

Weyerhaeuser Boardroom

October 24th, 2024 | 12:00 PM CST



MACALESTER COLLEGE
STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Legislative Body Meeting Agenda

Land Acknowledgement ~ *Liv Peterson* ~ 2 minutes

We would like to acknowledge that Macalester College and the College Archives are located on the traditional, ancestral and contemporary lands of the Waŋpékhute band of Dakhóta Oyáte, the Dakota nation. We make this acknowledgement to respect and affirm the sovereignty of the Dakota people, ancestors and descendants, and to respect the land itself. We recognize that this acknowledgment is but a first step in recognizing and dismantling aggressive and persistent policies of settler colonialism that continue to oppress to this day. These are the contexts in which the archives functions to this day. The work of acknowledgement must be paired with active practices like the amplification of Indigenous voices and land repatriation in order to be substantive and meaningful. With thanks to Jennings Mergenthal, Class of 2021, for their time and effort in crafting this land acknowledgement.

Speaker Announcement:

Liv: All members and guests should be aware that this meeting is open to the Macalester community and may be reported on by the Mac Weekly. Minutes are taken and added to the website. LB members can request additional agenda items for future LB meetings by emailing the Macalester College Student Government email.

Visit from Dean of the Faculty Tom Halverson ~ *Joel Sadofsky* ~ 20 minutes

-  Questions for Tom Halverson

- Joel: Dr. Tom Halverson has graciously joined us. I appreciate everyone who submitted questions. We won't have time for additional questions because we have a large agenda so I'm going to let him take it away.
- Tom: I'm super happy to be here. First, let me introduce myself. I'm Tom Halverson, I use he/him pronouns. I've been teaching math, stats and computer science for a really long time. I've been at Mac for 31 years and been the Dean of Faculty for 3 years now. Before President Rivera came there was one person as the Provost and the Dean of Faculty but when Rivera came she decided to split that position into 2 positions. Next year I'm going to be back teaching which I'm super excited for. I haven't been in the classroom since the fall of 2021. The idea is that I represent the faculty and the Senior Leadership Team and I represent the Senior Leadership to faculty, so it's supposed to go both ways. A big part of my job is overseeing recruiting, hiring, arriving, tenuring members of our faculty. I also run the department chair meetings so once a month we meet with our department chairs every Tuesday so in some sense the faculty reports to me, in some sense I report to them, and in some sense they don't report to anyone because that's the world of academia.
 - Tom: Hiring and supporting faculty of marginalized identities. Just to give a sense of how hiring tenure track works. There's a class of faculty who either have tenure or in the tenure track which is about 70% of faculty. The 30% are usually visiting faculty who are filling in for sabbatical. For the tenure track, it's a really long process. Someone needs to retire to open that up. All the tenure applicants are requests of about 5 pages to EPAG which makes recommendations to the provost. The provost decides which positions we're going to hire for, this year we have 9 positions open. There are 2 students on the committee, most places don't involve students as intimately as we do so job candidates are often blown away by this and it's really cool seeing how they respond to having the students involved. This is one real key way that students are involved and they have a hard job. I always let the students talk first without the pressure of what the professors are going to say. In terms of recruiting people of marginalized identities, that's a really long process. From the student perspective, it seems incredibly slow and it probably won't happen in your time here because hiring a diverse environmental sciences prof was probably in the works starting 10 years ago. I'm really excited and proud of the work we've been doing. But how do we support them because it's not just getting them in the door. This is really important and hard work

and there are things that we need improve that. For end of course student surveys, there's tons of biases that go into that and we need to think about that and what it means for candidates with very different experiences who need to figure out how to be at a place like Macalester. There's also a lot of invisible labor with our faculties of minoritized identities where students seek them out which isn't always in our tenure track so we need to think about that. There's also new forms of academia which are more involved with our communities that we've included on our curriculum now.

- Tom: Alright what's next? I'll go to [question] 5, I also oversee department reviews. Departments review themselves on a 10 year cycle. On the ninth year departments will go through a self study which is analyzing what are we doing now, what are major requirements, how many students do we have, how big is our major, what else are our students majoring in, what is community like in our department? They'll do an alumni survey and build a big portfolio that we send off to an external team. So I'm involved with helping the departments find three people from other institutions. For sure someone from another liberal arts college, someone from a research university, and the third can be from either. We try to find people who can cover a variety of disciplines. They come to campus for 2 days, it's usually a Monday and Tuesday, and students are involved. Usually departments try to get a meeting with junior or senior majors and a different meeting with freshmen or sophomores in intro classes and the committee tries to get a sense of what the department is like from the students. The committee will come back with a report that comes back to the department. The department will read the report and have a few months to respond to the report and say "yeah, we want to try these ideas" or "we disagree with this idea for these reasons." All of this goes back to EPAG and student reps. What's being assessed? It's sort of everything. Department community, curriculum, intro courses, are we reaching out to a diverse, broad population of Macalester students or are only certain students feeling welcome here? and looking into the future of the discipline. This is where we see if someone is retiring in a few years and how we should replace them. Curriculum implementation committee, I'm not on that committee. Are there students on that committee?



