

PSS & CUSS Voter Guide 2023

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**Jill
Blum**

She/Her/Hers



**Jeff
Cullen**

He/Him/His



**Roy
Prouty**

He/Him/His



**Pat Lee
Toliver**

She/Her/Hers



**Steve
Harris**

He/Him/His



**Ray
Soellner**

He/Him/His



**Melissa
Huselton**

They/Them



**Christopher
Vick**

He/Him/His



**Sam
Ferrigno**

She/Her/Hers



**Michael
Walsh**

He/Him/His



**Anna
Pittinger**

She/Her/Hers



**Deanna
Cerquetti**

She/Her/Hers



**Amanda
Scally**

She/Her/Hers



**Cael
Mulcahy**

They/Them



**Ally
Hepp**

She/Her/Hers

Jill Blum

She/Her/Hers

Senior Digital Designer for
Creative Services



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I'm excited about the opportunity to work together with folks from across the University (whom I would normally not have the opportunity to be connected with) to continue the great work I've seen in my three years here. I've spent the last two years as a mentee, and was a community member on the Caregiving Committee.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I am an approachable person with whom people feel comfortable sharing personal stories. I believe in keeping confidences, but I also like to make sure the under-represented are heard, albeit with anonymity. My prior experience in the for-profit corporate world made me very adaptable to change, and I think my experience thriving while everything shifts could be helpful to others. My day job and my passion is design, so I will be able to help the committees and the individuals on PSS deliver assets to our community that clearly convey their intended messages.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

I believe our priorities need to be on employee retention by continuing to focus on our DEIB values and our work-life balance. An issue I'm passionate about is finding a way to eliminate waste by identifying duplicative efforts and platforms in use institutionally.

Jeff Cullen

He/Him/His

Director, Student Conduct and
Community Standards



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I am currently in my fifteenth year at UMBC. Because of my job role, I interact with a broad cross-section of staff and faculty at UMBC but I would really look forward to making deeper contributions if elected as a PSS Senator. It has never been more important for exempt staff to have an engaged and active role in the shared governance of the institution. I would like to contribute in meaningful ways to the advancement of UMBC generally, and the interest of professional staff, specifically.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

One of my skills is assessment, research, and strategic decision-making. In 2021, I assisted the PSS in the creation and analysis of a Caregiver Survey which was used to inform flexible work schedules and telework in the “return from COVID” era. My office is the primary sponsor of Green Dot Bystander Training on campus and a co-sponsor of restorative practices training, and I would look forward to leveraging that network on behalf of PSS and vice versa. I have been serving on the OEI Implementation Team (now Inclusion Council) and this is also an important avenue for PSS engagement.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

Parking policies, tuition/fees benefits, remote work policies, pay transparency and equity, AND the careful discussion/development of the UMBC strategic plan that will govern much of what UMBC endeavors to do in the coming years.

Roy Prouty

He/Him/His

Specialist in DoIT



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I have been a part of shared governance at UMBC for nearly a decade! First as a graduate student in GSA and then as staff in PSS. I've had the opportunities to serve on the University Shared Governance Steering Cmte, the system student council (USMSC), and also on the system staff council (CUSS). Most recently, I've been the chair of the legislative action and policy committee in CUSS where I worked with a few dozen other staff, students, and faculty members throughout the system to organize responses to state legislation that impacts higher education. I hope to be able to continue my work with PSS and CUSS and to otherwise set future staff members up for success in these and similar roles.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

Throughout my time in shared governance, I've worked with many campus and system staff, faculty, students, and administrators in order to understand the sometimes complex policies and budgets that govern much of what happens on campus. I hope I know enough about these and the various academic and administrative units on campus so that I can be a benefit to staff by helping find answers to questions, the best changes to policies, and solutions to issues.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

Parking policies, tuition/fees benefits, remote work policies, pay transparency and equity, AND the careful discussion/development of the UMBC strategic plan that will govern much of what UMBC endeavors to do in the coming years.

