

2018 Academic Senate and Faculty Assembly Elections, Candidate Brochure

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I. Five Associate Faculty Candidates are running for two open seats on the Academic Senate: Eduardo Aguilar, Robin Allyn, Karla Cordero, Samira Rostami, and Lisa Taylor.

Four candidates submitted the following statements, presented in alphabetical order.

Eduardo Aguilar

Dear Associate Faculty,

I humbly ask you to vote for me to serve as your voice on the MiraCosta College Academic Senate. I attended MiraCosta College as a student from 1998-2002. In the Summer of 2007 (while a graduate student at UCLA), I participated in the SDICCA Program, which brought me back to MiraCosta as a history instructor. Over the past ten years I have gained extensive experience in constructive collaboration among peers. I am confident that given the opportunity I would prove to be a valuable member of the academic senate.

Which committees you served on and when?

President’s Advisory Committee on Diversity and Equity. 2013-2014.

Diversity, Equity, & Cultural Competency (DEqCC) Committee. Spring 2014-Present

Which leadership roles have you held?

Associate Faculty Senator February-May 2018

Undocumented Student Educational Issues Committee (Dream Keepers). Spring 2015-Present.

Human Rights Council of Oceanside. Co-founder, student club advisor, community organization adviser

Encuentros Leadership Conference Presenter. 2006-2012

Barrio Empowerment Conference Presenter. 2013-Present

MEChA Co-Advisor. 2007-Present

Puente Mentor. 2016

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Latino/Chicano Graduation Emcee. 2017 & 2018.

While at MiraCosta I have produced and presented guided discussions on various social and historical issues including; Afro-Latino History and Identity, The History of Mexican Independence, Identity for Latinos, Undocumented Student's Experiences, the Concept of Death in Mesoamerica, California Native Cultures and the Missions, Latino Educational Attainment, Controversies on Columbus Day, and the History of Cinco de Mayo.

What do you think are the five most pressing issues facing the Academic Senate today, and how has your work over the past three to five years shown your commitment to these issues?

1) Associate Faculty involvement in Academic Governance and the college in general needs to be improved.

I know firsthand what the adjunct faculty lifestyle is like and what is like to be teaching in multiple colleges. I know that is nearly impossible to commit yourself with things beyond the classroom when you are in two or three different colleges; nevertheless, I am here to show that it is possible, it is beneficial to our academic careers and our students, and our responsibility as active members of society.

2) Job security, health care access, and retirement education for Associate Faculty.

As a head of household who has taught at three different colleges at one time, I understand the feeling of waiting to get a class assignment, not having health care for you and your loved ones, and the concerns of retirement as a part time instructor. As a member of the Academic Senate I will advocate for Associate Faculty rights. I have attended the union luncheon over the years and kept myself updated on new contract policies.

3) Exposing and keeping students involved in the issues happening in our communities and nation.

Some of my class assignments include student community involvement, learning beyond their own cultures and mentoring younger students. I have partnered up with K-12 teachers to take some of my community college students to continuation and elementary schools to create awareness and get the younger community interested in college. As a result, I have had students take my class once they entered college.

4) The need for a basic orientation and introduction to the campus for new instructors beyond the workshop during FLEX week.

Every time I meet a new associate faculty, I make sure to take the time to introduce them to the administrative support staff in the associate faculty workroom and to some of the people I have met over the years that I know will be instrumental to their success.

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5) For the Academic Senate to continue taking leadership, symbolic positions, and action on current educational and equity issues that are affecting faculty, staff, and the students we serve.

In the past four years, I have been a member of the Diversity, Equity, & Cultural Competency (DEqCC) Committee. My participation includes; helping plan our faculty Cultural Competence Conference every semester, developing and presenting workshops on new and central issues dealing with Cultural Competence.

What would you do to keep your constituents informed, and what would you do to elicit feedback on important issues from your constituents?

I will attend every Senate meeting, serve and represent you with dignity and respect, and keep an open line of communication, especially when important issues come up. I will be available via email, cell phone, and in person for any of the Associate Faculty member.

Thank you, Eduardo Aguilar-Associate Faculty History Department

"Plant good acts and you will harvest new habits, plant good habits and you will harvest great character, plant great character and you will harvest a destiny"
Toltec Philosophy

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Robin Allyn

I ask for your vote to represent your interests as a Senator on the Academic Senate.

The wonderful SDICCA internship program brought me to MiraCosta College in the Fall of 2014. Under the guidance and mentorship of Sociology department chair, Dr. Thao Ha, I was well prepared for a new career as an associate faculty member of Sociology. Over the past four years, I have gained extensive lecture experience and teach a variety of courses that range from introductory courses in sociology to social psychology and statistics for the social sciences.

Q: Which committees have you served on and when? Which leadership roles have you held?

Currently, I am a member of the Academic Senate for MiraCosta representing associate faculty. I also serve on the MiraCosta Online Educators (MOE) committee, which provides "advice and counsel to the Academic Senate and the MiraCosta community regarding online education." Since Fall of 2016, I have represented the associate faculty as a member of the Service Learning Advisory Board. The board brings together MiraCosta faculty/staff, administration and students with select community partners and in an effort to maintain and create new meaningful service learning opportunities for our students.

Q: What do you think are the five most pressing issues facing the Academic Senate today, and how has your work over the past three to five years shown your commitment to these issues?

1) Open educational resources: Teaching on a student-centered campus, in a department that actively advocates for student equity, I have been working toward making all the courses I teach utilize open educational (free) resources so that every student has access to all materials, regardless of their financial situation.

