Meet your Professional Staff Senators for 2010/2011

Executive Committee

Ross Hickey 2009-2011, chair
Employed at USM since 2005.
Associate Director and IRB Coordinator.
Senate representative to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee; Strategic Plan Task Team #4 for Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; The USM Board of Visitors; and the University Council.

“My involvement started when I was encouraged by a friend of mine to run for senate several years back. I became chair through a nomination by Micheline Decrow two years ago that the rest of the ProSen seemed to think was a good idea. I was re-nominated again this summer and agreed to another term. What I enjoy most is the ability to act as a conduit between administration and staff, facilitating dialogue on the critical issues USM faces. In this time of change, I envision the Senate as a reliable and dependable resource in understanding current events.”

Janet Casey 2009-2011, vice chair
Employed at USM since 2005.
Coordinator of Graduate Student Services, Graduate Studies. ProSen By-Laws Committee; and the Communications Committee.

“I joined the Professional Staff Senate to contribute to the conversation about professional staff interests at USM. Working with senators from both academic and non-academic departments has developed my “big picture” knowledge of USM. Understanding each other is critical to the success of our students and USM.”

Colleen White 2009-2011, co-secretary
Employed at USM since 1989.
Associate Director of USM Bookstore.
ProSen Executive Committee; By-Laws Committee; and the USM Governance Constitution Updating Committee.

“My involvement started when I was encouraged by a friend of mine to run for senate several years back. I became chair through a nomination by Micheline Decrow two years ago that the rest of the ProSen seemed to think was a good idea. I was re-nominated again this summer and agreed to another term. What I enjoy most is the ability to act as a conduit between administration and staff, facilitating dialogue on the critical issues USM faces. In this time of change, I envision the Senate as a reliable and dependable resource in understanding current events.”

Lori Arsenault 2007-2011, co-secretary
Employed at USM since 2002.
Special Assistant to the Dean for Communications and External Affairs, College of Science, Technology, and Health. ProSen Executive Committee, Communications Committee; ProSen representative to the Faculty Senate; and ProSen representative to the USM Strategic Plan Task Team #1, “serving the needs and aspirations of 21st Century Maine.”

“I ran for a seat because it was suggested to me by my dean. I’ve come to believe that the best way to understand the purpose of a group is to become deeply involved in the workings of it. I have continued to serve because I believe I can serve in the importance of the professional staff voice in University governance.”

Janis Albright 2010-2012
Employed at USM since 2005.
Student Success Advisor, Student Success Center. ProSen Colleague Connection Committee; and the Retention Committee.

“I served for a previous term, and found it a wonderful way to become more connected to the USM community. Also, as a Student Success Advisor, I know that the Senate teaches me about additional resources that I can share with students.”

Amy Blaisdell 2009-2011
Employed at USM since 2005.
Finance Coordinator in the Office of Finance and Administration. ProSen’s Student Retention Committee; ProSen representative to the Classified Senate; and also to USM’s Strategic Planning Task Team #5, which deals with finances.

“I joined the ProSen as a chance to meet other members of the USM community, get involved in activities on campus and help shape USM as we go through the reorganization process.”

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Signs of Spring in February!
Teona Beaulieu 2007-2011
Employed at USM since 2005.
Health Information Manager, Student Health Services. ProSen Professional Recognition and Awards Committee.

“I agreed to join because I was new to the University and I thought it would be a good way to meet others in the University that I don’t normally work with everyday! I stay on because I enjoy getting the updates from the higher ups, and I enjoy getting together with individuals in the University that I don’t work with.”

Michelene Decrow 2007-2012
Employed at USM since 1997.
Administrative Manager, Law Library. ProSen Professional Recognition and Awards Committee; Professional Development Committee; and the USM Emerging Professional Staff Award Committee.

“The Professional Staff Senate serves an important role in building community among our three campuses. I enjoy working with the committees that recognize staff accomplishments and their service to our departments, schools and colleges at USM, and the University of Maine School of Law.”