- Joel: we're working on it.

- Tom: That's important work and I think that's really important and the committee feels like it's in a good place moving forward. But what other opportunities are there for students to shape course offerings or provide feedback? That's a good question. I might ask that back to you after I think about it. Within the department there are ways but that really varies by department. Math, Stats, and Computer Science is enormous so we have student committees that are giving advice on all kinds of aspects of it. We hear things about you know, it would be better if this course were offered in the spring so that would allow those of us who study away... We hear questions like that all the time. Every department has students giving advice in different ways. I don't know if there are great avenues otherwise, that's why I like that question because I think that's something that we could do better so I'm curious. I mean EPAG is one way but I don't know if we really get into the curriculum level. Are there things in which you wish you could have insight in?
- Marina: Something I'm passionate about is the biology department and having it being more focused on actually meeting pre-reqs for students who are looking to go to PA or med school. Right now we don't have an anatomy or physiology course which is important to me. I know schools in our cohort like St. Olaf offer these courses, I guess they have a nursing major so it makes it easier, but they're able to have freshmen in their intro bio labs looking at cadavers and things like that. So bouncing off of that, how is it possible to effect change not just in new course offerings but kind of changing the scope of what is offered.
 - Tom: That's a great question. Probably the most effective way is getting enthusiasm around that idea within the department. The department can say to EPAG "we need someone to teach these courses based on student demand". I would say the most effective way is from the ground up through the department. You could go through your student reps in EPAG. The EPAG committee always has a million things to do every year so I don't know if we would get to that but I could bring it straight to the committee chair and ask for that. I welcome those kinds of conversations.
 - Marina: When you say chair do you mean the bio chair?
 - Tom: Yeah, yeah.
 - Marina: She's my advisor so I've talked to her about this.


- Tom: Yeah, yeah, tell her! I'd also be interested in having those conversations, too.
 - Liv: Just a two minute warning, maybe one or two more questions.
- Samantha: I'm on AAC and we were talking about other career paths besides grad school like being an EMT and practices separate from academics. We were wondering if there was a way to outsource academics to get that training?
 - Tom: That's a great question. One thing we're also thinking about is advising at Mac more broadly and getting more career advising. One thing we know about is going to grad school, which is what we did, but we know not everyone could or should go to grad school so we're trying to connect more with career exploration. One thing is bringing in more 2 credit courses. It would be really interesting to engage in that conversation more. Maybe coming from the AAC committee to EPAG or a department could lend some weight. It would be really interesting to engage in that conversation more.
- Laurice: Thank you so much. My question is around study away programs especially for people who are more in STEM. I've had several conversations with people in STEM who say they can't go abroad because of their STEM courses. Is there a way to make it easier for students to get their STEM requirements and still go abroad?
 - Tom: That's a good question. So every department has someone who's their liaison to the study away department. Each department should have some approved study away programs. If you go to the study away process there should be a listing. That would be a great person to go meet with to talk about it. In our department we looked for programs where you could go and take math, stats, and computer science courses. We also know there are students who don't want to take these courses so we tried to do some work to make it so you could go and take an entire semester off, do other things, and still get the required credits. But I agree it's trickier to get something more aligned with how we do STEM at an American liberal arts college than how it's done at a big European university. And in another language, that can be really hard.

- Liv: I hate to cut off any more discussion but we are out of time. Thank you so much for coming.

Election Code Edits and Voting ~ *Joel Sadofsky* ~ 5 minutes


-  TO EDIT MCSG Election Code 2024-2025
-  Proposed MCSG Election Code 2024-2025
- Joel: I think it is on the agenda. The meeting we had before fall break we voted to table amending the selection code. My hope is that we can answer any questions people have about the proposed MCSG election code document that's been circulating for a few weeks. After a larger conversation, we can either vote to approve it or table it. I can speak briefly and say that all of the edits were pretty insignificant and removing all the duplicate language made it about a page and a half shorter. There are a few things like a stipulation about tie breaking methods being at the discretion of the EPC. Essentially we went through things and questions that had come up in the past and Emi was a good help with an institutional memory with how EPC has worked. If people have questions, now's the time. [no questions]
- Joel: I would like to motion to approve the Fall 2024 Election Code bill, a bill to amend the MCSG Election Code.
 - FOR: 23
 - AGAINST: 0
 - ABSTAIN: 0
- Liv: So, the proposed 2024 election code edits have been approved.