2) Preparing students for life outside the classroom: I integrate service learning into my regular curriculum, and have been successful at getting my students engaged with the community and connecting that experience to our classroom curriculum.

3) Bridging the basic skills gap: I advocate for integrating high school performance results rather than the sole use of standardized testing in the placement of students into transferable English and Math classes.

4) Mental health awareness: Academic life can be stressful for students as well as faculty. Helping MiraCostans achieve work-life balance is an important issue that can always be improved upon.

5) Many Associate Faculty carry concerns about job security, health insurance coverage, retirement planning, and finding pathways to become competitive for opportunities for full-time employment. I am sensitive to these concerns, and as a Senator will advocate for Associate Faculty rights.

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Q: What would you do to keep your constituents informed, and what would you do to elicit feedback on important issues from your constituents?

An important quality in an Associate Faculty Senator is to be a good listener and to be available. I am available to listen through face-to-face meetings, via e-mail and over the phone. To elicit feedback from faculty, I would use web resources such as online survey tools to keep the communication flowing.

In conclusion, I am highly motivated to do all I can to help maintain and improve student education and services for our diverse student body at MiraCosta College. I would really appreciate your vote to represent you in the Academic Senate.

Warm Regards,

~Robin N. Allyn~

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Samira Rostami

1. Which committees have you served on and when?

While I have not yet had the pleasure of serving on any committees at Mira Costa College, I make up for that lack of experience with quick learning, energy, curiosity, and dedication. Throughout my scholastic career, I have demonstrated intrinsic interest and ability in collaborating and contributing to my peers, colleagues, and the community. I believe very strongly in effective governance, and the best governance occurs in the spirit of creativity and collegiality. I can offer that spirit to the Academic Senate, and I know that I can also take from it the same.

2. Which leadership roles have you held?

Director of Philanthropy - Communication Graduate Student Organization, SDSU, 2011-2013

Human Resources Coordinator - Forensics (Speech and Debate) Board of Directors, SDSU, 2010-2011

Public Relations Coordinator - Gen Why Homeless Advocacy, SDSU, 2010-2011

Vice President - Persian Club, RBHS, 2000-2003

Vice President - Writing Center, RBHS, 2001-2003

Co-Captain - Varsity Track and Field, RBHS, 2001-2002

3. What do you think are the five most pressing issues facing the Academic Senate today, and how has your work over the past three to five years shown your commitment to these issues?

I don't currently serve our constituents on the Academic Senate, so I can't pretend to know what's in their hearts and minds, nor will I pretend that I've to date done much to solve their issues. What I do know is that happy students, happy teachers, and happy administrators perform better, and that if elected to the Academic Senate, I will make it my primary goal to facilitate all three. Below are some issues - and ideas - I've identified based on my experiences as a former college student and current associate faculty member:

A. A sense of community – One issue that is echoed by nearly every student (and many faculty members) is the lack of a sense of community. In comparison to universities, community colleges are notoriously decentralized. But Mira Costa College doesn't have to be. Can we create an environment in which students, and faculty members, create stronger relationships with their peers and reap the benefits that a sense of belonging affords? I believe – nay, I know – we can. I would really like to see students more engaged in college life and with each other, as I know that the research consistently shows that engaged students feel more confident and happy, get better grades, and have better

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retainment and graduation rates. And, I'd like to make a strong effort to help create a stronger sense of community among faculty members as well, particularly associate faculty, so many of whom teach at multiple schools and, like many students, lack the sense of belonging and socialization so critical to their well-being and performance. These can be simple - game nights, a holiday party, monthly or bi-monthly get-togethers, etc., but their effect would be anything but minimal.

B. The Political Climate - Politics have always impacted colleges in both direct and indirect ways. In today's partisan political landscape, and particularly after recent events that have spurred student activism, creating programs, events, or resources for Spartans would prove useful. Some of our students are excited and riled up. Some feel their voices are increasingly silenced. Others are afraid, depressed, or purposefully unengaged. Yet others are finding their voice and their place in a democratic system, or building upon them. Nearly of them are at critical points in their personal, interpersonal, and social development. As educators and school administrators, we can do more to guide and support them. As a communication instructor, I have dedicated the last seven years of my life to help and inspire students to articulate their ideas, respect divergent viewpoints, critically analyze information, engage in healthy debate, and discover their societal contributions. I know that with you and my fellow Academic Senate members, I can help facilitate that on a larger, more comprehensive level.

C. Evaluation, Feedback, and Collaboration – Feedback is almost always a good thing. A better, and perhaps more frequent, method to assess all facets of student and employee experience can help inform us of what works, what doesn't work, and what needs improvement. I personally would like more frequent feedback from my peers, evaluators, and students, and I imagine other faculty members would welcome that as well. This could be done at an interdisciplinary level that falls outside of the regular evaluation process – so, for example, we could create a voluntary, collaborative network of faculty members who sit in on a class, and provide feedback that does not go on teaching records. I have recently begun doing just that with a few colleagues at another school, and always welcome any kind of feedback and collaboration.

D. Social media – That's where our current and prospective students are. So let's meet them there. I just looked up Mira Costa College's Instagram account, and, while it is certainly on the right track, it could be better. It can drive more engagement, engagement that would help with that sense of community I mentioned earlier, and engagement that could appeal to prospective students. Creating a wider, more engaged Mira Costa social media platform is something I am keenly interested in developing.