Lee Anne Dodge 2010-2012
Employed at USM since 2006.
Coordinator of Substance Abuse, Dean of Student Life. ProSen Professional Recognition and Awards Committee.

“This is my first year as a senator and I ran because I had a colleague who had been on the senate in the past and I was curious about what it entailed, what was the scope. I was very interested in networking with other staff members as most of my work is on the Gorham campus. I am also a big fan of being part of the solution vs. the problem.”

Stephen Houser 2006-2012
Employed at USM since 1991.
Executive Director, Computing Services. ProSen Professional Recognition and Awards Committee; Professional Development Committee; the USM Honorary Degree Committee; and the President’s Budget Advisory Committee.

“The Professional Staff Senate gives me a way to build connections with colleagues across the University that I might otherwise only meet once in a while. It builds the relationships that allow me to understand what they and their department or office does. Beyond that it also allows me to understand the University and its many aspects. To communicate with campus leaders. It also allows me to pass along information from my department to other departments at the University.”

Sara Johnson-Berz 2008-2012
Employed at USM since 2007.
Coordinator of Programs & Administration for University Outreach. ProSen Professional Development Committee; the ProSen Retention Committee; and the ProSen Awards & Recognition Committee.

“I was encourage by my director (Monique LaRoque) two years ago to become active in the University and ProSen seemed to be a perfect fit! As a new employee, it helped me meet other like-minded employees who really care about making positive changes in the working & educational lives of our staff and students. I decided to serve a 2nd term because I still believe there is more work to do in the areas of USM student customer service and pride. In addition, more than ever, I want to continue to pursue opportunities where we can help support and recognize our USM staff.”

Janine Manning 2008-2012
Employed at USM since 2002.
Development Officer; Foundation Relations. ProSen Professional Recognition and Awards Committee; Election Committee; and the By-Laws Committee.

“I wanted to participate in the Professional Staff Senate to learn more about the numerous areas within the University that I don’t work with on a daily basis.”

Contact a Senator with your comments, ideas, suggestions or concerns.

www.usm.maine.edu/prosen

Professional Staff in the News


ANNIE FINCH, director of Stonecoast MFA, presented a paper about the writing of her new book, Among the Goddesses: An Epic Libretto in Seven Dreams, at the conference of the Association of Literary Scholars, Critics, and Writers at Princeton University in October 2010.

MONICA CHAU, web designer, Office of Marketing and Brand Management, presented her research and participated in the 2010 DesignInquiry program, “Joy,” this past June in Vinalhaven.

Read “What We’re Doing” at USM Public Affairs for more information about the professional activities of our faculty and staff.

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Colleen White 2009-2011, co-secretary
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Senators

Janis Albright 2010-2012
Teona Beaulieu 2007-2011
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Lee Anne Dodge 2010-2012
Stephen Houser 2006-2012
Sara Johnson-Berz 2008-2012
Janine Manning 2008-2012
Kate Mitchell 2010-2012
Kate Mitchell 2010-2012
Deb Nightingale 2009-2011
Carol Sadler 2010-2012
Krista Schorr 2010-2012
Yvonne Souliere 2009-2011
Susan Taylor 2008-2012
Nicole Vinal Harvie 2010-2012
Patti Volland 2009-2011

“The variety and complexity of the tasks performed by the institutions of higher education produce an inescapable interdependence among governing boards, administration, faculty, students, and others. The relationship calls for adequate communication among these components, and full opportunity and appropriate joint planning and effort”

ProSen By-Laws
Kate Mitchell 2010-2012
Employed at USM since 1993.
Staff Associate: Assessment. ProSen Communications Committee; and the USM NEASC Committee.

“I am new to the Professional Staff Senate this year. Others around me have been senators in the past, and I thought this year and next would be pivotal ones, with the new colleges, new deans, and reorganization. I wanted to lead the change and be a part of it from the inside out.”

