



**Faculty Council Meeting**  
**Monday, November 10, 2025, 1:00-3:00 PM**  
**Chancellor's Conference Room**  
**Third Floor, Quinn Administration Building**  
<https://www.umb.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-council/>

## **DRAFT Agenda**

Supporting documents may be found in the November Meeting Documents Folder here: [2025-2026 Faculty Council Meeting Documents](#) (To access these documents, you must be signed into your UMB account.)

I. Motion to approve or amend the Agenda

II. Motion to approve the September Meeting Minutes

III. Motion to approve the October Meeting Minutes

IV. Motion to approve the General Education Committee and Subcommittee Membership (Neal Bruss) (**See Appendix A below**)

V. Motions from the Graduate Studies Committee (**See Appendix B below**)

VI. Motion to request information from administration on procedures for handling FOIA requests of faculty syllabi by external parties (Timothy Oleksiak).

**Background:** August 6, 2026: *Bean Town Times* (a partisan conservative media outlet) reported a FOIA request for faculty syllabus was submitted. Therefore,

BE IT MOVED that Administration present to the Faculty Council its procedures for the handling of FOIA requests of faculty syllabi by external parties;

BE IT FURTHER MOVED that Administration shares with the Faculty Council best practices for submitting syllabi to departments or other university systems such as Curriculog.

VII. Motion to form an ad hoc UMass Boston Faculty Council First Amendment Defense Committee (Timothy Oleksiak). Colleagues wanting to see where these ideas emerged from can look to: <https://facultyfirstresponders.com/>.

BE IT MOVED that Faculty Council create an ad hoc Faculty Council First Amendment Defense Committee.

VIII. Motion to Discuss the Acceptable Use Policy, Revised May 2025 (Travis Johnston)

IX. Motion Opposing the "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education" (Amy Todd) (**see Appendix C below**)

X. Discussion of previously circulated reports from union representatives:

- Classified Staff University Representative - Alexa MacPherson, CSU President
- Professional Staff Union Representative - Michael Mahan
- Faculty Staff Union Representative - Caroline Coscia, FSU President
- Representatives from the Graduate Employee Organization – Jonathan Vega Martinez

XI. Discussion of previously circulated reports from administrators:

- Chancellor - Marcelo Suárez-Orozco
- Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs – Joseph Berger
- Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance – Kathleen Kirleis

XII. Discussion of previously circulated reports from student government:

- Representatives from the Graduate Student Government
- Representatives from the Undergraduate Student Government

XIII. New Business

XIV. Motion to Adjourn

## Appendix A

### General Education Committee and Subcommittee Membership Academic Year 2026\*

Serra Acar, CEHD (Early Childhood Education and Care)

Cassandra Alexopoulos, CLA (Communication)

Hadi Banat, Director, CLA (English) Director, English as a Second Language Program

Lynne Benson, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Faculty Councilor

Lynne LeBlanc, CLA (Classics and Religious Studies)

Lauren Bowen, CLA (English), Director, Composition Program

Shawna Butler, Manning College (Nursing)

Neal Bruss, CLA (English), Coordinator, First-Year Seminars

Rachel Drew, Manning College (Exercise and Health Science) Spring 2026 only

Karla Schallies, CSM (Biology)

Lauren Sullivan, Coordinator, Intermediate Seminars, CLA (Anthropology)

Elizabeth S. Sweet, CLA (Anthropology), Chair (2025), Quantitative Reasoning Subcommittee

Yijia Eddie Zhao, CSM (Accounting and Finance)

*Ex officio*

Tim Blackman, Director, Undergraduate Studies

Betsabe Gomez, Associate Director, Writing Proficiency, Undergraduate Studies

Lynnell Thomas, Associate Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence, Undergraduate Studies

#### Distribution Subcommittee

Neal Bruss, CLA (English)

Ting Chen, CM (Accounting and Finance)

Shuai Jin, CLA (Political Science)

Nino Kebadze, CLA (Latin American and Iberian Studies)

Sheldon Kovitz CSM (Mathematics)

Lisa Rivera, CLA (Philosophy)

Barbara Worley CLA (Anthropology)

Aimee D'Avignon, CEHD, Director, Office of Student Success, *ex officio*

#### Diversity Subcommittee

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\* All appointments are for one year (unless indicated as *ex officio*) and renewable. Subcommittee chairs are pending election unless indicated.

Sowmya Balachandran, School for the Environment  
Miguel Montalva Barba, CLA (Sociology)  
Neal Bruss, CLA (English)  
Samantha E. Erskine, CM (Management)  
Phil Gona, Manning College (Urban Public Health)  
Karen Grayson, CLA (English)  
Azizah Jor'Dan, Manning School (Exercise and Health Sciences)  
Marcelle Mentor, CEHD (Curriculum and Instruction)  
Suisui Wang, CLA (Women's and Gender Studies)  
Aimee D'Avignon, CEHD, Director, Student Success Center, *ex officio*

### **Quantitative Reasoning Subcommittee**

Neal Bruss, CLA (English)  
Jie Chen, University Senior Statistician  
Chris Contreras, CLA (Sociology)  
Karen Crounse, CSM (Mathematics) Math 114G Coordinator  
Joao de Souza, CLA (Economics) Spring 2026 only.  
Arthur Eisenkraft, CSM (Physics), CEHD, and Honors College  
Eric Grinberg, CSM (Mathematics)  
Albert Kao, CSM (Biology)  
Georgia Mavrommatti, School for the Environment Fall 2026 only  
Reed Reynolds, CLA (Communication)  
Sung Park, MCHS (Gerontology)  
Elizabeth S. Sweet, CLA (Anthropology) Chair (2025)  
Laurel Wainwright, CLA (Psychology)

