairs staff if they witness discriminatory behavior or if they feel they may be the object of discrimination. All Student Affairs staff are prepared to assist students who feel they have experienced discrimination. Students who have experienced discrimination or harassment as defined by these policies should file complaints with the Equal Opportunity Officer (Nicole Comstock, Venable Hall 309C, (413) 662-5571).

2. Policy Against Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Retaliation

MCLA is committed to educating, training, and preparing our students to live and work in our increasingly global and diverse workforce. It is our commitment to take all possible steps to provide an inclusive and diverse learning, living, and work environment that values diversity and cultural tolerance and looks with disfavor on intolerance and bigotry. Any condition or force that impedes the fullest utilization of the human and intellectual resources available represents a force of destructive consequences for the development of our Commonwealth and ultimately, our nation.

- a. **Discrimination.** An intentional or unintentional act that adversely affects employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's membership in a protected class or association with a member(s) of a protected class. Discrimination may be classified as either disparate impact (the

result of an employment policy, practice or procedure that, in practical application, has less favorable consequences for a protected class than for the dominant group) or disparate treatment (employment practices, such as tests or educational requirements, that are fair and neutral on their face, but which are applied or administered in an unequal manner). A single act of discrimination or discriminatory harassment may be based on more than one protected class status.

- b. **Discriminatory Harassment.** A form of unlawful discrimination including verbal and/or physical conduct based on legally protected characteristics and/or membership in a protected class that: has the purpose or effect of creating an objectively intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment; has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or learning performance; or otherwise unreasonably adversely affects an individual's employment or educational opportunities.
- c. **Retaliation.** Taking adverse employment or educational action against a person who files claims, complaints or charges under these procedures or under applicable local, State or Federal statute, who is suspected of having filed such claims, complaints or charges, who has assisted or participated in an investigation or resolution of such claims, complaints or charges or who has protested practices alleged to have violated the non-discrimination policy of the College, the Department of Higher Education or local, State or Federal regulation or statute. Retaliation, even in the absence of provable discrimination in the original complaint or charge, constitutes as serious a violation of this Policy as proved discrimination under the original claim, complaint or charge.

Prohibited Conduct

This Policy prohibits all conditions and all actions or omissions, including all acts of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation denying or having the effect of denying any person their rights to equity and security on the basis of their membership in or association with a member(s) of any protected class. This policy reaffirms the values of civility, appreciation for racial/ethnic/cultural/religious pluralism and pre-eminence of individual human dignity as preconditions to the achievement of an academic community recognizing and utilizing the resources of all people.

In order to promote an atmosphere in which diversity is valued and the worth of individuals is recognized, the College will distribute policy statements and conduct educational programs to combat discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation.

The prohibited conduct contained in this Policy shall apply to and be enforced against all members of the College community, including, but not limited to, faculty, librarians, administrators, staff, students, vendors, contractors and all others having dealings with the institution.

3. Policy for Reasonable Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

MCLA is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities and employment for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. The College recognizes that individuals with disabilities may need reasonable accommodations to have equally effective opportunities to participate in or benefit from educational programs, services, activities, and employment.

- a. **Individual with a Disability.** An individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment substantially limiting one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities are activities an average person can perform with little or no difficulty such as walking, breathing, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, and working.

- b. **Qualified Individual with a Disability.** A qualified student with a disability is someone who possesses the skills necessary to complete the essential academic requirements of a course and/or degree program, with or without reasonable accommodation. The essential academic requirements of a course and/or degree program are the knowledge and skills that must be acquired and demonstrated in order for a student to successfully meet the learning objectives of the course or degree program.
- c. **Reasonable Accommodation.** Modifications or adjustments to an application process, job, work environment, the way in which work is customarily performed or a course of study that permits a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a position or to enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment or education equally with persons without disabilities. Reasonable accommodations in education may include, but are not limited to: in-class aids such as note takers; extended time for examination; quiet rooms or alternate locations for testing; alternatively formatted testing; alternatively formatted textbooks and other course materials; and/or access to assistive technology. Possible course reductions or substitutions on the basis of a disability will be carefully evaluated. Students with disabilities must meet the essential requirements of all academic degree programs.

Any student of the College seeking reasonable accommodation for a disability may contact Cindy MacDonald, Assistant Director for Disability Resources in the Center for Student Success & Engagement for more information.

4. **Complaint Procedures**

MCLA has established complaint procedures to help resolve claims and complaints of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation on our campus. These procedures will also specifically address claims and complaints of sexual harassment and failure to accommodate or to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and academic adjustments for a person with disabilities as prescribed by the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Massachusetts General Laws Chapters 151B and 151C. The Discrimination Complaint Procedures serve as a system of review and resolution for both informal claims and formal complaints of discrimination, discriminatory and sexual harassment and retaliation on any of the above-mentioned protected bases. Any applicant for employment or admission or any member of the College community who believes they are the victim of discrimination or harassment may initiate an informal claim or formal complaint as outlined in the Discrimination Complaint Procedures, the full text of which is located on the College's website and in the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan. Further advice or information may be obtained by contacting the Student Affairs Division Office or the Equal Opportunity Officer (Nicole Comstock, Venable Hall 309C, (413) 662-5571).

Emotional Support Animals

The Fair Housing Act defines an emotional support animal (ESA) as any animal that provides emotional support, well-being, or companionship that alleviates or mitigates symptoms of a disability. ESA's are not limited to dogs and can be other species of animal. ESA's are not considered service animals. They are not individually trained. They are commonly known as companion, therapeutic or assistance animals.

Individuals who are living in college housing can request to have an ESA with them as an accommodation for a substantially limiting disability. Requests have to be supported by documentation from a medical professional who has an established relationship with the individual requesting the ESA and be approved by

the Disability Resource Office.

To begin the approval process please complete and return the [On-campus Housing Accommodation Form](#) or contact the Disability Resource Office at (413) 664-5334 for assistance. Once approval has been granted, individuals must complete the second part of this process through Residential Programs and Services (RPS) BEFORE they can bring their approved ESA to campus.

Residency Requirement Policy

MCLA's on campus residency policy requires that all first time, first-year students live on campus and participate in a College meal plan for three years unless they are living at home with their family within a specified community distance. Student who enter MCLA as transfer students with prior college experience will receive a one, two or three-year residency requirement commensurate with the number of credits completed at the time of transfer. The Office of Admission assigns the appropriate residency requirement for all students at the time of admission.

Room Scheduling

The Office of Student Development is responsible for scheduling non-academic spaces on Campus. To reserve a room for a meeting or activity, complete an Event Scheduling Form and submit it to the Office of Student Development. Due to the high demand for meeting and activity space on campus, students are encouraged to submit reservation requests as early as possible, but no later than two weeks prior to the event. If the request is approved, the student will receive written notification from the Office of Student Development. To reserve a specific room or facility not scheduled by the Office of Student Development, students will be referred to the appropriate party at the time of inquiry

Tobacco Free MCLA Policy

I. Individuals Affected by this Policy:

All individuals on Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts' campus.

II. Policy Statement:

MCLA is a tobacco-free campus. Smoking and other tobacco use is prohibited on all property owned or operated by Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA). This consists of all buildings, all grounds, including exterior open spaces, parking lots, on-campus sidewalks, roadways and driveways, recreational spaces and practice facilities; and in all College

III. Rationale for Policy:

MCLA is committed to promoting a healthy and safe environment for everyone on campus. This policy is intended to reduce the health risks related to second-hand and other adverse effects of smoke and other tobacco use for the campus community, providing a healthy learning and working environment. MCLA recognizes the medical evidence that indicates that smoking and other tobacco use is a serious health hazard, and that this health hazard extends to non-smokers subjected to second-hand and other effects of smoke and other tobacco use.

IV. Definition:

Smoking and other tobacco use shall include the burning of tobacco or any other material. It shall also include smokeless tobacco use, and the use of unregulated nicotine products. Smokeless devices - While electronic cigarettes (or e-cigarettes) are marketed as a healthier alternative to smoking and are used to assist users in their efforts to quit smoking, the use of electronic, simulated smoking materials including cigarettes, pipes and cigars, is also prohibited under this policy.

V. Policy Compliance and Procedures:

A. Compliance with this policy is grounded in informing and educating members of the college community and visitors about the policy. All members of the college community are encouraged, but not required, to assist in this endeavor to make MCLA tobacco free through courteous, respectful, supportive and non-confrontational efforts to inform any offending party of the existence of this policy and/or by requesting they adhere to its conditions.

B. Disciplinary measures will be reserved for repeat infractions or infractions that interfere with the college's academic or workplace needs or responsibilities, consistent with applicable collective bargaining agreement procedures or the MCLA Student Handbook.

C. Visitors who fail to comply with the policy may be prohibited from remaining on or returning to campus.

D. Temporary policy exemptions (i.e.: for educational, clinical, demonstration, etc. purposes) not otherwise controlled by State law may be reviewed by the Vice President of Administration and Finance and if applicable, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or their designees.

*This Policy shall be subject to review at least annually. MCLA reserves the right to review and amend more frequently if needed

Student Responsibilities

MCLA develops and/or adopts rules, regulations, and policies governing certain student behaviors. If an individual, student or student organization/group is believed to have violated any of these standards, disciplinary action may be initiated by the College against this person or group.