Pat Lee Toliver

She/Her/Hers

Lead Transfer Evaluator



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

This experience would allow me to inform the University and other Universities transparency in Transfer Services and provide information needed. I am excited to be nominated. Currently I monitor our transfer database, assist in orientation during orientation times and also assist the Graduation team with needed services related to Transfer Credit. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I have a lot of talents and skills to numerable to name especially in back-office support.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 - 2025 session?

I have none at this time.

Steve Harris

He/Him/His

Director, DPS IT Systems -
Division of Professional Studies



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I think that this is a great opportunity for me to branch out in the UMBC community. Also this would help me to get more experience with working in the shared governance framework here at UMBC. If elected, mentorship is one of the areas I would like to volunteer in. In the past I have volunteered at graduations and other campus events. In a PSS role I think I would be able to make connections with others on campus which could lead to relationships to propel future UMBC initiatives.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I love collaborating with people! In my role at DPS, I work to remove roadblocks that prevent the success of personnel. Due to my experience, education and training, these roadblocks tend to more often than not be in the domains of business process and information technology (IT). I have a good sense of methodologies and tools that can be used to help facilitate communication and managing work on projects with groups. In tandem with facilitation, I am able to lead a group to consensus on an initiative. Lastly, I can maintain a good focus on a problem/opportunity and home in on ways that we might mitigate an issue.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 - 2025 session?

Continue to examine work-life balance for the UMBC community. Growing the professional development opportunities for UMBC personnel. I am impressed by the professional development offerings that are advertised and available. Continuing to support this can help to foster a more diverse UMBC community.

Ray Soellner

He/Him/His

Director of Telecommunications/DoIT



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I worked on campus for nearly a decade before becoming a senator. I love my job but there is truly something special about being able to serve the campus in this way. In each year I've become more deeply engaged in the senate by serving in various roles of the executive committee, including Vice President for the last two years. This has allowed me to build and foster incredible relationships across the campus and continue learning the nuances of the campus and staff concerns. It is through this nomination that I hope to continue advocating for staff and representing the importance of shared governance at UMBC.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I have been a dedicated and hard working member of the UMBC community for over 15 years and am passionate about making UMBC the best place to work, learn and grow. I love supporting our community not only in my professional role but I have also through PSS in our shared governance structures. Since becoming a PSS senator I have served as the secretary, treasurer and Vice President, so have an excellent understanding of PSS and shared governance structures at UMBC.

I am open minded, empathetic and caring. I love to learn and understand the perspectives of others through active conversation and I want to use these talents to represent the concerns of staff and find solutions in partnership with campus leadership.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

We've just finished the campus bold conversations. Now is a critical time for shared governance to play a role in shaping the future of UMBC AND to entrench the value of shared governance in the culture of UMBC. We've also had and will continue to have significant changes with senior leadership roles. Now is the time to create change, as these individuals are coming to UMBC with a whole new perspective and set of experiences.

Melissa Huselton

They/Them

Health Professions Advisor,
PreMedical & PreDental Advising



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

In the past I've volunteered for events like Welcome Week and Commencement, and I taught FYE101 Introduction to an Honors University for two years. In addition to my service to students, I'm excited to serve the UMBC staff community in a more sustained, impactful way. One of our greatest strengths is our collaborative culture, and I am excited by the opportunity to build community and create a more engaging, equitable, and supportive work environment.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

In my work as an advisor I listen carefully to others' dreams, concerns, and ideas. Helping others succeed and lead fulfilling lives that are congruent with their values and interests is my life's work. Professionally and personally, I bring my creativity, thoughtfulness, and perseverance to any team that I am a part of as we work towards a common goal.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

UMBC is experiencing significant change as new leaders and staff join our community. Change can be exciting but also brings uncertainty. It's imperative that the PSS continue to bring concerns to leadership and work collaboratively towards solutions. Listening to and advocating for staff needs is more important than ever as we enter into a new era of campus leadership.

