



Date 10/16/24
5:30-7:00
Event Space

Town Hall Minutes

I. Welcome

II. Attendance

III. Committee Report

A. President

My name is Vish Dsouza and I am the Student Body President. As part of my role I chair the executive board meetings, regular meetings, serve as a student representative to the Muhlenberg College Board of Trustees, the Student Experience Committee of the Board of Trustees, and the College Committee on the Student Experience.

- part of the Budget Allocation committee which meets over the course of the first few weeks and allocates funds for our permanent organizations, the newest ones being Religious Life Association and Muhlenberg Theatre Association.
- responsible for appointing student government representatives to the following institutional committees: Institutional research Board, Lectures and forum Committee, College Committee on Technology and Digital Learning, Curriculum Committee, Academic Policy Committee, President's Diversity Advisory Council, Library Programming Committee.
- currently working with several offices on campus to create an Event Planning Guide which will make planning events on campus more accessible with all the updated information on policies and procedures. Additionally, I am part of the Search Committee for Vice President. I am tasked with bringing student perspectives to the board and aligning student interests as we advance in our search.

Looking forward, I hope to continue supporting all the committees and executive board members with advice and guidance as and when necessary. Additionally, if there's any concerns or suggestions you would like to make, please feel free to reach out to SGA or I am happy to meet with you!

B. Standards

My name is Sabeen Safi, and I serve as Vice President of the Student Government Association (SGA). As part of my role, I chair the Standards Committee, which includes dedicated members Aidan Silvestri, Jason Rackas, Ellie Lavoe, Amanda Growney, and Amy Swartz (constituent).

Our committee is tasked with upholding the standards of the SGA, reviewing member conduct, and recommending updates to our Bylaws to the General Assembly.

Since August, we've passed 15 Bylaws to improve our practices and increase transparency. I'd like to take a moment to highlight some of our key accomplishments this semester:

- **First-Year Elections:** This fall, we held our inaugural First-Year election, welcoming four new first-year representatives to the SGA. After this experience, we identified areas for improvement, specifically clarifying the eligibility for open seats.
- **E-Board Resignations:** Previously, we lacked a clear process for handling E-Board resignations. Now, if a resignation occurs during the academic year, we've established a framework for a student body vote to ensure fair representation.

- **Renaming of Permanent Organizations:** To increase clarity around funding eligibility, we've redefined what were previously known as Permanent Organizations. They are now called Allocated Budget Organizations, highlighting which groups can apply for this specific type of funding.

Looking forward, we're focusing on strategies to boost voter turnout in our elections. Some of the ideas we're exploring include adding referendum questions to engage students or extending the voting period to increase participation.

If you'd like to learn more about our work or get involved in our discussions, we meet every Tuesday from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the SGA Office.

C. Finance

My name is Jay and I'm the student government treasurer. My committee is made of 7 amazing people Ashley, Sinhayna, Bethany, Priya, and Pamela. Finance's responsibility includes ensuring that the student activity fee is allocated to the student body in a way that is fair and equitable to all students.

We have completed a lot of work this year so far. The first thing we worked on was budget allocation. The Budget Allocation Committee met to equitably allocate the student activity fee to all Allocated Budget Organizations (ABOs).

Our main focus this year was Equity. In keeping with Muhlenberg's Mission statement and our DEIB mission statement, we made some revisions to the current budget allocation process. To be more equitable, we placed all religious groups under RLA and all Affinity groups under OML.

Though subtle, this change of having religious groups and affinity groups under one advisor ensures that the process of distribution is fair.

The advisors that disperse the funds are trained in DEIB and have the qualifications to make equitable judgments.

We have had two Finance Votes, ATR's Muhlapalooza and Rock Climbing's membership fees. ATR requested \$6,000 for Muhlapalooza, which was recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the student government. This event will include headliner artists and student-led bands. This is a great investment both for our students, artists and audiences and our school as a whole.

Rock Climbing was our first finance vote. As many of you remember, the vote passed and their funds were approved. Rock Climbing provides all students with the opportunity to learn how to rock climb and have a great time.

This year we have been focusing on giving as much of our general fund to student organizations that put on campus wide events and are open to all students.

Many of you probably remember our mission statement at the beginning of the year where we asked student groups to request as much as they need.

I'm happy to announce that we have spent close to \$10,000 of our general fund on student groups.

Looking forward, we will continue to reach out to student groups and conduct surveys to see which campus improvement projects we should introduce next.

