

**Charge to Campus Senate  
February 3, 2021**

Mascots are representative symbols of an organization, often associated with good luck. The “Lords” and “Ladies” mascots have a long history at Kenyon, dating back to at least the 1950s for “Lords” and the early 1970s for “Ladies.” But in both cases, the names are a nod to the connections between the College and its earliest benefactors, including Lord Kenyon, Lord Gambier, and Lady Rosse. Over the years, members of the Kenyon community have questioned the appropriateness of the Lords and Ladies mascots, questions that have grown more frequent recently.

This moment, as the College approaches its bicentennial, is right to examine the role and relevance of a mascot to Kenyon. I am requesting that Campus Senate take up the questions of what are the values that a mascot represents for Kenyon and what are the processes for evaluating mascots with respect to those values. In particular, Campus Senate should:

- (1) Articulate the history and background to the current Kenyon mascots (the Lords and Ladies).
- (2) Collect information from the campus community about the importance and meaning of mascots: What does the community look for in a mascot? What types of values or characteristics does the community expect a mascot to represent? What is the place for history and tradition in these considerations?
- (3) Collect information from how peer institutions have evaluated their mascots.
- (4) Make recommendations about processes that Kenyon may adopt to evaluate its mascot, including constituencies to consult.

While it is difficult to discuss a mascot in the abstract, this charge is not intended to be a referendum on the current mascot, nor a call for proposals for future mascots. Rather, the focus should be on the general questions: what do we (as a campus community) want to see our mascot represent, and how do we evaluate or measure whether our mascot achieves that purpose.

Ideally, the report on this work would be complete by the end of the semester (May 2021). While the process should gather information from the community broadly, given the uses of the mascots, special attention should be given to the Athletics Department (and our student-athletes), the Advancement Office (which oversees alumni and parent engagement), and the Admissions Office.

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President