

2022 Minnesota State University, Mankato Student Government Election Candidate Guide

Candidates who submitted a statement/photo by the deadline are listed in this document.

Not all candidates who are on the ballot have a candidate statement/photo in this document.

Contents

President and Vice President	4
Emma Zellmer and Idman Ibrahim.....	4
Senator - Humanities and Social Sciences.....	5
Frank Vondra	5
Grace Larsen	7
David Wing.....	8
Senator - Allied Health and Nursing.....	9
Namita Basnet.....	9
Senator – At-Large.....	10
Senator – Off-Campus	11
Regan Hoehn.....	11
Nitiben Parekh	12
Maria Mendez-Martinez	13
David Mesta	14
Keb Spear.....	16
Senator – Residential Life.....	17

Bennet Hanson	17
Joey Novak.....	18
Senator – College of Business	19
James Ziegeweid	19
Mariana Dermenji	20
Yasir Wedatalla.....	21
Victor Nguyen.....	22
Senator – College of Graduate Studies	23
Douglas Roberts.....	23
Senator – College of Science, Engineering, and Technology (CSET)	24
Nick Huynh.....	24
Roshit Niraula	26
Board – MSU Reporter Newspaper Board	27
Nitiben Parekh	27
Board – Centennial Student Union (CSU) Board	28
Grace Larsen	28
Nitiben Parekh	29
Keb Spear.....	30
Commission – Student Health Services Fee Advisory Commission.....	31
Keb Spear.....	31

Commission – Athletics Fee Advisory Commission	32
--	----

President and Vice President

Emma Zellmer and Idman Ibrahim

Empowering Mavericks

Senator - Humanities and Social Sciences



Frank Vondra

Independent

My name is Frank Vondra, and I am running for Senator for the College of Arts and Humanities. I was previously Arts and Humanities Senator the 2020/2021 year.

During this time I spearheaded a project, started by my predecessor, to oversee the conversion of the Kiyo Suyematsu music library into a performing classroom space, so that theatre and music students could have a space for rehearsal and performance in a more intimate setting, while also relieving scheduling stress on the two dance studios that were/are the only place to rehearse. If Elected, my goal is to assist the Theatre department in successfully reaching the goals put forth by Student Government during the 2021/2022 year, and improve student outreach and involvement. I plan to assist in this by reaching out to various Registered Student organizations(RSOs) and seeking their involvement. In regards to other leadership experience, I have previously been President of the Residence Hall Association, after having been a floor representative for two years prior. During my tenure as RHA President, I led a group of students who were concerned with the campus policy of locking the Kitchens and Lounges due to COVID-19. This group was successful in it's goal of restoring the previous functionality of the Kitchens and Lounges, as well as uniting several student leaders across different groups, and bringing in new student leadership who are still actively serving today. In my major and career choice, I am a Theatrical Sound Designer, a position that heavily requires team collaboration and leadership. I have successfully designed over 20 shows, five of them here at MNSU Mankato, and have won both regional and national awards for my work. Outside of school, I have served

in the Sons of the American Legion, a partner group of the Veteran's organization The American Legion, which advocates on behalf of veterans' children, and have served in several local and state level leadership positions within this group.



Grace Larsen

Independent

Hi Everyone! I am so stoked to be running for the 2022 Student Body Government here at MNSU! I am planning on majoring in Political Science with a minor in Accounting here at MNSU, with hopes of graduating in 2024. I would love to represent all of you by serving as a Social and Behavioral Science Student Senator this upcoming year! Here are a couple of things about me! - People often describe my personality as a cup of coffee. It's

pretty adaptable depending on the situation and it's always there to hype you up! - I work part-time as a barista and I also work in the photography industry. Capturing weddings is one of the greatest honors I have ever been given. - I have 8 siblings and I have two nieces who are literally the cutest kids on the planet. - I care deeply about political awareness and staffed with Teenpact Leadership Schools in MN this year. My main role was teaching 13-19-year-old students about the political process and state legislative process. - I am a massive extrovert, but this usually surprises people because while I get my energy from being around other people, I don't have to be the one talking, and love hearing stories from other people! Thanks for your consideration! :)



David Wing

Independent

I am going into my final year as a philosophy, politics, and economics major here at MNSU. I have a history of strong leadership and volunteer work stemming from my roles in student activities across high school and 2 different universities. I am an avid singer among other things and have been doing so for over a decade. I am dedicated to promoting the values of my constituents and will do so by representing the College of Arts and Humanities.