E. Associate faculty working conditions – Last, but definitely not least, our associate faculty. They comprise a plurality of the faculty and their contributions are often underrated. I am lucky to teach in a great department, but I know that many of Mira Costa's associate faculty members experience continuous uncertainty, lack job security, support, and guidance, and feel under-valued and overwhelmed. Anything we can do to help support their well-being, development, and pocketbook is a must.

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4. What would you do to keep your constituents informed, and what would you do to elicit feedback on important issues from your constituents?

Open communication and feedback are my strong suits. I would do anything in my capacity to inform my constituents, and, more importantly, to hear their concerns and garner feedback. I would, of course, learn the best practices that have proven effective for current and former Academic Senate members, and I'd be thrilled about creating my own as well. Whether it be sending out newsletter emails, time spent meeting with groups or individual constituents, creating surveys, or even instituting anonymous feedback methods, I'd eagerly welcome any feedback, concern, or opinion my constituents share. Every constituent has a perspective I don't have, can learn from, and can help serve. That is where my strengths lie, as well as my desire.

Samira

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Lisa Taylor

I humbly ask for your vote in the coming election for MiraCosta College Academic Senate. I have been fortunate enough to work at MiraCosta College for the past three years. I have been working in the California Community College System for ten years.

Before coming to MiraCosta, I served on the Academic Senate and Institute for Professional Development committees at Golden West Community College. Additionally, I currently volunteer on the Faculty Mentoring Program at CSUSM. I am also involved with Department Meetings here at MiraCosta.

There are several issues facing the Academic Senate today. First and foremost, our focus needs to be on students and helping them achieve their goals. Working with other colleges to understand the needs and expectations for transfer success is very important. We need to continue to spread information to our faculty about Low and Zero cost textbook options in a clear message. Faculty members continue to stay committed and focused on the college's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus.

I am available and in the Associate Faculty Offices several days a week. I love to talk to Associate Faculty and get a better understanding of individual needs. I would enjoy using this time to keep members up to date on Academic Senate issues and to solicit feedback. Of course, I'm always available by phone and e-mail as well.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lisa Taylor

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II. Statements from Full-Time Faculty Candidates for the Academic Senate (all candidates are running unopposed)

AS Senator

Yesenia Balcazar

Hello, my name is Yesenia Balcazar and I am the Faculty Director for the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) at MiraCosta College. I have served as the EOPS Faculty Director for 4 years and as the EOPS Student Services Coordinator from 2005-2014. I am excited to take an active role in the academic senate and hope to have your support.

Robert Bond

I am a newly-tenured faculty member with experience serving on the Academic Affairs Committee (2015/16), Courses and Program Committee (2016-2018), and the International Education Advisory Group (2016-2018). Although I have yet to hold any positions of leadership at MiraCosta College, I welcome the chance to serve on the Academic Senate and work with my colleagues on important issues.

As a senator, I look forward to working with my colleagues on a variety of matters. First, I believe the Senate has played and will continue to play a very important role in the implementation of the Guided Pathways/ACP initiative. I also think that the AS has a very important role in working with other campus stakeholders in supporting initiatives concerning equity, inclusion, and diversity. As my office is in San Elijo, I will be a voice for that community on the Senate. I also believe strongly that the Senate must continue to fulfill its role in advising on all issues related to 10 + 1. I also believe that it is important that the AS works with our colleagues at the Faculty Assembly in cases where issues overlap; for example, in evaluation. Finally, I also look forward to working on initiatives to streamline the organization and workflow of committees under the Academic Senate, though this review might be completed before next fall.

I will be very proactive in communications with my constituents. I will provide summaries and related documentation to them on important issues and seek feedback. I am a careful decision maker who would study all sides of an important issue before voting. I will also consult with my constituents as to what matters they feel are important for the Senate to take up. I look forward to participating in the Senate and to support its role in collegial governance.

John Kirwan

I have been pleased to serve on many different committees over the past 21 years at the college. The work that I am involved in now with DEqCC and as Chair of the Letters Department has been deeply meaningful to me, getting at the issues that I consider most important for the college. Like so many of

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you, my work at the college has been deeply informed by my engagement with students—in my case that was enriched by eight years teaching Summer Bridge and nine teaching in the Puente Program. These experiences have shaped me professionally and helped me appreciate the needs of students populations that have been historically underserved. Both as a member of DEqCC and as department chair, I've been proud to be involved in significant changes that help promote a more equitable climate in the college, including reformed hiring practices, reformed student assessment and placement, and more culturally competent pedagogy. The approaching implementation of Pathways and the continuing refinement of FYF and Dual-Enrollment are important initiatives that the college is involved in and that require faculty input to be successful. While I am aware of the push from Sacramento regarding these and other initiatives, I have always been proud of being part of faculty bodies that have been ahead of the curve, responding to the students before us and to the best practices in our fields. I'd like to see faculty keep that edge, and so as Senate representative it would be imperative to me to be in close communication with constituents in the hopes that faculty find ourselves not simply responding to Sacramento but leading the way.

III. Statements from Full-Time Faculty Candidates for the Faculty Assembly (all candidates are running unopposed)

FA President

Brad Byrom

What skills or experiences do you possess that would be a benefit to the Faculty Assembly's main purposes (see FA Constitution, Article I, numbers 1-8--however, there is no need to address each of the 8 purposes)?