### **Seminars Assessment Subcommittee**

Neal Bruss, CLA (English), Coordinator, First-Year Seminars, Convener  
Meredith Gunning, CLA (Philosophy)  
Virginia Karlis, CLA (English)  
Meesh McCarthy, Center for Academic Excellence  
Michael Motia, CLA (Classics and Religious Studies)  
Lauren Sullivan, Coordinator, Intermediate Seminars, CLA (Anthropology)

### **Writing Proficiency Subcommittee**

Hadi Banat, CLA (English), Director of English as a Second Language, Academic Support Programs  
Lauren Bowen, Director, First-Year Composition, CLA (English)  
Neal Bruss, CLA Coordinator, First-Year Seminars (English)  
Deborah Budden CLA (English)  
Maria Carvajal Rigidor, Director, University Writing Center  
John Hess, CLA (English)  
Lauren Sullivan, Coordinator, Intermediate Seminars, CLA, (Anthropology)  
Bryan Williams, Center for Academic Excellence  
Raul Ybarra, (English) CLA

### *Ex Officio*

Kathryn Archard, Director, Writing Programs, College of Management  
Robin Babcock, Manager, Writing Center, Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences  
Betsabe Gomez, Associate Director, Writing Proficiency, Undergraduate Studies  
Tim Blackman, Director, Undergraduate Studies

## **Appendix B**

## **Motion #1**

### **From: CLA**

**Request for a course change**, to change the description of APLING 891 Qualifying Paper Seminar, to add a prerequisite of no incompletes and a GPA of 3.0 or above, and to change the grading scheme to Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.

Old description: This required 3-credit course supports students in the development of the Qualifying Paper, a required element in the APLING program. It considers common issues such as finding a researchable question, designing and conducting a literature review, beginning a conceptual framework, and making a timeline for work on the QP. Some classes will be structured.

New description: This required 3-credit course supports students in the development of the Qualifying Paper, a required element in the APLING Ph.D. program. It considers common issues such as finding a researchable question, designing and conducting a literature review, establishing a conceptual framework, and making a timeline for work on the dissertation. Through readings about style, writing, applied linguistics research areas, and presentations for peer and instructor feedback, students create and refine their qualifying paper for departmental review.

Rationale: The catalog description has been amended to provide a clear and concise public-facing description of the course content and to rectify grammatical inconsistencies and typographical errors in the previous description. The internally-enforced departmental policy that students have no incompletes and a GPA of 3.0 or above in order to enroll in this first Ph.D. benchmark course should be added to the course catalog for the purpose of transparency. Assigning a grade of S/U is a better reflective of the formative and summative assessments than assigning a traditional letter grade.

## **Motion #2**

### **From: CLA**

**Request for a course change**, to change the maximum number of credits for ECON 698 Mentored Research Project from five to six. ECON 698 is a required course for the MA in Applied Economics. This course change is also related to a program change for the MA in Applied Economics (still in governance).

Description: Economics 698 is a course designed to facilitate completion of the capstone project (or thesis), a critical requirement for the MA degree in Applied Economics. All students taking the course will be required to design and complete a comprehensive research project that includes the relevant literature, description of methods and data used, analysis of the findings and implications of the research.

Rationale: Students take the course for multiple semesters. During the first semester they take the class, students identify a research question and plan their research proposal. During the second semester, students complete their analysis, present their results in an oral presentation, and write up a capstone/thesis paper. This change in total credits better captures the work and effort students put into their capstone.

## Appendix C

### **Resolution Opposing the "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education"**

#### **Background**

The United States Secretary of Education requested on 10/1/25 that nine universities in the United States agree to a compact with the federal government entitled the "[Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education](#)" (hereafter, "Compact"). The Compact asserts that federal benefits will be jeopardized if an institution of higher education does not sacrifice elements of its institutional autonomy, including academic freedom, freedom of speech, shared governance lawful admissions practices, and lawful employment practices.

#### **Resolution**

**WHEREAS** the Trump Administration, on October 1, 2025, presented a Compact containing ten conditions on federal funding to nine national universities, conditions that among other things:

- threaten interference in admission decisions;
- entail the surveillance of community members' personal views;
- demand changes in universities' governance structures and the closure of units deemed ideologically suspect;
- require that institutions commit to the use of force against campus protest and to the enforcement of specific definitions of gender;
- create unacceptable constraints on students' programs of study;
- limit international student enrollments; and
- essentially commit to an annual performance of loyalty to receive federal funding, and

**WHEREAS** the Compact contains provisions antithetical to the mission and traditions of the University of Massachusetts-Boston, and

**WHEREAS** the Compact contains provisions which endanger the independence, excellence, and integrity of the University of Massachusetts-Boston, and

**WHEREAS** the Compact likely violates state and federal law, and infringes upon the constitutional rights of members of the University of Massachusetts-Boston community, and

**WHEREAS** the University of Massachusetts-Boston exemplifies American academic values of the highest standard, including universal right to free speech and the cultivation of academic freedom; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Faculty Council of the University of Massachusetts-Boston firmly opposes this Compact as written and calls upon Chancellor Suárez-Orozco, President Marty Meehan, and the Board of Trustees to also reject this Compact outright as well as any similar proposal compromising the mission, values, and independence of the University of Massachusetts-Boston.