MacGPT Community Chest Request ~ *Philomena Shuffelton-Sobe* ~ 5 minutes

-  minh-nguyen-2024-09-10-161035.pdf
- Michael: My name is Michael and I'm part of the planning committee for MacGPT this year. Just a quick intro to what Mac GPT is. It's a day-long event where students are presented with policy issues and then present a brief solution to the policy. The hackathon/policython last year featured a thousand members and keynote speakers. The event last year received the Ann Bolger Vision award which recognizes outstanding endeavors that thoughtfully advance learning. This year we're looking to request \$1,275 from the Community Chest Fund which would be our lunch which includes \$17 for 75 people. This includes 45 participants, 20 mentors split between the morning and afternoon, as well as 10 team members. Are there any questions?

- Catherine: This was a Community Chest funded request last year right?
 - Micheal: Yes.
- David: When it says 20 mentors for the anticipated amount of people is that 20 professors?
 - Michael: Not necessarily professors, we intend to have a wider range of mentors coming in. We intend to have people in policy coming in as well as professors to check in on groups and provide any help.
- Liv: Do I see a motion?
- Tristan: Motion to approve \$1,275 for the Mac GPT event.
- FOR: 23
- AGAINST: 0
- ABSTAIN: 1
- Liv: The Community Chest request passes with 23 votes.

Discussion of Proposed Voting Amendment ~ *AnLian Krishnamurthy* ~ 15 minutes

-  MCSG Voting Amendment (1).pdf
- AnLian: I'm proposing an amendment to change the way we do voting in MCSG. My proposal is that instead of the raised hands system we do right now to have an anonymous form that we use to vote and the results get published without people's names. Talking to Ryan and Joel this week their main concerns were the anonymous count. The way we do it right now, the amount of votes gets published but not the names of who voted what. This wouldn't change in my amendment. My amendment is solely seeking to change the way we actually do voting in MCSG. So, instead of actually raising our hands you fill out a form so we're not influenced by the way other people vote.
 - Joel: In short, I want to say that it's worth discussing and revisiting all our practices. At the same time, my caution of going this direction is it sending a message to the student body that we are even less willing to be transparent and for that reason I think we should revisit practices but I don't think we should make voting anonymous.
 - AnLian: To push back on that, I'm not changing much of the anonymity because the results are already being published in an anonymous way.
 - Emi: I'm going to tap in here. Typically in a process like this, we use a speakers list. So Liv is going to call out who's up next, on deck that

way we make sure people have appropriate time. I also want to make sure that we're making sure we're giving each other the chance to speak because there are lots of thoughts on this.

- Aisha: Respectfully, I disagree with that idea and method of voting. Mainly because if you're on MCSG you're elected to serve on every committee or even if you're a class rep. If you make a decision, you should stand by it. You shouldn't have to make a decision because you feel pressured to vote in a certain way. If someone is judging you on the decision you're making, then screw them, just make the decision. So I disagree with that decision and like Joel said, transparency. I think changing that method of voting while people are elected to serve I don't think that necessarily makes sense.
- AnLian: I agree with what you're saying but I think the reality is that it is hard for people to stand by a decision but we are members of the student body and -
 - Liv: I'm sorry, AnLian, to cut you off but we're going to do questions first so we can get everyone in. So next is Ryan.
- Ryan: I know it's hard to make decisions and say no and you're in class with people and you're in clubs. But if you disagree with something you have to be able to stand up and be able to say that you disagree with something. I know it's hard and it sucks and we're 18 year olds and you shouldn't have to do that but this it's hard and it's a learning experience and this is a student government. So later in life when personal things come up, you have to be able to stand up and say this is what you do or do not want and this is just an extension of that.
- Cooper: I want to echo what people are saying. I also understand that right now, we can't see how individual folks are voting but I think if we want to have a solution to that I think we can have that written down somewhere so people can see who voted for what. I think for a lot of folks that's kind of impractical or like. People should be able to know how their representatives voted to see if they're voting what they want and representing what they want in student government.
- David: Would you be willing to amend this a little bit so it's how people are voting isn't announced. Right now, it's only transparent to those in the room that doesn't mean anything to the student body. But if we have something like this which gets published that would be a step for transparency. So I think if this proposal was amended and the results were published it solves the transparency issues and it would

still have the effect of dissuading people from voting based on how they think others are going to vote.