Over my 18 years at MiraCosta I've been fortunate to have the opportunity to develop substantial leadership skills that I think are especially useful to me as FA President. I've worked with a wide range of faculty, staff, and administrators on all sorts of committees, and participated in several leadership training workshops and conferences. In the process, I think I've made significant strides as a leader, becoming more patient with change, while still aggressively defending faculty rights when necessary.

The leadership style I've developed has allowed me to work effectively with both our FA leadership team. Evidence of that includes the fact that over the 4 years the FA has existed and that I've served as president, there has been very little turn over on the FA Exec or Council. As well, I think the FA and the AS have worked together very effectively, and especially since the hiring of the district's Director of Labor Relations (Hayley Schwartzkopf) working with the district has become a smooth and efficient process.

The many leadership and committee roles I've served in have allowed me to become intimately familiar with the day-to-day operations of the college, including its budget development, the Board of Trustees, the Academic Senate, the negotiation processes, hiring processes, and much more. I've served on each of the search committees for each for the past four college presidents, and have become adept at working effectively with our administrative leaders while also standing up for faculty rights and working conditions needs.

In pursuing my PhD in history, I studied (and now teach) three major fields: California history, and American social history, and medical history. These fields (which include a great deal of labor, race, and gender history) have helped me to better understand the importance of labor relations. At MiraCosta we are clearly fortunate to have terrific working conditions, but history shows that such conditions are rare, and that we must stay vigilant and work hard to defend the gains that MiraCosta faculty leaders have achieved.

What will you do to keep all Faculty Assembly members updated about important issues?

Over the past four years I've put a great deal of emphasis on keeping FA members updated on important issues and will continue to do so. I send emails when urgent issues arise and make use of the excellent newsletter and website created by the FA's Communication Committee to convey information

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regarding matters of lesser urgency. I provide substantial reports at the start of each FA Council meeting and respond as quickly as possible to faculty who have questions about working conditions, negotiations, etc. I often meet face-to-face with individual faculty members, and over the past year I have begun to reach out and make appointments with individual faculty members so that I get input from a wide range of academic disciplines, experience levels, etc.

I meet at least twice each year with newly hired, tenure-track faculty to help introduce them to the role of the FA and the expectations laid out in our FA contract. Each semester I lead at least one flex activity for all full-time faculty and am often invited to speak to departments or other groups of faculty to address specific working conditions issues. One of the great rewards of this job is the opportunity to meet with my colleagues and hear their perspective on important issues, and I truly enjoy the visiting faculty to learn how things are going in their particular role. If I am fortunate enough to be elected to another term, I hope you'll all consider meeting with me at your convenience.

Finally, I attend most meetings of the Board of Trustees, and provide updates to both our FA Exec and Council, as well as periodic articles on Board activities to all faculty via our FA newsletter.

What leadership roles have you assumed during your MiraCosta College career and which accomplishments are you most proud of?

I have served as both the Academic Senate President and Faculty Assembly President (each for two consecutive terms). At the time I served as AS President, the role included duties related to working conditions—duties now addressed by the FA. In each role I was in a position to assist faculty facing workplace challenges, and in most cases I've been able to help faculty work their way through these challenges.

As well, I served as AS Vice President and Council member (when there was an AS Council), and have served on negotiating teams for the full time faculty during 5 different negotiations. In those negotiations, I served as either the Chief Negotiator, or president. I've also served as history department Chair for the past seven years (happily, history has a new chair beginning this summer) and have served on at least a dozen different standing and ad hoc committees at one time for another.

This issue in particular is one that I have likely served as the Chair and Co-Chair of a number of other committees, including the Professional Growth and Evaluation Committee. While evaluation remains a matter over which the Academic Senate has major responsibilities, the process of negotiating changes to our evaluation process is a subject of mandatory bargaining, and therefore a matter for the FA to address. My background as a former chair of PG&E has provided me with valuable experience in assisting tenure and tenure-track faculty through the evaluation processes. Among the many committees I have served on over the years, few were more important than the ad hoc committee that explored and developed the Faculty Assembly.

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How does your previous service demonstrate your readiness to assume the presidency of the FA?

Please see above.

What would you do to ensure the creation of an inclusive Faculty Assembly Council that represents the full diversity of the MiraCosta faculty?

I believe the FA Council is inclusive, and that this is because the Executive Committee and the faculty as a whole have stepped forward and worked with me to make it so. We have had numerous, lengthy discussions at meetings of both the FA Exec and Council (especially Council) to discuss what constitutes inclusivity and diversity—particularly in relations to working conditions. Issues like race, gender, and ability certainly matter and are taken into account when faculty are selected for a role on Council, but the FA has gone far beyond hoping for diversity by actively recruiting faculty for the Council with an eye towards diversity and inclusivity. We make every effort to ensure that there GE, CE, Non-credit, library, directors, and counseling faculty are represented on the FA Council, along with representatives from small, medium, and large sized departments. We also seek out faculty who are untenured to ensure that their voices are heard—in fact, even though we have tenure track faculty on the FA Council, I see untenured faculty as a group that could easily be ignored or exploited, and so I've met with a large number of them to assess their needs in a confidential manner. In those rare instances where we lack such representation of a particular group, we make sure that we approach faculty from those disciplines to gain input.