Violence: In general, the Northern Berkshire Region is a peaceful and safe environment. Violence occurs, however, on many levels in any community, and violence takes many forms. No form of violence is acceptable at MCLA. Sexual violence; hate crimes which include intimidation graffiti, electronic communications or other threats; hazing; carrying or using a weapon or other dangerous instruments; assault on a person or property; domestic violence; or any other form of interpersonal violence will not be tolerated.

I. General Regulatory Statement

Disciplinary procedures may be the necessary consequence of student misconduct occurring on or off the campus. This misconduct may include instances wherein students violate local, State or Federal laws. Whenever a student's behavior becomes disturbing to other members of the College community, to the extent that such behavior is believed to hinder the College in its basic functions, then College officials may be required to initiate disciplinary procedures against the student or students in question.

Students also have a special obligation to live harmoniously in the North Adams community. Therefore, behaving in a way, which disrupts or has the potential to disrupt community relations, may result in disciplinary procedures against a student or student group.

Actions that in any way threaten or endanger the personal safety or security of an individual or group are considered grave offenses. This includes endangerment of personal safety or well-being.

In addition, students may be charged with an alleged violation of this general regulation whenever it is believed they violated established laws or other standards of conduct, which are not specifically listed in this Handbook but are covered by the spirit of this statement.

II. Conditions of Enrollment

Even though a person is eligible to be admitted to the College community, there are certain conditions all people must meet in order to be enrolled in MCLA and function as a member of the community. Failure to meet and maintain these conditions may result in a hold against future registration and/or termination of a student's current enrollment and/or presence on Campus. If a student's enrollment is terminated for failure to fulfill conditions of enrollment, the student may not be on Campus or use Campus resources without the expressed permission of the Student Affairs Division Office. In addition, the student will not be eligible for refund of any portion of the expenses listed by Student Accounts.

- A. **Accuracy of College Records** – Students are expected to provide accurate and complete information on all College forms and documents, including applications for admission, financial aid, references, health and immunization reports, local and home addresses, and other types of records.
- B. **Class Attendance** – The [MCLA Policy on Class Attendance](#) MCLA is available in full in the Academic Policy section of this Handbook and at the link above. Furthermore, each class may have a separate attendance policy established for it by the faculty member of record for the course. Should a student fail to attend all of the student’s classes for a period of a week or more, without approval from the student’s faculty, and should a student be failing all of the student’s courses and it can be confirmed there is no way for the student to make up the work in the student’s courses, MCLA reserves the right to take steps to terminate that student’s enrollment. This action would result in residence contract termination as well.
- C. **Communications with the College** – Students are expected to regularly pick up their mail at the Campus mailroom, check their Campus voice mail, and check their MCLA electronic mail accounts. These are the primary communication systems used by the College.
- D. **Completion of Registration** – Each semester students are required to complete their registration with the College before they are recognized as students of the school.
- E. **Conditions Established as Part of Disciplinary Sanctions** – All students are expected to fulfill conditions established as part of disciplinary sanctions. Students who fail to fulfill these conditions may be subject to additional disciplinary action and/or the student’s enrollment may be terminated. Residence contracts may also be terminated.
- F. **Financial Obligations** – Students shall be held responsible for all financial obligations they incur with the College. Failure to comply with this policy, without prior permission being granted, could result in loss of Campus housing and/or Campus parking as well as a hold placed against the release of grades, diploma or transcript of a student with such outstanding obligations.
- G. **Health and Immunization Records** – State law requires all students to provide complete and accurate immunization records in order to be enrolled in any college or university. The Health Services Office is primarily responsible for monitoring the compliance of each student concerning this particular legal requirement. If a person should fail to comply with this requirement, the College may either prevent the student from completing the student’s registration or remove the student from the enrollment rosters of the school.
- H. **Health Insurance** – State law requires each full time student to possess a minimum level of health insurance during the student’s time of enrollment. Such insurance may be provided by either an insurance carrier chosen by the student, inclusion on a parent’s plan, or by the student enrolling in the program adopted by the State University System. The Health Services Office provides students with the [information about this program](#). The law also requires the College to terminate the enrollment of any student who fails to provide proof of proper insurance coverage.

III. Special Behavioral Standards for Students at MCLA

- A. **Alcoholic Beverages** – The College intends for its students to abide by State laws prohibiting those persons under the age of 21 from possessing, purchasing or transporting alcoholic beverages. Those students who are of legal drinking age may possess alcoholic beverages in specific residence areas and at certain times and places on Campus such as specifically designated social events. Students of legal age who choose to possess and use alcohol must do so responsibly. Students who are 21 years of age may not consume, possess or otherwise use alcohol when a minor is present. Conversely, minors may not be present when/where there is alcohol present unless specifically approved. This standard applies both on and off Campus. At no time are students allowed to possess on Campus (regardless of content) kegs, half kegs or similar “common” containers of beer such as “beer balls” and/or alcohol abuse apparatus such as funnels, beer pong or Beirut set ups.

Students are expected to become familiar, where relevant, with policies established by such offices as Residential Programs & Services and Public Safety before becoming involved in any event where alcoholic beverages are to be present. Behaviors resulting in violations of community standards as a result of improper use of alcohol will not be excused or mitigated.

- B. **Assault and Battery** – Students may not willfully threaten or injure another person. Additionally, they may not endanger nor may students intentionally and unjustifiably use force upon a person or act in a negligent way that causes injury to another. Behavior involving an expressed or implied threat, which interferes with an individual’s personal safety, academic efforts, employment or participation in College sponsored programs and causes the person to have a reasonable apprehension that harm is about to occur is also prohibited.
- C. **Complicity/Implied Consent** – If a student is aware of or in the presence of a violation of College policy and the student remains in the presence of and/or fails to take reasonable actions to stop the violation, the student gives implied consent to the violation and becomes a party in the violation. A student present when/where one or more violations are occurring also chooses to accept the consequences of being in violation of College policy. Anyone who creates an opportunity or encourages another person to violate regulations may be deemed equally responsible as the actual perpetrator and may be subject to the same sanctions as the active offender.
- D. **Disruptive Conduct** – Students are considered to be acting in a disruptive fashion and against College standards whenever they shall make a disturbance or threat of violence which is sufficient to disrupt the normal and reasonable use of the buildings or property, owned or controlled by the College or elsewhere (even off campus). In the interpretation and application of this regulation, either a disturbance or a threat of violence, shall constitute a violation. A “disturbance,” which is something less than threats of violence, is an interruption of peace and quiet, a violation of public order in decorum or an interference with/or hindrance of facilities or occupation of a building or space. Classroom disruption is substantial and/or repeated behavior that reasonably interferes with the conduct of a class or related academic pursuits. “Fighting,” defined as engaging in and continuing when one has an opportunity to disengage from a physical struggle with another person or persons, is specifically prohibited under this regulation. Lewd, obscene or otherwise indecent conduct is also prohibited under this code.
- E. **Drugs and Narcotics** – In accordance with the General Laws of Massachusetts, the College as an instrument of the State, is obliged to uphold and maintain standards in relation to illegal drugs and substances. Therefore, students alleged to be in violation of these standards can expect the College to pursue such matters through its regularly established conduct process. The possession, use, distribution or sale of narcotics, hallucinogens or other dangerous and/or illegal drugs is prohibited. The possession or sale of drug related paraphernalia is also prohibited. The College embraces wellness and, therefore, prohibits the use of any substance in a harmful or abusive manner. This may include over-the-counter substances or prescription drugs. Behaviors resulting in violations of community standards as a result of improper use of drugs or other substances will not be excused or provide justification for the College to mitigate its response to associated behaviors and violations.
- F. **False Information** – Any student who knowingly withholds information or offers false information during either an investigation or College disciplinary process shall be considered to have violated College policy and standards of behavior. Furnishing false information, alteration, destruction, misuse of documents, records or I.D. cards or signing or using another person's name is also prohibited.
- G. **Fire Safety - Fire Alarms, Equipment and Drills** – The use or misuse of fire equipment, such as smoke detectors, extinguishers, alarms and hoses, is strictly prohibited except in the case of an emergency or an organized fire safety drill approved by the Department of Public Safety. Likewise, failure to evacuate promptly and completely any campus building or facility is prohibited once a fire alarm is sounded or when directed under such circumstances to do so by a College staff

member or official emergency personnel. The setting of fires without a written permit is strictly prohibited.

