

Candidates for the 2020/2021 FSU Executive Committee

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

President (Vote for One)

Marlene Kim, Professor of Economics (candidate for re-election)

Over the past six years as FSU President, I secured a 2:2 course load for most Colleges, won continuous employment for NTTs, organized department chairs into a union, and, working with sister unions across Massachusetts, won retroactive pay, enhanced tuition benefits for dependents, and prevented drastic changes to your health care and increasing the share of your costs.

I worked with the university to conduct the much-needed gender/race equity study, am leading the fight against Mt. Ida, and am building this union by working with all members, hearing and responding to all your concerns, and involving more members.

I have deep knowledge of our campus, and the experience (15 years' bargaining), record of success, proven leadership and respect statewide and within the UMass System to be most effective. A daughter of farmworkers and a former organizer, I became an Economics Professor, specializing in work, workers, discrimination, and unions. Website: Marlene.Kim

Steve Striffler, Director, Labor Resource Center, Professor of Anthropology

In addition to serving on the FSU executive committee and bargaining team, I have been involved in the labor movement as a scholar and participant for over twenty years. If elected President, I will work to strengthen the FSU's capacity to be a powerful voice for faculty and librarians. In order to face ongoing threats to our urban mission, we need to strengthen the FSU by developing a union that is more democratically and transparently run; by better engaging our members on issues that matter to them; by providing a stronger defense for the most vulnerable among us; by improving our relationships with other campus unions, the Faculty Council, and allies on campus; and by strengthening our connections with unions across the state, with the MTA, and with sympathetic politicians and policymakers across the region. We need a union where member involvement is encouraged and made easier by union leadership.

Librarian (Vote for One)

Jessica Holden, Reference Archivist (Librarian III), (candidate for re-election)

After serving my first term on the FSU Executive Committee from 2018-2020, I am now running for re-election for the Librarian Representative position. During my first two years on the Executive Committee, I served on several subcommittees, including the Communications Committee, Elections Committee, and Procedures Committee. I have advocated for my fellow librarians, both individually and collectively, on union-related matters. I have also been active in the leadership of the Librarians Personnel Committee, previously serving as the LPC's secretary, chair, and past chair. I strongly believe in the importance and power of labor unions and workers' rights and would be honored to continue this work if re-elected as the Librarian Representative. Thank you.

Tenured Faculty (Vote for Three)

NOTE: There are three positions up for election. One is to fill the remaining months of a resigned member. The other two positions are the standard two-year term that begins at the conclusion of Spring 2020 semester and runs to Spring 2022.

Bottom line: There are two full two-year term positions (May 2020 to May 2022) and one position to fill the remaining term (March 2020 to May 2021) that require a member to be elected to fill. When voting you will select three (3) members.

Sofya Aptekar*, Assistant Professor of Sociology

(* Will assume committee duties upon receipt of positive tenure decision in Summer 2020)

As a member of FSU, I have served on the executive committee as a pre-tenure rep; bargained for junior research leave; helped research, develop, and push through more open and accountable bargaining procedures; and built the communications infrastructure for a more engaged union. I am part of a national network of higher education union organizers, and engage in applied research with the labor movement. Issues of particular interest to me include supporting faculty of color, women faculty, LGBTQ faculty, and faculty dealing with immigration issues; protecting academic freedom; strengthening open bargaining; making FSU more transparent and inclusive for the rank-and-file member; building coalitions with other unions, community groups, and our students; and expanding the issues we fight for as a union. At a university pummeled by austerity measures, our strength lies in organizing together. Let's make FSU a vibrant, powerful, and democratic force for the urban mission.

José Martínez-Reyes, Associate Professor of Anthropology and School for the Environment (Affiliate)

My experience at UMass Boston during the past 11 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. At this juncture, I am in a better position to understand the politics related 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. 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 our rights as faculty. Our labor conditions have a potential to improve. If I'm elected, I am committed to be transparent, work collaboratively and guided by the principle of solidarity with our sister unions.

