MACER March 19, 2026 Meeting Notes

Management Association Committee for Employee Relations

Representing Management: Vivian Cavazzi, Austin Gilliland, Joanne Landers, Mike McCarthy

Representing NECCPA: Sara Codair, Jenny Fielding, Linda Giampa, Laura Mondt, Suzanne Reyes, Steve Russell

Meeting held in President's Conference Room, Haverhill Campus

NECCPA President Linda Giampa began the meeting at about 3:00 PM.

1. **Course Accessibility and Syllabi** – The discussion centered around the requirement that every faculty member submit their Spring 2026 syllabi with documentation that each syllabus has met an 85 – 100 % accessibility standard as determined by Blackboard Ally or Brightspace Panorama applications. The requirement was agreed to in a Memorandum of Agreement between community college legal counsel and MCCC. At NECC, detailed instructions have been issued by Austin and also by individual deans.

   Discussion ensued about whether the College is allowed by contract to keep syllabi which are submitted for review or must they return them. The contracts appear to indicate the latter. The question of how relevant this is in the current environment where almost all syllabi are submitted to deans electronically was discussed. Austin agreed that while syllabi documents can be retained by the dean, no syllabus can be shared or used in any way by a dean (or their staff) without the instructor's permission, since a syllabus is essentially copyrighted material.

2. **Brightspace Conversion** – Linda asked if CIT is able to handle all of the work produced by this conversion, that is reviewing the courses and helping instructors get the courses where they need to be. Austin speculated that some instructors are taking a lot of time to develop a spectacular course, but that takes a long time. She encouraged faculty to submit their courses for CIT review, even though they may not be perfect, even in terms of accessibility. CIT and their coaches can then help to address problems and speed the process along. While a lot of the summer courses (due for review by March 22), have been submitted for review by CIT, many still need to be submitted. Austin hoped that all would take the review requirement seriously, since an ultimately acceptable review is a condition of being able to teach a course, irrespective of how many times an instructor may have taught the course previously.

One of the areas Austin cited as being most difficult is the students' access to their grades. This is especially difficult when much of a course uses third party software. Some third party applications have their own grade books and this becomes especially challenging when some items in the course are graded through the third party software and some graded through Brightspace. The bottom line, Austin said, is that the student needs to know what their total grade is and needs to able to find it in one place.

Steve asked if the College has adequate computing power to enable Brightspace to function smoothly. While so far, students taking courses on Brightspace, for the most part, have been able to adapt and have no more connectivity problems than they may have had with Blackboard, how will Brightspace fare when the whole College is using it? Austin replied that she did not anticipate problems, but it is something that needs to be monitored. Any faculty members having any kind of connectivity or other operational problems, should notify CIT.

Steve also suggested that the message in Panorama in Brightspace be altered to remove the statement that the college required above 99% accessibility, if indeed it does not. While most are used to it by now, faculty coming on board with Brightspace can find such a message demoralizing, and indeed if it is not accurate, misleading. Austin said she would look into that with CIT.

3. **Fall 2026 Class Schedule** – Linda asked if the Fall 2026 was completely posted now. Austin said that it was and she understands that it was late and it would not be so late again. Linda was concerned that advisers who ordinarily start seeing students in March to prepare for registration might be held responsible for lower enrollments, given the late availability of the schedule. Austin promised that they would not be.

4. **Overtime Pay for Professional Staff FAQ** – Vivian said that the form for compensation for overtime is now on the HR Sharepoint site. Linda asked if time and a half would be paid when there was a snow day within a particular week. Another question relates to whether comp time and overtime pay are calculated based on hours or salary. Vivian said this varies depending on the employee. New Federal income tax regulations may make a difference in this area. Linda and Vivian agreed to meet to work out these issues and discuss the possibility of issuing a FAQ for professional staff compensation.

5. **Under Enrolled Classes** – Linda asked if there is a specific number at which a class becomes "under enrolled" and becomes a Directed Study. Austin replied that she is putting together a standard and will be ready to discuss it in the future.

6. **DCE Seniority List** – Linda asked who handled this now. Austin replied that it was Kirsten in her office.

7. **Building Issues** – Mike reported on several issues of concern to members.

a. Leaky Roofs – Mike explained that in the Spurk Building snow got into the ventilation and is causing water to come in through ceilings in that building. He said that this will necessitate replacing insulation and ceiling tiles. There is still time on the roof warranty to cover the costs.
b. B & E Buildings – He should know soon if completion in time for Spring 2027 semester is realistic. He will know in time for development of schedule for that semester.
c. Amesbury Street Lobby is being upgraded
d. 420 Common Street lease due to expire October 27 could be extended.
e. He will be meeting soon to figure out space utilization from the Jones Report. Linda asked if everyone would be able to see the report. Mike said yes, when it is finalized. It is a public document.
f. 30 more on-street parking spaces for use between 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM have become available by agreement worked out with the City of Lawrence.
g. Construction on solar array near the Haverhill campus library will be underway.
h. Old bookstore on Haverhill campus will be realigned.
i. Use of D building will be limited until police academy can be located back to B and E Buildings. Eventually air conditioning will be installed in the gym.

8. Enrollment – Joanne reported that of the 1400 fall applicants, 1000 have been processed.

Meeting ended at about 3:45. Next MACER meeting is Thursday April 16, 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Russell, Ph.D.
NECCPA Secretary.