

Harmon Room - Library

February 8, 2024 | 12:00 PM CST



MACALESTER COLLEGE
STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Legislative Body Meeting Minutes

[Land Acknowledgment](#) (We are on Indigenous land) ~ *Reagan Kimzey* ~ 2 minutes

Provost Anderson-Levy and Tom Halverson ~ *Mariah Loeffler-Kemp* ~ 25 minutes

- [Question document](#)
- Reagan: Thank you so much for coming here today. Just to begin, we want to hear an outline of your roles, and what your favorite parts of your positions are
- Provost Anderson-Levy:
 - Role is Executive Vice President and Provost
 - Both student and academic affairs report to the provost, but this change was made very recently
 - This is the third year, and the change was made with this position in order to have a more holistic experience for students
 - We are moving and planning towards a time where your experience feels more seamless across both those facets
- Tom Halverson: Professor in Math, Stats, and Computer Science for thirty years
 - Been in this role for two years and was Chair of Department for six years before this
 - Works between faculty and admin
 - Rotating role, will go back and teach at some point
 - Oversees the hiring of new tenure track professors

- Mikayla: SOC Chair
 - Broadly, how do you envision the strategic plan affecting academic affairs? What outcomes are you hoping for? What are specific changes that we can expect to see?
 - Tom Halverson: Senior leadership rep for ad-hoc curriculum sub-committee EPAG
 - Faculty-driven process
 - Faculty have to change and approve a new curriculum
 - Whole year of strategic planning with students and faculty
 - Making curriculum more student-facing
 - Stop asking if students are ready to take curriculum, start asking if the curriculum is ready for the students coming in
 - Gen ed requirements and FYCs will change
 - We want to design a curriculum that fits you
 - What are the liberal arts, and how can we engage with them?
 - Provost Anderson-Levy: Add a few things
 - SLT representative for the First Year Experience Committee
 - Thinking about on-boarding new students
 - Really interesting to think about the students and who they are in their first year
 - Recognizing that there is a developmental trajectory between first through fourth year
 - Students change—how are they moving through curriculum and advising in ways that are supportive?
- Joel: How do you two see your roles as part of Macalester’s structure of faculty governance? Could you two help explain how your roles interact with EPAG, FAC, the Faculty Meeting, FPC, and AAUP?
 - Provost Anderson-Levy: Attend faculty meetings, sit on several of these committees, but not EPAG, but I will back up a little bit
 - Mentioned that role of provost changed right before I arrived
 - Used to be that there was no Dean of Faculty
 - Having this position means that the faculty handbook is changing a lot
 - Used to be that the provost sat on all these committees, but now with this split I am no longer on EPAG, and Tom has never been on another committee
 - I also sit on Faculty Personnel Committee
 - Manages faculty reviews and promotion

- Tom Halverson: both a member of faculty and SLT
 - Participate in faculty governance in both ways
 - Non-voting member of EPAG
 - Meet about governance issues that arise each week
 - AAUP is not an official campus-governing committee, but we meet to discuss questions
 - Run department chair meetings each month
 - Not official governing party, but it is quite important
 - Informal idea-exchange, learning what is happening on the ground
- Emma K: she/her, Vice President of MCSG
 - Do you foresee changes to Macalester's faculty governance structure?
 - Tom Halverson: EPAG is both curriculum and governance
 - There are a lot of curricular things happening right now, but often the governance is pressing and pushes the curriculum work aside
 - So there are questions about whether we should rethink that
 - Should this committee split in two?
 - We don't know yet, but faculty will be able to decide
 - Provost Anderson-Levy: part of my role to advocate for faculty, students, and staff
 - In all these conversations around First Year Experience, curriculum, there have to be ways that we are thinking from lots of different perspectives about how changes might impact different constituencies
- Luke: he/him, sophomore class rep
 - This past year, the faculty handbook was updated to include periodic background checks for all faculty, a change that was allegedly made outside of the usual shared governance process. Do you believe that the decision to update the handbook was appropriate given the context of Macalester's liability insurance requesting it, or would you do things differently in the future?
 - Provost Anderson-Levy: the faculty handbook did not change
 - You are correct that there was a requirement for all employees to have background checks, but the handbook didn't have to change as a result of this
 - The question about whether this is appropriate or not is not relevant because we did not have to change the handbook

