

## Candidates for FSU Executive Committee, Spring 2021 Election

The following individuals have submitted the required paperwork to be a candidate for a position on the FSU Executive Committee. Below is each candidate, their title, and a 150-word statement.

### Vice President – Vote for one

**Caroline L. Coscia**, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science (incumbent seeking re-election)

My 2019 candidate statement said, *‘ensuring processes are followed, transparent and communicated in a timely manner’*. and *‘What is the added value of my FSU membership? In the next year, this can be accomplished through planning, information, and engagement.’* I believe we have made great strides in these goals, but we still have a way to go. We held members forums, encouraged members to attend bargaining sessions, and provided bargaining updates. Working with President Striffler, our interactions with Administration have been shared with you.

Today, the FSU is at the table in coalition with our sister unions, at UMB and the UMass system, to represent your interest on issues related to health and safety as well as parking. I ask for your vote to continue to improve our processes, share information, support our sister unions, focus on racial justice, and take your concerns to administration.

### Tenured Faculty – Special election, vote for three

**Joel Fish**, Assistant Professor (tenure likely to be granted at the end of this academic year), Mathematics

As a mathematics professor, I am running to further the representation of the College of Science and Mathematics (CSM) within the FSU Executive Committee, aiming to make it more commensurate with the active role that CSM plays on campus. In addition, I hope to represent the many people who have contacted me over the past semester, expressing the need for greater diversity of viewpoints in Union discourse and decisions.

Tenured candidates continued on next page

**Sana Haroon**, Associate Professor, History/Asian Studies

I've been at UMass Boston since 2012, tenured since 2017. I am a joint appointment to the History and Asian Studies Departments and this is my first FSU Executive Committee election. I have participated in FSU-initiated conversations among Faculty of Color and have a particular interest in the challenges facing international faculty and staff. I pledge to be available to my colleagues as I participate in the work of the ExCom to better understand how I can serve your vision for UMB.

**José Martínez-Reyes**, Associate Professor, Anthropology (incumbent seeking re-election)

My experience at UMass during the past 12 years has allowed me to get to know and love the ideas and principles of what this institution represents as a public university with an urban mission. Having served half-term as Tenured Representative has strengthened my commitment to labor conditions, rights, and benefits. We know Higher Ed is in crisis and under attack on many fronts. As a parent of a student in the UMass system, I am able to see how this crisis affects students as well. I have been an activist in other areas of my life and I'm deeply committed to justice. I am enthusiastic and motivated to work to defend and increase the rights of ALL faculty. Our labor conditions have a potential to improve. If I'm re-elected, I am committed to be transparent, work collaboratively and guided by the principle of solidarity with our sister unions.

**Jeffrey Melnick**, Professor, American Studies (incumbent seeking re-election)

I have felt very honored to serve on the FSU Executive Committee over the past couple of years during a time of difficult transition for UMB. I think the new leadership of the FSU, along with the whole ExCom, has done a fantastic job of coalition building across campus and beyond to fight for the embattled urban mission of the university. As a member of this ExCom and in my work as its communications director, I have seen that it is necessary—and possible—to use our collective strength to fight for the common good: on campus, in the surrounding community, and beyond. I feel energized and challenged by this work and hope I might continue to serve as one representative of the tenured faculty on campus, a representative who understands that with this position of great privilege comes the responsibility to work hard for the interests of all members.

Tenured candidates continued on next page

**Surjit Tinaikar**, Associate Professor, Accounting and Finance

I am keen to serve on the Executive Committee of the FSU because I have always been interested in representing the interests of the constituencies of the FSU - both faculty and the librarians. It gives me an opportunity to give back to the organization that has served my own interests over all my years at UMB. I understand that unions are only as effective as the active participation of their constituents. I therefore want to be more involved so that I can contribute to making this institution stronger. Also the recent transparency in bargaining negotiations has alerted me to the diversity and complexity of issues surrounding collective bargaining and I am curious to know more about this, if not actively participate. Part of my academic research involves labor unions and how they have evolved to be important governance structures in corporate America. I am therefore also intellectually curious to understand better how unions operate in non-profit settings.

**Brian White**, Associate Professor, Biology

Since 1997, I have taught large and small classes to a wide range of levels. From my students, I have learned about their lives, their aspirations, and the daily struggles they go through to pursue an education. I have worked with colleagues to develop their skills as teachers; through this, I have seen their outstanding commitment to educating our students and the wide range of environments where they teach. On sabbatical, I have seen how different universities are structured and experienced the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches. Finally, as Associate Provost for the past two years, I have seen the dedication and competence of those who work in the university administration as they work to achieve our mission given many challenging constraints. I hope to use what I have learned to help faculty and staff to do our best for our students and to thrive at UMass Boston.

## Non-Tenure Track Faculty – Vote for two

### **Lynne Byall Benson**, Senior Lecturer I, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

I have been an NTT member of the faculty in the department Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies since 2012, and I am very proud to be associated with UMB, Boston's public, minority-majority higher education institution. I have long felt that NTT faculty deserve the respect of the administration and our tenured faculty peers, which we have earned in the commitment to teaching, service and research that we have demonstrated. We need a strong voice in addressing these issues, among others of university policy, and I would be proud to serve and advocate on behalf of my NTT colleagues.

### **Dana Comesso**, Senior Lecturer II and Undergraduate Program Director, Exercise and Health Science

I started at UMass Boston in 2008 as a part-time lecturer after 9 years with the US Olympic Committee in Sport performance. Since then, I have held a full-time NTT position (since 2010), earned my EdD (Northeastern), and been promoted to Senior Lecturer II. I love teaching, but service is as important to me. I have participated in the CIT NTT Seminar, served on committees at various levels, including Chair of the Constitution Committee for Faculty Council, which led to the approval of NTT faculty eligibility to serve as voting members on the Council, current Chair of the Joint University Athletics Committee, and have held the role of Undergraduate Program Director in the EHS Program for the past 10 years. My motivation for running is to be an advocate for NTT faculty and concerns related to job security, course load and assignments, and representation in service.

### **George Kelley**, Senior Lecturer, Management Science and Information Systems

I have for years attended union meetings and several union leadership development events, in Framingham and now online, on open and practical approaches to organizing and bargaining. I have a strong background in operations and technology management, including managing budgets and negotiating contracts with different stakeholders. I have been at UMass Boston for some 20 years now. I hope as ExCom member to be able to help energize our union processes, facilitate transparent and inclusive member participation, and improve our pay, benefits, and working conditions.

## Pre-Tenure Faculty – Vote for one

**Meghan Kallman**, Assistant Professor, School for Global Inclusion and Social Development (incumbent seeking re-election)

I am running for a second term to continue advocating for the pre-tenure faculty at the University. A longtime community organizer, a sociologist, and entering my fourth year at UMB, I have built the relationships and the knowledge to be an effective advocate for those of us on the tenure track, and a strong ally to those in other instructional positions, either NTT, tenured, or professional staff such as librarians. I believe that the role of a union is twofold – to advocate for better working conditions for faculty, staff, and students in the immediate term, and also to be an advocate in the broader system of higher education, which is itself shaped by the intersecting trajectories of sexism, racism, access issues, funding issues, and others. I am committed to supporting the pre-tenure faculty in this university in our work towards fulfilling UMB's mission.