Senator - Allied Health and Nursing



Namita Basnet

Independent

Being a former Allied Health and Nursing Senator for approximately a year, I have not only tried to improve the university life for us; however, I gotta chance to grow, learn and evolve. As a student leader, I have had realized to be inclusive, confident and respectful of other person regardless of everything. Some of the project I had completed with other senators are making free female hygiene products all over the university's restrooms, Library Services improvement, Senator Compensation and so on. I wish to improve the university for you and me, for us, so let's join to do that. Vote me your Senator to improve the quality, delivery and growth of our university.

Senator – At-Large

Senator – Off-Campus



Regan Hoehn

Independent

I am majoring in Mass Communication with a minor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. I am running as an off campus senator and look forward to representing the student body.



Nitiben Parekh

Empowering Mavericks

Hello everyone, I am Nitiben Parekh, a sophomore undergrad transfer majoring in Mass media. Wonder what's it like to have a creative person handle a position? It will be my duty to productively represent the needs, concerns, and views of the students for whom I will be responsible. I will innately speak on behalf of the student body to the college administration and make decisions on

issues that directly affect students. your vote and time is appreciated.



Maria Mendez-Martinez

Empowering Mavericks

Hello I am Maria Mendez-Martinez. I am currently a double major in Criminology, Psychology. I am running as a Senator for Off-Campus with Empowering Mavericks. The reason that I believe I should get this position is because I believe in being the change we want to see. I love diversity and knowing that I come from a diverse background I would love to add that diversity to the table by getting nominated. I believe in new ideas no matter how big or small the idea is. I would love to welcome everyone's idea and make sure that all of our voices as students of MSU are being heard and that our needs are being met. Sometimes being a student can be hard and especially difficult if you feel that your Voice is not being heard. I believe that we as Mavericks and as our party name "Powering Mavericks" we can grow together and learn from each to bring new ideas and new changes to not just the campus but what we call our "Home"



David Mesta

Independent

My name is David Mesta, and I am running for Off-Campus Senator. I am a first-generation Mexican American college student from Faribault, MN. I am interested in the position to be a voice for students who don't live on campus and creating space to bring their concerns and ways to better support students off campus who don't know about the resources available for them like snap, food pantry, and other support systems that aren't always easy to find and improving them. As a transfer student from South Central College who began in the fall semester, I want to make the transfer process more seamless and help support incoming students compared to my experience struggling with bad academic advising that would have cost me thousands of dollars in tuition if I had listened and changed my plan especially since I had to pay out of pocket this year since I lost my Pell grant. My leadership experience at South Central College has been serving as the Student Senate Treasurer and being on multiple clubs like Rotaract, Campus Activities Board, and InterVarsity serving from Treasurer, VP, and President on campus. I have also been involved in Students United's sister organization, LeadMN currently serving as Vice President where I represent two-year college students advocating for them on the state, federal, Minnstate levels Through my student's leadership experiences have provided me with the ability to work with people from different backgrounds, and the passion to help get things done that will help be a support with the fellow senators on student government and the broader student body to have their voice lifted and be a friendly face that will engage

with the broader student body to bring their voice to the table in the decision-makings and bring a fresh perspective as a transfer student.



Keb Spear

Independent

As our university works to recover from the pandemic, our student Senate must "Build back better" by improving access to social services, continuing the work of improving student pay, fighting for better treatment of Grad assistants, pressure the school administration to improve accessibility of the campus, and more! As an incumbent of this seat, I wanna work more closely with the other Senators to get this important work done.

Senator – Residential Life



Bennet Hanson

Independent

I am the sole current SBS Academic Senator for Student Government. I am a Future Graduate Student for the 2022-2023 School-year. I am seeking a Master's Degree in Urban Planning by 2024. As of this writing: I am an Undergraduate Student in the Urban and Regional Studies Program and will graduate in Spring of 2022 with High Honors. I am the current Vice President of the Residence Hall Association (RHA). I am a current member of the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH). I have been selected for a Summer Conference Position with ResLife. I have spent Two Years Living within Mankato ResHalls. What I am Running On: Reduced Politics within the ResHalls. Accessibility within the ResHalls. Transparency within the ResHalls. Future Expansion of the ResHalls. Student Advocacy within the ResHalls. Dining Services Reform. Student Parking Reform. Food Pantry Expansion. Thank You for Voting, I means a lot to me.



