

**PERSONAL STATEMENTS FOR  
ELECTIONS TO ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE,  
ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES COMMITTEE,  
ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES PANEL  
SPRING 2025**

**ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

**Toni Anaya:** I am honored to have been selected to stand for election to the Academic Planning Committee. Since joining the UNL faculty in 2007, I have served on both Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and several other Faculty Senate committees. This experience has provided me the opportunity to be exposed to and develop a better understanding of curricular issues I believe will be beneficial should I be elected to serve on the Academic Planning Committee. The types of academic programs UNL provides to students not only impacts future enrollment but also the direction of the academic and research goals of the institution. How we prepare our students to meet the needs of a changing world starts with the curriculum offered by the University. I believe serving on the Academic Planning Committee is a vital way to help maintain the quality and relevance of our academic programs and welcome the opportunity to serve.

**Jeffrey Bradshaw:** I am excited to apply for an elected leadership role on the Academic Planning Committee. With extensive experience in academic leadership, governance, and professional service, I am eager to contribute my skills to help guide the direction of academic programming at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. Below is a brief summary of my leadership and service experience and my commitment to academic excellence.

**Leadership and Service Experience**

*University Leadership Roles*

- **Director, Doctor of Plant Health Program (2023 – Present):** Leading a multidisciplinary professional doctoral program that integrates teaching, research, and administrative functions. Supervising staff and aligning program goals with institutional priorities.
- **Interim Director, Panhandle Research and Extension Center (2020 – 2021):** Oversaw administrative, research, and extension operations, leading teams to enhance operational efficiency and research outcomes.
- **Associate Research and Extension Director Intern (2017 – 2019):** Contributed to strategic oversight and cross-departmental initiatives, supporting the alignment of research with institutional objectives.
- **Committee and Governance Roles:** Served on numerous university committees, contributing to policy development, resource planning, and academic governance.

*Professional elected and appointed service to Entomological Society of America*

- **Chair, Leadership Committees:** Guided strategic initiatives and enhanced member engagement to support the society’s mission. This included elected roles of President of Plant-Insect Ecosystems Section (2019-2020) and President of the North Central

Branch (2022-2023).

- **Program Organizer and Mentor:** Coordinated national and regional meetings, fostering collaboration among researchers, students, and industry professionals.
- **Editorial and Review Responsibilities:** Provided peer review and editorial oversight for journals to advance entomological research and scholarship.
- **Recognition and Awards:** Honored for contributions to the society through leadership roles and impactful service.

#### *Other Professional Leadership Roles*

- **Supervisor of Research and Administrative Teams (2010 – Present):** Directed diverse teams to achieve academic and operational goals in research and extension settings.
- **Recruitment and Team Building:** Led initiatives to attract, mentor, and retain high-caliber academic talent, strengthening institutional competitiveness.
- **Partnership Development:** Established collaborations across academia, industry, and community stakeholders to advance institutional and disciplinary goals.

#### **Commitment to Academic Excellence**

My leadership roles have equipped me with the skills to address complex challenges in academic planning, including resource allocation, curriculum development, and fostering a collaborative academic environment. I have also actively contributed to the university's research, teaching, and extension missions having managed single grants exceeding \$2M, delivered significant scholarly outputs, and mentored several students since my employment at UNL in 2010.

Service to professional organizations like the Entomological Society of America has strengthened my ability to engage with diverse stakeholders and support strategic initiatives that enhance academic and professional development. These experiences have prepared me to contribute effectively to the Academic Planning Committee's goal of advancing the university's academic priorities for review and recommendation.

Thank you for considering my application. I welcome the opportunity to bring my experience and dedication to the APC.

**Kevin Hanrahan:** I am a Professor of Voice & Voice Pedagogy in the Glenn Korff School of Music. In my 18 years at UNL I have been involved in many university-level governance committees. From Fall 2018 to Spring 2020 I served as Faculty Senate President. I have also served on the Faculty Advisory Compensation Committee, the Convocations Committee, the University Commencement and Recognition Committee, the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the N2025 Strategic Planning Committee, the Nebraska University System Strategic Planning Committee, as well as college and department committees. I am a firm believer in the faculty governance role within the shared governance paradigm. As Faculty Senate President I was involved in the planning of the now abandoned RCM-hybrid budget model. These experiences position me well to advocate on behalf of the faculty in what will certainly be a difficult period for UNL.

Regent Weitz announced at the December Board of Regents meeting that they will be discussing and proposing significant structural changes to the system in what is no doubt an effort to move us to a "One University, Four Campus" institution. We need representation in the APC who will hold firm to the principles of faculty governance, maintaining and improving the health of UNL as the flagship institution within the system and state, and advocating faculty priorities, and not administrative priorities.

