

Sarah Gross

I have had the honor of serving as one of your Associate Faculty Representatives for the past two years, and I am seeking reelection, so I may continue to serve you.

During my first term on the Academic Senate, I gained a deeper understanding of shared governance, collegial consultation, and the importance of informed, cross-divisional collaboration. I am seeking a second term to build on that foundation, bringing greater continuity, confidence, and momentum to ongoing Senate work.

Like many associate faculty, I am a freeway flier, serving as a general and dual enrollment counselor and instructor at Saddleback College. As a counselor and instructor, I bring a holistic perspective to the Academic Senate. I understand how academic policy, curriculum decisions, and legislation affect student success, while also shaping classroom realities, faculty workload, and instructional practice across institutions. I am committed to amplifying associate faculty voices, strengthening collaboration between Instruction and Student Services, and ensuring Senate decisions reflect the lived experiences of those who teach, counsel, and support students every day.

I would be honored to continue serving on the Academic Senate for a second term and to further the work already in progress. MiraCosta invested in me as a student, and I remain deeply committed to investing back in the future of this college and its community.

Which committees have you served on and when?

In addition to serving as a senator for the past two years, I have played an active role in the following initiatives:

ACP/Guided Pathways; working with STEM, Health Sciences, and Social & Behavioral Sciences (2021-2022)

Strong Workforce Program (2023-2024)

Dual-Enrollment, teaching and building partnerships with feeder high schools (2023-present)

Honors Program (2021-present)

Which leadership roles have you held?

I serve as a lead for the CSU Transfer Success Pathway in the Transfer Center.

During my time as a Writing Consultant, I aided in the development of online writing consulting and assisted in the subsequent training.

Prior to my career in counseling, I was selected for many leadership roles throughout my career in healthcare. I was asked to lead administrative initiatives for the medical group, establish medical practices, and act as a consultant for managers within the healthcare group.

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. Student-centered scheduling and academic calendar revisions

Changes to the academic calendar, including the new block schedule proposal, carry significant implications for instruction, counseling, and student access. As the Senate considers student-centered scheduling models, it is essential to balance innovation with equity, instructional quality, faculty workload, and student persistence. I continue to closely follow these discussions and bring a counseling and instructional perspective that centers how scheduling decisions affect students' ability to enroll, persist, and complete.

2. State legislation and its impact on students and faculty

Recent legislation including AB 1111, AB 928, and AB 1705 have fundamentally reshaped placement, transfer pathways, and academic planning. As a general and transfer counselor, I work daily at the intersection of policy and practice, helping students and faculty navigate these changes while identifying unintended consequences that affect equity, workload, and student success.

3. Advancing equity and supporting disproportionately impacted students

Ensuring that DEIA efforts translate into meaningful outcomes remains a critical Senate responsibility. I have actively supported ACP initiatives and engaged in direct outreach to disproportionately impacted students, connecting them with campus resources such as Student Equity, Tutoring, Counseling, SAS, Financial Aid, and CARE. This work grounds my advocacy in real student experiences, not abstract goals.

4. Student mental health and academic persistence

Rising student distress continues to impact learning, retention, and completion. My training in Mental Health Recovery and Trauma-Informed Care directly informs my counseling practice and my approach to policy discussions. I bring a student-centered lens to Senate conversations about academic standards, flexibility, and institutional response.

5. Expansion of dual enrollment

As dual enrollment remains a statewide priority, the Senate must consider its academic, instructional, and equity implications. My experience providing dual enrollment counseling at multiple high schools, and teaching dual-enrollment courses to high school students, has given me firsthand insight into both the opportunities and operational challenges of program growth.

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

As the largest faculty group on campus, associate faculty voices must be actively included in academic and professional decision-making. As an associate who works across two districts, I understand how difficult it can be to stay informed amid the volume of campus communication. If elected, I will continue my commitment to sharing information in ways that are accessible, concise, and respectful of associate faculty time.

To keep constituents informed, I will continue to collaborate with my fellow AF-Senators to provide brief, monthly updates that summarize Academic Senate discussions, key decisions, and upcoming issues requiring your input. I will continue to solicit input from associate faculty through email outreach and informal conversations, ensuring that your perspectives inform my Senate participation and votes. My goal is to distill complex information into clear, actionable updates, so associate faculty can stay engaged without being overwhelmed.

Thank you for taking the time to review my statement. I would be honored to earn your vote and remain committed to amplifying associate faculty voices and ensuring they are heard, valued, and represented.