Additionally, a strength of our community is our determination to achieve big goals. However, this is only sustainable with adequate staffing and support. We all want to be more involved and create a better experience for students, but we often feel that we lack the time to do so. Staff have expressed that they feel like "a team of one," which can lead to burnout. If an office is experiencing an extended absence of a colleague or a vacant position, this additional work exacerbates the issue. Creating a work environment in which staff can thrive is imperative to achieving our goals.

Christopher Vick

He/Him/His

Associate Director Sherman STEM
Teachers Scholars Program



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

This is my second season at UMBC. I am excited to connect with my colleagues in a novel way. I also bring the thoughts/ experiences of someone early in their university career. I think this is an important and needed perspective.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I bring a significant professional network to this work. I also bring a deep love of this university and its students.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

I am a product of Baltimore City and its public schools. As such, I have developed a unique perspective on how UMBC can even better engage the community we partner with. I am particularly excited to tackle issues of diversity and inclusion, primarily as we think of how to better engage our community partners.

Sam Ferrigno

She/Her/Hers

Community Director, Residential Life



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

As a staff member whose role often involves student crisis management, I understand first hand how our students' trauma can directly lead to our own burnout. I hope that the experiences and conversations I've had with my peers about this subject can help me become an excellent advocate for staff needs. Being a member of PSS would help me grow my connections and platform for staff advocacy. As one of the few live-on staff members at UMBC, I also hope to advocate for staff members who often feel underrepresented in decision-making conversations.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I am a trained Green Dot Facilitator, which means I am qualified to teach members of our community about power-based violence prevention.

In my day to day job, I utilize and teach students about restorative practices.

I work a lot with the curriculum for my department, and would be interested in helping people learn about how to build and implement department curricula.

I have a personal passion for integrating the things that I love (painting, role playing games, etc.) into the work I do. I'd love to work with others to help them figure out what that looks like for them.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 - 2025 session?

Staff burnout, staff retention initiatives, building better relationships between departments to better serve students

Michael Walsh

He/Him/His

Director & Training Coordinator,
Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP)



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I look forward to working with other campus community members as I hope to continue my position on CUSS or serve as a Senator on PSS. I served as a PSS Senator in 2017-2018 and as a CUSS member from 2017-present. I am currently a PSS representative on the Library Policy Committee, Research and Creative Achievement Council, and Work-Life Balance Committee. I formerly served on the Pre-School committee in past terms. CUSS committee assignments have included the Staff Resources and Special Projects committee (current), the Benefits and Compensation committee (2017-2020) and the Legislative and Policy committee (2020-2021). I am a two time UMBC alumnus (MA in Historical Studies 2002 and PhD in Public Policy 2012); I have been a member of the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) since 2008 and am currently the Director and Training Coordinator in OSP. In that position, I have had the opportunity to be a part of many committees and working groups. I also once served as a Teaching Assistant and Graduate Assistant from 2001-2007 in the History and Political Science Departments. Continuing to serve in CUSS or PSS, and to therefore play an integral role in shared governance at both UMBC and USM, is an opportunity and honor that would allow me to utilize my skills and leadership abilities for the continued advancement of UMBC and USM.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

Leadership is the key to success. Leading and directing a department is a great privilege and an invaluable experience. Using those skills in PSS/CUSS--as I have and hope to continue to do--can only help to better UMBC and USM as a whole (staff, students, and faculty alike). I've been at UMBC since 2000 as either a grad student or as an employee. I feel that I have a firm understanding of both UMBC and USM (even as they both continue to evolve and change with each passing year) and have a strong desire to see and participate in the success and action of shared governance. The time is ripe at UMBC for new ideas and novel approaches, while still adhering to its core values and honoring the proud traditions that have been permanently entrenched on Hilltop Circle and beyond!

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 - 2025 session?