When it comes to working conditions, the difference that most impact us tend to relate to our academic disciplines, department size, family status, gender, and proximity to retirement. Why these? Because various academic disciplines have different needs in terms of reassigned time, length of contract, and things like responsibility and performance factors. Gender and family status has a clear impact on faculty members, particularly when it comes to maternity, family leave, and health benefits, and the FA is seeking to make improvements in this area and has placed particular focus on such issues as a subject of upcoming (and ongoing) negotiations. Those nearing retirement also have unique concerns (for example, reduced work load and STRS) and so they too have been a subject of recruitment for roles on the FA Council.

While these issues tend to draw the most attention, other issues certainly do play a role and the FA has supported the hiring of a diverse faculty and the creation of district policies that take into account cultural differences. The FA regularly reviews and advises the district regarding diversity and hiring trends, and the need to create evaluation policies that take cultural differences into account.

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How would you approach future negotiations? What long and short-term strategies do you see as key to success?

Perhaps the most critical role for the FA—especially at this particular moment—is that of negotiating on behalf of all full-time faculty with the district. I’ve not only led or assisted in leading 5 separate formal negotiations, but I’ve also negotiated numerous smaller agreements with the district regarding such things as compensation for the Canvas transition. Since the FA was formed, we’ve seen steady improvements in working conditions, including the first salary increases in 6 years, stable benefits agreements (despite rising costs), significant increases to reassigned time for department chairs and others, and perhaps most importantly, a well-designed, clearly written, and highly protective contract.

Our FA Constitution requires that we negotiate using “the most effective and ethical means available in order to establish negotiation priorities and working conditions agreements with the District that are fair and equitable for all full-time faculty.” As FA president, I worked with our Executive Committee and our larger Council to develop a process for establishing negotiation priorities that allows all faculty to submit negotiation issues that are important to them. As we set priorities for the current negotiations, this resulted in dozens of submissions from faculty across all disciplines. Those issues were then prioritized by the FA Council (a diverse group including 20 of your colleagues) and are currently being addressed in the negotiation process.

Perhaps the most critical part of maintaining long term success in negotiations involves demonstrating to the Board of Trustees and administration that full time faculty are a uniquely competent and dedicated group. So often MCC faculty go well beyond the minimum expectations in performing their jobs, dedicating time in the community and around the campus in truly remarkable ways. In my role as FA president I’ve had unique access to our district leaders, and I make sure that they are aware of the wonderful work being done by our FA membership. When faculty dedicate their own time and resources to make the college a far better place, that needs to be recognized. When faculty put on a car show to raise funds for veterans, hold a cupcake sale to support LGBTQIA students, host foreign artists at their homes for the betterment of the arts, or stand on a street corner waving signs in support of a bond campaign, they are not only contributing to making MCC a wonderful asset for the community, but making the FA’s job much easier.

Among the most important of my long-term negotiation strategies is to encourage faculty to continue to go the extra mile, and make sure the college leadership is aware of it (which makes this a pretty cool job).

What do you think are the two or three most pressing issues facing the Faculty Assembly today?

The three most pressing issues are:

1. Maintaining strong working conditions through effective negotiations and establishing a clear understanding of our contract among both faculty and administration.

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2. Addressing the statewide surge in faculty investigations by better educating our membership about the investigation process and individual faculty rights.

3. Maintaining a solid, healthy working relationship with new AS leadership so that we may work together to effectively address issues that involve issues for which both groups are responsible.

FA Vice President

dara perales

Hi, everyone. I am Dara Perales, aka dara, and I am running for Faculty Assembly Council Vice President. Although I am running unopposed, I thought I would write this statement to honor our elections processes and the work of the Elections Committee members.

-What skills or experiences do you possess that would be a benefit to the Faculty Assembly's main purposes?

-To represent members in matters relating to employment conditions and employer employee relations, including but not limited to, wages, benefits, workload, and other terms and conditions of employment;

-To support quality education throughout the MiraCosta College District by promoting effective communication regarding employment conditions among the MiraCosta faculty, staff, administration, and trustees;

-To employ the most effective and ethical means available in order to establish negotiation priorities and working conditions agreements with the district that are fair and equitable for all FA members;

-To promote agreements that are consistent with the professional needs of faculty and with the district's commitment to maintaining the highest quality of education for our students, and that take into consideration the varied interests of a diverse faculty, staff, administration, and board of trustees;

-To maintain open, transparent, and inclusive processes among FA members while honoring the confidentiality of negotiations, and the personal privacy of individual FA members;

I believe I can respond to all five of these statements in one concise paragraph. I am, at heart, a teacher. I am not an administrator in training. Professionally, I am home as an English professor, specifically a compositionist. Everything I do outside of the classroom is to support my work in the classroom, and that carries over into my Faculty Assembly Council work. If I am supporting you as full-time faculty members, I am supporting student success because if your best interests are diligently

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championed, you can be more effective teachers, counselors, librarians, etc. Since I have been eligible, I have been nominated for leadership positions every election cycle: both on the Senate and FA “sides.” Now, due to my experience on Faculty Assembly Council, it seems to be a good time to accept this nomination and work on our behalf to represent us in terms of wages, workload, and benefits.

-What leadership roles have you assumed during your MiraCosta College career or elsewhere?

