

The Constitution of the Macalester College Student Government

Amended April 2011

Preamble

We the members of the Macalester College Student Body, in order to further the educational goals and general welfare of the College do hereby establish the Macalester College Student Government Constitution.

State of Purpose

The purpose of the Macalester College Student Government is to ensure direct student participation in campus governance, to uphold and protect the rights and freedoms of the Student Body as expressed in the Students' Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities document, to incorporate the needs and desires of the Student Body in Macalester College policy and programs, and to distribute the student activity fee to student organizations.

Statement of Affirmative Action

The Macalester College Student Body recognizes the unique diversity of its student body and the need for different groups to be fairly represented in student governance. Students of color, international students, women, and students of all sexual and gender identities are integral segments of the student community. Members of these groups should be encouraged to participate in the student decision-making process. The Macalester College Student Government Constitution has been structured to encourage participation by all Macalester student groups and other non-student constituencies of the College.

Statement of Environmental and Social Concern

Part of the mission of MCSG is to advocate for the student body's environmental and social concerns through the practices of student government and Macalester College institutions. Campus governance necessarily includes interaction with the communities of which we are a part. MCSG will take action to support environmental and social concerns when students request it and such action is likely to cause appreciable improvement or improve the ethical stance of MCSG.

See Amendment I. Adherence to Environmental and Social Concerns

Article I. **MACALESTER COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT – EMPOWERMENT**

Section 1. The authority of this Constitution, within the legal authority held and delegated by the Macalester College Board of Trustees, its successors and assignees, shall be derived from the Student Body. The Macalester College Student Body shall be composed of all students at Macalester College who pay all or part of the student activity fee.

Section 2. All the powers of the Student Body herein specified shall be vested in the Macalester College Student Government (MCSG).

Section 3. The Student Government shall do all in its power to uphold and protect the rights and freedoms of the Student Body as expressed in the Students' Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities document.

Article II. **MACALESTER COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT - FUNDING**

Section 1. The Macalester College Student Government shall receive upon validation of enrolled students each semester, a student activity fee from each student.

Section 2. The Macalester College Student Government shall see to the proper distribution of these activity fees according to the bylaws established by the Legislative Body and the guidelines of the Financial Affairs Committee.

Article III. **MACALESTER COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT – STRUCTURE**

Section 1. The Macalester College Student government shall be divided into the following bodies:

- A. The Legislative Body (LB)
- B. The Judicial Council

Section 2. Voting

- A. All members of each branch shall enjoy voting rights in their respective meetings. Each member has one vote.
- B. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting.
- C. This section applies to all MCSG meetings.

Article IV. **THE STUDENT ASSEMBLY**

Section 1. The SA shall be composed of all the members of the Macalester College Student Body.

Section 2. The Student Assembly shall:

- A. Act as a forum for discussion of issues of interest to the Macalester College Community.
- B. Possess legislative powers through which it may pass resolutions dictating LB attention/action.
- C. Recommend budgeting priorities for the Student Activity Fee.

Section 3. The SA shall meet if either:

- A. A simple majority of the Legislative Body votes to call such a meeting; or
- B. A petition calling for such a meeting presented to the Legislative Body bearing the valid signatures of at least 20% of enrolled students.

Section 4. Attendance is mandatory for all members of the Legislative Body, optional for all other students.

Section 5. All students in attendance shall have voting privileges and enjoy the privilege of the floor.

Article V. **THE LEGISLATIVE BODY**

Section 1. Shall be divided into a Representative Committee and an Executive Board.

Section 2. The following shall be non-voting members of the Legislative Body:

- A. The Dean of Students or an appointed representative.
- B. A faculty representative appointed by the Faculty Advisory Council.
- C. A staff representative appointed by the Staff Advisory Council.

Article VI. **JURISDICTION**

- Section 1. The Executive Board
 - A. Small budget requests (as defined in the bylaws)
 - B. Organize all MCSG meetings
 - C. Representative Committee elections

- Section 2. The Representative Committee
 - A. Large budget requests (as defined in the bylaws)
 - B. Executive Board elections

Article VII. **THE REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE**

- Section 1. Shall be composed of elected representatives.

- Section 2. Every representative shall enjoy full voting privileges.

Article VIII. **THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

- Section 1. The Executive Board shall be comprised of:
 - A. The President
 - B. The Vice-President and Chair of the Student Services and Relations Committee
 - C. The Program Board Chair
 - D. The Academic Affairs Committee Chair
 - E. The Financial Affairs Committee Chair
 - F. The Student Organizations Committee Chair

Article IX. **THE COMMITTEES**

- Section 1. The committees are designed to enact and administer various policies only to the limits made clear in this document and its bylaws.

- Section 2. Types of Committees
 - A. Academic Affairs Committee (AAC):
 - 1. Shall represent students in all areas relating to policies, practices, and proposals of an academic nature.
 - B. Student Services and Relations Committee (SSRC):
 - 1. Shall act to respond to student needs on campus and work to promote the transparency of MCSG as a whole.
 - C. Student Organizations Committee (SOC):
 - 1. Shall work to form a partnership with student organization to foster communication between MCSG and student organization leaders.
 - 2. Shall charter new student organizations and audit and re-charter existing organizations as appropriate.
 - D. Financial Affairs Committee (FAC):
 - 1. Shall allocate the Student Activity Fee in a consistent and fair manner with the advice and consent of the Legislative Body.
 - E. Program Board (PB):

1. Shall organize large-scale programming on campus with the ultimate goal of promoting and fostering student collaboration and community.

Article X. **THE STUDENT JUDICIAL COUNCIL**

Section 1. The judicial power of the MCSG shall be vested in the Student Judicial Council.