- H. **Gambling** – Any gambling which is prohibited by Massachusetts law is also prohibited on College property.
- I. **Harassment** - The College has concern for incidents in which students are subject to harassment because of membership in a particular racial, ethnic, religious, gender, self-identification of gender or sexual orientation group, or because of their disability. Conduct less than a physical attack or contact that is so severe or pervasive it interferes with a person's employment, academic performance or participation in College programs or activities and creates a working, learning, program or activity environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile or offensive is in violation of this policy.
- J. **Hazing** – The term "hazing" as used in this section shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into a student organization whether on public or private property that willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the weather; forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance; or any other treatment or forced physical activity that is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions, consent shall not be available as a defense to any campus disciplinary action under this action. Principal organizers and/or participants are considered to be responsible for hazing. Further, whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing and is at the scene of such activity shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to their self or others, report such crime to an appropriate enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. This policy is consistent with [Massachusetts General Law \(M.G.L.\) 269](#), sections 17-19.
- K. **Misappropriation, Theft, and/or Damage/Destruction of Property** – Students are responsible for the proper utilization and preservation of all College furnishings, equipment, grounds, vehicles, services, and facilities. Prior to use, approval is necessary for use of vehicles, facilities, and some equipment. Damages caused by students to College owned or operated property will provide the College with the basis for a claim against the responsible student(s) for the repair/replacement of the damaged item(s) and any associated costs incurred. Further, students may not incur College expenses or consume College resources for the conduct of their personal lives, personal entertainment or livelihood. Students are expected to acquire permission to use College resources, and resources or the personal belongings of fellow students. If a student takes property or uses services without permission and/or is in possession of stolen property, the student is in violation of College policy.
- L. **Noise** – Students may not intentionally make or cause to be made any noise above the level of the activity commonly associated with the environment of the campus. In assessing whether a student behaved in accordance with this community standard, factors such as the time of day, day of the week, and place of the alleged violations will be taken into consideration; that is, greater care to control unwanted noise will be expected during weekdays, near the library and classroom buildings, and at examination times than on weekends or at athletic events. Generally, any intentionally created noise that inhibits the ability of others to study, teach, sleep and enjoy the intended use of the campus and its facilities will be presumed to be against this standard of behavior. Likewise, any noise generated from within a building that travels within and/or beyond the building such as the sounds transmitted through a radio or stereo are also presumed to be against this standard of behavior.
- M. **Sponsorship of Events** – Individuals or groups sponsoring events disruptive to the College or community, or having disruptive consequences, may be held responsible for such activity as if they

had committed the offense. Examples of such activity would be parties or dances which prevent study or classes in College buildings and/or disrupt relations with the community or result in other harmful effects.

- N. **Weapons and Firearms** – Except for authorized law enforcement purposes, no weapons of any kind are allowed on the MCLA campus. No individual may possess, carry, store, use or have in the individual's custody or control, a firearm or other weapon on campus. State law prohibits the unauthorized possession, carrying or use of weapons or firearms on College property.

For the purposes of this policy, the term “weapons” includes, but is not limited to, firearms of any nature or description, including shotguns, rifles, pistols and revolvers, paint ball guns or BB/pellet guns; firearm replicas; ammunition; martial arts-type weapons; explosives (including fireworks); bows, crossbows or arrows; slingshots; switchblade knives, double-edged knives, hunting (fixed-blade-style) knives of any length, throwing knives or folding (pocket-style) knives with a blade length of three inches or greater; swords; pointed metal darts; mace, pepper gas/spray, and other dangerous chemicals; or any other destructive device or instrument that may be used to do bodily injury or damage to property.

The term “Campus” includes but is not limited to: College housing, buildings, grounds, parking areas or any other facility owned, leased, managed or operated by the College.

The term “carrying” includes, but is not limited to: possession, transporting, storing or having custody or control of firearms or other weapons within any part of a vehicle.

The policy applies to all persons, including but not limited to: faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

Temporary exemption to the portions of this policy not controlled by State law may be granted by the College's Director of Public Safety or designee for job related, educational or demonstration purposes.

Weapons will be confiscated by the College's Department of Public Safety and violators may be subject to criminal prosecution and/or referral for College disciplinary action.

IV. Administrative Policies

Once a person becomes a student and, therefore, a member of the College community, the student is asked to abide by the administrative practices of the College. Failure to abide by these and other administrative policies may result in disciplinary action against the student or group responsible for the violation. College policies are published in many different forms such as the MCLA Catalog and by various offices including the Aramark Dining Services, the Office of Student Records, Computer Support Services, IGC Standards and Conditions for Affiliation, and the business offices. Because these policies are rather extensive in number, students are advised to inquire of the College staff before they invest time, money or material in any endeavor. Students are specifically advised that College policies exist regarding:

- A. **Building Hours, Use of Facilities, Equipment, and Vehicles** – Students must abide by the check-in and check-out procedures for College housing and the hours posted for the use of other buildings and events. Likewise, College facilities, equipment, and vehicles are provided for particular uses reflected in the policies governing the use of these facilities, equipment, and vehicles; therefore, any misuse is prohibited. At all times, students are

expected to behave in appropriate ways on the Campus especially in the Centennial Room, Fitness Center, Computer Labs, etc.

- B. **College Logo** – No one may use the name of the College, its logo, seal, trademarks or other forms of official representation in ways suggesting they are affiliated with, endorsed by or represent the College without authority granted to them by the College.
- C. **Failure to Comply with an Official Request** – Students are expected to make reasonable efforts to comply with the requests of College staff and/or designees whenever these College personnel are acting in the performance of their job responsibilities.
- D. **Guests** – Students, by inviting or allowing a guest to come to the College, assume responsibility for their guest's behavior while they are on the Campus or involved in a College-sponsored event. The College reserves the right to have its staff ask any person who is not a member of the College community to leave the buildings and/or grounds of the College, and to stay away from such areas, if the presence of such a person is judged to be the cause of disruption of the fundamental operations of the College or if such a person violates the policies of the College.
- E. **ID Cards** – Students must have in their possession at all times a valid student identification card and are required to identify themselves upon the request of any staff member. These cards and their use are not transferable.
- F. **Keys** – Unauthorized possession or use of keys for College buildings, facilities, vehicles, and/or equipment is prohibited. Likewise, no key belonging to the College may be reproduced or loaned to any other person without specific written permission from the Department of Public Safety.
- G. **Motor Vehicle Registration and Parking** – Students who possess a motor vehicle must properly register it with the Department of Public Safety. Students are expected to follow all [parking regulations](#).
- H. **Solicitations** – Students should receive approval from the Student Affairs Office for any solicitation to be conducted on Campus or any solicitations to be made off Campus in which the College's name will be used.
- I. **Use of Computing and Other Electronic Resources** – The unauthorized use of computing resources is prohibited including, but not limited to, duplication of copyrighted material, unauthorized access to or alteration of records, unauthorized use of electronic communication equipment or networks, and assisting others in any of these actions either intentionally or unintentionally. Students are expected to use campus computer and electronic resources (such as e-mail, voice mail, computers, programs, and software) in responsible ways and in a manner consistent with the mission of the College. For complete usage guidelines see [Tech Help webpage](#).

The Student Conduct Program

MCLA Student Conduct Program Mission

The MCLA Student Conduct Program is committed to fostering an inclusive campus community that promotes active and responsible citizenship through an educational and developmental process that values respect, responsibility, and accountability for all members of the MCLA community.

MCLA Student Conduct Program Goals

- Promote a consistent, fair, and timely student conduct process that encourages participation of the campus community while holding students accountable for their choices.
- Educate the campus community about student's rights and responsibilities as a member of the MCLA community.
- Assist students in seeking out resources for learning and living that enhance the student's overall well-being and help students think critically in their decision-making.
- Facilitate on-going comprehensive conduct related training for students, staff, and faculty that are involved in the student conduct program.
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive assessment strategy regarding all aspects of the student conduct program and engage in regular assessment of the student conduct program to aid in informed decision-making about policies, procedures, and overall community engagement of the student conduct program.

MCLA Student Conduct Program Outcomes

As a result of going through the student conduct program, students will be able to:

1. Explain why College policies exist and why the College community is concerned about their choices.
2. Understand the impact of their behavior and decision-making on themselves and the community.
3. Communicate their personal responsibility for their behavior within the College community.
4. Identify ways to address their actions(s) so that their choices do not negatively impact their educational goals and success in the future.

MCLA Student Conduct Program Philosophy and Principles of Community

The student conduct program at MCLA is to be developmental and educational in nature and not intended to punish students; rather, it exists to protect the interests of the campus community and to challenge those whose decision-making is not in accordance with MCLA policies and to align choices to be a positive member of the community. Outcomes are intended to educate and challenge student's ethical decision-making and align with the values of the MCLA community.

As a member of the MCLA community, members are to be respectful, responsible individuals who are held accountable for their choices and actions. All members of the faculty and staff strive to create and support an educational environment that promotes student growth and development.

The College recognizes the rights of all individuals to express themselves in works and actions and encourage civil discourse so long as they do so without infringing upon the rights of others or violating the policies outlined in the Student Handbook. There must be a willingness and commitment among all individuals in the MCLA Community to associate in a way that allows individual freedom, rights, and privileges to coexist with reasonable order. Members of the College community assume a respect for these basic principles that enable the College to accomplish its mission.

MCLA Student Conduct Program Authority and Responsibility

Daily responsibility for good conduct rests with the students as individuals. All members of the campus

community are expected to use reasonable judgment in their daily campus life and to show due concern for the welfare and rights of others. The ultimate responsibility and authority to enforce the Student Conduct Program resides with the President of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. The President may, and has, delegated responsibility for the administration of the Student Conduct Program to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students, in turn, delegates the authority to authorized and responsible staff for the implementation and enforcement of the policies and procedures. This responsibility includes formulating and implementing appropriate policies and procedures, in conjunction with other appropriate College bodies, for the consideration of conduct complaints, infractions, and the imposition of outcomes in an efficient, consistent, legal, and equitable manner which supports the Colleges' educational mission. The College reserves the right to take any necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community.

The Student Conduct Program was established in accordance with the concept of "due process." Due process, as used herein, shall mean generally that the student will be notified of a complaint alleging any violation of College policy; be provided the opportunity to review the complaint; and be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is rendered. The decision of responsibility is based on the "preponderance of information", which means it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred and any outcomes will be proportionate to the severity of the violation and to the cumulative conduct history of the involved party.

The College retains conduct jurisdiction over students who choose to take a leave of absence, withdraw, or have graduated, for any misconduct that occurred prior to the leave, withdrawal or graduation. A hold may be placed on the student's ability to re-enroll, conduct certain transactions and/or participate in College events. All outcomes must be satisfied prior to re-enrollment eligibility. In the event of serious misconduct committed while still enrolled but reported after the accused student has graduated, the College may invoke these procedures.