D. Campus Engagement

Hi everyone, my name is Jimmy Kaba and I am the Campus Engagement Chair of SGA. Campus Engagement meets regularly every Tuesday, from 6:30 - 7:30 PM in the SGA office. Our committee includes Teigan Brown, Addison Star, Edmund Sage, Max Kurzweil, Lauryn Glass, & Charles Cuadra.

The goal for campus engagement is to work on enhancing the student experience on campus by facilitating dialogue and addressing any student concerns, seeking club approvals and planning events.

We recently partnered with the Dean of Students Office and had a De-Stress Event on October 4th. The Campus Engagement committee has also approved six new clubs which include BergDems, Woman In Politics/Law, Fencing Club, Intramural Floor Hockey, Chess Club, & the Public Speaking Club.

We are currently working on our annual Udder Bar Challenge and end of semester Destress Yoga Event.

I also want to take a moment to highlight some of the projects my committee is working on which directly impacts student experience on campus. We are advocating for convenient printing and ensuring all of them are in working order. Secondly, we're focusing on making the LSC Gym and swimming pool more accessible to students.

Additionally, we understand that academic buildings shutting down at 7 pm is an inconvenience and we are in

conversation with our campus partners to extend the hours. This is an ongoing concern and directly impacts students who are often unable to attend late night workshops. We're advocating for extended hours and exploring the possibility of implementing card swipe access for all students after closing hours. Looking forward, our committee looks to initiate and collaborate to hold more campus-wide events on our campus such as the Muhlenberg Bonfire and to allow for students to voice their concerns about any problems on campus.

E. DEI&B

My name is Josephine and I am the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging Chair of SGA. The DEIB committee includes Shajnin Howlader, Aj Ring, Alessandra Rodriguez, Hannah Winter, and, Eliana Yascual. We meet on Mondays from 6-7 pm. I'm excited to share some updates on key initiatives our committee has been working on to strengthen the community, honor heritage, and promote accessibility.

The DEIB committee advocates for the needs of marginalized identities in the Muhlenberg community and beyond through frequent collaboration with students, student groups, departments, offices, faculty, staff, and administration. First, I want to highlight the Hitëkw Project, which we're collaborating on with AJAL. This initiative honors Lenape culture by redesigning tree plaques on campus with Lenape translations.

Another key initiative is our newly revamped Meals for Mules program. This effort focuses on building strong relationships with local restaurants to offer 10-15% discounts for Muhlenberg students. We're prioritizing partnerships with minority and locally-owned businesses and are also looking to collaborate with food banks to make a positive impact by Thanksgiving.

To promote these partnerships, we're running a sticker design competition starting last week! We want the winning design to reflect our love for the community and proudly represent the Meals for Mules program. It'll be displayed in the windows of participating restaurants, so students know where they can find discounts. The contest closes on October 30th at 4:00 pm, and the winner—announced on November 1st—will receive 75 dollars in Berg Bucks as a reward!

Looking ahead, we are planning to collaborate with campus partners on a new initiative to provide free Narcan and training on its administration to our community. This is a crucial step in ensuring student safety and preparedness, and we're excited to work together to make it happen.

Thank you all for your continued support. We look forward to seeing your creativity in the sticker competition and to building a stronger, more inclusive Muhlenberg community!

F. Secretary

My name is Teigan Brown and I currently serve as the recording secretary for SGA. In this role, I am responsible for recording all meeting minutes, facilitating our voting process, and ensuring equal and equitable participation of all student government members by tracking attendance. It is also my responsibility to organize conduct reviews, should the need arise. Additionally, I serve as SGA's Student Representative on the President's Diversity Advisory Council, where we have taken up the charge of making DEI&B training visible and accessible while simultaneously uplifting current initiatives and efforts.

G. Director of Communications

Hi everyone! My name is AJ Ring and I am your Director of Communications this year.

I am excited to report that I have added some things to the position this year in order to make communication between me and those needing graphics easier. I have made a 'graphic request form' which gives me all of the information in one go so I can deliver my best work as quickly as possible. I am also doing some research on how to better engage the student body with different forms of content.

I redesigned our logo! I wanted to go with something simple and sweet. Our first round of tote bags with the logo went quick! We reordered more of the same design for future tabling events.

Over the summer I also designed the artwork for the new Vicki machine in the LSC. The machine is a new addition to the LSC cafe, and if you haven't checked it out yet, I highly recommend you do.