Joey Novak

Empowering Mavericks

Howdy I am Joey Novak, I am seeking re-election as a residential life senator. I am also a CA and involved in local politics which gave me valuable experience I hope to carry into this role. I seek to represent you all and want to be easily accessible to everyone so in addition to holding regular office hours if elected I will provide my email here so anyone may contact me with questions or suggestions at any time (joseph.novak@mnsu.edu). If elected I want to focus on Accessibility, specifically I want to address procedures and policies that make this campus inaccessible to our physically or mentally divergent students. I also want to move the green transport fund into its own budget category to allow for the Student Activities Fee to avoid another budget increase next year while still guaranteeing the same level of services that are provided to students. Finally, I hope to continue my work with ensuring proper student worker compensation.

Senator – College of Business



James Ziegeweid

Independent

The College of Business here at Minnesota State University, Mankato is outstanding, and its not very hard to see why. Every day, students are offered the amazing opportunity to mold themselves into being the best that they can be through amazing opportunities such as the Integrated Business Experience (IBE) and the Maverick Student Investment Fund (MSIF). I believe that commitment to providing opportunities for students to develop the skills essential to being successful businesspeople is something critical to our college. As a College of Business Senator, I would push for more real-world experience opportunities for our students such as helping solve problems facing local businesses. I will take advice from all students within our college and work to implement these changes, ultimately allowing the College of Business here at Minnesota State University, Mankato, to be the best that it can be.



Mariana Dermenji

Empowering Mavericks

My name is Mariana, and I am from a small Eastern European country called Moldova. Currently I am a Junior studying Marketing here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am a very passionate student and involved in lots of activities that our campus can offer. My main goal as a potential College of Business senator is to improve and to ease college path particularly for international students with College of Business majors. As an international student myself, I know the struggle and commitment we have in order to find an internship during our college journey; my goal is to make it more real for hardworking and dedicated foreign business students!



Yasir Wedatalla

Independent

True Advocacy for Business students.



Victor Nguyen

Independent

Hello, my name is Victor Nguyen; I am a third-year Accounting and Finance major. It is with great pleasure, passion, and privilege that I submit my application to run for and serve in the Student Government. For the upcoming year, I will work with the administration to create more programs, awards, and activities for business students. I understand that it is difficult for students to find their first internship without experience, and being involved in business programs or activities will give us an edge to stand out, build a better resume, and connect more to other large companies. This year 2021-2022, I was in the Student Government as an Off-Campus Senator, and I have worked to expand the Free Parking Lot. At the beginning of the year, I realized it takes a while for students to find a spot to park at the Free Lot. I brought up this issue and worked with other senators, the executives, and the administration to solve this problem. Finally, it is in the last step. If everything goes right, the Free Lot will expand to the South of the Orange Lot next year.

Senator – College of Graduate Studies



Douglas Roberts

Empowering Mavericks

I am running for reelection as Graduate Studies Senator. My goals for this upcoming year is improved pay for graduate assistants, better access to resources

available for current graduate students on-campus. I intend to continue fighting for better support for programs that matter the most to graduate students. It is also a goal to improve ability to deal with professors and faculty who continue to abuse graduate students by creating and working with the administration to develop a better system to get your grievances heard without having your name dragged through the mud or feeling like you would get retaliated against for doing so. For a little background on me, I am a graduate student obtaining their MFA in Communication Studies. I am also a graduate assistant in the Communication Studies Department. I am also coaching with the Speech and Debate team here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I was the Student Allocations Vice Chair this past year. I completed my undergraduate at Simpson College where I served in multiple leadership roles.