Off Campus Conduct Statement

The College cannot, as a practical matter, monitor or control the off-campus conduct of MCLA Students, nor does it attempt to assume any duty to do so. However, if a College official receives notice of non-college-affiliated, off-campus conduct that is inconsistent with College policies, the College may take actions against the student(s) involved under the Conduct Review Process. This will more than likely happen if the off-campus conduct or a student involved appears to present a danger to students or others, the behavior does not align with the MCLA Community values, and/or reflects negatively on the student's ability to participate in College-related activities including class or otherwise negatively affects the interests of the College. This can include notice of an alleged violation of the law. Depending upon the circumstances, interim measures may be imposed until the conclusion of the Conduct Review Process.

With respect to off-campus, College-affiliated excursions, events, programs, such as sports-related travel, study abroad, field trips, etc. the College will hold students accountable for compliance of all College policies and/or expresses community standards outlines in off-campus event.

Policy Statement of Non-Discrimination

MCLA is committed to a policy of non-discrimination, equal opportunity, diversity and affirmative action, and dedicated to providing educational, working and living environments that value the diverse backgrounds of all people. MCLA does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, marital or parental status, or veteran status. MCLA prohibits discrimination or discriminatory harassment on all of those bases. Such behaviors violate the MCLA's Policy Against Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Retaliation, will not be tolerated, and may result in

disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion.

It is also MCLA's policy to provide each student, employee, and other person having dealings with the institutions an environment free from sexual harassment and all forms of misconduct on the basis of sex. MCLA prohibits rape, statutory rape, sexual assault, incest, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation. These behaviors violate MCLA's Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy, will not be tolerated, and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination or expulsion. MCLA's Non-Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment and Retaliation Policy and Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy apply in all College programs and activities, including, but not limited to, athletics, instruction, grading, housing, and employment. They apply to all members of the campus communities, including, but not limited to, students, faculty, librarians, staff, visitors, contractors, and applicants for employment or admission. They also apply to off-campus conduct and conduct that takes place in online or virtual spaces, when such conduct negatively affects a community member's experience in the College environment.

MCLA has appointed an Equal Opportunity Officer ("EO Officer") to oversee its compliance with its Policy Against Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Retaliation, as well as the state and federal non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws. Anyone with questions, concerns or complaints regarding discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or retaliation may contact the EO Officer. MCLA has appointed a Title IX Coordinator to oversee compliance with its Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy. Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment. Reports may be made in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the reporting options available at the time of the report. Reports do not constitute a formal complaint unless they meet the criteria specified in the Title IX Complaint and Resolution Procedures.

The U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02119-1424
(617) 289-0111/Fax (617) 289-0150
TDD (877) 521-2172
OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Or:
MCLA Title IX Coordinator and EO Officer
Nicole Comstock
Mail: 375 Church Street North Adams, MA
01247
Phone: 413-662-5571
Email: Nicole.comstock@mcla.edu

For complete information about MCLA's Non-discrimination policies and procedures, please refer to the Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan found at www.mcla.edu/eoplan.

Student Conduct Program Student's Rights and Responsibilities

The following student's rights and responsibilities are granted to all students going through the Student Conduct Program and who have been charged with an alleged violation.

- The right to be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion by College officials and by all persons involved in the Conduct Review Process.
- The right to have the opportunity to review all college policies. A student is responsible for knowing all policies as listed in the Student Handbook, including those that may occur through encouragement or neglect.
- The right to be informed by written notice, delivered electronically, of the alleged violation(s) and also the date, time, and place of the meeting/hearing.

- The right to review documentation and respond to the information in documentation presented at the time of the meeting/hearing.
- The right to participate in the meeting/hearing or remain silent. If the student chooses to remain silent, the conduct review process will move forward.
- The right to have the level of responsibility determined based on “preponderance of information” standard, which means it is more likely than not the violation occurred.
- The right to request an appeal on the finding(s) and/or outcomes(s) issued based on the appeal criteria. Appeals may only be granted if at least one of three specific criteria are met. (See Appeal Process section)

Statement of Evidentiary Standard of Responsibility

Students should be aware that the Conduct Review Process is different from criminal and civil court proceedings. The Conduct Review Process is not based on, nor is it intended to mirror, the rights or procedures in civil or criminal court proceedings. The Conduct Review Process procedures are intended to be fair, but does not include the same due process protections afforded by the courts. The decision of responsibility is based on the “preponderance of information,” which means it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred and any outcomes will be proportionate to the severity of the violation and to the cumulative conduct history of the student.

Conduct Review Process: The path of a case will be determined by the Dean of Students.

Filing a Report: When an incident occurs, an incident report is filed by a student, faculty, or staff member who becomes aware of, observes, or is the alleged victim of the incident. This report is reviewed and, if appropriate, the student or student organization is directed to go through the Conduct Review Process.

Review of Report: Review of all alleged violations is overseen by the Dean of Students whose role is to identify those acts that may be in conflict with College policies. Alleged violations are determined by the Dean of Students and then assigned to an appropriate conduct officer. Generally, two (2) business days’ notice is given prior to a meeting/hearing. If circumstances necessitate, the meeting/hearing may be scheduled immediately. Written notice, delivered electronically of the date, time, location, and alleged violation(s) is sent using the case management system and/or the student campus email account. If the student fails to attend the meeting/hearing, a decision will be made in the student’s absence.

Interim Measures: The Dean of Students, or designee, may impose an interim measure before the completion of the conduct review process if there is a reasonable belief that:

1. A student’s own safety and/or well-being is at risk;
2. A student poses a threat to the health and/or safety of any member of the College community;
3. A student poses a threat of disruption or interference with the normal operations of the College.

Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

- **Interim Suspension from the College** - While interim suspension status is in effect, a student is denied access to classes, activities, and facilities pending resolution of the case or completion of the conduct review process.

- **Campus Restriction** - While campus restriction is in effect, a student is allowed access to classes; however, access to other activities, campus facilities, and campus property may be denied.

- **No Contact Order** - While a no-contact order is in effect, a student is instructed not to engage in either direct or indirect contact with the Complainant(s) and witnesses. Methods of contact include, but are not limited to, verbal exchange, telephone, email, text message, letter, and communication via another party on the student’s behalf. No Contact Orders are ordinarily put in place for all students involved and electronic written notice will be given to all parties.

Following the imposed interim measure, the student will have 24 hours to schedule a meeting. At the meeting, the student will have an opportunity to share their account of the incident(s) under review and/or request for a modification of imposed interim measure. The Dean of Students or designee will determine whether the interim measure will continue or be modified which will be communicated in writing. A hold may be placed on a student with an interim measure in place.

If a student fails to comply with interim measures, further disciplinary action may occur.

Inappropriate behaviors that will not be tolerated: The following is a partial, but not extensive list of inappropriate behaviors which may lead to the student's suspension or dismissal from the College once a determination of responsibility has been made. While not an exhaustive listing, students should use this list as a general reference. Immediate interim suspension from the College may occur whenever the accused student's behavior is judged as a compromise to safety.

Acts against persons, including, but not limited to:

- Hate crimes
- Murder
- Rape
- Physical assault
- Stalking

Acts against property, including, but not limited to

- Arson
- Destruction of property including electronic property medium
- Illegal occupation of a building

Jeopardizing the safety of self and/or lives of others, including, but not limited to:

- Creating or false reporting of bombs
- Hazing
- Inciting a riot
- Resisting arrest
- Tampering with fire or safety equipment including pulling a false fire alarm
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Third offense involving alcohol following progressive discipline for the first two offenses
- Possession and/or use of illegal drugs; Illegal alcohol or drug distribution
- Possession or discharge of illegal weapons

Preliminary Meeting

In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Dean of Students, or a designee to meet or speak with students who may have relevant knowledge about an incident. This investigative process allows the responding staff member to gain information to make decisions about proceeding with the Conduct Review Process.

Types of Case Resolution

- **Informal Resolution:** An informal resolution may transition into a formal meeting/hearing for any reason including new information learned during an informal meeting or when an informal resolution cannot be reached.

Example of informal resolution can include:
Educational letter, conversation, or agreement

Mediation. If mediation is deemed appropriate, contact will be made to all parties involved and an explanation of the process will be offered. If accepted by all parties, mediation will be viewed as an alternative solution. Should an agreement not be possible, the incident may be pursued through a conduct review meeting/hearing. All agreements reached through mediation are binding. If at any point the agreement is not fulfilled, the negligent party may face further conduct action. Mediation is not an option in cases of sexual misconduct.

Letter of Reprimand: A letter of reprimand may be sent to a student as a notice of a violation that has been documented. The letter of reprimand will instruct the student to refrain from repeating a behavior and will be placed in the student's file. No further action will occur. This is a matter of record keeping and notice of a student's decision-making pattern for a certain violation(s). Students receiving multiple Letters of Reprimand in an academic year may be subject to further disciplinary action.

Conduct Review Meeting: The Dean of Students, or designee, will conduct the Conduct Review Meeting. This meeting is to be educational in nature. The student may take responsibility for the alleged violations or not. The goal of the meeting is to make a decision about responsibility and discuss the impact of the behavior(s) on the student and the MCLA community.

Administrative Hearing: The Dean of Students, or designee, will be the Administrative Conduct officer. This type of hearing is typically reserved for higher level cases and/or for a student's whose conduct history is at a higher level. The goal of the hearing is to make a decision about responsibility and discuss the impact of the behavior(s) on the student and the MCLA community. The hearing may be scripted and recorded as a matter of college record.

