

Imagine, Macalester: Our Strategic Plan

2022-2030

Macalester College fosters lives of meaning and purpose through the transformative power of education. We value ethical leadership in pursuit of a more just and peaceful world. As we look ahead, we are inspired by the college's legacy and excited to plan for its future.

At Macalester, we offer a highly regarded academic program led by passionate and innovative faculty and staff; an environment that supports student learning and development outside of the classroom; an emphasis on international perspectives and preparing global citizens; an engaged alumni network; and a track record of being good stewards of physical and financial resources to further the mission of the institution.

While our foundation is solid, we must be mindful of a number of global, national, and regional trends including: rising costs that significantly outpace inflation and put attending college out of reach for many families; declining birth rates that translate into fewer students graduating from high school; population shifts; increasing expectations that colleges will provide a range of non-instructional programs and services; and questions around the perceived value of higher education. We also face our own unique challenges and issues of the moment that further complicate the landscape.

We need to act boldly to secure the college's future. We can seize this opportunity by amplifying what makes us distinctive: the powerful combination of **a signature liberal arts curriculum, grounded in a residential campus experience, focused on our unique location in the vibrant Twin Cities, with an emphasis on citizenship within the wider world.**

Realizing this potential requires that we align our values, resources, and priorities. The framework set out in this plan relies on managing and reallocating resources wisely, creating a transparent budget model that incorporates increased efficiency, and attracting additional endowment and annual giving. By sharing powerful stories about our programs and learning opportunities, we will be compelling to students who recognize the value we offer and the positive impacts our alumni have in the world.

Plan Framework

The initiatives we will undertake are organized into three categories: **Curriculum, Culture, and Campus.** Across these categories, the following four foundational imperatives will animate our work and be used to measure its success:

- **Academic Distinction:** Foster teaching, learning, creative work, curiosity, and research that is challenging, energizing, and joyful, and engages students in discovery, growth, analysis, problem-solving, and communication relevant to the complex challenges of our time.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Create experiences that are irresistible to future students and that galvanize the financial support of alumni and friends of the college. Apply our financial, human,

and campus resources innovatively and equitably to achieve our mission while increasing financial capacity over time.

- **Social Responsibility:** Advance equity and social justice, anti-racism, environmental justice and climate action, and global citizenship on our campus, in our community, and in the wider world. Expand access to groups historically excluded from higher education, including first-generation college students.
- **Community Well-being:** Promote holistic health, personal development, shared experiences, and human connection among students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Cultivate a community of care that supports mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

Curriculum: Inspire Current and Future Students	
<p>Macalester is uniquely situated to offer a liberal arts curriculum that integrates our institutional values with distinctive learning opportunities. Drawing on the increasingly interdisciplinary and international experience of our world-class faculty and staff, a reimagined curriculum will inspire students to develop deep understanding in a field of study and the capacity to apply multiple methods and perspectives to address problems.</p> <p>We will engage our shared governance processes to update our curriculum, providing a cohesive framework and unifying experiences that prepare our students to tackle the world's pressing challenges.</p>	
<i>Priority Initiative</i>	<i>Goals</i>
Create a Developmental Four-Year Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strengthen the student experience across the four years by identifying specific learning foci for each year. Connect and integrate learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, in ways that are equitable and inclusive. ● Develop a robust and student-centered first-year experience.
Update and Innovate Academic Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a compelling, future-focused curriculum and set of graduation requirements, framed by curiosity, innovation, problem-solving, digital literacy, justice, sustainability, and global perspectives.
Redesign the Academic Calendar to Reimagine Our Use of Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish an academic calendar and work schedules that intentionally center well-being by creating time for reflection, integration of ideas, community connection, and rest. ● Explore flexibility in time-to-degree to maximize use of the campus during summer and January term, potentially allowing for new models like a three-year B.A. or an accelerated pathway to graduate/professional school.

<p>Amplify Opportunities for Experiential Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure all students have access to internships, community engagement, study away, and entrepreneurship experiences that prepare them for life after Macalester. ● Assess the feasibility of summer/January break programming to increase flexibility, grow opportunities for international experiences, and maximize use of our facilities and resources. ● Emphasize the uniqueness of our location in a capital city by strengthening partnerships with Twin Cities organizations that involve our students in mutually-beneficial learning, service, cultural engagement, and employment opportunities.
--	--

<p>Culture: Build Meaningful Connections</p> <p>Macalester is both an institution and a community of people. The institution thrives when the people thrive. To achieve this, we must facilitate an environment where we work, live, and learn that encourages collaboration, creativity, respect, support, rest, and compassion. We recognize these as both values and skills that must be intentionally cultivated and mindfully applied.</p> <p>We will engage with all of the constituencies of the college to create an inclusive campus culture that is regenerative, encourages fun, and fosters an enduring sense of wonder and curiosity for those who are here and those we want to attract.</p>	
<p><i>Priority Initiative</i></p>	<p><i>Goals</i></p>
<p>Prioritize Student and Employee Well-being, and Foster a Sense of Belonging for All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote holistic student development, including physical, emotional, and mental health. ● Invest in our employees, offer opportunities for their learning and growth, and cultivate a collaborative and engaging work environment. ● Amplify programs, policies, and resources that support the effective recruitment, retention, and success of marginalized students, faculty, and staff.
<p>Diversify Student, Staff, and Faculty Populations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase the number of students, faculty, and staff from domestic communities historically excluded from higher education, and support their retention. ● Identify and remedy institutional barriers and inequities that impact marginalized communities at Macalester.

