

2023 President-Elect Candidate

Andrew Valls (at OSU since 2003), Professor of Political Science ~ School of Public Policy – College of Liberal Arts

FACULTY SENATE SERVICE: Liberal Arts Senator, 2014-16, 2006-08; Executive Committee, 2015-16; and Budgets and Fiscal Planning Committee, 2013-15

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS SERVICE: Promotion and Tenure Committee, 2023-26; Budget Committee, 2010-12; Curriculum Committee, 2006-08; Scholarship Committee, 2006-07; Research Grant Committee, 2005; and Faculty Council, 2004-07

UNIVERSITY SERVICE: Criminal History and Participation Committee, 2023-present; Provost Portland Bridge Committee, 2017-18; University Council on Student Engagement and Experience, 2016; Social Justice Minor Steering Committee, 2014-18; Hybrid Course Development Pilot Program Review Committee, 2014-18; and Humanities Center Advisory Board, 2010-12

SEARCH COMMITTEE SERVICE (at the level of unit head or above): School of Visual, Performing, and Dramatic Arts Director (Search Advocate), 2021-22

Candidate Statement: In my years at OSU I have served in a wide variety of roles. In addition to the positions listed above, I have run an academic program (Political Science, 2014-18) and served as an academic unit head (Interim Director, School of Public Policy, 2019-20). Mainly I have been a regular faculty member, teaching a full load of courses and pursuing my research. As I explain in more detail below, I think that this combination of experiences has allowed me to see the issues facing OSU from a variety of perspectives, and I would strive to represent the faculty with integrity.

What will be the critical issues for faculty, and how can you help move those issues forward?

There are many critical issues facing the faculty and the university, but among the most important, in my judgment, are:

1. Implementation of the new Core Curriculum.

This election will determine the Faculty Senate President for 2025, the year that OSU will implement its new Core Education Curriculum. I am deeply committed to the success of the new curriculum, but I know that it raises myriad issues for academic units, individual faculty members, and the university as a whole. I have a longstanding involvement in curricular matters and, in my time at OSU, I have submitted over a hundred successful curriculum proposals. Most of these were submitted while I was running the political science major, as I tried, in consultation with the faculty, to improve and streamline the major to better serve our students. I have undergone the training required for the new curriculum, and I submitted the first course proposal for the Core. As Faculty Senate President, I would strive to be a constructive faculty voice in the implementation of the Core Curriculum. I would bring my background in curricular development, as well as my familiarity with the new Core, to this role and would endeavor to represent faculty interests and concerns as the new curriculum is implemented.

2. Supporting student success amid growth across campuses and modalities.

The new OSU Strategic Plan envisions a future where “every student graduates” and aims to “more than double online enrollment, and... implement growth strategies for OSU-Cascades, the Corvallis campus, and in our professional master’s degree offerings.” This set of goals is extremely ambitious and will require both careful management and

significant faculty buy-in. As an academic unit leader, I was often acutely aware of the potential synergies but also the trade-offs between Ecampus and on-campus course offerings and programs. As a member of the teaching faculty, I have also often observed the tension between OSU's role as a land grant university, one of whose missions is to make higher education accessible to all, and the real-life barriers students face, including having to work, support family members, and other financial and emotional challenges. How do we maintain accessibility and promote student success in this context? How do we significantly increase enrollment while meeting the needs of all students? These questions are raised but not answered by the new Strategic Plan. I think that my experiences as a member of the teaching faculty (one who has taught mostly on campus, but online as well) and a unit head has prepared me to represent the faculty in discussions around these issues. As OSU plots its growth trajectory, I would ask some hard questions about where the necessary resources will come from, how they will be distributed, and how we can serve the students we already have as well as the new ones we hope to attract.

3. *Maintaining a strong faculty voice with the OSU administration, the Board of Trustees, HECC and other bodies, as well as maintaining faculty authority on matters within its purview, especially curriculum.*

The Faculty Senate fosters shared governance and faculty participation, both when it acts as one body and through its many committees and councils. The Faculty Senate President plays an important role in shared governance by leading the Faculty Senate and representing the faculty in a wide variety of venues. Sustaining a strong faculty voice requires establishing mutual trust and respect with those with whom one works. I think that I have a track record of maintaining the kind of relationships with members of the university community that would allow me to play an effective role as Faculty Senate President and to represent the faculty, its interests, and concerns. I would look forward to working with the Executive Committee and the entire Faculty Senate as we deliberate on matters of importance, and to working cooperatively with OSU staff and administrators to advance the university mission and serve its stakeholders, especially our students.

4. *Building public support for higher education.*

This is a large, overarching issue of our time in which we all have a role to play. I believe that we must take seriously negative public perceptions of higher education, such as that a college education is not a good investment or that universities like OSU are misusing their public trust. Although the Faculty Senate President is not primarily a public-facing office, it has a contribution to make on this score. I think it is important for the President to engage with all stakeholders, including those to whom OSU must explain and demonstrate its value. When doing so, experience with managing deep disagreement can be helpful, and I have this experience from both my administrative roles as well as in the classroom. I teach many "hot button" issues in my political theory classes, and I think that students from a wide range of ideological and experiential backgrounds find that in my classes they are treated with respect and their views are taken seriously. As with students, so too with colleagues and other interlocutors: I strive to build relationships of mutual respect and trust despite disagreements, even deep ones. I hope that with this approach to the Faculty Senate Presidency I can do my part in making the case to the public, if only indirectly, for the essential role of higher education in fostering equal opportunity within a democratic society.

How has your experience prepared you for this position?

As I have emphasized, I have served in a broad range of roles at OSU. In these roles I have been involved in many aspects of the university, including scheduling, personnel, budgeting, and curriculum. I have also served on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, through which I was able to benefit from excellent models of how to be a highly effective Faculty Senate President.

In all my previous positions, I have striven to act with integrity and professionalism, and my management style has always been deeply collaborative. I would bring these values to the Faculty Senate Presidency, mindful that in this role I should not merely express my own views but must represent the whole faculty: academic faculty of all ranks and titles, wherever they are (Corvallis, Cascades, online, etc.), as well as extension and professional faculty.