College Hearing Board Hearing: The Dean of Students will appoint three (3) MCLA Faculty/Staff members who have been trained in the Conduct Review Process to comprise the College Hearing Board. One of the College Hearing Board members will be designated as the chairperson. This type of hearing is typically reserved for higher level cases and/or for a student's whose conduct history is at a higher level. The hearing may be scripted and recorded as a matter of college record. After a decision has been made by the College Hearing Board, the chairperson will fill out documentation needed and turn all case materials back to the Dean of Students. The decision letter will be written from the Dean of Students to the student.

Steps in the Conduct Review Process: The steps below specify the procedures that must be followed when determining if a violation has occurred and assures that due process is followed. The Guardian Case Management System will be used as the official management software for conduct. In the event the case management system is unavailable, all communication shall be sent to student's MCLA email address.

1. Notice - Students will receive a letter electronically from the appropriate College staff member, informing them of a conduct meeting/hearing to discuss the incident. Students must be given at least two (2) business days' notice for administrative hearings and preliminary meeting. The student will need to respond within 1 day (24 hours) if there is a schedule conflict. If no notification is received from the student, the meeting/hearing will proceed as indicated on the Notice of Violation.
2. Attendance - If the student fails to attend the meeting/hearing, the review will be made in the student's absence. Additionally, the student forfeits the right to appeal the decision and/or outcome of the case.
3. Meeting/Hearing - A conduct officer will review the incident report(s), documentation and/or related information with the student and the student will have the opportunity to share information regarding the incident. Since the meeting/hearing focuses on what happened with the purpose of determining whether policy violations have occurred, character statements, character

witnesses, and letters of support that do not pertain to the incident in question cannot be considered. Students should only share information that pertain to the incident.

4. Finding and Outcome - Based upon the information presented, the conduct officer or conduct board will determine if the student is responsible or not responsible for the alleged violation(s). Outcomes are considered only after responsibility has been determined and is based solely on the severity of the violation and a student's previous conduct record. The decision of the case will be subject to final review by the Dean of Students, or designee.
5. Notice of Outcome - Students will receive a letter electronically notifying the student of the results of the meeting/hearing no later than three (3) business days following the meeting/hearing. Additional time may be needed if the case is complicated in nature.
6. Appeal - The Student has the right to appeal based on appeal criteria within (3) three business days of the decision letter. (See Appeal Process Section for appeal criteria)

Procedural Advisor

A student may have an advisor accompany them to any scheduled conduct review meeting/hearing. The advisor may be any individual of the student's choosing who is allowed to be present on the MCLA campus, except another student with a pending conduct complaint in a potentially related matter. The advisor's role with regard to meetings/hearings is strictly limited to directly advising and/or accompanying the student advisee or complainant to the hearing. An advisor's presence is contingent upon following this procedure.

Advisors may not:

- (a) address any person involved in the hearing except for the student they are advising, or
- (b) disclose any student record information obtained through the student conduct process except as permitted by law. Confidentiality is paramount.

Advisors who do not comply with these requirements may be dismissed by the case officer, required to immediately leave, and will not be allowed to participate in future proceedings unless authorized by the Dean of Students. In the event an advisor is dismissed from a scheduled proceeding, the proceeding will continue as scheduled. The student may request to have a different advisor, if available, for the duration of the case and any additionally scheduled proceedings.

Appeal Process

The College has implemented procedures for students to appeal. Appeals are not re-hearing of the facts of the case, but rather an examination of the procedure and/or outcome. General dissatisfaction with the outcome of a conduct case or an appeal for mercy is not an appropriate basis for an appeal. The outcomes(s) resulting from a case decision will be considered on hold until the decision is affirmed, modified or reversed in the appeals process. Additionally, only a student who has participated in the hearing process and has been found responsible for violating a policy may file a written appeal. If a student fails to attend a meeting/hearing, that student forfeits their right to appeal the decision rendered by the conduct officer or conduct board.

An appeal must be made in writing via the Appeal function in the Guardian Case Management System within (3) business days of the notification of the outcome of the case to the parties involved in the original decision and should include the grounds for the appeal and all relevant information. Character statements, character witnesses, and letters of support that do not pertain to the incident in question cannot be considered. The decision to consider the appeal is a separate action from actually determining the appeal. If the appeal officer determines that the appeal does not meet any of the criteria for appeal, the student will be notified in writing via Case Management System and/or College email address within three (3) business days after the appeal request has been submitted.

The possible criteria for appeal are:

- A. The original meeting/hearing was not conducted according to established procedures or had significant procedural errors or irregularities that denied the student(s) a fair meeting/hearing.
- B. The student has new information that was not reasonably available prior to the original meeting/hearing and that information is likely to substantially changed the outcome of the meeting/hearing.

All requests for appeal must outline the following:

Any appeal based on criterion “A” must include all of the following:

- Citation of specific procedural errors or irregularities with appropriate reference to the Conduct Review Process;
- Reason(s) why procedural error was not mentioned in the original meeting/hearing;
- Reason(s) why correction of error can contribute to a decision other than that which was originally made.

Any appeal based on criterion “B” must include all of the following:

- Nature of the new evidence;
- Name(s) of anyone who will present this evidence;
- Reason(s) why evidence was not discussed at original meeting/hearing;
- Reason(s) why evidence can contribute to a decision other than that which was originally made.

The appeal officer may take the following actions after considering or determining an appeal:

- Remand the matter to the original conduct officer to be reheard in whole or in part. At the discretion of the appeal officer a different official or meeting/hearing method may be designated;
- Affirm the original decision and outcome(s);
- Reverse the original decision and outcome(s);
- Affirm or reverse the original decision in part and/or alter the outcome(s) which could increase or decrease the severity of the outcome(s).

If an appeal meets at least one of the appeal criteria, the assigned appeal officer will review case related information. A notification of the decision regarding the appeal will be made to the student in writing via Case Management System and/or College email address. The appeal decision will normally be rendered within (5) five business days of the written appeal. The decision of the appeal officer is final and effective immediately, the case is closed. All outcomes must be completed as stated in the original Notice of Outcome and/or Notice of Appeal Decision letter.

Additional Conduct Review Process Guidelines

- All meetings/hearings will be held in closed session. Individual recording of case related materials, meetings, and hearings is prohibited by involved parties, witnesses, and advisors including but not limited to taking pictures, screenshots of documents, voice recording, video recording, etc. Failure to comply may result in additional disciplinary action.
- During summer, vacation periods, and in extenuating circumstances including but not limited a natural disaster and/or global pandemic, the Dean of Students may approve alternative arrangements for individuals to participate in meetings/hearings including, but not limited to, the use of audio or video conferencing technology.
- If at any time during the course of a conduct meeting/hearing, any person exhibits behavior or language that is disruptive or threatening, that person may be dismissed with the process continuing without their presence or input.
- If requested in advance, and determined to be an appropriate and reasonable accommodation through Disability Services, notices, reports and/or written materials can be provided in an alternate format.

- The Dean of Students exercises discretion over the admission of any person into a meeting/hearing.
- A conduct officer or conduct board may record the meeting/hearing if it is deemed appropriate for the purpose of appeals or a matter of college record. This will be determined by the Dean of Students. All individuals will be notified.
- For higher level conduct review, a meeting/hearing script may be used to help with consistency of process.
- The student can make an impact statement. This can be written ahead of time or within 24 after the meeting/hearing. If written in advance, the impact statement can be submitted to conduct officer after being read during the meeting/hearing. The impact statement should address how this incident impacted them and how the possible outcome may impact them. It does not have to admit a level of responsibility.
- The student can present witness statement(s) in the meeting/hearings by giving prior notice to the Dean of Students and such statements one (1) business day in advance of the meeting/hearing for approval to be added to case information. Character witness statements will not be accepted.
- If a student is found responsible, the conduct officer or conduct board reviews the student's full conduct record to decide if an outcome should be more severe based upon past history. This information is not used to determine a student's responsibility for alleged violations.
- Cases of alleged sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or retaliation will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator to be resolved under the Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy Complaint and Resolution Procedures found in the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan (EO Plan). The EO Plan was approved by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education on September 28, 2018 and updated on August 14, 2020.

Outcomes/Educational Outcomes

There are a variety of possible outcomes you may receive if you are found responsible for violating a College policy. These outcomes range from disciplinary standing outcomes to educational outcomes to interventions.

When a student is found responsible for a violation of the policies within the MCLA Student Handbook, any of the following types of outcomes may be assigned. Outcomes should be appropriate to the policy violation(s) for which they are assigned. When considering the outcomes to be imposed, a range of factors may be considered, including the:

- nature, context, and severity of an incident,
- developmental needs of the student,
- level of accountability and responsibility taken by the student,
- level of cooperation from the student,
- need to stop the misconduct and prevent its recurrence,
- need to remedy and address the impact or effects of the conduct on others,
- conduct history of the student,
- best interests of the College community, and
- any other aggravating, mitigating, or relevant factors.

Types of Outcomes:

Educational Outcome - Students are expected to reflect upon their decisions and to be mindful of how their future choices and actions may impact themselves, others, and the College community.

Educational outcomes may include the following:

- Educational information provided to the student to review.
- Judicial Educator module – online module that relates to the violation of the incident.
- Participation or completion of a project, class, or other activity to build awareness or knowledge

relevant to the nature of the offense or oneself, including research papers, personal reflections, workshops, organizing events, designing community education, or preparing an action plan.

