

I am honored by Senator Alex's nomination of me to replace Sep Eskandari as Senate Chair. That nomination followed my own unsuccessful effort to persuade Professor Alex to take up the challenge again. I approached her because I believe that at this juncture in the life of Cal Poly Pomona it is important to have an experienced leadership team to give voice to the faculty in shared decision-making. I believe the traditional pattern of a two-year 'apprenticeship' as Vice Chair is more essential than may appear from outside. Despite decades' worth of experience on this campus, most of it as a Senator, I learned a lot about the particular ways in which the Senate Chair can have a positive impact on policy when I served as Vice Chair under Chair Alex.

Facilitating full Senate meetings is the most visible but one of the least influential activities of a Senate Chair. Moderating a deliberative conversation ordinarily carries a responsibility to encourage a full airing of all sides to an issue, not advocacy. But the Senate Chair and Vice Chair participate in lots of smaller meetings in which the task is very much advocacy for faculty interests and points of view. Experience in these settings allows one to know and be known by the participants and increases one's credibility. This often makes the difference between getting a polite hearing and being taken seriously.

I've appreciated the opportunity last year to return to my perch at the back of the Senate. I'm happy teaching my classes and representing the campus on the ASCSU in Long Beach. But I think the faculty's role in the future of Cal Poly Pomona is not well served by a false dissemblance. Big decisions are being made and the entire cadre of senior administrators have very limited local experience. The weight this places on effective, experienced faculty representation is huge.

One never sounds good engaged in self-advocacy, but I'm willing to run for Senate Chair because my experience gives us an advantage. I believe I have a deserved reputation for being willing to speak truth to power, bolstered by my long-term goal of remaining a faculty member without administrative aspirations. I strive for civil, candid, constructive dialogue in the Senate Chamber and in the smaller meeting rooms along the halls of power. It's true that I applied for the Chief of Staff job not long ago (the only MPP job I've ever sought), encouraged by the former President and based on my understanding that this was really a Senior Advisor to the President and not a line bureaucratic position. I may have been wrong in that calculation, for which I'm glad that I wasn't successful in the attempt. But, as was true last time, if I'm elected Senate Chair I will do my righteous best to make sure our voice is taken seriously and then, at the end of my term, I will happily return to the back corner of the Senate chamber as we all participate in conversations that protect the future of this remarkable community of learners.