Since I was hired, full time, I have been on at least one committee every year. I have been a lead instructor before the Letters Department split into different, smaller departments; I have been a department chair; I first served on PG&E before chairing PG&E; I served as an Academic Senate Senator for several years; I have been on Faculty Assembly Council for the last few years, serving on the Ombuds Advisory Committee and going through the San Diego National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC) Training; I am currently on the Negotiating Team, working on behalf of faculty’s/students’ best interests. I worked with Mary Gross—our Ombudsperson--and a team to negotiate an agreement between FA and the District regarding the grievance policy, and I have had some training regarding representing faculty who are the subject of investigations. I have also attended, and will attend California Community College Independents (CCCI) conferences: spring and fall, 2017 and this coming May. During the fall, 2017 conference, I was able to sit with our Faculty Assembly’s chief legal counsel, David Conway to ask and hear answers to questions related to negotiations and ongoing legal issues in the state. Because I chaired PG&E and sat on Academic Senate, I learned about the academic and professional “side” of our MiraCosta roles. I grew to appreciate our evaluation processes, and I worked to maintain the high standards and rigor it they demand. In my current work on FA Council, I have gotten very familiar with the working conditions “side,” and I know these experiences make me well-suited to take on this leadership position.

-What do you think are the two or three most pressing issues facing the Faculty Assembly today?

I think we still deal with some misunderstanding about what the FA is, does, and represents for full-time faculty. I look forward to continuing to strengthen the relationship between Academic Senate and Faculty Assembly Council so we work, not as wholly separate (and in some cases opposing) entities, but as two halves of our professional lives here at MiraCosta. Lastly, anything remotely dealing with working conditions needs to be “above board” so we are not taken advantage of and so we are protected now and in the future.

FA Ombudsperson

Mary Gross

What skills or experiences do you possess that would be a benefit to the Faculty Assembly's main purposes (see FA Constitution, Article I, numbers 1-8--however, there is no need to address each of the 8 purposes)?

I have been honored to serve as your FA Ombudsperson and part of the FA Executive team for the past two-year term. During this time, the position of Ombudsperson has evolved greatly from its initial inception. As you know, the FA was established as the exclusive employee organization of the full-time faculty, and since then, the FA Executive team, the negotiating team, and the larger FA Council has worked diligently to represent all its members in employment matters and is currently negotiating updates to the comprehensive contract that articulates our employment rights and responsibilities. A great deal of my work as your Ombudsperson has involved ensuring that the contract is upheld and assisting faculty members when an alleged working-condition violation is identified. Fortunately, as part of the first contract, I led the FA team in the development of a strong grievance procedure that now resides in our contract and articulates the process for resolving grievances. With this in place, I have assisted several of your colleagues to resolve grievances successfully at the informal level. In addition to managing grievances, the Ombudsperson must work to assist in resolving conflicts between and among its members as well as providing Weingarten representation to faculty who are experiencing conflicts with administration and who desire assistance with issues faculty believe may result in disciplinary action. Again, I have been able to assist a number of your colleagues to advise and work through these issues and ensure they have representation when requested. Finally, the increase in faculty finding themselves the subject of Title IX and Title V complaints and the investigation that ensues has become the largest part of the Ombudsperson's work. Because ensuring the privacy of these individuals is utmost important, you may not be aware that your departmental colleague, committee member, or even officemate has had to endure an investigation. Preparing faculty for the often lengthy, stressful investigative process requires the advocacy of the Ombudsperson to provide ethical, respectful, empathetic representation and guidance in the most confidential manner provided by law. I pride myself on the reputation I have developed with both faculty and administration who identify these very traits in my interactions with them. The Ombudsperson must ensure first and foremost that the individual faculty member's rights are upheld and this includes seeking legal counsel, actively advocating for the faculty member throughout the process and most specifically in the investigatory interview, and supporting him/her during this most trying time through resolution. In assisting faculty in any of these Ombuds situations, I have been able to utilize my skillset as a critical and strategic thinker, an organized and diplomatic leader, an objective and empathetic listener, and a collegial collaborator all to support my work as your faculty advocate. However, the work of the Ombudsperson cannot be done in isolation. The Ombudsperson must work collegially and collaboratively with the FA Executive team as well as FA Council to ensure the consistent and objective processing of faculty concerns, complaints, grievances, and investigations. As your Ombudsperson, I have been sensitive to the diversity of our faculty and the varied interests among us, and I understand that each person is unique and reacts to issues differently.

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Regardless of the circumstance, my work has been to ensure that both the faculty member and the Faculty Assembly as a whole is well represented and protected through any conflict that arises, and I reflect on each experience and make thoughtful and considered recommendations that will assist the FA in our work going forward whether through language recommendations in the contract or professional development to lessen the incidents that distract from our primary mission.

What leadership roles have you assumed during your academic and/or professional career?

My nearly thirty years as a public employee devoted to the work and mission of the Community College has provided me with a comprehensive perspective and many leadership opportunities which all have influenced and benefited my work as Ombudsperson. I have served on the Academic Senate, the Collegial Negotiation Team, and a number of Senate Committees including Academic Affairs. For my department, I am the Lead Instructor and Department Chair. I also chaired the Basic Skills/ Student Success Committee as well as served as a Faculty Chair for Accreditation. Since the FA's inception, I have been an invested member, serving on its Council and then as your Ombudsperson. In addition to serving in the Ombuds and Exec work described above, I also worked with a subcommittee of FA Council to make recommendations for revisions to the FA Constitution and Bylaws. These were then considered by the FA Exec and the full FA Council and received unanimous support. The Constitution was then put to a full faculty vote and garnered over 95% voting approval. Each of these roles has provided me with opportunities to work alongside faculty, staff, and administration. It has also allowed me to develop a broad and wide-ranging vision of the workings of the college and the diverse perspectives among us.

What do you think are the two or three most pressing issues facing the Faculty Assembly today?