- Mentorship with a specific person on campus.
- Requirement to attend, present and/or participate in a program related to the violation. It may also be a requirement to sponsor or assist with a program for others on campus to aid them in learning about a specific topic or issue related to the violation for which the student was found responsible. Audience may be restricted.
- Restorative actions - Requiring a student to engage in actions to investigate the impact of a violation and repair the harms resulting from misconduct on other members of the community. These actions may include letters of apology, drafting and implementing a plan of resolution, engaging in community events that build positive community.
- Mental Health/Medical Assessment and/or Treatment -Requirement that a student seek a mental health, medical, substance use, or threat assessment from Counseling Services or Health Services, or other appropriate professional and follow through with the recommendations of the professional.
- Additional or alternate Educational Outcomes maybe created and designed as deemed appropriate to the violation.

Letter of Reprimand - A letter that makes a matter of record any incident that reflects unfavorably on the student behavior and is in violation of the policies outlines in the Student Handbook. Please note that further violations of College policy may result in further disciplinary action.

College Warning - Formal notice and censure that a student's actions violated a College policy, that such actions are not acceptable in our community, and that further misconduct, or any other violation of a College policy, may result in more serious disciplinary action. Students are expected to reflect upon their decisions and to be mindful of how their future choices and actions may impact themselves, others, and the College community. This warning is in effect for 6 months (from incident date), if no other violation occurs in that 6-month time period, the warning is no longer counted in student conduct history.

Residence Area Probation - A status imposed on a student for a specific period of time to allow students to reflect upon their choices and behavior and to demonstrate the ability to abide by College policies and expectations. Any additional College policy committed during the probation period may result in additional or more serious outcomes, including residential suspension or expulsion, College suspension, or College expulsion.

College Probation - A status imposed on a student for a specific period of time to allow students to reflect upon their choices and behavior and to demonstrate the ability to abide by College policies and expectations. Any policy violations committed during the probation period may result in additional or more serious outcomes, including residential suspension or expulsion, College suspension, or College expulsion.

Campus Restriction - Restrictions or prohibitions on a student's entry or access to particular locations, premises, or events, or on a students' contact with another member of the College community. While campus restriction is in effect, a student is allowed access to classes; however, access to any activities, campus facilities, and campus property is denied.

Housing Relocation – At times it is best to relocate a student to another part of the residence area. This change in housing assignment will be done in consultation with Residential Programs & Services.

Financial Restitution - Restitution is monetary compensation required of students who have taken, misused, damaged, or destroyed College, public, or private property or services. Amounts charged to students may include cost to repair, replace, recover, clean, or otherwise account for the property or

services affected.

Student Account/Disciplinary Hold (Dean’s Hold)– A hold may be placed on the student account. Students with a hold may not be able to receive grades, transcripts, diplomas, or be allowed to enroll in future classes at MCLA. Holds will remain in place until the outcome is completed or course of action is resolved. Students may also have a hold placed for missing official paperwork such as immunization document or not completing compliance modules.

Community Service Hours – Community service hours may be assigned. The following may be assigned:

- Complete a specific number of hours with a specific department/office or campus under the direct supervision of the department/office head.
- Complete a specific number of hours in the town of North Adams under the direct supervision of the Director of Civic and Community Engagement or designee.

Withdrawal of Recognition/Dissolution - Student groups may be disbanded and College recognition withdrawn for a specific time period or permanently. Further, disciplinary action taken against a student group leader(s) may result in the organization receiving outcomes involving loss of recognition and/or privileges.

Administrative Fine - Fines are punitive monetary costs intended to dissuade students from violating the policies outlines in the Student Handbook. Failure to pay a fine will result in a registration/graduation hold on the student’s account.

Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Level System: MCLA is committed to taking specific action in cases involving alcohol and/or drug violations. This Alcohol and Other Drug Level system is progressive however there are instances where lower levels may be bypassed due to the nature of the incident.

| AOD Level Status | Outcomes |
|---|--|
| AOD Level 1* Typically given 1 st offense for presence of/ minimal disruption to the community. | Educational information may be provided College Warning (status 6 months) Parental Notification may occur Level 1 status remains for 6 months (no additional violations = status removed) |
| AOD Level 2* Typically given as 1 st offense for actively engaging in AOD consumption. | Educational information may be provided Educational Outcome: Judicial Educator #8 or #9 or related topic Residence Area Probation or College Probation (1 year) Additional Educational Outcome(s) may be assigned Parental Notification may occur Level 2 status remains for 1 year (no additional violation = status removed) |
| AOD Level 3** | Educational information may be provided Educational Outcome: Judicial Educator #15 or related topic College Probation (1 year) On-campus Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) referral to Counseling Services Additional Educational Outcome(s) may be assigned Parental Notification may occur Level 3 status remains for 2 years (after 1 year of no additional violation status decrease to Level 2, if no additional violations happen after 2 years = status removed) |
| AOD Level 4** | Residential Suspension or Expulsion, Suspension from the College, or Expulsion from the College Parental Notification may occur |

* A first incident in which medical treatment/transport may result in automatic placement on Level 2.

Any additional incident in which medical treatment/transport may result in level increase of levels if already on a level.

* If campus police charge a student with a citation for an appearance in court for alcohol or drug related violation, an automatic placement on Level 2 or higher.

* Off-Campus Police/Authorities are involved may result in automatic placement on Level 2 or higher.

** Drug Sale &/or Distribution may result in automatic Level 3 or Level 4.

NOTE: One part of the College’s compliance with the 1989 Drug Free School and Campuses Regulations (Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, Public Law 101-226) and the policies of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education is to set alcohol and illegal drug conduct code standards. In response to findings of code violations, the College will typically apply a minimum mandatory sanction. As minimum and mandatory these outcomes are aimed to provide an opportunity to examine one’s choices in light of complying with College standards as well as the Federal and State mandates and serve as a deterrent to future violations.

Fire Safety Level System: MCLA is committed to taking specific action in cases involving fire safety violations, which include covered smoke detectors, tampering with fire safety equipment, and or smoking/vaping in buildings. This Fire Safety Level system is progressive however there are instances where lower levels may be bypassed due to the nature of the incident.

| FS Level Status | Outcomes |
|-----------------|--|
| FS Level 1** | Educational information may be provided Possible Administrative Fine* College Warning (status 6 months) Level 1 status remains for 6 months (no additional violations = status removed) |
| FS Level 2** | Educational information may be provided Educational Outcome: Judicial Educator #10 or related topic Possible Administrative Fine* Residence Area Probation or College Probation (1 year) Additional Educational Outcome(s) may be assigned Level 2 status remains for 1 year (no additional violation = status removed) |
| FS Level 3** | Educational information may be provided Educational Outcome: Judicial Educator #5, #7, or related topic Possible Administrative Fine* College Probation (1 year) Additional Educational Outcome(s) may be assigned Level 3 status remains for 2 years (after 1 year of no additional violation status decrease to Level 2, if no additional violations happen after 2 years = status removed) |
| FS Level 4 | Possible Administrative Fine* Residential Suspension or Expulsion, Suspension from the College, or Expulsion from the College Parental Notification may occur |

* **Administrative Fine:** For every covered smoke detector in a room or apartment, each person found responsible will be charged an administrative fine of \$100. This administrative fine will increase \$100 for each time a student is found responsible for a covered smoke detector. Covering a smoke detector puts the lives of those living in the room, floor, apartment, block, and/or building as risk and is a serious offense – this fine is meant to be a deterrent to not put the safety of other students at risk.

** If campus police charge a student with a citation for an appearance in court for fire safety related violation, an automatic placement on Level 2 or Level 3.

Residential Suspension - Temporary dismissal from College-owned housing for a specified period of time and without financial reimbursement. After this period is concluded, the student may regain their ability to live in a residence area following an interview with the Dean of Students or designee. A residentially suspended student may not enter any College owned housing during this time. Return to housing will be on a space-available basis.

Residential Expulsion – Permanent expulsion from College-owned housing without financial reimbursement. A residentially expelled student may not enter any College owned housing for the remainder of their College career.

Suspension from the College – Temporary dismissal from the College for a specified period of time. After this period is concluded, the student may resume their studies following a satisfactory interview with the Dean of Students or designee. A suspended student may not engage in College activities, use any College facilities, or be on College property without express permission from the Dean of Students or designee. After this period is concluded, the student may regain their ability be readmitted following an interview with the Dean of Students or designee. A Suspension may be recorded on the student’s transcript. Return to housing will be on a space available basis.

Expulsion from the College – Permanent dismissal from the College without the right to return. An expelled student no longer has the privileges of matriculated students and may not engage in College activities, use any College facilities, or be on College property. Expulsion is recorded on the student’s transcript.

Disclosure of Outcomes/Conduct Verification:

Graduate schools, professional schools, and MCLA College programs, field placement, position working at the college may request information to inquiry if the student is in good conduct standing. The Dean of Student or designee will review student conduct history to determine good conduct standing. All conduct verification requests should be submitted in writing to the Dean of Students.

Good Conduct Standing is determined as the following:

- Not on College Probation and/or
- Not on an AOD Level higher than level 2 and/or
- Not on a FS Level higher than level 2 and/or
- Have a progressive conduct history that rises to the level of residential suspension, suspension from the college, or expulsion from the college.

For graduate schools or professional schools, it will be assumed that a request for a Dean’s recommendation provides implied permission for release of this information. This is also true for transfer request forms. If a student is suspended from the College or expelled from the College, this is typically notated on the official transcript.