Maintaining-and expanding UMBC's R1 status is an extremely important goal in the coming years. Focused and deliberate attention to ensuring that UMBC re-attains this lofty status is a necessity as the research enterprise continues to grow and prosper in the years to come in conjunction with the stellar undergraduate and graduate education that is being provided. Additionally, telework/remote work still remain as a sometimes contentious talking point in this post-Pandemic era that would benefit from some perhaps better clarity. Staff retention and salary equity with other USM institutions also remain as key issues that demand attention. Finally, improving and increasing UMBC's infrastructure needs to continue (i.e., physical buildings, staffing, cybersecurity, etc.) in order for UMBC to reach its full potential.

Anna Pittinger

She/Her/Hers

Employer Relations and Event
Coordinator, Career Center



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I have been at UMBC for just over three years, and have become very invested in the overall well being of the UMBC community. I served on the Staff Development Committee for two years, and found the work we did to be integral to the sense of togetherness and belonging we share. What I value most from that experience, is learning how incredibly dedicated the people at UMBC are to their mission and values. I am excited about potentially becoming a Professional Staff Senate Representative because it would allow me to expand my connections to better support UMBC, and serve thoughtfully in a time when we are going through great change.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

Working in the UMBC Career Center, and serving on the Staff Development Committee, has helped me grow my campus network in a way that can support Staff Senate initiatives and goals. I am skilled at multitasking, thinking outside of the box, and coming up with inventive solutions. I am a good listener, and naturally enjoy looking at things from various viewpoints. As a planner, I tend to always think ahead, and broadly consider all possibilities. I believe strongly building meaningful relationships, and in the mission here at UMBC. Serving as a Professional Staff Senate Representative would allow me to help the UMBC community maintain our shared values and goals through our transition in leadership.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

The UMBC community will be going through massive change as we welcome Dr. Ashby and new leadership. The Professional Staff Senate should be thoughtful in response as things develop, and diligent in representing the voice of our community.

Deanna Cerquetti

She/Her/Hers

Academic Advisor, Office for Academic and Pre-Professional Advising

Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?



I'm excited at the prospect of joining PSS/CUSS because I genuinely enjoy being involved in shared governance at UMBC. As a graduate student at UMBC, I spent many years serving on the Graduate Student Association Executive Council (as President, Historian and Vice President) and have experience serving on many of our campus' shared governance university committees as well as representing UMBC on the USM Student Council. I've had chances to work with PSS in the past and would love to join officially as a staff member and lend my voice to help understand and advocate for staff needs. I'm currently the Chair of the Enrollment Management Staff Development Committee and would love to get involved again in broader campus and USM issues.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I've been at UMBC since 2011 and during my time, I've worked and served in various capacities and have come to understand our campus from many different perspectives. I've been an instructor in the Spanish department, a Graduate Assistant for the Office of Graduate Student Life, an Executive Council member for the Graduate Student Association and I now work as a full-time Academic Advisor. Through my current role, I advise exploratory undergraduate students as well as Near Completer students who are returning to UMBC to finish their degree. I gained great experience navigating student, staff, and faculty relationships in all of my roles at UMBC and have been fortunate enough to collaborate on many different initiatives that involve many campus partners. I strive to always remain open-minded about validating the needs of others and balancing solutions that can benefit all parties involved.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

PSS does a great job at providing awareness, guidance and advocacy for staff needs and I believe we should continue to learn about and advocate for: mental health resources for staff, flexible work opportunities and work/life balance, more opportunities for mentorship among staff members, and active promotion of career advancement at UMBC and in our various roles in Higher Education in general.

Amanda Scally

She/Her/Hers
Residential Life



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

When I went into Student Affairs, I wanted to be an advocate for students and to help them find their voice. And while that is still the thing that drives my work everyday, I also see the importance of being a strong advocate for our staff. In my 4 years at UMBC, as an Assistant Director in Residential, I have seen significant changes to how staff work, how we engage with students, and how we integrate our work with our personal lives. I am very interested in serving as a PSS Senator to provide voice for our staff, to build stronger relationships and connections across campus, and to identify ways to better serve our students and our staff. I have also appreciated the programs and events hosted by PSS, such as the Mentor-Mentee program which I participated in before COVID took us all away from campus. That program was pivotal in my transition to UMBC. I'm hopeful that as a PSS member I can help to continue to foster programs that strengthen staff connection.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

My current role requires me to be connected to various student serving offices, which has enhanced my connection with staff and awareness of departmental needs/services during my time here.