First, as an evolving and progressive college, MiraCosta and its employees, particularly faculty, will continue to be challenged with new and developing initiatives. As the exclusive representative of faculty for all working-related matters, the FA will constantly be involved with issues raised due to this evolution. It is critical that the FA leadership, particularly the Executive Team of which the Ombudsperson is a part, must be positioned to deal proactively vs. reactively as issues develop. Educating faculty and administrators to ensure the accurate interpretation and application of the contract is also critical to our success as an FA.

Having strong, respectful working relationships with the Academic Senate and Administration will ensure that the elements of our contract are understood, upheld, and applied consistently.

Secondly, addressing the increase in investigations of Title IX and Title V complaints against our members is a primary concern. The FA Exec and specifically the Ombudsperson must continue to educate faculty in understanding their rights, garnering necessary legal counsel on behalf of the FA, and preparing unit members for interviews. More work needs to be done to educate faculty on what can be done to avoid becoming the subject of an investigation, but as I have seen, often times complaints can

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be made whether warranted or not. We also need to work to reduce the interpersonal conflicts between faculty and administrators/staff as well as among faculty which interferes with us doing our best work and serving students. We need to work with administration to ensure a workplace free of harassment, with limited conflict, and a process to assist with conflict resolution.

What would you do to keep Faculty Assembly members informed, and what would you do to elicit feedback on important issues from members?

As your Ombudsperson, my door is always open. Over the past two years, I have assisted over a dozen of your colleagues to resolve grievances successfully; ensure rights through the investigative process providing exceptional, solid representation; afford Weingarten representation at meetings with administration where unit members were concerned about potential disciplinary action; assist with informal mediation for conflict resolution; and, of course, simply listen to and offer advice and assistance regarding any working condition issue or concern. To keep faculty informed, I made it a priority to develop an Office of the Ombuds website so faculty can access information related to their working conditions; I regularly write articles for the FA Newsletter; and I have facilitated a number of professional development workshops addressing the then proposed FA Constitution & Bylaw changes, Investigations, Weingarten Rights, and Conflict Resolution. Any faculty member can also submit a suggestion or request for agenda item through the FA website.

What skills or special training do you possess that would allow you to help others to resolve differences?

A critical and unique role of the Ombudsperson entails working to resolve differences, conflicts, or grievances. To do this well requires careful reasoning, an empathetic character, and the ability to advocate. Through my career, I have worked to develop these very skills. I have completed Mediation Training through the National Conflict Resolution Center. This training provided me with mediation concepts and processes as well as communication strategies for active listening, acknowledging, and reframing. As a language educator, I understand the art of communication and the delicate balancing act of skills required to hear and be heard, to understand and be understood. I have also attended a number of California Community College Independents (CCCI) conferences where I have collaborated with other Grievance Coordinators to share experiences and tools to assist with resolving differences among professionals. I know that my education, experience, and commitment to the community college mission have all benefited me in my ability to bring people together, encourage cooperation, and resolve differences collaboratively and professionally. It is with this same skill set that I promise to address the work required as your Ombudsperson if I am reelected.

FA Executive Member

Scott Fallstrom

Statement:

I am seeking your vote for FA-Exec. As a tenured faculty member with more than 20 years of teaching experience, I will continue to fight for what is fair and equitable for all faculty. I am a hard-worker who will put in the time necessary to make sure the job is done right, and to continue helping faculty in any way possible. I find it exciting to work with the dynamic group of faculty on FA Council and to be able to work for changes that will benefit all faculty through our negotiation process. I would appreciate your vote this year to continue serving you in this role.

What skills or experiences do you possess that would be a benefit to FA's main purposes?

I have served the FA as an elected Executive Member for the past 4 years, as well as serving as one of the representatives on the Fringe Benefit Committee. Further, I've served as Treasurer of the FA and as a member of both negotiation teams. When working with faculty around campus, I do my best to listen carefully and get all the relevant information from them so that I can represent them the best way possible. At times, this also requires educating faculty about the contract and how it works. One of my strengths is analyzing data and budgets. I prepare summaries of FA expenditures/budgets on an annual basis, and have moved to provide this information 1-2 times per term instead of just annually.

For FA purpose #3, I've personally been asked by faculty colleagues to review their paystubs/sick leave/banking spreadsheets for consistency. As a result, a number of faculty were able to resolve issues related to sick days, paid/banked overload, etc. Some faculty received back-pay for errors that had inadvertently shorted them money – at least 2 faculty received thousands of dollars to correct mistakes!

For FA purpose #4, I've written a number of articles for the FA newsletter under the "Dear Scotty" title which clarify and inform faculty about issues related to their working conditions. Each semester over the past 5 years, I've put on FLEX workshops designed to educate faculty about their retirement options and how working conditions issues (sick leave, banked hours, overload, etc) can impact retirement. These workshops are well attended and faculty continue asking me to hold them again – each time, there are new updates/changes that affect retirement planning!

For FA purpose #5, I've written over 15 proposals from different groups that were submitted to FA for prioritization during negotiations in 2014 and in 2017.

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What leadership roles have you assumed during your academic and/or professional career?