A student can request a meeting with the Dean of Students to review their conduct file and check disciplinary standing.

College Departments and Services

Academic Services

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| <u>Academic Technology</u> | <u>techhelp.mcla.edu</u> |
| <u>Center for Student Success & Engagement</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/csse/index</u> |
| <u>Academic Support Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/csse/Academic-Support/index</u> |
| <u>Advising Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/csse/Advising/index</u> |
| <u>Career Development</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/csse/Career-Services/index</u> |
| <u>Internships</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/csse/Career-Services/internships/index</u> |
| <u>Study Abroad Programs</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/csse/Study-Abroad/index</u> |
| <u>Free Library</u> | <u>http://library.mcla.edu/friendly.php?s=free_library</u> |
| <u>Office of the Registrar</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/registrar/index</u> |

College Services

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|---|--|
| <u>College Bookstore</u> | <u>http://www.bkstr.com/massliberalartsstore/home</u> |
| <u>Dining Services</u> | <u>http://mcla.campusdish.com/</u> |
| <u>Student Financial Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/academicresources/financialaid/</u> |
| <u>Student Accounts</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Admissions/bursar/index</u> |
| <u>Veterans Information</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Academics/registrar/veteraninformation/index</u> |
| <u>Veterans Resource Center</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/studentdevelopment/vrc</u> |

Student Affairs

Student Affairs, working with everyone in the MCLA community, creates a learning community that provides a sense of affiliation; respects and values the worth of all members; supports academic success; and encourages the personal development, wellness, and safety of students. Students in this community participate in meaningful leadership and service opportunities building a foundation for lifelong learning and the attainment of career goals.

Mission Statement

The Division of Student Affairs at MCLA supports the mission of the College providing a central focus on students and their development as leaders who seek opportunities leading to empowerment employing the College strategic plan as a guide.

Methods

- complementing the academic experience and encouraging academic achievement;
- providing direction for out-of-classroom learning;
- helping students to develop self-responsibility and respect for self and others;
- working with students to build a campus community that is both supportive and inclusive;
- creating experiences that expose students to new ways of thinking and living;
- encouraging personal growth through the development of academic, social skills, ethics, and overall wellness;
- developing opportunities for students to learn and practice leadership skills;
- assisting students with transition and adjustment issues;
- engaging students in local and national service opportunities; and
- providing opportunities for learning and goal achievement peer-led programs.

Values

As we work together to accomplish our mission, we are mindful about the values that underpin our practices. These values are as important as the goals themselves. With that in mind, in an effort to maximize the development of the students with whom we work, we are committed to:

- promoting a safe and healthy campus environment;
- recognizing and celebrating diversity with awareness of social justice;
- serving as positive role models;
- involving students in the process;
- providing a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive;
- assuring the presence of high quality, dynamic student services that are responsive to student needs;
- working collaboratively with other divisions of the College and the local community;
- allowing students to engage in reasonable challenges; and
- engaging in professional organizations and employing best practices.

Student Affairs functions/offices are comprised of Athletics, Center for Service and Citizenship, Counseling Services, Identity and Gender Equality Resource Center (IGE), First Year Experience, Health Services, International Student Programs, Multicultural Resource Education Center, Orientation, Public Safety, Residential Programs & Services, Student Development and Activities, Student Conduct, Susan B. Anthony Women’s Center, and Veteran’s Services. Contracted services for MCLA Dining Services and the USA Today Readership Program are also managed through Student Affairs.

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|---|--|
| <u>Center For Service & Citizenship/ Volunteer Center</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/serviceleadership/center-for-service/index</u> |
| <u>Counseling Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/wellness/counselingservices/index</u> |
| <u>Health Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/wellness/healthservices/index</u> |
| <u>Identity & Gender Equality Center</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/community/identity-and-gender-equality/index.html</u> |
| <u>Intercollegiate Athletics</u> | <u>http://athletics.mcla.edu/landing/index</u> |
| <u>Intramural & Recreation Programs</u> | <u>http://athletics.mcla.edu/information/intramurals/index</u> |
| <u>MERC & International Student Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/community/multiculturalcenter/index</u> |
| <u>Public Safety/Campus Police</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/publicsafety/index</u> |
| <u>Residential Programs & Services</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/campushousing/index</u> |
| <u>Susan B. Anthony Women’s Center</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/community/womenscenter/index</u> |
| <u>Student Affairs</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/studentaffairs/index</u> |
| <u>Student Development</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/studentdevelopment/index</u> |
| <u>Student Government</u> | <u>http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/community/studentgovernment/</u> |

The Student Government Association, through its [clubs, organizations](#) and committees, offers the College community a wide variety of activities and programs to fulfill educational goals. Several programs involve the North Adams community. These student-managed organizations provide a means for students to express themselves in a professional and social environment.

[Student Organizations & Clubs](#)

[SGA Sponsored Activities](#)

http://www.mcla.edu/Student_Life/clubsandorganizations/index

[Campus Conversations on Race](#) (CCOR) - CCOR is a program that fosters student discussions on race and ethnicity. Typically, a team of two trained students or a Staff Advisor facilitates discussions. The conversations use case studies as the starting point to engage the views of participants.

CCOR forums enable MCLA students to discuss one of the most critical issues we face in contemporary society - racial and ethnic prejudice and bigotry. It is paramount for students to gain an understanding of the perspectives and cultures that will soon be the new majority in our society. CCOR forums formally and systematically address societal change and provide guidance on methods to explore and understand the underpinnings of race relations.

The Inter-Greek Council - The Inter-Greek Council (IGC) aims to promote harmonious relations among the member fraternity and sorority groups, and act as the central governing body for member Greek letter organizations. The IGC works to assure that fraternity and sorority groups follow appropriate standards, promote group development, create member education programs, and provide training on hazing prevention. IGC member organizations provide opportunities for members to serve the community, cultivate leadership skills, be engaged in campus life, encourage academic excellence, and work to help members reach their potential and act as positive and productive members of the academic community. Along with the privileges of being a recognized fraternity or sorority, comes a responsibility to adhere to all MCLA policies and appropriate behavioral standards. Many of these policy and behavioral standards are listed in the Student Handbook. These policies and Commonwealth of Massachusetts and federal laws supersede the rules and procedures of fraternity and sorority chapters. Fraternity and sorority chapters that are unable to operate within these policies and/or laws or adhere to guidelines will lose or be denied recognition as an IGC member organization at MCLA. Specific regulations regarding recruitment, expansion, and Greek system policies are established and administered by the College and the IGC. Membership in fraternities and sororities is limited students who are in good standing with the College, and first semester students are not eligible to participate. Membership in and/or association with fraternities and sororities not affiliated with the IGC is strongly discouraged by the College. The only IGC affiliated fraternity and sorority organizations are listed below:

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Fraternity: | Pi Upsilon |
| Sorority: | Pi Beta Lambda |

Jazz Band - The jazz band provides performance experience in an instrumental jazz ensemble. The jazz band performs instrumental and vocal arrangements from a variety of styles of the repertoire, including Latin jazz. In addition to the full ensemble, combos of three to six players are also formed. Each semester the Jazz Band offers a concert.

MASSPIRG - MASSPIRG is a statewide, student-directed, non-profit, non-partisan, organization, which conducts research, education, service, and takes action on environmental, consumer, energy, and hunger relief issues. MASSPIRG chapters across the state pool resources and hire a staff to work with students on the issues that concern us as citizens. Each semester a \$9 fee (which can be waived) for MASSPIRG is listed on the student bill. Students vote at least biennially to sustain or abandon the practice of listing the fee that can be waived.

Spires is the College's student produced art and literary magazine. Published every spring under the auspices of the English/Communications Department, it contains original poetry, fiction, art, and photographs by MCLA students, faculty, and staff, with an emphasis on student's work.

Off Campus Services & Information

Selected City Of North Adams Rules and Regulations

A complete list of City ordinances can be found online at [City of North Adams Code](#)

- [Section 4.3](#) **Solicitation** - Solicitation in the City of North Adams requires a permit.
- [Section 12.8](#) **Explosives** - No person shall keep, store, or sell inflammable or explosive substances.
- [Section 12-13.3](#) **Possession and/or dispense of a malt beverage** - Possession and/or dispense of a malt beverage from two or more quarter kegs is unlawful for any person without a valid keg license.
- [Section 13-5](#) **Clinging to Moving Vehicles** - Clinging to moving vehicles is prohibited.
- [Section 13-6](#) **Hitchhiking** - Hitchhiking is prohibited.
- [Section 13-7](#) **Driver to Report Accident** - The driver of any vehicle involved in an accident resulting in the injury or death of any person or property damage to the apparent total extent of \$200 or more, must file within 5 days a report in writing to the police department unless incapacitated then file when able.
- [Section 13-8](#) **Removal of Vehicles for the Purpose of Snow Removal** - Any vehicle interfering with snow or ice removal may be towed at the owner's expense.
- [Section 13-24](#) **Unofficial Signs** - No person shall display any unofficial sign which resembles any official sign.
- [Section 13-25](#) **Tampering with Signs** - Injuring or removing any traffic sign, device, or marking is prohibited.
- [Section 13-40](#) **Regulation of bicycles** - When two or more persons in a group are operating bicycles, they shall ride in single file. No bicycle shall be operated between sunset and sunrise without displaying a clear, white, properly, lighted headlight which is firmly attached thereto, and is visible under normal atmospheric conditions from the front thereof for not less than 500 feet or without a red reflector, firmly attached to the bicycle.
- [Section 13-49](#) **Parking Prohibitions** - There are parking prohibitions on the streets around the campus area. See North Adams city ordinances for details.
- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Ashland Street | Davenport Street | N. Church Street |
| Blackinton Street | Dover Street | Pleasant Street |
| Bond Street | Eagle Street | Quincy Street |
| Bradley Street | Hoosac Street | South Street |

Chestnut Street
Church Street
Corinth Street

Main Street
Meadow Street
Montana Street

Spring Street
Washington Ave
Willow Street

[Section 13-52](#)

All Night Parking - No person shall park any vehicle on any street or highway between 1:00 a.m. through 6:00 a.m. Enforced Nov. 1 to April 30. Overnight parking is prohibited on Montana Street throughout the year.