- We did need this in order to have liability insurance on campus, and this is really important, especially where people are living on campus
 - Happy to answer more about this if there are more questions
- Alec: sophomore class rep, MCSC major
 - We are updating the curriculum, but I would like to know about how the school will approach grading. Will there be more guidelines about this?
 - There are a lot of ideas about building your own major, and sometimes gen ed requirements put a lot of pressure on specific majors and departments. Certain courses are required for many majors, and it can be difficult to find professors to fill them. Could resources be used elsewhere to fill English department or stats major requirements?
 - Tom Halverson: We have had conversations about whether FYC should be exclusively pass-fail, as well as what should happen in students' first semester
 - There are many different types of grading, and we continue to have these conversations about what is best
 - I don't know if grading has specifically come up in the strategic plan, but questions of resources have come up
 - Majors in one department often require a course in another, and this puts pressure on specific majors
 - Want to allocate resources correctly, and want to pay attention to what each department requires
 - Try to respond as quickly as we can and get enough people teaching
 - Provost Anderson-Levy: all of these curricular changes we are speaking about are in draft form and haven't happened yet
 - With grading, faculty do what they do, and we can't be telling them how to grade
- Elizabeth: junior, she/her, belonging and accessibility
 - Do you all have any questions for us?
 - Tom Halverson: End of course surveys
 - The participation rate in end of course surveys has been declining and declining for years now
 - We are interested in hearing how we can make those surveys more successful, because they are extremely important

- Even when they are assigned to do in class, students don't always do them
 - Joel: a lot of geography faculty started having mid-course evaluations that students can respond to at any time
 - Having this option instead of an exacting timeline at the end of the semester will likely increase feedback
 - Mariah: she/her, president
 - Reiterate Joel's idea
 - Having these be on paper is also helpful
 - I am way more likely to do something if a professor gives me a piece of paper that I have to submit before leaving the room
 - Tom Halverson: we like the idea of hand-written surveys, but we have found that anonymity is hard to ensure with hand-written papers
- Brady: sophomore class reps, he/him
 - Many of my constituents have brought it up to me that a common theme of some stem majors is that they are determined by MCAT and GPA
 - Certain classes are required and quite difficult, and it often comes down to luck whether students get a harder or easier professors
 - This can greatly impact GPA for some compared to others
 - This is a hard thing to solve, but people have brought this up to me because I'm not sure if you all are aware of students' concern
 - Tom Halverson: one thing that we try to do is have different professors know about what the other is doing so that different sections of the same course do not vary as much
 - I will share this back with the department chairs, but the best thing is to get faculty talking about this
- Provost Anderson-Levy: I was really surprised by the types of questions around faculty governance, and I was pleasantly surprised
 - How did you come up with these questions? It is a bad assumption that you guys wouldn't care, but it was my assumption
 - Elicia: Everyone has to make assumptions at some point, so that makes a lot of sense. I just wanted to follow up on the question regarding background checks

- Given that the faculty handbook hasn't changed and the faculty were upset about the background check change, would you make the decision to implement background checks in similar situations again, or would you try to find a different path?
- Provost Anderson-Levy: first, I will say that I am sorry for making assumptions
 - What I would do differently next time is think more about the process and how it rolls out
 - We have different kinds of employees on campus—faculty and staff
 - Some things apply to all employees and this is one of those things
 - Given how frustrated faculty felt, I would want to think differently about the rollout of this plan
 - In communities where people are coming and going, we have to think of communication
 - Admin communicates by email, and people often miss things and then feel like things weren't said
 - Communicating clearly is a challenge
- Reagan: Unfortunately we are out of time, but thank you all for coming and answering our questions!

Org Charter ~ Mikayla Giehler ~ 5 minutes

- [Charter of Macalester National Society of Black Engineers](#)
- Reagan: we have an org to vote on now, so please take thirty seconds to look the charter over again and think of any questions you might have
- Mikayla: this is a chapter of National Society of Black Engineers
 - This is a cool opportunity to bring people together in engineering
 - If you have any questions after looking over the charter, let me know
- Reagan: Questions?
 - Mariah: Are there special events? What is the org planning on doing?
 - Mikayla: they plan to bring in speakers, and there are some events hosted by the national organization that they will join
 - They will also collaborate with other orgs
- Vote
 - Emma: I would like to move to approve the charter of the Macalester National Society of Black Engineers
 - Jordan: Second
 - In favor: 22

- Abstain: 0
- Opposed: 0
- Reagan: with 22 in favor, the Macalester National Society of Black Engineers has been chartered

Committee Updates ~ *Committee Members* ~ 5 minutes

- Joel: Last week, AAC met with Brian Lindeman to discuss financial barriers to post-grad opportunities, financial implications of the automatic textbook billing contract, and AAC's shifting student support responsibilities
 - We learned that much of the contract specifics are uncertain and financial aid is still exploring the different ways to change practices in response to the results of the implementation of this committee
 - We discussed tax and financial aid implications of increased AAC-administered aid and now feel prepared to move forward with trying out different programs
 - Additionally, we discussed exciting open-educational resource opportunities and brainstormed how AAC can help advocate for Macalester applying for these grants
 - We also learned that Brian was on the Education Council in the 1980s
 - Today, right before this meeting I met with Associate Director of Alumni & Parent Engagement for Career Exploration Tamo Lucero to discuss piloting a new format of the alumni fair potentially with MCSG as one of several pilot student groups who could try out this format with MCSG alumni
 - We will discuss this in our AAC meeting tomorrow and hopefully bring this forward to everyone in MCSG who would be interested in participating and evaluating the format as a trial to bring to more of the student body
 - Tomorrow, we also meet with BoT Liaison Bobbie Pennington to discuss student academic concerns and what is or isn't pertinent to the upcoming BoT meetings
- Eliora: FAC met and opened up membership for at-large members, so we would be happy to have any of you join
 - Voted on 17 different requests
 - Tabled one, approved in part one, and all others were approved
 - There is BoT finance meeting soon, so if you have any questions or concerns about this, please reach about to fac@macalester.edu
- Mikayla: SOC finished up all the org check-ins from last semester
 - Saturday, February 17 is our mega org check-in day
 - We have a few new orgs to meet at the next meeting