One of the more recent posts on social media I made was the “how to request SGA funding” graphic. We noticed that some clubs and organizations were unsure of how to go about securing funding, so we decided to make a post that had all of the needed information in one area. It is vital to SGA that our resources are accessible and readily available for the student body.

We will be having club approvals near the end of this month, so keep an eye out for all advertisements and emails coming your way about that.

H. Institutional Committees

1. Academic Policy Committee

My name is Amanda Growney, and I am one of the two representatives on the Academic Policy Committee, along with Vice President Sabeen Safi.

Academic Policy Committee (APC) is the major standing committee in charge of making all recommendations to the Faculty, President, and Board regarding the academic program of the College. This includes all academic policies, procedures, divisions, new programs/majors, and cross-institutional ventures of the College. APC also functions as the "committee on committees" and makes recommendations to the Faculty, President, and Board regarding the Faculty governance structure of the College, including the membership and charges of all standing committees. APC works with its executor, Curriculum Committee, to set all of the rules and regulations for the new Pathways curriculum.

So far this year, we have had in-depth conversations that have led to the development of the following:

Recharge Day in Spring of 2025: This campus-wide health day aims to provide students with a much-needed breather during the busy period between spring and Easter breaks. The event offers a chance for students to relax, recharge, and catch up on work while promoting holistic health and wellness. We intend to present this event at the faculty meeting this Friday in hopes of approval.

Religious Observances: We are interested in exploring the possibility of adding more religious holidays to the academic calendar. We want to ensure that on-campus programming is available for students who do not observe these holidays. As our campus is becoming more diverse, our committee believes these conversations are necessary to continue fostering a sense of belonging.

Meeting Patterns: Currently, we are in the process of introducing two new models for structured meeting times, which will limit overlapping classes and offer a common hour. After reviewing the data submitted by the faculty, we will be able to provide more information to the students. These meeting patterns are currently set to go into effect in Fall 2025.

We are collaborating with the Faculty Personnel & Policies Committee (FPPC) to roll out a series of conversations for faculty members. The goal is to educate them about the new Title IX guidelines and to clarify the resolution policies and procedures for Title VI/IX processes. Additionally, we are providing guidance on the Attendance and Incomplete policies that the Dean of Academic Life presented to APC.

These are just a few of the many things we are working on so if you'd like to learn more about our work or participate in our discussions, feel free to contact me, Sabeen, or the chair, Jeremy Teissere.

2. Curriculum Committee

My name is Jason Rackas, and I currently serve as one of the two student representatives to the College's Curriculum Committee, along with SGA Representative Amanda Growney. The Curriculum

Committee is primarily responsible for the application of policy set forth by the Academic Policy Committee and faculty as a whole.

This semester, the committee has worked through various projects:

- With the implementation of the new Pathways curriculum for the Class of 2028, the committee has been working to review faculty proposals for designations for their courses, both for the spring semester and beyond. Thus far, we have reviewed many proposals of each designation, and have in total approved approximately 50 designations. These new Pathways designations will provide additional flexibility to the first-year class when they register for courses later next month.
- The Curriculum Committee also works in conjunction with other committees and task forces which issue decisions and recommendations.
 - This semester, we have worked with IELab to issue IL (GAR) and IEL (Pathways) designations for both integrative and experiential learning courses. A new focus of the Pathways curriculum is the expansion of the IEL requirement to experiential learning opportunities, courses that provide education both at Muhlenberg and with an outside partner institution or community service.
 - Additionally, an RP advisory board has provided insightful information in issuing the Race & Power designation to courses.
- Lastly, the committee has reviewed and approved many new courses for next semester, which will be officially communicated to the student body when course descriptions go live on Workday on October 25.

If you have any questions regarding the Curriculum Committee, or you would like to raise a concern, please feel free to reach out.

I. Muhlenberg College EMS (MCEMS)

MCEMS hosted its 25th Anniversary Celebration recently, with representatives from the college administration, campus safety, and the health center in attendance. We strengthened our alumni connections by reaching out to past members, some of whom shared pictures and stories of their time with MCEMS, with several joining the celebration remotely via Zoom.

We welcomed ten new members into MCEMS this semester, bringing our membership up to 32. 25 of them are EMTs licensed in Pennsylvania.

