

**Profiles of Candidates
for Senator At-Large**

Term: 2024 – 2026

Election: April 15 – 19, 2024

Candidate Profile – Lauren Balasco

Name and Title: Lauren Balasco, Associate Professor of Political Science

School: SOBL

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 7

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I have served as an at-large senator for four years. During those four years, I have also served as Vice Chair of the Student Affairs Committee and at-large member of the Senate Executive Committee. In my service I have tried to practice leadership qualities of listening, dialogue, cooperation, and patience. I regard the Faculty Senate as an important space for representation and deliberation. I will work closely with my colleagues to understand the ever-evolving needs and circumstances of our students, so that we can advocate for the institutional space and resources needed for their success. Stockton University is currently undergoing major changes, and it is important for faculty voice and input to play a central role in building a thriving intellectual and caring community both on campus and in our local community.

Candidate Profile – Vasundhara Chakraborty

Name and Title: Vasundhara Chakraborty, Assistant Professor in Accounting

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 5

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Take a more active role to serve the university community.

Candidate Profile – Jiajin (Sandy) Chen

Name and Title: Jiajin (Sandy) Chen, Associate Professor of Finance

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 9

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Since I joined Stockton University, I have been engaged in various committees at our program, school and university level. At the university level, I served as a member of the Stockton Faculty Senate Administration and Finance Committee, Stockton Advising Council, and Commencement Student Speaker Selection Committee. I would like the opportunity to serve as At-Large Senator of Faculty Senator so I can represent our program and school, expand my service and get more involved in university wide discussions.

Candidate Profile – Philip Eaton

Name and Title: Philip Eaton, Assistant Professor of Applied Physics

School: NAMS

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 4

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Being relatively new to Stockton and New Jersey, I offer a fresh outside perspective crucial for university governance. My active involvement in Faculty Senate Task Forces and committees within the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics demonstrates my dedication to institutional improvement. Being young and tenure-track provides a unique insight into current academic and administrative dynamics. With these qualities, I feel I am well-equipped to advocate for innovative approaches to curriculum development, student support, and faculty engagement, contributing to the university's ongoing growth and success. I want to be a Senator so that I can help champion retention efforts that are crucial to our students, help advocate for more diverse and interdisciplinary degree routes, and to do my part as a Stockton Faculty member.

Candidate Profile – Betsy Erbaugh

Name and Title: Betsy Erbaugh, Associate Professor of Sociology

School: SOBL

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 11

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I value the opportunity to engage with faculty colleagues in efforts to promote the liberal arts educational mission of the university. I seek especially to support initiatives that promote equity and social justice through programs, policies, and evidence-based best practices. During the current period of significant transition at the university and throughout academia, it is more important than ever that the faculty voice be heard and honored in institutional processes to steer teaching, research and service in productive and equitable directions. I bring prior experience as a faculty senator, task force chair, SIPET fellow, search advocate, service-learning fellow, program chair/coordinator, Title IX/gender equity advocate, and 20+ years of university teaching, research and service experience in interdisciplinary fields that use quantitative and qualitative evidence to advocate for equity across university communities.

Candidate Profile – Helana Girgis

Name and Title: Helana Girgis , Assistant Professor of Psychology

School: SOBL

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 5

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I look forward to representing the interests of the faculty and advocating for diverse perspectives in our decision-making processes.

Candidate Profile – Geoffrey Gust

Name and Title: Geoffrey Gust, Associate Professor of Critical Thinking

School: GENS

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 10

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Among other things, I am the Coordinator of First-Year Seminars at Stockton, a long-standing member of the Academic Policies Committee, and the Vice Chair of the General Studies committee, so I am involved in a lot on campus and have seen the importance of Senate to the machinations of the university in many different ways. So, I believe in the importance of Faculty Senate, it has been a privilege to serve as a Senator in recent years, and I would like to continue doing so for the next few years at least.

Candidate Profile – Robin Hernandez-Mekonnen

Name and Title: Robin Hernandez-Mekonnen, Associate Profesor of Social Work

School: SOBL

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 11

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I have been at Stockton for 11 years and a part of the Senate for the past several years, serving as Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee for the past 4 years. I have also been serving as the Vice Chair for the Academic Policies and Procedure Committee for the past several years. For the past year and a half, I have served as an at large member of the Senate Executive. I am an active member of the Senate and the Union, with the intention of helping to ensure Stockton is an institution that continues its mission of serving students, by caring for faculty and staff. I try to lift the voices of the faculty as advocates for the best possible environment. I enjoy serving and advocating on your behalf and hope to continue to serve.

