

Candidate Statement
A&H Rep
Spring 2025
Dr. Rebecca Richards

Dear Colleagues,

I am an Associate Professor of English, currently under review for promotion to full professor, with PhD in Rhetoric, Composition (Writing), and the Teaching of English. I am running for the position of Fine Arts & Humanities representative to the MSP Board.

Before arriving at UML in the fall 2020, I worked for nine years at Saint Olaf College, a small liberal arts college in Minnesota. To our community, I also bring my professional experiences as: a children's book editor, a unionized public high school teacher, and a freelance writer and editor.

At my core, I am a research-driven educator, born and raised in Ohio by my parents who were unionized public school educators. Many of my extended family, likewise, worked in powerfully unionized industries throughout the Rust Belt.

Because of my background, I was thrilled and willing to make a mid-career transition to join the union-supported UML community. Since arriving in Massachusetts, I've been inspired by the history of union work in the Merrimack Valley, and I would love to contribute to that lineage, growing our solidarity to improve our working lives and to create a positive environment for our campus. In the past five academic years, I've regularly attended MSP town hall meetings and collective bargaining (as a silent bargaining member). I also actively advocate for union activities through the email visibility campaign and by speaking with colleagues about union participation.

As a trained rhetorician, I practice active listening and consensus building, working as transparently as possible while protecting sensitive information. Consensus does not mean that we will believe the same things nor that we will always "get our way." Instead, consensus requires coming to a general agreement about what is humane and equitable in the face of the constraints of our changeable world.

I also champion the diversity of our work in the arts and humanities and the challenges of doing this work in the current moment. The arts and humanities bring creativity, community, and intellectual curiosity to our campus; I will advocate for the recognition and support of our essential role in creating a lively and thriving campus—a place people want to be and where they belong.

I would appreciate your vote for Fine Arts and Humanities representative to the MSP. Moreover, please support the entire MSP Solidarity Coalition slate, as we have a united and unequivocal vision for creating a better union. Thank you for your attention and consideration. I hope your semester goes smoothly.

In Solidarity,
Becca Richards