Deb Nightingale 2009-2011
Employed at USM since 1989.
Assistant Director of Campus Card Office.
ProSen Professional Development Committee; ProSen Recognition & Awards Committee; By-Laws Committee; and ProSen representative to the USM Parking & Transportation Committee.

“I am passionate about the University and its mission. I find my involvement in the Professional Staff Senate provides me with great opportunities to stay engaged, actively participate, and experience a more rewarding career at USM.

Kristina O’Brien 2007-2011
Employed at USM since 2006.
Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions. ProSen Retention Committee.

“I ran for the Senate because I wanted to have a more active role in the USM community. I have continued to serve because I enjoy being a representative for my colleagues and I love the professional connections I have made with other staff members.”

Susan Robinson 2009-2011
Employed at USM since 1980.
Manager of Administration: Telecommunications. ProSen Colleague Connection Committee.

“I wanted to get involved with the different committees the Senate has to offer. I take great pride and satisfaction in helping others and being part of the process. I enjoy engaging and working with fellow senators and being an active participant in the university community.”

Carol Sadler 2010-2012
Employed at USM since 1999
Clinical Counselor, University Counseling Services.

“I joined to give back to the University Community, and to be more involved with other professional staff.”

Kat Schorr 2010-2012
Employed at USM since 2000.
Coordinator of Student Affairs, School of Social Work and Muskie. ProSen Communications Committee.

“I decided to run for a seat in the Professional Staff Senate, because I believe that active participation in our governance is crucial in times of great change. I have and will continue to serve, because I want the voice of professional staff to be heard loud and clear.”

Yvonne Souliere 2009-2011
Employed at USM since 2001.
Student Success Advisor/Coach. ProSen Communications Committee; and Election Committee.

“In Spring 2009, running for the Senate seemed a good way to find out about other people and areas of the University. Working in Advising/Student Success doesn’t offer much opportunity for socializing with other staff. Our outside-the-office contacts tend to be referrals or queries about some aspect of student academics. I’ve stayed because I do enjoy putting faces with names and learning how other staff contribute to the successful operation of the institution and to the success of its students.”

Susan Taylor 2008-2012
Employed at USM since 1979.
Human Resources Liaison, College of Science, Technology, and Health. ProSen Elections Committee; and ProSen representative to the USM Committee for Climate Neutrality.

“I was asked to run and serve on the Senate by other professional staff both terms.”

Nicole Vinal Harvie 2010-2012
Employed at USM since 2005.
Administrative Manager, Law School. ProSen Colleague Connection Committee.

“I ran for the Professional Staff Senate to help represent the law school among the USM community and so that I could share news of USM with the law school community. I am hopeful that the Senate can be representative of all the working parts of USM and help educate, mentor and guide all staff campus wide.”

Patti Volland 2009-2011
Employed at USM since 1986
Coordinator of Internships, Department of Art. ProSen Professional Development Committee, Retention Committee, and the ProSen representative to the USM President’s Council on Diversity.

“If I received a call from a member of the executive committee asking if I would be willing to fill a temporary senate seat and sort of stayed on. I find serving on the Senate allows me to learn from fellow senators and to participate in the wider University community.”

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Professional Staff Senate
2011 Annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony!
June 2, 2011, 2 - 4 p.m.
Hannaford Hall
Portland Campus

Public Skate
at the USM Gorham Ice Arena
through March 17, 2011
Tuesdays & Thursdays
8:30 - 9:45 a.m.
Cost: Free with USM ID
$3 per person, or $2 per person if there are 3 or more in your group.

If a task will take less than 2 minutes to do, do it now!