Candidate Profile – Mina Jafarijoo

Name and Title: Mina Jafarijoo, Assistant Professor

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 5

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

As a junior faculty member, being a part of the Senate would give me a better understanding of Stockton's mission and goals. As a scholar whose research area is focused on governance, I can contribute to the Senate by sharing my knowledge on governance-related topics with my colleagues. Also, my expertise in data-driven decision-making processes can help shape more effective policies. Furthermore, being a part of the Senate would allow me to voice the concerns of my students, school, and program to the faculty from other programs and schools, which can help make more informed decisions and policies.

Candidate Profile – Colleen Kase

Name and Title: Colleen Kase, Assistant Professor of Psychology

School: SOBL

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 2

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I am excited about the opportunity to make a positive impact at Stockton by serving as an at-large senator. I joined the PSYC faculty as an assistant professor in 2022. Because I am new to Stockton, I would bring a fresh perspective to the senate that is informed by my recent experiences at other universities, including the University of Maryland and Temple University. My goal as a senator would be to help preserve Stockton's many existing strengths (especially our exceptional, student-centered faculty), while also pursuing new and innovative solutions to the challenges we face as an institution. In addition, I am a licensed counseling psychologist and I do research on the mental health of LGBTQ+ populations. I would apply these areas of expertise to my work in the senate, with a focus on supporting the well-being of Stockton's diverse students, faculty, and staff. Thank you for your consideration!

Candidate Profile – Daniel W. Ki

Name and Title: Daniel W. Ki, Associate Professor of Chemistry

School: NAMS

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 8

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I am honored to present my candidacy for the Faculty Senate position at large. With six years of dedicated service to Stockton University within the Faculty Senate, I am deeply committed to advancing the interests and addressing the concerns of our esteemed faculty members. This experience has granted me valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing both our faculty and the university as a whole. I remain steadfast in my commitment to serving the faculty and advancing the mission of Stockton University through continued participation in the Faculty Senate.

Candidate Profile – Jen Martin

Name and Title: Jen Martin, Assistant Professor

School: NAMS

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 5

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I am very interested in serving as an At-Large Senator, as I value contributing to the important purpose of the faculty senate at Stockton in engaging in shared governance with administration. I'm looking forward to having a more active role in developing and promoting effective campus policies that will benefit both my faculty colleagues and the Stockton community as a whole.

Candidate Profile – Quynh Nguyen

Name and Title: Quynh Nguyen, Assistant Professor of Computer Information Systems

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 5

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Building upon my four years of experience as an At-large Faculty Senator at Stockton, I am deeply motivated to continue serving in this position to further advance the interests of our faculty and the broader university community. Throughout my tenure, I've been extensively involved in various committees and task forces, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the issues and challenges facing our institution. Collaborating with colleagues from diverse disciplines, I've effectively addressed complex issues and developed comprehensive solutions.

Seeking re-election, I am committed to leveraging my expertise in computer information systems to drive positive change within the university community. Given my background, I can contribute meaningfully to current committees and task forces. In conclusion, I am committed to continuing to shape the future direction of our university through the Faculty Senate.

Candidate Profile – Monika Pawlowska

Name and Title: Monika Pawlowska, Associate Professor of Communication Disorders

School: HLTH

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 9

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Faculty Senate plays an important role in shared governance at our University. As an at-large senator, I would like to work with colleagues across campus to represent faculty voices and contribute to discussions and decisions regarding University policy.

Candidate Profile – Thierry Saintine

Name and Title: Thierry Saintine, Associate Professor of First-Year studies Math

School: GENS

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 8

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I have been an At-Large Senator for a number of years now. I have always viewed my role as a senator as both a privilege and an incredible honor. This was made clear to me during the early months of COVID-19 when, as a faculty, I could choose between work (working in person) and risking health (or the health of loved ones); a choice that wasn't afforded to many other colleagues. There have been many other instances since and during COVID that have crystalized for me the role of the senator as a "broker" whose primary responsibility is to serve and (at times) represent the interests/concerns/grievances of students, staff and faculty across campus, especially those who aren't always able to advocate for themselves. If given the opportunity to serve in this role for another term, I plan to continue advocating for those who've mostly or only experienced "#TheOtherStockton."