[Section 14-3.1](#)

Drinking or Possessing Alcoholic Beverages in Public Places - Open alcoholic containers are prohibited in public places.

[Section 14-4](#)

Acts That Cause Public Inconvenience or Annoyance (disorderly conduct) - No person shall engage in any act that causes public inconvenience or annoyance.

[Section 14-4.1](#)

Noise - No person shall willfully or intentionally permit or cause a noise, which is objectionable due to volume, intermittence, beat frequency, or shrillness to be transmitted, outside the property where it originates, and in no case shall such noise exceed sixty-five (65-db-A) decibels at any property line.

[Section 14-5](#)

Use of Guns, Pistols, or any Firearms - Use of guns, pistols, or any firearms is prohibited unless authorized by law. Students are prohibited from possessing any weapon or weapon-like/dangerous implements on campus.

[Section 14-7](#)

Public Property - Damaging public property is prohibited.

[Section 14-8](#)

Standing, Loitering and Disorderly Conduct on Public Sidewalks - Loitering in front of public buildings or on public sidewalks is prohibited.

[Section 14-9](#)

Peeping or Spying into Houses (Peeping Toms) - Peeping or spying into houses in any manner is prohibited.

[Section 15-2](#)

Litter in public places - No person shall throw or deposit litter in or upon any streets, sidewalk or other public place within the city except in public receptacles, in authorized private receptacles for collection, or in official city dumps.

[Section 21](#)

Snow Removal - It is the responsibility of the tenant or owner of the house or land to remove snow from the sidewalks in front of their house (sec. 21-12) and to remove snow from the roofs of their house. (sec. 21-13)

[Section 21-22](#)

Coasting in Streets or Sidewalks - Coasting down the streets or sidewalks is prohibited.

[Section 21-23](#)

Playing Games in Streets or Sidewalks - Playing games in streets or sidewalks is prohibited.

[Section 21-25](#)

Bicycle Riding and Roller Skating on Sidewalks - Bicycle riding and roller-skating on the sidewalks is prohibited.

[Section 27-3](#)

Restraint of Dogs - All owners must keep their dogs leashed. No dogs are allowed to roam at large.

[Section 27-9](#)

Removal of Dog Litter - The owner or any person walking or in control of a dog outside of the owner's or person's property shall not allow or permit such dog to defecate upon any property, public or private, unless such person shall remove all litter so deposited by such dog and dispose of same in a sanitary manner before leaving the immediate premises.

Where to Get Help in the Local Community

[North Adams City Services](#)

[Building Inspector](#)

City Hall, 10 Main St., North Adams, (413) 662-3014

When inspecting an off-campus apartment you should make sure it has a Certificate of Occupancy. If you feel that your apartment has something wrong with it, you should first ask your property owner to remedy the problem. If your property owner refuses, you should then call the building inspector to see if your apartment should be inspected. Should the inspector find a violation of the Sanitary Code, the inspector will inform your property owner that the problem must be fixed within 14 days.

[Health Department](#)

City Hall, 10 Main St., North Adams, (413) 662-3020

The Code Enforcement Officer inspects off-campus apartments and issues Certificates of Occupancy. A building will have a Certificate of Occupancy if the Code Enforcement Officer has inspected the apartment in accordance with Chapter 2 of the State Sanitary Code.

[City Clerk](#)

City Hall, 10 Main St., North Adams, (413) 662-3015

The City Clerk issues dog, hunting, fishing, and marriage licenses. They can also provide you with a form to register as a North Adams voter. If you are from out of state and wish to vote, then you should note that there is no minimum length of time in residence to become a Massachusetts voter.

Health Related Services

AIDS and HIV Information and Testing

Testing and counseling can be arranged at the Berkshire Medical Center, 725 North Street, Pittsfield (413) 447-2000. Free testing is available at the State Clinic, 510 North Street, Pittsfield (413) 447-2654. National AIDS Hotline (800) 342-2437 (English), (800) 344-7432 (Spanish). At select times, testing is also provided on campus. Contact MCLA Health Services at ext. 5231 for additional information.

[Berkshire Health North](#), 71 Hospital Ave., North Adams, (413) 664-5256. Students utilize Berkshire Health North for medical emergencies and when the College Health Services Office is not available. Students can receive free care on campus including assessment, various cultures and medication and should avoid use of the emergency facility for non-emergent care.

Brien Mental Health Center, 124 American Legion Drive, North Adams. The Brien Center for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services provides many [services](#) such as crisis, psychiatric, outpatient and continuing care; child and adolescent care, and substance abuse services.

Counseling Center in the Berkshires, 111 North Street, Williamstown, (413) 458-3279, and 34 Depot Street, Suite 201, Pittsfield, (413) 499-4090. A pastoral counseling center, providing individual, couple, and family psychotherapy, including work with stress and anxiety related issues, grief management, and self-destructive behavior. Most major insurance and HMO plans accepted.

Howland Associates, 85 Main Street, Suite 202, North Adams, (413) 664-4600. Provides a broad range of psychological services.

Siracusa Associates Behavioral Health, 681 Simonds Road, Williamstown, MA, (413) 458-9600. In addition to psychotherapy, a broad range of related psychological services are available including psychological testing, vocational assessment, divorce and custody mediation, parent coordination, anger management, team building, staff retreats, workplace conflict resolution, consultation to schools and human service agencies, Critical Incidence Stress Management (CISM), and training or workshops on issues related to personal development and problems of daily life.

Tapestry Health Systems, 77 Hospital Drive, Suite 210, North Adams, (413) 664-5659. Hours: Every other Wednesday, 10:00 am – 4:45 pm. The agency provides gynecological diagnostic services, birth control supplies, and all types of counseling concerning contraceptives, problem pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and other areas of human sexuality. Fees for gynecological exams, pregnancy and HIV testing and referral services are based on a sliding scale and Medicaid is accepted. Tapestry Health Clinics are also located in Pittsfield, (413) 443-2844 and Great Barrington (413) 528-4238.

Liferight, 57 Main St., Room 208, North Adams, (413) 664-4106. Pro-life group offering counseling and pregnancy tests. The agency assists with maternity care and baby items, financial assistance, home placements, and alternatives to abortion.

STD Information Hotline (800) 227-8922

Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance, Berkshire County District Attorney's Office, 7 North Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201. Provides direct assistance to crime victims including referrals to appropriate programs and service providers and information and advocacy to help victims better understand the justice system. Call the Hotline at (413) 442-6000.

Women's Services and Rape Crisis at the Elizabeth Freeman Center, 85 Main St., North Adams, (413) 663-9709, 24-hour services are available at 43 Francis Avenue, Pittsfield, (413) 499-2425. Provides support group for women in transition, job and career counseling, and short-term crisis counseling and rape victims counseling and advocacy. Assists with legal problems, especially concerning divorce and separation and serves as a liaison with a lesbian support group in the area. Also sponsors the Hand-in-Hand program for children who witness domestic violence. (413) 663-9709 is a 24-hour hotline.

Legal Assistance

[Massachusetts Bar Association](#), 20 West Street, Boston, (617) 654-0400 or (866) 687-7511. A referral source for students who need legal assistance in civil and/or criminal proceedings.

[Community Legal Aid](#), 61 Main St., North Adams, (413) 664-4531. Specializing in poverty law. You must be income eligible to use this service (income at 125 percent of poverty level). Legal Services can assist with benefits and housing and be a possible resource for you if you do not have adequate heating. Limited hours: Tuesdays 10:00 am – 4:00 pm or by appointment.

Other Services

[Berkshire County Consumer Advocate](#), 150 North St., Pittsfield, (413) 443-9128. Mediates consumer/business problems and landlord/tenant problems and helps individuals to understand their rights.

[Information and Referral Services](#) - Berkshire United Way, Inc., 200 South Street, Pittsfield, (413) 442-6948 or toll free (800) 356-8998. These telephone numbers can be used to connect with a Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. information and referral agency serving all of Berkshire County. The service's primary function is to help people focus their needs and put them in touch with existing service agencies.

[Northern Berkshire United Way](#), 85 Main Street, North Adams, MA (413) 663-9062.

[Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training](#), 37 Main Street, North Adams, MA (413) 663-1111, 60 North Street, 3rd Floor, Pittsfield, MA (413) 499-2220. The Job Matching Center, staffed by professional placement interviewers, is a good resource for students who are looking for summer, part-time, or full time jobs.

[Northern Berkshire Community Action](#), 85 Main St., Suite 628, North Adams, (413) 663-3014. This agency provides fuel assistance for those who are eligible. The eligibility guidelines differ from year to year. Dependent students are not eligible for assistance.

[Registry of Motor Vehicles](#), 33 Main Street, North Adams, (800) 858-3926