- Willow: Cabinet has been meeting
 - Current goal is to increase transparency with the structure of MCSG and how we work and utilize funds
 - We will add liaison updates on instagram
- LeSean: CEC has been hard at work
 - Talked about setting up partnerships within each committee
 - Coordinating with members of each committee to post things online
 - We are going to try to do a series of introductions on instagram with everyone
 - Please take the time to fill out the form for this
 - We have a few different TikTok ideas that we could use your help with during this meeting

Cabinet Updates ~ *Cabinet Members* ~ 5 minutes

- Elizabeth: Belonging and Accessibility Liaison
 - Meeting with Sam from LSC to collaborate with belonging and identity-based initiatives
 - Met with Kelly Stone to continue with Rola's activities
 - Embody the Change—run at Macalester based on Quaker circles and check-ins
- Yosephine: International Student Liaison
 - On the search committee for the new director of ISP
 - There will be a virtual interview tomorrow
 - Have largely been focusing on orientation and date-changes
 - How this will work with orientation leaders and move-in dates
 - Concerns from staff about how we can make orientation and pre-orientation work with the new schedule
- Philomena: Residential Life & Dining Liaison
 - Haven't had many meetings this week
 - Last week, I talked with Kyle Flowers about goals of this semester
 - Change in housing and dining contract
 - If you sign the contract then cancel in summer or spring, you will be fined some of that money
 - This will make their side of the work a little easier, but we are hoping to get more info out to students
 - Spoke about single-gender housing and figuring out the numbers for that for next year
 - MDAC will meet soon
- Amanda: Infrastructure & Sustainability Liaison
 - Meeting with sustainability office

- Meeting with sustainability advisory committee
 - Working with career exploration to develop a guide on how students can find jobs with companies that follow sustainable practices
 - Organizing a human rights conference open to students from colleges all over MN
 - Collaborating with sustainability office
 - You all should apply
- Jordan: Athletics & Recreation Liaison
 - Met with senior athletics administrators last week about many things
 - New merch coming out after new mascots
 - We are stuck with Under Armour, so we can't always have the most fun merch
 - Implemented inclusive lifting group
 - Starting to plan Scot Ball, so if anyone has strong opinions about Scot Ball, we need input
 - Laurie: Is there a date for this?
 - Jordan: I want to say yes, in April?
 - Theme is casino

TikTok Time ~ *Reagan Kimzey* ~ 5 minutes

- LeSean: We have a TikTok idea for a full-house introduction for us
 - Do you know what I'm talking about?
- Reagan: please gather with your committee, and we will take a quick video of you all doing your work together

Announcements ~ 5 minutes

- [Mac-Groveland Community Council Board Member](#) ~ *Emma Kopplin*
 - Having elections soon, so spread the word
 - Mini city council for the neighborhood
- [Focus groups](#) ~ *Emma Kopplin*
 - Strategic Plan focus group [RSVP](#): 2/12, 11:45-1pm and 2/13, 3-4pm
 - Another reminder to sign up for focus groups
 - Thank you for attending these, they are specifically for students
 - If you can't go don't stress, but come if you can
- Feb. 15 event with BoT ~ *Mariah Loeffler-Kemp*
 - 4:30pm, Weyerhaeuser
 - Hosting an event with Bobbie and Kathryn Kay Coquemont about governance
 - Eat Boca Chica and learn about how the three of us work together
- Where is the speaker? ~ *Mariah Loeffler-Kemp*

- Usually this speaker is in our office, but it is not
- If people know where it is, please let us know
- If it got lost, that is okay, but just tell us
- Please, that was expensive
- Mariah: If you have questions for visitors, please write them in advance so that our guests feel prepared
 - For the future, when you have questions ask them
- Mariah: Vote in the election!
- Alcohol and Drugs Committee
 - Andrew: Tristan and Emma R were just at this committee
 - Got everyone caught up on the public health vending machine idea
 - Talked about upcoming party host trainings
 - Inclusive spaces where alcohol and drugs aren't a focal point even if they are present
 - Language surrounding alcohol in the student handbook should be clarified
 - What does it mean to maybe be a dry campus?
 - Discrepancy between what is said and what is done
- Reagan: please stay for one minute to get one more TikTok clip!