- Tristan: I think if we're going to make a change, it should be to make those names public but I think those names need to be published immediately and not after any sort of delay. I think this speaks directly to someone's moral character of people that they are not willing to stand up and say I am voting this way at that moment. By not being willing to do that, it's saying that people are willing to leave behind their morality based on what your friends are doing. I think that represents us incredibly poorly in the greater Mac community and I think as we struggle to form stronger connections with the rest of the community here at Mac we need to be more transparent and have more of an upstanding moral character.
- Lina: I want to add that if we add this anonymity rule and you want to add 5 minutes, it'll make the meeting way longer and we won't be able to do other things in the meeting. This will make it way harder for us to do things in the meetings.
- Aditya: I want to echo David. I agree that there should be a slight amendment to show how people voted but our current system is not very transparent at all. If you're not coming to these meetings, you're not knowing how people voted. If we voted electronically it would be easier to show how people voted. I also think it's easy to say to just stand up for what you believe but in the moment it's hard to not vote your conscience. I will say there have been times that I wanted to deny something but I've actually abstained instead. I think this eliminates that in-the-moment feeling when you can't really vote.
- Marina: To counter that I think it's antithetic to the purpose of MCSG and I think if you struggle to make split second decisions that reflects how much you're doing before the meetings. What's expected of you in MCSG is that you're reading the agenda and you should have an idea of how you're going to vote before we come to this meeting. This is a space for clarifying questions and I think that was echoed in our expectations we created at the beginning of the year. This is our big business meeting and most of the work happens outside of this meeting. Number one, more anonymity is completely against what we are working towards in MCSG and I completely oppose a system where we have more anonymity. When you're voting, you're voting for what you think the people you're representing would want. I'm a junior class rep so I vote for what I think the junior class wants, not

my personal opinion. I encourage others to do the same and I'm very disappointed if that's not a reflection of your vote. You chose to be in the position, you stepped up to the plate to have this position in which you are allowing your voice to be heard and counted. You can't bow out now and say I'm going to abstain on most of these decisions because I don't want people to think less of me because I'm scared in the moment how it'll look if I'm the only one that denies it. I think that all of us need to take more personal responsibility and maybe that means putting in more work ahead of time in terms of really looking into these issues and talking to our constituents. I'm totally in support of a way in which the student body can see how people voted because they are the ones electing me and they should know this. However, I don't think anonymous voting based on how we think our peers will think of us is not what MCSG stands for. I really encourage everyone to think about their motives for why they're on MCSG on the first place and if being scared in the moment is going to affect their vote.

- Elizabeth: I would echo most of the comments I've heard about the importance of transparency, I think this amendment would be a step against that and therefore I oppose it. What I do want to say is that I think it's important to remember in terms of public voting who our constituents are and they're Macalester students and the community more broadly. I know this is not what's on the board but I think if we were to have a list of who voted what way I think of the institutional research site where there's data available only to the Macalester community. I think if we were to have it publicly known who voted what way I would like that to be available to the Macalester community and not just anybody. I personally know people who have been targeted by specifically right-wing news organizations and organizations that try to track people down and intimidate them. I think it's important to recognize that we are not accountable for those outsiders, we are accountable to our Macalester community and our constituents and I think there needs to be that.
- Liv: Just to remind everyone the order now is going to be Joel, Luke, Cem, Laurice. We're running short on time so I'm not going to take more questions.
- Joel: I'll be brief. I think members of the Macalester community have the right to know how they're representatives voted. I also wanted to give an example of what happens when some pieces of MCSG proceedings are open to the entire world. In the winter of 2021-2022, I

was working with students on a resolution regarding the regulation of speech relating to anti-semitism. As it played out, it was rightly recorded in the Mac Weekly and I'm pretty sure picked up by a Google alert. This led to a blog on the Times of Israel website calling for this other student and I to be expelled. It also called for numerous threats and people calling me a self-hating Jew in my Twitter DMs. I personally think that it's dangerous to have that open to the entire world because we represent Macalester, we don't represent everyone.

