

Macalester College Student Government
Spring 2025

Resolution Calling for a Reconsideration for the 2025 Graduation Venue

WHEREAS Macalester College has held commencement ceremonies outdoors, creating an open and celebratory atmosphere that many students and families have come to appreciate;

WHEREAS the decision to exclude John Leaney Field from any 2025 Commencement Ceremony planning was made without properly consulting the graduating class, contradicting the college's commitment to student input in major institutional decisions;

WHEREAS the Commencement Planning Committee disregarded the concerns raised by the sole student representative on the committee, demonstrating a lack of respect for student input in decisions that directly impact the graduating class;

WHEREAS the Commencement Planning Committee has failed to properly adjust or justify their decision after they were sent the petition written by Liz Kelly-Doan and signed by hundreds of members of the student body;

WHEREAS the Class of 2025, like many others, experienced significant disruptions to their high school graduations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, making this commencement ceremony particularly meaningful as one of their first opportunities for an unrestricted, in-person graduation experience;

WHEREAS an outdoor ceremony at John Leaney Field allows for a greater number of family members and friends to attend, compared to the more restricted seating capacity of the indoor Fieldhouse;

WHEREAS holding the ceremony outdoors provides a safer environment for immunocompromised individuals and attendees who may still have concerns about large indoor gatherings;

WHEREAS accessibility is a fundamental consideration in event planning to ensure inclusivity for all attendees, including individuals with disabilities;

WHEREAS the use of larger, open-air stadium spaces as opposed to confined indoor venues such as the Field House can provide increased accessibility benefits, including improved mobility, sightlines, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities;

WHEREAS stadiums often provide accessible seating, ramps, elevators, and designated viewing areas that better accommodate individuals with mobility impairments compared to smaller, enclosed spaces;

WHEREAS utilizing a stadium setting allows for greater flexibility in event layout, ensuring accessible pathways, sensory-friendly areas, and additional accommodations for individuals with diverse needs;

WHEREAS the open-air setting of John Leaney Field offers a more aesthetically and emotionally fitting environment for a momentous occasion, in contrast to the limited and athletically-tailored space of the Fieldhouse;

WHEREAS previous graduating classes have successfully held their commencement ceremonies outdoors, demonstrating that weather-related risks can be managed effectively with contingency plans;

WHEREAS the decision to relocate the ceremony has caused widespread disappointment among the graduating class, highlighting the need for transparency and student involvement in future planning decisions;

Authors: Ryan Connor '25

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Macalester College Student Government (MCSG) urges the Commencement Planning Committee to reconsider the decision and restore John Leaney Field as the default option for the 2025 Commencement Ceremony;

THEREFORE be it resolved that Macalester College commit to greater student involvement in future commencement planning, ensuring that major decisions reflect the preferences and interests of the graduating class while reaffirming the interest of the graduating class in planning their own ceremony;

THEREFORE be it resolved that Macalester College, in conjunction with MCSG, shall appoint two students of the graduating senior class and one student of the junior class to the Commencement Planning Committee each academic year;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Commencement Planning Committee release the yearly location of commencement and any major changes to the ceremony in the fall semester, allowing time for proper response and feedback from the student body;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the administration provide a clear and transparent explanation of the rationale behind venue decisions, as well as an opportunity for students to voice their concerns before finalizing such changes.