Roles I have assumed:

- BPC member (4 years). Served on a significant number of subcommittees including revising the ranking system, drafting a new resource allocation program, budget subcommittee, and education master plan addendum subcommittee.
- FA Exec member (2014 – Present). Served in role as treasurer as well as negotiation team member in 2015 and 2018.
- Fringe Benefit Committee Faculty Representative (2014 – present). Served as Ad-Hoc Benefits Task Force member when Collegial Negotiations Committee, under AS, was handling working conditions.
- FA Budget and Benefits subcommittee, chair (2015 – present).
- Math 52/95 Pathway Lead Writer (2014 – present). This created alternative pathways for students who are not heading towards STEM careers. This work also led to an alternative course being approved to satisfy Title V requirements for graduation.
- Math Department Pre-Transfer Committee Member (2011 – present), Chair (2012-14)
- Flex Workshops on Faculty Retirement options and Sick leave (2013 – present)
- Oregon Teachers of Teachers of Math – TOTOM Conference President (2010)
- Served as Math Education Coordinator and Assistant Undergraduate Advisor at the University of Oregon (2005 -2011). During that time, I served on the group of faculty working to create a faculty union with AAUP/AFT support.

What do you think are the two or three most pressing issues facing the Faculty Assembly today?

1. The contract is our resource for determining how working conditions issues are handled, but it seems that many on campus are still unaware of the contractual guidelines and this creates frustration. We need to continue educating faculty about their rights under the contract. As faculty, we're continuing the journey from working conditions that were loosely defined and not consistently applied to the very clearly defined and highly protective contract. Further increasing communication between faculty on campus will create a stronger faculty group.
2. Legal challenges. The number of faculty under investigation has grown significantly over the past few years, and educating faculty about how to best protect themselves is critical. As faculty, we receive words of advice from people (give students your cell phone number, text your students, friend them on Facebook, etc.) who have the best intentions but it is advice that can create significant problems or lead to an investigation. Other legal challenges like the Janus case, Janus v. AFSCME Council 31, could

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drastically weaken the public union voice across the nation, and especially in California. Further, the California Supreme Court will hear arguments on a prior ruling (Marin Association of Public Employees v. Marin County Employees Retirement Association) that could have drastic impacts on pensions for CalSTRS and CalPERS members. Being in top of these legal challenges and changes to investigations will be critical to representing our members.

What would you do to keep Faculty Assembly members informed, and what would you do to elicit feedback on important issues from members?

Over my past 4 years in FA, I have worked hard to represent all faculty (classroom, non-classroom, faculty directors) on issues that concern them. Each group has a unique perspective and being able to listen carefully and understand the issue clearly is extremely helpful. I've enjoyed serving in both classroom and non-classroom roles at MCC and feel that I can better understand faculty concerns and perspectives because of this experience. My main way to keep faculty informed is through our newsletter. If elected, I plan to continue writing Dear Scotty articles and holding FLEX week sessions that are relevant and informative to faculty. Further, I believe making myself available to meet with faculty to hear their issues is important. I plan on continuing to meet face-to-face with faculty to hear their issues and make sure their concerns are addressed.

Mark Whitney

I have appreciated the opportunity to serve the past two years as an Executive member of the Faculty Assembly Council, and would very much value your support in continuing in this position.

As a member of Exec, I have been charged with documenting the work of the Faculty Assembly Council, maintaining records of all FAC meetings, insuring they are accurate and accounted for in a timely manner and that FAC decision-making processes remain open, transparent and inclusive. I consistently attend Exec meeting scheduled throughout each month and contribute my ideas to the issues, discussions and decisions made by our FAC colleagues. I serve as coordinator of the FA Communications Committee, and work closely with FA members producing the FA Newsletter (thanks, Leigh), FA Website updates (thank you, Richard) and related communications. Currently, I am a member of the FA Negotiations Team and contribute to ongoing discussions with the District pertaining to our contractual working conditions.

My almost 20 years at MiraCosta have taught me the value and critical importance of the faculty voice in collegial governance. I have assumed appointments as Co-Chair of the Academic Master Plan Committee, as a Tenure Coordinator/Evaluation Coordinator with the Professional Growth and Evaluation Committee, as the Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator and as both a Representative and Vice-President of the Academic Senate. Last year, working closely with PG&E colleagues and under the

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leadership of our incoming Academic Senate President, I coordinated the development of the evaluation process for the SSSP Counselors, insuring those individuals temporarily appointed to these positions could apply their first year of evaluation to possible future tenure review (in hindsight, an important endeavor, as all three individuals have since been hired as full-time faculty colleagues).

Beyond my primary commitments in support of student learning (I teach 4-5 face-to-face child development classes each semester), I remain deeply committed to insuring a close, positive and effective working relationship between the Faculty Assembly and the Academic Senate. One of the key “touch points” between FA and AS is the faculty evaluation process. As a member of PG&E for eight years, and member of the FAC for the past three years, I am in a fortunate position to insure our evaluation process remains an essential element of our contract in support of our employment rights, working conditions and legal protections.

Of course, no one can accomplish anything of great impact individually. I am indebted to all of the faculty, staff and administrative colleagues I have worked with over the years, and have learned much from the leadership provided by others. It seems clear to me that we are all quite stretched and overextended with the myriad of initiatives, outcomes, pathways and related endeavors we are grappling with... however, we cannot sit back and hope “someone else” assumes responsibilities for collegial governance (it just doesn’t work that way). It seems to me that most important issue at hand, not only for the FA but for all faculty colleagues, is to strengthen our voices in support of one another in these efforts, in remaining committed to doing the good work we all must do and in demonstrating our worth in earning the salaries and enjoying the working conditions that we are most fortunate to have.

I would be most appreciative of your vote and will do my very best to earn it.