One of our main goals this semester is to increase our collaboration with Allentown EMS. Last week, a few of us sat down with some of the medics at Allentown to discuss ways that we can better work together. With this, we have a couple of things coming up. Our November training will be held at the Allentown Fire Academy, utilizing Allentown's high-fidelity equipment. This training will help our members become more familiar with Allentown's equipment and how to best assist the medics. Another thing that we are working towards is allowing our members to ride with Allentown to the hospital. We believe this would make our students feel more comfortable and helps Allentown EMS with additional support.

Switching gears, we have made some changes to our software to help our members work more efficiently, all at a better cost. Our patient care reporting software and scramble crew dispatching software are top-of-the-line and allow people to work more efficiently and better use the tools at their disposal.

We have also recently transitioned from using EpiPens to using what is referred to as "check and inject" epinephrine. There are several reasons behind this change, but the most central is cost. We went from paying \$1200 every year and a half for EpiPens to paying only about \$75. This cost-saving will enable us to do more.

We are planning on starting our community CPR classes back up in the coming weeks. We are also looking at ways to make our program more robust and get more members to become CPR instructors. If there's anything else you want to know about, please reach out and I'd be more than happy to discuss them. (Report by MCEMS Captain, Gabe Kanter-Goodell)

J. WMUH

Hi everyone, I'm Harper Hogan, the Station Manager of WMUH, Muhlenberg's own college radio station. Although last year we celebrated quite a large milestone, our 75th anniversary of broadcasting, we continue to work hard creating opportunities for the Muhlenberg and Lehigh Valley community to experience music in new ways each and every day. So far this semester, we have hosted three awesome concerts on campus, introducing our student body to improvisational jazz, psychedelic rock, and the new-age punk scene making waves in the greater community. Additionally, from the Student Organization fair held in the beginning of September, we have had thirty new students show interest in getting trained to be on air, ten of which completed the process and were welcomed on as DJs within the past 2 weeks. At this moment, we are looking forward to our 6th annual Radio Riff Off, our student-made music competition, being held this Friday 10/18 in the Red Door at 8 PM. We will also be having our final concert of the semester on 11/14 in the Event Space, presenting Ian Sweet and Allie Sandt, which we are very excited for. Thank you all for your support of The Only Station That Matters. We hope to continue to make the campus a better place to be along with your help.

IV. New Business

A. Seegers Expansion Presentation

1. We hope to see fully enclosed expansion construction by Summer 2025
2. Lower level of Seegers will be completely renovated & refreshed, spaces will be repurposed
3. Summer 2025 Renovations
 - a) Complete renovation of Red Doors (will be fully ADA accessible)
 - b) GQ Annex → GQ Dining
 - c) Career Services → Student Life Offices, SGA Office
4. Expansion - Proposed Upper Level
 - a) Career Services & Associated Lounge Area
 - b) The addition of 2 classrooms and collaborative/flex spaces
 - c) All gender-inclusive bathrooms
5. Expansion - Proposed Lower Level
 - a) Reservable auditorium space
 - b) Alumni services
 - c) "Soft seating" - flex/collaborative spaces
 - d) Green room
6. Expansion - Proposed Top Level
 - a) New event/dining space & associated pre-function space (holding 300-400 people for large dining gatherings/seminars etc)

7. Presented several artificially constructed images of the construction process & final product
8. Was there student input during the discussions of design → not yet, but they will be considering student input for interior design choices, and GQ Annex/Dining design
9. Mule Cabinet & Prayer Rooms are not currently anticipated to be changed at all → will remain fully accessible during construction
10. Prayer Room Renovation → still in discussions, Janelle & Ira will be contacts for students to reach out to, to directly receive student feedback for a prayer room
11. Interior Construction Phase Summary
 - a) Phase I - Career Services 12/13/24 - 1/13/25
 - b) Phase IA - Radio Station 1/14/25 - 5/19/25
 - c) Phase II - Light Lounge 108/109/110 3/5/25 - 3/19/25
 - d) Phase IIA - Javas/Fireside Lounge/Main Lobby/GQ 5/19/25 - 8/15/25
 - e) Phase III - Red Doors 5/20/25 - 8/15/25
 - f) Phase III - Lower Level Refresh 5/20/25 - 7/6/25

V. Open Forum/Constituency Comments

- A. How can we establish a direct line of communication between affinity groups and those with the funding source? → SGA provides funds to OML so that affinity groups can request funds from them (in addition to membership funds, provided directly by SGA) → call for more transparent & direct communication → SGA & Finance offers to meet with all parties necessary to ensure transparency and direct communication

VI. Adjournment