Tim Sieber, Professor of Anthropology (candidate for re-election)

I have had the privilege of presently serving as a tenured faculty representative on the Executive Committee, and ask your support for continuing for another term. Being on the ExCom is challenging, individually and collectively, keeping watch on administrative practice on campus, and devising effective ways of intervening whenever colleagues perceive they are being unjustly treated. With many others, a strong concern I have had from the beginning is to support efforts to create a more inclusive union that puts racial justice as a central commitment. We have begun to make some progress in this direction, but have a long way to go yet, and if elected, I would rededicate myself to helping to advance this particular project. Another key issue for me is assuring a responsible stance on the part of the university toward our Boston neighbors in relation to planning for the Bayside and Pump House developments.

Non-Tenure Track Faculty (Vote for Two)

NOTE: There are two positions up for election. One is to fill the remaining months of a resigned member plus a full two-year term. The other position is the standard two-year term that begins at the conclusion of Spring 2020 semester and runs to Spring 2022.

Bottom Line: There is one full two-year term position (May 2020 – May 2022) and one position to fill the resigned member's term (March 2020 – May 2020) plus serve a full two-year term (May 2020 to May 2022). When voting you will select two (2) members.

Monique Fuguet, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics, (candidate for re-election)

I am running for re-election as NTT Rep (and current Treasurer) to keep helping our union realize the ideals of more transparency, democracy and inclusion, humbly believing I have more to offer than when I joined ExCom in Fall 2017 as a voice for the unique concerns of NTT faculty.

This includes knowledge/skills I've gained about important labor issues through attending conferences/workshops, listening to those with on-the-ground experience, and asking a lot of questions. I remain committed to promoting unity among faculty across rank/discipline/demographics, joining with sister unions to resist privatization, supporting vulnerable programs/centers/students, resurrecting our urban mission, and achieving equity for NTTs. I fought hard with colleagues to get FSU to accept open bargaining. Our collaboration resulted in our most diverse bargaining team ever.

If re-elected, I will continue using my talents to help FSU build its power post-Janus, improve internal communication and consensus-building and restore alliances on campus.

George Kelley, Senior Lecturer in MSIS.

I have been teaching part-time at UMass Boston as an NTT for nearly 20 years now. I have for years attended union meetings and several union leadership development events, most recently again in Framingham on new and practical approaches to organizing and bargaining, and will again in Quincy this coming May. I have been following the funding cutbacks and related administrative abuses with alarm. I have a strong background in operations and technology management in a variety of industries, including managing budgets and negotiating contracts in the service of different stakeholders and market constituencies. I hope as ExCom member to be able to help modernize and energize our union processes so as to enable greater transparency and allow for more effective and inclusive member participation and collaborative engagement.

Linda Ai-Yun Liu, Lecturer in Sociology

Active in the FSU since 2015, I have seen numerous budget cuts and layoffs that have harmed my colleagues, our working conditions, and overall morale. Many NTTs feel they are undervalued and don't have a voice. I can personally attest to the inequities and sense of powerlessness that all too many of us face on a regular basis. If I'm elected, I will continue to fight for greater equity and improved working conditions for all, building on my work with the Caucus for a Democratic Union (CDU), Save UMB, the FSU's Associate Lecturer Subcommittee, and the current Contract Bargaining Support Team. I am committed to defending the public urban mission of our campus, and I believe that the strength of the union lies with its rank-and-file. I will make it a priority to listen to the most vulnerable faculty among us.

Pre-Tenure Faculty (Vote for One)

Travis Johnston, Assistant Professor of Political Science

I'm running to serve on the FSU Executive Committee because I believe that our union has a responsibility to fight for members of the bargaining unit and to advocate for policies that are forward looking, equitable, and just. In graduate school, I was a member of UAW Local 2865 and witnessed how union activism can be used to pressure university administrators to adopt progressive positions. Before that, I was a public school teacher and member of WTU Local 6, and observed how union leadership resisted efforts to undercut teacher tenure and compensation. These experiences taught me that a strong union is one that fights for bread-and-butter issues and social justice alike. If fortunate to serve, I will also push for additional research support (sabbatical, travel funds) and advocate for greater faculty representation in system operations, particularly related to any future college reorganizations and expansions to the Mt Ida program offerings.