I am a do-er! I am a planner by nature and love to make things happen. I see this as an asset as PSS works to build and develop new programs and initiatives.

Lastly, I'll share that before I went into Student Affairs, I dreamed of working as a creative

designer for a publishing company. That being said, I love creating materials that help to communicate a story and would love to bring that skill to the PSS team.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

I believe that supporting institutional change and staff retention are two areas that PSS can help to address during the 2023-2025 session.

There is a lot of excitement and energy around changing leadership, but change can also be overwhelming or even scary for some. I think PSS can help to support staff who are both energized and hesitant as we embark on this journey. I also think the PSS can be stewards for our staff, presenting our new leadership with the needs, challenges, and successes of our UMBC staff.

Staff retention is another area I think PSS can help to support. UMBC has amazing people and we should celebrate them. To that point, we've also lost some very talented and amazing staff. PSS can work to solicit what it is that staff need to feel valued and supported, in order to help inform and advocate for the changing needs of our staff.

Cael Mulcahy

They/Them

Director of Operations,
CAHSS Dean's Office



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

I have been serving in PSS as Treasurer for two years and the experience has greatly expanded my ability to advocate for academic staff and better understand how things work around campus. I hope to be able to continue to network and develop processes to provide a structure for continued growth.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

I've had the opportunity over the past 10+ years to develop a strong network that spans all divisions. I feel that one of my strengths is being able to envision a goal and then gather a team to put the puzzle together, losing minimal pieces along the way!

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

PSS can advocate for methods to build in necessary redundancies for staff responsibilities to hopefully cut down on burnout and our continuing retention issues.

Ally Hepp

She/Her/Hers

AV Specialist, DoIT



Why are you excited about potentially serving as a Senator/CUSS Representative?

Participating in shared governance is something that is incredibly important to me, particularly with all of the changes we have experienced in the last few years. I have served as the co-chair and chair of the Staff Outreach and Development Committee and participated in many of our PSS committees and campus committees. Currently, I serve on the executive board as the Communications Officer and chair of the Communications Committee. I am always looking for opportunities to contribute to my community; shared governance provides an avenue to bring staff concerns to leaders' attention and advocate for staff well-being. I am proud of the work our senate has done in the past few years as we returned to campus, adjusted to hybrid working, and welcomed a new president and leaders to UMBC; I know we will continue to advocate for staff and continue to provide a voice and resources to those we represent and I hope to continue helping with these efforts.

What skills/talents/resources would you bring to PSS/CUSS?

My role in DoIT involves a lot of interaction with various members of our campus community and I have built relationships with many staff and faculty through my job and PSS. As we transition PSS meetings to hybrid, I can assist in supporting these meetings from a technical standpoint with my AV colleagues. My background beyond my role at UMBC includes communications, website management, graphic design, and event planning. I have been fortunate to contribute these skills to PSS through the Staff Outreach & Development committee and our many events, including the annual Staff Cookout. I've also been able to use these skills as the Communications Officer, handling

myUMBC, the PSS website, and monthly newsletters, with the help of the excellent staff who serve on the committee with me.

What specific issues do you think PSS should address during the 2023 – 2025 session?

Our campus community faces a few obstacles; we are welcoming new leaders in many areas, facing staff retention issues, and adjusting to a new normal of hybrid and remote work and policies associated. Shared governance at UMBC serves as a model to many other universities, and I know PSS will continue to advocate for staff and continue this legacy with new leaders throughout campus. Our new leaders are doing excellent work trying to improve work-life balance and staff retention issues, and I hope to see PSS act as a partner in these efforts.