Senator – College of Science, Engineering, and Technology (CSET)



Nick Huynh

Empowering Mavericks

I started attending MNSU-Mankato when I was 16 years old and am one of this university's 2021 Presidential Scholars. I will be entering my senior year next fall with an academic goal to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences. After my undergraduate education, I plan to attend graduate school for my M.D.-Ph.D. in Regenerative Medicine with an emphasis in Cancer Biology. I am very passionate about cancer research and how it can be successfully implemented into a clinical setting for successful prognoses and diagnoses of a myriad of cancers. Presently, I am actively engaging in undergraduate research with my mentor, Dr. Marilyn Hart, who under her guidance has assisted me in my training and my establishment of preliminary research that will set the groundwork for my future studies. As a leader, I am actively involved within Fraternity and Sorority Life being the Vice President of Membership Education on the Interfraternity Council as well as being the Scholarship Chairman within the Sigma Chi Fraternity. I was also a MavPASS Leader for General Biology I last fall. My goals during my tenure are to implement and to bring awareness to academic support services for upper-division courses as well as for courses that have a history of high Drop/Withdraw/Fail (DWF) rates. One big change that I hope to bring about is transforming unused spaces in Trafton Science Center and Ford Hall into STEM tutoring centers. During my tenure as a MavPASS leader for General Biology I last fall, it was all too often I notice students pursuing pre-professional programs and decide to switch programs all because they did not do well in ONE

course. One setback should not affect your dreams, and I want to help students accomplish what they set out to do by being at the forefront of change!



Roshit Niraula

Empowering Mavericks

Namaste and Hello to you all, I am Roshit Niraula. A current international student from Nepal, this is my first semester here at MNSU. Throughout my schooling, I have been involved in various leadership opportunities. I look forward to growing on those experiences and ask for your support in my candidacy for Senate. Thank you.

Board – MSU Reporter Newspaper Board



Nitiben Parekh

Empowering Mavericks

Hello everyone, I am Nitiben Parekh, a sophomore undergrad transfer majoring in Mass media. Wonder what's it like to have a creative person handle a position? It will be my duty to productively represent the needs, concerns, and views of the students for whom I will be responsible. I will innately speak on behalf of the student body to the college administration and make decisions on

issues that directly affect students. your vote and time is appreciated.

Board – Centennial Student Union (CSU) Board



Grace Larsen

Independent

Hi Everyone! I am so stoked to be running for the 2022 Student Body Government here at MNSU! I am planning on majoring in Political Science with a minor in Accounting here at MNSU, with hopes of graduating in 2024. I would love to represent all of you by serving as a Social and Behavioral Science Student Senator this upcoming year! Here are a couple of things about me! - People often describe my personality as a cup of coffee. It's

pretty adaptable depending on the situation and it's always there to hype you up! - I work part-time as a barista and I also work in the photography industry. Capturing weddings is one of the greatest honors I have ever been given. - I have 8 siblings and I have two nieces who are literally the cutest kids on the planet. - I care deeply about political awareness and staffed with Teenpact Leadership Schools in MN this year. My main role was teaching 13-19-year-old students about the political process and state legislative process. - I am a massive extrovert, but this usually surprises people because while I get my energy from being around other people, I don't have to be the one talking, and love hearing stories from other people! Thanks for your consideration! :)



Nitiben Parekh

Empowering Mavericks

Hello everyone, I am Nitiben Parekh, a sophomore undergrad transfer majoring in Mass media. Wonder what's it like to have a creative person handle a position? It will be my duty to productively represent the needs, concerns, and views of the students for whom I will be responsible. I will innately speak on behalf of the student body to the college administration and make decisions on

issues that directly affect students. your vote and time is appreciated.



Keb Spear

Independent

As our university works to recover from the pandemic, our student Senate must "Build back better" by improving access to social services, continuing the work of improving student pay, fighting for better treatment of Grad assistants, pressure the school administration to improve accessibility of the campus, and more! As an incumbent of this seat, I wanna work more closely with the other Senators to get this important work done.

Commission – Student Health Services Fee Advisory Commission



Keb Spear

Independent

As our university works to recover from the pandemic, our student Senate must "Build back better" by improving access to social services, continuing the work of improving student pay, fighting for better treatment of Grad assistants, pressure the school administration to improve accessibility of the campus, and more! As an incumbent of this seat, I wanna work more closely with the other Senators to get this important work done.

Commission – Athletics Fee Advisory Commission