Please consider running for a seat on the Professional Staff Senate in the Spring of 2011
Mid-year Report from the Professional Staff Senate Fall 2010

The Professional Staff Senate has been fortunate to have President Selma Botman attend each of its monthly meetings this fall. Senate members have submitted questions for the President to answer at the meetings. Discussions have included enrollment management, university finance, student readiness, and how the new political climate in Maine might affect funding for higher education. New to the Senate this fall is a representative from the Faculty Senate, Dr. Karen Croteau. Judy Ryan, VP of HR, also regularly attends the meetings to address personnel and policy questions from the Senate. These meaningful exchanges have enhanced the Senate’s meetings this year.

The Senate has worked to fill positions on the six standing Senate committees, sixteen university committees, and the eight strategic planning task teams that require Professional Staff representation this year. The current Professional Staff Senate members cannot provide representation to all of the committees and task teams. Any professional staff member is eligible to provide this representation and is encouraged to volunteer for one of these opportunities.

In September, the Senate advanced a new university policy for hiring outside consultants to review internal operations. The proposal calls for more transparency and consistency in the utilizing of such advisors. A draft of the policy was sent to the faculty and classified staff senates for their review. The Classified Staff Senate endorsed the new guidelines. Currently, the Professional Staff and Faculty Senates are working on some revisions before a final vote is made by the Faculty Senate.

The Professional Staff Senate Colleague Connection Committee has merged with the Senate’s Professional Development Committee this year. The newly merged group sponsored its first joint program on December 10th, Managing Stress with Yoga.

Meg Weston, VP for University Advancement, which includes the Marketing Department, visited the Senate at its October meeting. She discussed the current process of re-branding USM. The campaign will consist of new television ads, an improved web site design, and new print materials. Advancement will also participate in the renaming of the four new colleges.

Watch for the next Colleague Connection or Professional Development program coming up in the spring.

At the request of the Strategic Planning Task Team One, the Senate held a One Hour, One Conversation event at its November meeting. The open discussion took place and resulted in repeated themes about technology driving student expectations and work processes for staff. Although it is impossible to predict exactly where technology will take us, a plan should be in place to respond to future trends as they affect higher education. The group expects that the University will need to provide for the needs of more adult students and address the supports that will be needed either at USM or in Maine’s K-12 system to prepare students for college. The future professional staff member at USM was projected to be one who could sift through an overabundance of information and prioritize multiple tasks to best serve the students of the future.

As demonstrated by the senator profiles in this newsletter, there are a variety of reasons to join the Professional Staff Senate. We hope that you will consider running for office during the 2011 elections and add your voice to the discussion of life as a professional staff employee at USM.

Did you know...

...the Professional Staff Senate meets monthly?

...many of our professional colleagues have served on ProSen over the years?

...there are opportunities for networking and professional development when we participate in University service activities such as committees and Senate representation?

...one need not be a senator to participate in a Senate committee?

...the Professional Staff Senate receives nominations from the campus community each year for new members?

...professional staff comprise those who are dues paying members of the UMPSA bargaining unit, those who have not joined but are eligible to be members, and those who are neither represented nor eligible?

...all professional staff at the University of Southern Maine are represented by the Professional Staff Senate which contributes to shared governance at USM?

A place for you

The University of Southern Maine serves its 10,000 plus students from its southern Maine campus with two hubs in Portland and nearby Gorham. Spending time at both, you live the Maine lifestyle to the fullest: Jump into the energy of our vibrant cosmopolitan city on the waterfront full of shopping, art, music, dining, and career opportunities and find inspiration in the open spaces, forested acres, mountains, lakes, and beaches for which our state is famous.

About 30 minutes from our southern Maine hubs, USM serves a nontraditional student population at our Lewiston-Auburn campus.

The above message is an excerpt from the Discover USM Web site, www.usm.maine.edu/discover.

“The Professional Staff Senate (hereafter known as ProSen) shall serve as a meaningful contributor to shared governance within the University of Southern Maine. ProSen shall serve as a vehicle for channeling the professional responsibilities of active and meaningful participation into the process of University governance. In that context, the ProSen complements the activities of the Faculty, Student, and Classified Staff Senates.”

- USM Professional Staff Senate By-Laws