- Luke: I think this bill wouldn't affect the publication of results online. I see where people are coming from with the idea that it does cloud the decision of individual members at the time of the meeting. If we want to go the route of publishing the results to the Macalester community, doing something like the bill says, voting anonymously, would be the easiest way to logistically collect those votes in the meeting. If we are concerned about making the meeting longer, I think having to assign each person's name in a roll call vote would be kind of difficult. It's also important to remember that AnLian wrote this bill in an attempt to reform the process, to make it better. I think people have the moral right to disagree with his method but I still think he legitimately has an idea of how to make things better. Questioning people's moral character and things like that, I don't think AnLian came at this with any sort of attempt to give people the ability to excuse their morality. I think this is an important thing to keep in mind especially since AnLian can't respond to this.

- Emi: Can I just clarify, you can add yourself to the speaker's list. Sorry, I should've clarified that immediately.

- Cem: I felt like the time that people can express their views is generally the questions and discussions phase and people can come in with a lot of opinions that they formed before the meeting. But a very heat of the moment thing, I guess I'm thinking psychologically can make small effects swing the vote one way or the other. I feel like yes, the student body puts their trust in us, but they have no way of knowing whether we're voting for their views or our own, they just have to put their faith in us. With an anonymous voting system, they don't have to put their faith in us because whether their faith is correct or incorrect is completely irrelevant because it no longer becomes a problem through anonymous voting. I completely agree with the fact that this should only be the case during the voting procedure and after the fact people can be presented on what they voted on. That is how

the student body can understand what they elected, what their positions are, and what they can elect in the future. I feel like this isn't really comprising anything detrimental to transparency and only removing a psychologically proven effect that could sway votes one way or another. There's a reason that voting in the real world is anonymous as well.

- Laurice: I want to echo what Cem is saying in terms of in the real world why is that it's just you and a little box and it's just you and no one else is looking over you. I know we are running out of time but that's just the thoughts that I had.
- Liv: Thank you, we're going to move to cabinet updates and we'll talk more about this next week.

Cabinet Updates ~ *Cabinet Liaisons* ~ 5 minutes

- Jordan: I met with athletics administration. We talked about some club sports reservations things so you can reserve parts of the field house which will make it easier for club sports during the winter. Donny wanted me to share that athletics is looking into making sure everything they do is furthering admission to the college. They're aware that athletics has the perception of spending a ton of money on stuff, they want to be sure that if you're like hey what are you spending money on they can point to an individualized list of items.
- Laurice: Thank you so much. This update is coming from the international students office so currently just before the break I stated that I had the meeting with Dr. Coquemont and Jen Guyer-Wood and there's been considerable thought into bringing back the Friends of Macalester international students program. When I had a chat with ISP they were saying they were waiting on the higher ups to approve it. When I had a chat with the higher ups they said everything looks good on their level and they're just waiting for things to be finalized. So I'm happy to announce that there should be something coming out in the next few weeks.

Committee Updates ~ *Committee Chairs* ~ 3 minutes

- Chloe: In SOC we briefly discussed entrepreneurship club, we looked at Green Athletics club and their charter, continued discussions around Heterodox club. We also decided not to recharter Scots in the City Volunteering club based on the fact that there's too much overlap with the CEC and funding would be scarce so we don't know how they would be able

to operate feasibly. Lina's doing great in her role as FAC liaison and discussions with Go Club continue.

- Luke: FAC had our meeting on Tuesday where we had a request from Chess Club that was rejected and another from Chess Club that was approved - registration fees. We had another from Macalester Questbridge that was rejected but since appealed so keep your eyes out for that, it'll probably come in front of LB next week.
- Lina: For AAC, we're considering potentially decrease a lot of the places just so we can decrease amount of applications. Legislative Week AAC organized Pied for Professors and you can find pics on Instagram. We're also working to figure out ways to subsidize EMT training. We're thinking of creating an international student guide, we reached out to Laurice and we talked about either having a guide about how the US academics work like gpa.
- Sylvia: For CEC, this week was Legislation Week. It was very successful, thanks to those who came out to help out. The student survey closes tomorrow, please take it and encourage your friends to take it too.

Announcements ~ 2 minutes

- MCSG Resolution on Divestment ~ *Tristan Niedzielski*
 - We are thinking of doing a resolution in support of Macalester divesting from companies associated with the Israeli offensive in Palestine in association with the Mac for Palestine proposal to pressure the board in taking a stance. If you are at all interested, try to reach out to me by the beginning of next week.
- [Student survey](#) (open until Friday) ~ *Mena Feleke*
- Working group: creating a reposting policy ~ *Joel Sadofsky*
 - Joel: We have something we as in CEC and Mathilda and myself have been thinking about and working on is what should MCSG Instagram account be used for. If you're interested in having those discussions about what we repost and why, let me know.
- [claps for CEC legislation week]