Section 2. The Student Judicial Council shall:

- A. Be responsible for the interpretation of this Constitution, the powers vested in the MCSG, the charters of student organizations created by the LB, and the Students' Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities document.
- B. Consist of three students, nominated by the Dean of Students, subject to the approval of the LB.
- C. Meet as often as the members choose or at the request of the Representative Committee. Any case the Judicial Council refuses to hear shall be considered closed unless the Executive Board requests, by a majority vote, that the Judicial Council meet.

Section 3. No student may hold an office on the Student Judicial Council if they hold a non-staff office, elective or appointive position in any other part of the MCSG. Appointed committee seats, with the exception of FAC, are not considered part of the MCSG.

Section 4. Removal of Judicial Council Members

- A. Members of the Student Judicial Council may be removed only by two-third vote of the MCSG.

Article XI. **REFERENDUM**

Section 1. Any student may submit to the Student Judicial Council a petition bearing the valid signatures of no less than 15 percent of the student body requesting a referendum on any Legislative Body action.

Section 2. Upon verification of the petition by the Student Judicial Council, the action in question shall be suspended until the referendum is held. The referendum vote shall be held within ten (10) class days of the petition being verified.

Section 3. The LB may call for a referendum on any issue which it feels should be decided by the student body.

Section 4. The Election Procedures Commission (EPC) shall schedule a forum to discuss any proposal prior to the election.

Section 5. These procedures shall not be construed as a means of unilaterally releasing the LB from contractual obligations. Actions which have already been executed by the LB prior to petition verification shall be exempt from these proceedings.

Article XII. **RECALL OF ELECTED INDIVIDUALS**

- Section 1. Petitions seeking the recall of an official must give at least one of the following reasons for such an election to take place:
- A. Failure to fulfill the duties of their office as defined by this Constitution and other official documents.
 - B. Conviction of the official by a civil court of a felony.
 - C. Conviction of the official by a campus judicial body, on items outlined in the Students' Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities document.
 - D. Violation of the MCSG bylaws, the election code of the MCSG, the Students' Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities documents or some other official document or a legislative mandate.

- Section 2.
- A. Upon collecting valid signatures of 15% of the elected individual's constituency, any student may initiate a recall election for any elected position in the student government.
 - B. Upon verification of validity of the petition by the Student Judicial Council, a recall election shall be conducted by the EPC within ten (10) class days. The office held by the official in question shall become vacant if a majority of those voting support the petition.

Article XIII. **REMOVAL OF APPOINTED INDIVIDUALS**

- Section 1. Any student may present a motion that calls for the removal from office of any individual who has been appointed to a position by the LB. At least 48 hours before the proposal is considered by the LB, the motion shall be delivered to all LB members and the person it proposes to remove from office.

- Section 2. Valid grounds for removing an appointed official shall be the same as those outlined in Section 1 of Article XII.

Article XIV. **AUTOMATIC REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

- Section 1. Any student may initiate a petition calling for the dissolution of the MCSG. In the event that the petition is signed by 30% of enrolled students, an all-campus referendum must be held within ten (10) class days.

- Section 2. Should a majority of those voting approve the referendum, the current members of the MCSG shall retain their positions and powers granted by this Constitution until a new constitution is drafted and approved by a majority of enrolled students.

- Section 3. The new form of government must be in place by the end of the term in which the Constitution has been dissolved.

- Section 4. The current MCSG shall be responsible only for overseeing the vote on the referendum. The person(s) who present the petition for dissolution is/are responsible for presenting the MCSG with a draft of a new Constitution.

- Section 5. Upon the approval of a new constitution, all MCSG members and student representatives to campus committees appointed by the MCSG are removed from their positions.

Article XV. **AMENDMENTS**

- Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by one of the following procedures:
- A. A petition presented to the Legislative Body bearing the valid signatures of at least 15% of enrolled students.
 - B. A recommendation by two-thirds of the membership of the Legislative Body.
- Section 2. Following the completion of any of the procedures outlined in Section 1, of this article, the MCSG is required to hold an election on the proposed amendment within ten (10) class days.
- Section 3. Amendments shall be reviewed by the Judicial Council to ensure procedural commission before being placed on a ballot.
- Section 4. A majority of those voting is required to pass the amendment.

Amendment 1. **ADHERENCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS**

- Section 1. The following criteria will be used to evaluate existing or potential MCSG decisions for adherence to the student body's environmental and social concerns. They do not represent absolute minimums, but rather a series of ideal values against which competing decisions can be measured.

Environment Concerns

- Criteria 1:** Transport: Decision results in minimal transportation resources.
- Criteria 2:** Materials: Decision results in minimal unnecessary materials and recycled/reused/recyclable/reusable materials.
- Criteria 3:** Precautionary Principle: Decision proven to cause no ecosystem damage.
- Criteria 4:** Restorative Principle: Decision contributes to a process of ecosystem restoration.
- Criteria 5:** Energy: Decision results in minimal energy use; energy use is produced by renewable, decentralized sources.
- Criteria 6:** Education: Decision contributes to intensified efforts to raise awareness of environmental concerns.

Social Concerns

- Criteria 7:** Workers: Decision contributes to economic forms that provide safe, meaningful working conditions and the means to live within ecological constraints.
- Criteria 8:** Democracy: Decision contributes to an equal distribution of resources and substantive access by all to community power.
- Criteria 9:** Freedom: Decision contributes to the freedom of all people from structures of domination, such as racism, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism and heteronormativity.
- Criteria 10:** Human Scale Principle: Decision contributes to political, economic and social developments that are not resource intensive and are accessible to the exercise of local community power.