

## Candidacy Statements for the Chair-Elect 2020-2021 Election

### Chair-Elect Nominees (One will be Elected)

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#### John D. Lea-Cox, Professor, Plant Science & Landscape Architecture College of Agriculture & Natural Resources



I am truly honored to be considered for Chair-Elect of the University Senate. Having previously served my Department and now my College as Senator, I have always appreciated the opportunity to share in the responsibility (albeit in a small way) to develop policies and procedures for our Institution. The impact of COVID-19 is of immediate concern, and the coming year will be a testament to whether we can minimize the impacts of this crisis on our whole campus community. In these times of disruption, dislocation and uncertainty, our collective decisions have even greater import. Supporting and advising our incoming President, Darryll Pines and the University administration in the coming months will be vital to navigate our way through these troubled times. And yet the resilience – already demonstrated – by our Faculty and Staff during the past month has been a testament to everyone’s strength and resourcefulness.

We need to listen, develop creative solutions and work collaboratively to chart a path forward for the University’s continued success, while recognizing the indelible impact of this period on our community. If elected, I promise to be a voice for *all* members of our community. I truly believe that inclusion is at the heart of our shared governance process, and the Senate provides a unique opportunity for all of our constituencies to work together, to provide their perspectives to our campus leadership. I would strive to support our incoming Senate Chair, Laura Dugan during this crucial time, to foster a congenial and mutually beneficial relationship between the Senate and President Pines.

Having been a member of the University of Maryland community for 24 years, I have seen and experienced a number of (mostly positive) changes on our campus and State in that time. As an extension specialist with teaching, research and state-wide outreach responsibilities, I have been privileged to lead national research teams that have ultimately served our farming communities, in both rural and urban environments. I have learned how important building teams, leveraging talent and engendering trust are to achieving success. Research is foundational to our success as an institution, our innovation and to our teaching and outreach missions. But academic excellence is also fundamental to our success – as students are our life blood, and graduate students are our future capacity.

I have served in various Committee and Chair roles at Department, College and University levels; my most important roles have been serving on faculty mentoring and APT committees, to advise and promote our Faculty. But on a personal level, my greatest achievements have always been reflected in mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students, to enable their ultimate success. If elected, I look forward to the opportunity to advocate for faculty, staff and students; to gain insight and help improve the function of our great University; and to contribute to the well-being and success of the whole campus community.

**Ellen D. Williams, Distinguished University Professor, Physics  
College of Computer, Mathematical & Natural Sciences**



I am honored to be a candidate for the position of Chair-Elect of the University Senate. I came to the University of Maryland as a postdoctoral research associate, and I cherish the opportunities the University provides for faculty to excel in teaching, research and service. We now face challenging times as the University, along with our society as a whole, approaches the peak of the COVID pandemic and prepares to develop a 'new normal' in its aftermath. If elected, I would do my best to represent the Senate and support the University in the grave decisions that will be made during the next few years.

During my professional career I have developed a collaborative way of working, and focused on interdisciplinary topics in research, teaching and service. For instance, as the Director of the Interdisciplinary Chemical Physics Graduate Program, I supported graduate education spanning three colleges and multiple departments. I later established a NSF-supported Materials Research Science and Engineering Center, representing a similar breadth of disciplines in research, graduate education, and providing educational outreach to the local community.

I also spent several years on leave from the University, working both in the energy industry on sustainability issues, and on clean energy innovation at the Department of Energy as the Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy. Since returning, I have worked with colleagues in the College of Engineering and the School of Public Policy to advocate for the impacts of university research and role-model behavior in advancing the use of clean energy.

The experience I have had within the University of Maryland and with external organizations has given me a great appreciation of the diversity of human talents that comes together in an effective organization. I would welcome the opportunity, if elected, to use my experience to support the campus community as a whole in sustaining and expanding the University's mission.