Candidate Profile – Aakash Taneja

Name and Title: Aakash Taneja, Professor, Computer Information Systems

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 17

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

Serve, Solve, and Support:

I request the opportunity to serve as an At-Large Senator and represent the faculty's will and opinion in shared governance.

My years of experience as a Stockton faculty member in a wide variety of roles have equipped me to effectively contribute to Senate deliberations on making recommendations and working with the administration on solving matters such as academic policies, degree requirements (for example, attributes/subscripts), generative AI usage, program offerings, etc.

I aim to collaborate with other members to foster productive relationships between students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community to continually advance our shared goal of providing an engaging and supportive learning environment for our students' professional readiness and the welfare of Stockton and its stakeholders.

I thank you for your consideration.

Candidate Profile – Christine Tartaro

Name and Title: Christine Tartaro, Distinguished Professor of Criminal Justice

School: SOBL

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 23

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I have been on the senate for several years and want to remain so I can represent the faculty as we transition with the new administration. I take pride in speaking up for non-senators who have concerns and would like to continue to do so. Some of my recent senate work includes co-chairing the Purchasing Task Force and serving on the Vehicles Task Force.

Candidate Profile – Pu Tian

Name and Title: Pu Tian, Assistant Professor

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 1

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

(Why apply) The at-large Senator offers me a great chance to get involved in the university-wide service opportunity, especially as a non-tenured faculty member. I used to attend the Friday Senate monthly meeting over Zoom and have been feeling that being a senator member will give me a platform to get involved in the university community affairs through participating in the Senate process and expressing voices that will help shape better policies, making positive impacts on the school. In addition, the at-large senator opportunity will allow me to know more colleagues, promote professional associations, and learn from them to serve the Stockton community better.

(What to do) If I am elected, I will actively engage in the Faculty Senate's activities, such as attending regular meetings, expressing opinions on various topics raised by the meeting, submitting proposals through corresponding procedures, and participating in the voting process. Moreover, I will also be active in other volunteering opportunities to help improve the Faculty Senate.

Candidate Profile – Helen Wei

Name and Title: Helen Wei, Associate Professor

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 12

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

As the chair for the Faculty Senate Information Technology and Media Services Subcommittee for the past four years, I've gained valuable experience in advocating for faculty members across the university. Serving on a university-wide committee like the Faculty Senate At-Large Senator would enable me to further amplify faculty voices and represent their interests to administrators. Being a faculty senator provides an opportunity to advocate for faculty and staff, exercising leadership and making a meaningful impact at the faculty senate level. I believe faculty senate involvement is a powerful way to contribute positively to our institution.

Candidate Profile – Kerrin Wolf

Name and Title: Kerrin Wolf, Associate Professor

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 9

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I have been serving as an At-Large Senator for most of my time at Stockton and I enjoy representing the faculty in the shared governance process. I've done my best to stay informed and be prepared for meetings, so I can be actively engaged as we work through items on the agenda each month. I have also served in a wide variety of other roles on campus that have helped me build institutional knowledge that informs my work as a Senator.

Candidate Profile – Jongbok Yi

Name and Title: Jongbok Yi, Associate Professor

School: ARHU

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 11

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

In light of my intrigue in the communication and decision-making processes of the Senate, I aspire to pursue the Senator-at-Large position. Previous Senate terms in ARHU lacked active engagement in collecting colleagues' perspectives. This prompted me to envision a more dynamic approach. By establishing open lines of communication with ARHU faculty, I aim to effectively convey their opinions to the Senate, thereby leaving a palpable impact on the future of the Stockton community.

Candidate Profile – Yuli Zhang

Name and Title: Yuli Zhang, Assistant Professor of Business Studies, Marketing

School: BUSN

Position sought: At-Large Senator

Number of Years at Stockton: 6

Why do you want to be a Senator or Committee Chair? What would you bring to this position? (150 words or less)?

I want to be Senator to advocate for the needs and concerns of both faculty and students. I'm committed to making sure that everyone's voice gets heard and considered when we're making decisions. As a Senator, I will work diligently to address issues that impact our academic community. I am dedicated to promoting a supportive atmosphere for our faculty and students.