<p>Nurture Life-long Connections between the College and its Students, Employees, and Alumni</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extend Macalester’s reach beyond the campus, and instill an enduring sense of pride and ownership in our students, employees, and alumni. ● Immerse alumni in the intellectual life of the college, and deepen opportunities for intergenerational learning and relationships.
--	---

Campus: Transform our Physical Environment

Macalester is the steward of a physical space that is home to our students, a workspace to our faculty and staff, and a gathering space for our community. Revitalizing spaces and creating new buildings that support student living-learning and invite community gathering require intentional consideration. Campus planning projects will recognize and be mindful of our location on the ancestral homelands of Indigenous people.

We will engage in a campus planning process that affirms our commitment to fostering community, global citizenship, and environmental sustainability.

<i>Priority Initiative</i>	<i>Goals</i>
<p>Create a Campus that Fosters Innovation, Access, and Connection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop an updated Comprehensive Campus Plan with a short-term and long-term roadmap that inspires current and future Macalester students, faculty, staff, and alumni. ● Strengthen our residential campus community by building (new) and renovating (existing) residence halls with the goal of being able to offer on-campus housing to all students. ● Modernize and expand existing facilities to support future pedagogical and technological needs, promote sustainability, increase accessibility, generate revenue, and build relationships.
<p>Expand the Metaphorical Boundaries of the Campus to Include the Broader Twin Cities Metro Area as an Extension of Our Living and Learning Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build and strengthen reciprocal partnerships with Twin Cities entities to activate our metropolitan location and to maximize Macalester’s impact as a neighbor, employer, leader, civic contributor, and community collaborator. ● Increase use of the Ordway Natural History Study Area, and develop additional off-site locations within the Twin Cities to support scholarship, course work, social action, internships, and entrepreneurship.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Emphasize our location on Indigenous land and our proximity to the Mississippi River to deepen and inform the curriculum and to reexamine our institutional practices.
--	--

Measuring Our Progress

As we implement our plan, we will regularly assess our progress and report back to the community on outcomes, adjustments, and next steps. We know that some initiatives will not have easily quantifiable progress and impact. We will maintain a public webpage that includes key quantitative and qualitative metrics and a timeline that summarizes significant progress on plan implementation. We will measure our progress using [key performance indicators](#) (KPIs) that map to:

- Macalester’s four distinguishing features: liberal arts, residential campus, vibrant city location, global focus
- Our four foundational imperatives: Academic Distinction, Financial Sustainability, Social Responsibility, and Community Well-being
- Our three plan categories: Curriculum, Culture, and Campus

APPENDIX:

About the Planning Process

Over the past ten months, all constituencies of the Macalester community have engaged in “Imagine, Macalester,” a robust strategic planning process to envision the Macalester of tomorrow. That process has been documented on our [Imagine, Macalester strategic planning website](#).

Thoughtful input and insights shaped the development of this plan. Every constituency of the college reviewed preliminary drafts at several points, and feedback was used to iteratively improve our plan. In short, the plan is stronger because of our community’s engagement, talent, and commitment.

A team of Strategic Planning Champions (which included students, staff, faculty, alumni, and parents) and Strategic Planning Liaisons worked together with the Senior Leadership Team to listen and lead conversations, sift through the data, which included more than 3,000 suggestions, and identify the ideas that rose to the top. We are grateful for their many contributions.

Strategic Planning Champions

Sami Banat '24

Meredith Harper Bonham P'23

Professor Dennis Cao

Rola Cao '25

Professor Ernesto Capello

Suveer Daswani '18

Daymond Dean '91

Charnelle Etti '15

Rebecca Gentry '23

Gabriella Gillespie '17, Assistant Director, Macalester Fund

Professor Duchess Harris

Jennifer Jacobsen, Executive Director, Laurie Hamre Center for Health and Wellness

Professor Sonia Mehta

Erin Miller '05

Gia Montgomery '24

Tamatha Perlman, Associate Director, Academic Technology Services

Bobbie Pennington '24

Barbara Phillips '71

Rohan Preston P'25

Niloy Ray '99

Carter Rutherford '23

Anna Sene '24

Margaret Smith*, Coordinator of Student Organizations and Leadership

**No longer at Macalester*

Senior Leadership Team

Jeff Allen, Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid
Dr. Lisa Anderson-Levy, Executive Vice President and Provost
D. Andrew Brown, Vice President for Advancement
Dr. Kathryn Kay Coquemont, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Jenn Haas, Vice President for Information Technology Services and Chief Information Officer
Dr. Thomas Halverson, Dean of the Faculty
Patricia Langer, Vice President of Administration and Finance
Dr. Paul Overvoorde, Vice Provost
Dr. Suzanne M. Rivera, President
Sara Suelflow '88, P'26 '26, Chief of Staff for the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Dr. Alina Wong, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Liaisons

Julie Hurbanis, Associate Vice President, Communications and Marketing
Katie Ladas, Consultant
Dr. Bethany Miller, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment
Dr. Dianna Shandy, Associate Provost, Strategic Initiatives