

Board of Trustees
Academic and Student Affairs Committee
January 24, 2020 9:30am – 11:00am Alumni Room, Tower 11th Floor

MINUTES

Members present: Elisa Hamilton (Chair), Denise Korn, Jan Saragoni (Ex-Officio).

Members absent: David Nelson (Ex-Officio).

Also participating: Maureen Keefe and Kym Pinder (Liaisons). Lyssa Palu-ay, Susana Segat (Secretary to the Board).

Call to Order

Chair Hamilton called the meeting to order at 9:35am.

Approval of the Minutes: November 8, 2019

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 8, 2019 committee meeting.

Items Requiring A Vote: none

Reports: Update on honorary degree model

Provost Pinder distributed a memo noting different process examples and recommended that MassArt adopt a procedure similar to that used by RISD. Trustees discussed the different options and MassArt's previous nominating procedures. Trustees discussed how they could be more engaged in developing the criteria and rationale for awarding an honorary doctorate. Provost Pinder recommended that an internal committee recommend the finalist(s) to the president for final vetting and discussed potential appearances of conflict of interest. Trustees discussed the process for receiving the proposed finalist(s) from the president.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the following pilot process for awarding honorary degrees and to evaluate its effectiveness at the end of the first cycle:

Proposed pilot process for awarding honorary degrees

From the January 24, 2020 Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting.

The recommendation from the provost is that MassArt adopt a procedure similar to that used by RISD/Simon Francis University.

Selection of Honorary Degree Recipients

The MassArt Community

Anyone from the MassArt community may nominate candidates for the honorary doctorate honor. The call for nominations will come from the Honorary Degree Committee.

The Honorary Degree Committee

The Honorary Degree committee is comprised of the following:

- Lead commencement planner (co-chair)
- Dean, department head, or graduate program director (co-chair)
- Student representative, as appointed by the Student Government Association
- Faculty representative, as appointed by the MSCA
- Trustee representative, as appointed by the BOT Chair
- President's office representative (administrative support)

Duties and Responsibilities

- Establish definite standard of scholarly attainment or of the distinctive applications of such attainment in the service of society by which to judge the qualifications for this honor.
- Establish procedures for the nomination of potential candidates for honorary degrees.
- Receive nominations.
- Review thoroughly the achievements and qualifications of all persons nominated.
- Keep all deliberations and votes confidential except where necessary for official purposes.
- Report to the president for his consideration and action such person(s) as have received no fewer than three (3) affirmative votes from the committee membership.
- Deliver the full dossier of each candidate and the nomination report of the committee to the president. This report shall include:
 - A statement that conveys the committee's rationale for the nomination,

- Pertinent details concerning the qualifications of the candidate, and
- The name of the sponsoring department or MassArt community member.

The President

The president considers the recommendations from the Honorary Degree Committee. He selects the individual(s) to bring before the BOT Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

The Board of Trustees

The BOT Academic and Student Affairs Committee receives, considers, and approves the recommendation brought forth by the president. The committee then forwards its recommendation to the full board of trustees.

Annual Timeline

In late January, the Honorary Degree Committee reviews, deliberates, evaluates, and selects approximately five to eight honorary doctorates of fine arts candidates. Typically, these recommendations are due to the president by early February for presentation, review, and approval by the board of trustees at their regularly scheduled February BOT meeting. The BOT considers the recommendation approved by the president. Once approved, the board delegates to the president the responsibility of extending invitations to the selected individual(s) to receive an honorary degree at commencement of the following academic year (e.g., candidates for an honorary degree at commencement 2022 would be nominated during the 2020 calendar year, approved by the BOT in February 2021, and then extended an invitation to attend commencement 2022).

Due to the lack of lead-time in the first cycle of implementation (for the 2021 commencement ceremony), a special abridged schedule would need to be implemented specifically for the 2021 commencement nominee.

Review and Evaluation

As soon as the 2022 candidate has been finalized, this pilot process will be reviewed by the BOT Academic and Student Affairs Committee to evaluate its effectiveness.

Reports: Update on enrollment

Provost Pinder distributed the year-to-date enrollment chart and said that the numbers showed no cause for concern. She noted that January 31 was the next deadline, so a more-up-to-date report would be provided at the February 4th board meeting. Provost Pinder said that Dean Wright would be leaving his position on February 7th and Lauren Wilchusen, the current assistant director, would be acting dean until a search for a new dean has been completed.

Reports: JET presentation

Dean Palu-ay distributed a leaflet describing the upcoming Thriving Classrooms workshops. She also asked trustees to save March 3rd for the New Rep Theater production of *Thurgood* at MassArt.

Reports: Sabbatical presentations

Provost Pinder invited the following faculty members to provide brief presentations on their work during recent sabbatical leaves: Jan Kubasiewicz, Jennie-Rebecca Falcetta, and Matthew Monteith. Chair Hamilton thanked the faculty for their work and for taking the time to make the presentations. She invited them to make the presentation again to the full board at their next meeting.

Other Business

Chair Hamilton distributed a memo from President Nelson requesting an official vote to grant an honorary doctorate to Theaster Gates in May 2020.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: To grant an honorary doctoral degree to Theaster Gates in May 2020.

Adjournment

On a motion duly made and seconded at 11:10am, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn.