

Harmon Room - Library

March 7, 2024 | 12:00 PM CST



MACALESTER COLLEGE
STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Legislative Body Meeting Minutes

[Land Acknowledgment](#) (We are on Indigenous land) ~ *Mariah Loeffler-Kemp* ~ 2 minutes

Visit from Residential Life ~ *Philomena Shuffelton-Sobe* ~ 20 minutes

- Philomena: Today we have a visit from Residential Life
- Kyle Flowers: Executive Director of Residential Life
- Priscilla Perez Umphress: Assistant Director of Residential Services
- Kyle Flowers: Thank you for the opportunity to come to MCSG and talk about our work and update you all
 - I hope to also be able to provide some time for questions at the end
 - There are three main points that I want to talk a little bit about today
 - Winter Break
 - Residential Life piloted a new winter break housing opportunity this year
 - This is a testament to students' work
 - Out pilot was very successful
 - International and domestic students who were not able to go home were able to stay on campus
 - We are doing some data-gathering and will formally recommend to continue this pilot going forward
 - What that looks like is providing summary to stakeholders who were involved in the planning and implementation of the pilot last year

- By the end of the semester, we hope to formally announce that this will be going forward
- This is a new development, and it is due to student work
 - We are very excited to share this with you all
- Housing Selection
 - Coming soon
 - Housing Selection is what was formally called Room Draw
 - We changed the name for a few reasons
 - The first is that when we think of the room draw, it sounds like a lottery
 - It sounds like something where “if I’m lucky I’ll get a space,” and we’ve found that we often still have space for students even after the draw completes
 - We don’t want this process to feel as stressful, and we want students to know that we’d like to help them find space on campus
 - We are also doing more events for marketing of Housing Selection
 - Had one event yesterday talking about accommodation requests, and we’ve had several Q&A sessions over the past several days
 - There are also a few more dates for March
 - March 21 is the deadline for contracts for housing and dining to be signed
 - Any students who will live on campus must sign this contract
 - We also have a semester-long contract for students studying away
 - March 26 is Housing Selection date for juniors and seniors
 - Juniors and seniors will be selecting first, contrary to previous years
 - We have space for juniors and seniors and we want you to be able to be on campus
 - March 28 is the day that rising sophomores select their rooms

- Any sophomore or rising sophomore who doesn't select a room will be assigned one
- We have over 200 beds for juniors and seniors to live on campus
 - Please let all of your friends know about this
 - This includes RAs, Student Program Assistants, and Specialty Housing
- Changes in Housing Selection for next year
 - We removed two male floors when we planned for housing next year
 - Making Bigelow 1 and Doty 2 gender-inclusive floors
 - Both are currently male-only floors
 - Changing the bathrooms to gender-inclusive bathrooms
 - We have found that female-identifying students are choosing gender-specific housing more than male-identifying students, so we want our housing options to reflect this fact
 - Kirk continues to be a struggle as we think about bathrooms
 - Kirk was built sixty years ago, and it is split section by section, with sections sections being split so that students have to go outside to go to different sections
 - Students who want to use a different bathroom would then have to go outside to do so
 - Students have expressed frustration about this, and we hear you
 - We want all of our spaces to be gender inclusive by nature, and we're still trying to find the best way
 - There's no perfect solution but just want to affirm that we hear those concerns
- Housing and Dining Contract
 - Contract is twice the length this year than last year

- We want to be more transparent about specific policies this year
 - Added a Housing and Dining Exception Committee, as well as other changes
 - Take a read and reach out with any questions
 - We wanted to make sure that the language aligns with our values
 - Residential Life doesn't manage dining, but we are asked a lot of questions about it
 - Included addendum that will show some of the pertinent information about the Bon Appetit contract
- Committees
 - We have been thinking a lot about committees and partnership and communication this year
 - We are working on having more committees and spaces for students to provide feedback
- Virtual Tours
 - We are increasing our list of virtual tours for students to see where they can live on campus
 - Juniors and seniors can also see available spaces
- Questions
 - Eleanor: I am wondering about the bathroom issues with Kirk
 - What are you thinking about doing to make Kirk a better place to live?
 - Will there be any reconfiguration of Kirk as a part of the Strategic Plan?
 - Kyle Flowers: We want to be community-responsive
 - Luca is working with students about specific bathroom designations that needs to be changed, and if students agree to change bathroom designations, we are willing to work with students to change things
 - We also want to talk about bathroom allocations while students are selecting their rooms
 - Students will know where their bathrooms will be while choosing their rooms
 - We haven't officially started working on what Kirk's renovations will look like, but this is a part of Stage 3 of the Strategic Plan

- We want to make it more accessible, and we will certainly have students at the table as we make these decisions
- Philomena: Can you talk more about the Contract Cancellation Policy?
 - Kyle Flowers: There is a section of the contract that talks about the cancellation policy
 - There are challenges when students cancel a room after the room draw
 - This takes a room away from a student who might have needed it, and it doesn't give Residential Life a lot of time to fill that space for another student
 - Until March 31, there will be no fee for canceling student contracts
 - Between April 1 and May 12, there's a \$250 fee
 - Between May 13 and July 31 there's a \$500 fee
 - This continues as we go through August
 - We will have a committee that will examine specific situations, potentially providing refunds for students with extenuating circumstances who need to cancel their rooms
 - The committee may not let students cancel their room, but this process is nuanced
 - The website will talk more about this soon, but most of these changes will be on a case-by-case basis
- Liv: Have there been any conversations about what has happened in Bigelow and how to prevent it from happening in the future
 - Kyle Flowers: Residential life is working with RAs, doing rounds, having card readers, and continuing to be active bystanders
 - We continue with communication in response to specific events such as this
 - There are Public Safety interim actions that are taking place in the meantime as the situation evolves
- Eliora: This is coming from a constituent who is hoping that you all can speed up your response to emails, is it possible to ensure that Residential Life responds to students in a more timely manner?
 - Kyle Flowers: We have one staff member whose primary position is front-facing customer service

- We are also working on having more than one person in our email account
- We try to respond to students within one or two business days
- During March Housing Selection, responses may be slower because things are busier, but we will try to have people on campus responding to questions as they come
- Mariah: I am curious about RA compensation, as RAs do a lot of work, and if there are plans to increase RA compensation in the near future
 - Kyle Flowers: In case folks don't know, there was a decision two years ago to add a stipend for everyone, not just returning RAs
 - We can submit budget requests for this
 - If we don't succeed the first time, we can try again
 - I really advocate for this
 - I would love for RAs to eventually have meal compensation as well
 - There are some hurdles with this, but it is a goal of ours
- kflowers@macalester.edu is my email
 - Please reach out with any additional questions, and thank you all for your time

Board of Trustees Update ~ *Bobbie Pennington* ~ 10 minutes

- Mariah: We have Student Liaison to the Board of Trustees Bobbie Pennington who just returned from California with some updates
- Bobbie Pennington: Thank you all for the feedback that you gave me a few weeks ago
 - This was very helpful
 - Leading up to my time with the Board of Trustees, I met with AAC, as well as residents of the Cultural House and members of the Student Union and Mac for Palestine
 - In sum, I went to California on a Thursday, with a brief introduction section that evening
 - On Friday, I attended three Plenary Sessions
 - Headwinds facing higher education and especially relating to threats to liberal arts colleges
 - Equity and inclusion in higher education
 - Capital campaign planning

- Saturday was the business meeting
 - This was the time that the Board formally engages in voting about major concerns or topics
 - This is where I gave my report
 - After, the Board met privately with President Rivera in an executive session
 - This happens every year
- In my report, I highlighted four main things
 - I spoke about Mac for Palestine, specifically relating to divestment and study away programs in Israel
 - Spoke about the Cultural House, with statements from current residents of the house
 - Spoke about the inclusive access textbook model, with feedback from MCSG's AAC
 - Finally, I spoke about the Student Union with a statement from the organizers
- I posed several questions to the Board
 - I want to get back to you all about these things
 - There was a question about the housing requirement extending to three or even four years with the building of the new dorm hall
 - Kathryn Kay Coquemont replied that there are no plans to require students to live on campus after two years, as we could not fit them all
 - There was also a question about whether we can ensure that no action is taken against staff or faculty who refuse background checks
 - The response that I got was that we do not currently have any faculty or staff who have refused to complete background checks
 - Did not receive an answer about whether they would be punished if they did not
 - Questions about the Strategic Plan updates also arose, particularly about why students are not getting the same updates that faculty and staff are getting
 - The response that I got was that the updates provided to faculty and staff have been pertinent to those groups
 - I hope that other questions about the Strategic Plan were also answered by Paul Overvoorde, but there is also a website

- We asked about the possibility of the Board opening their meeting minutes to the public
 - We will be meeting with Kathryn Kay Coquemont, Sarah Sueflow, and Tor about this
 - I received a question about how Macalester can support students who are experiencing crises at home
 - Scots Care Report
 - Students who have been in a crisis can fill this out, or students can fill them out on behalf of another
 - The only time that I speak in an official capacity is when I deliver this report to the Board, which is not a two-way conversation
 - I can assure you that I spent a lot of time speaking unofficially with the Board about matters that are of importance to all of you
 - Questions
 - Joel: Was there any discussion of the Negotiated Rulemaking Process with the Board of Education that may restrict Macalester's implementation of the textbook contract?
 - Bobbie: Not that I heard about, no
 - Joel: Was there discussion of the college moving away from a test-based admission model?
 - Bobbie: That didn't come up either, but I am curious to know more, as well
 - Guest: What was the conversation around the student union?
 - How did the Trustees respond?
 - Bobbie: Most of the conversations around the union happened in the informal space
 - I will be transparent with you all that I emailed the union for a statement, but they did not respond with specific answers or points of advocacy
 - There was a mixed reaction
 - Some Trustees supported this, but some were confused
 - None appeared to be outright against the union, but most wanted to know more about where this was coming from
 - Mariah: Please email Bobbie with any more questions that you might have

Vote to Cosponsor Women's History Month Event ~ Mariah Loeffler-Kemp ~ 5 minutes

- **Women's History Month Keynote Request**
- Mariah: We were emailed by the Department of Institutional Equity about an event that they are holding
 - They asked MCSG to co-sponsor it
 - Women's History Month Lecture and Event Thursday March 28
 - They don't need any money from us, but they would like us to help advertise it and attend if we are able
 - The Executive Board felt that it would be best to bring this to the LB, just to set a precedent for future MCSG partnerships
- Discussion
 - Tor: I love this idea
 - Do you know what their thought process was in reaching out to us about this?
 - This is one of the first times that we have been reached out to in this context
 - Mariah: I think that having MCSG promote it may bring more students, as well as increase legitimacy
- Vote
 - Alec: I motion to vote on supporting and sponsoring the Women's History Month Keynote Event
 - Sophia: Second
 - In Favor: 19
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstaining: 1
 - Mariah: With that, we have voted to co-sponsor the event
 - Else will send an email soon

Presidential Updates ~ Mariah Loeffler-Kemp ~ 5 minutes

- Mariah: As we know, we have had multiple assaults on campus
 - This has hit me hard
 - I had a meeting with Dr. Coquemont on Monday to address this issue
 - She provided a list of things that we can share with you all
 - I've been asking about what the plan is and what we can do
 - Student Affairs has been doing everything they can
 - List
 - Macalester has increased Public Safety Rounds on Campus
 - Expanding cameras in stairwells and elevators to review who comes in and out

- Not constantly surveilled
- Promote best practices regarding community care
- Add more information to residential spaces
 - Make sure that people aren't tailing you as you enter meetings
- Dr. Coquemont will provide another campus tour where students can point out things that need to be improved
 - Adding lights around campus and Kirk tunnels
 - Trimming branches
 - Adding speed bumps on Mac Street
- Public Safety's phone number will be provided
 - We can send it in the GChat
- Questions:
 - Norah: Do you know if there has been any discussion about the tunnels that go from Turck to Bigelow to 30Mac about requiring a key card to get in there
 - Mariah: I haven't heard about a plan for this, but I can bring this up
 - Guest: I know that there was a change at the beginning of this year where even if you don't live in a dorm you could get into it
 - If you are an underclassman, you can get into any dorm if you live on campus before 10pm
 - Is there thought about changing this back?
 - Joel: Last year, we felt that the dorms being so exclusive led to a culture where people let anyone into dorms
 - Letting any underclassman who lives on campus get into all dorms is how things were pre-COVID
 - Mena: Is there any information about how this student is being supported, or how to support other students who may end up in this situation
 - Mariah: With the Scots Care Form, someone from Student Affairs will reach out to students one-on-one to give them the care and resources they need
 - Laurie: A big part of this is connecting to resources such as Title IX that can care for students in any way that they can
 - Mariah: Dr. Coquemont has been working to make sure that resources are being shared


- We have a lot of people on campus whose job is to care for students experiencing hard things
 - Emma R: We have office hours for sexual violence prevention advocates
 - These are on the Hamre website
 - Title IX is an office, but you don't necessarily have to go through a whole procedure
 - They are here to support you
- Mariah: If anything comes up later, please reach out to Dr. Coquemont or Javier
 - Also just hired a new head of Public Safety, so we may invite him to a meeting

Committee & Cabinet Updates ~ *Committee & Cabinet Members* ~ 6 minutes

- Eliora: FAC met on Tuesday as usual
 - Working on Budget Bonanza as usual
 - Want to think the representatives for putting their all into this
- Joel: Sent the results of the When2Meet for the MCSG Alumni Fair Pilot program to Career and Exploration
 - We confirmed with CSLE Executive Director Laurie Adamson that the book bank can move with us to our new office in Weyerhaeuser.
 - I gave public comment to the US Department of Education negotiated rulemaking committee in support of banning federally-funded colleges (like Macalester) from having an opt-out model for comprehensive course material fees
 - Essentially, if this committee comes to a consensus, this could lead to textbook providers not being allowed to automatically charge for materials, for example: forcing Barnes & Noble to provide an opt-in fee for course materials instead of the upcoming opt-out model
 - This would take effect in the Fall of 2025 at the soonest. See this Inside Higher Ed article for more context.
- Jordan: Athletics & Recreation Liaison
 - Working with BIPOCA to write a request for Scot Ball
 - Might bring Donnie Brooks in
 - He is curious about what students are thinking
- Emma R: Health and Wellness Liaison
 - More news to come

- Entirety of Health Promotion is either leaving their job or in Japan
 - Meeting with Hamre Res Life, etc. after spring break
- Yosephine: International Student Liaison
 - Search committee for ISP
 - Finished interviews
 - Next steps will be final discussions
 - Should have our decision in the next week
- Philomena: Residential Life & Dining Liaison
 - Macalester Dining Advisory Committee
 - Planning around Ramadan
 - Students will be able to go to the Grille for a pre-done meal, as well as salad bar
 - Student worker allergen training
 - Want more of a concrete plan to prevent food contamination
 - Want to announce that if you want to be more involved with dining at Mac, you can join the Macalester Dining Advisory Committee
 - If you have ideas, you can also email me or attend my office hours
- Amanda: Infrastructure & Sustainability Liaison
 - Just returned from being away for two weeks, but will have more updates after spring break
- LeSean: CEC met on Tuesday night
 - Working to make election plans more complete
 - Student engagement survey will be sent out at the end of the year
- Alec: SOC went over three or four new charters
 - These should all be passing after spring break

Announcements ~ 3 minutes

- Exec elections information session
 - Filing opens on Monday, and the event will be the same night
 - Monday March 18th, 6:00pm, Harmon Room
- Election tabling sign-up
 -  Election Tabling Sign-ups (Spring 2024)
- [Apply to be an OL!](#) ~ *Emi Menk*
 - Apps due March 8 at 12PM
 - Perks: Early move-in, meal plan during training and orientation; students who complete training and orientation will receive a \$900 stipend for volunteering their time!

- Social Media Form ~ *Lorenzo Gurrola*
 - If anyone wants a post made, including projects and announcements, they can also be an Instagram Post
- Eliora: It looks like there is a textbook protest happening right now outside