For more information on my professional and academic career, please see my biography at [:https://arts.unl.edu/GKSoM/person/kevin-hanrahan/](https://arts.unl.edu/GKSoM/person/kevin-hanrahan/)

**Bonita Sharif:** I am an associate professor in the School of Computing specializing in software engineering and human factors. I look forward to working together with fellow faculty and university leaders to support the charge of the academic planning committee and to maintain high-quality and competitiveness in our programs and facilities. Building trust and strong communication between various stakeholders is crucial and will always be the underlying foundation of all activities I participate in. I have served in numerous leadership roles including steering committee chair for conferences in my field.

Website: <https://www.shbonita.me/>

**Zhigang Shen:** Dr. Shen joined UNL in 2007 as a tenure—track assistant professor at the Durham School of Architectural Engineering and Construction, and was fully promoted in 2023. He was a visiting associate professor in NYU in 2014-2015. Before joining UNL he had 6 years' industry experience in both design and construction. His apportionment at UNL has been: 50% teaching, 40% research, and 10% service. The intent to join APC is to provide a balanced perspective to UNL's current and future academic programs. Meanwhile, he would like to have a broader view of our institution where he has served for 18 years. He anticipates the new role will allow him to better serve the interest of UNL faculty.

During his tenure at UNL, he was awarded more than \$3M federal research grants. His work in computer vision and robotics was widely cited in the construction automation areas. His research outcomes were featured in top research journals, and international, national and regional media. He received awards of 2020-2021/2019-2020 Excellent in Research at College of Engineering.

He is a successful mentor: all his PhD graduates are research university professors. He was a recipient of the 2002 UNL Outstanding Postdoc Mentor Award. Since joining UNL, he has taught more than 1,500 students. His courses have been focused on construction cost estimating and 3D BIM modeling.

He served multiple service roles at UNL, including faculty senate, Chancellor's committee of people of color, Marshal Corp, UNL research Council etc. Outside UNL, he served as conference chairs and journal reviewers of more than 30 journals. UNL Faculty Website: <https://engineering.unl.edu/durhamschool/faculty/zhigang-shen/>

**Xiangmin Sun:** <https://snr.unl.edu/aboutus/who/people/faculty-member.aspx?pid=2830>

**ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES COMMITTEE:**

## **ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES PANEL:**

**Kristen Blankley:** Teaches and researches in the areas of alternative dispute resolution, legal ethics and sports law. She joined the faculty of the University of Nebraska College of Law in 2010 and is currently the Henry M. Grether, Jr. Professor of Law. She previously served on the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Panel from 2021-2024. More information about Professor Blankley can be found <https://law.unl.edu/kristen-blankley/>.

**Michelle Homp:** I am eager to serve as a member of the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Panel because of my commitment to upholding the principles of academic freedom, fairness, and equity within our university. I am especially motivated by the opportunity to support my colleagues regarding concerns related to academic freedom, tenure, and professional conduct. As a Professor of Practice, I value the collaborative nature of this role, which incorporates representation of various colleges, disciplines, and faculty ranks to ensure balance in addressing these issues.

**David Lott:** I have been an Extension Educator for Nebraska Extension since 2010. I currently serve on the Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate Executive Committee, understanding the challenges facing faculty and students. I understand the importance of case review of faculty and student situations to look at all angles to make informed recommendations that impact the future of colleagues and students. I promise to listen openly and honestly to any case that may come forward.

**Aaron PeeksMease:** Greetings everyone. I am Aaron PeeksMease, a Professor of Practice in Sociology, and I am seeking appointment to the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Panel. I have experience serving on similar committees at UNL, James Madison University, and Elon University, including chairing the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) committee at UNL and serving on the UNL Academic Standards committee. In each of these roles I bring a social justice mindset to work that focuses on topics of importance to underrepresented groups. During my time chairing the D&I committee, I established connections with various stakeholders on campus (e.g., Deans, programming heads) and accessed positions to acquire and disseminate more information when needed (e.g., becoming a member of the Council on Inclusive Excellence & Diversity). I believe in transparency and accountability and have used my time at UNL and elsewhere to advocate for people, groups, programs that I feel are being unfairly targeted by administration. I have no doubt that my colleagues both here and elsewhere would describe me as vocal, hardworking, thorough, transparent, and someone who works well with others.

**Saleh Taghvaeian:** I am honored and excited to have been nominated to serve on the Academic Rights and Responsibilities (ARR) panel. As an associate professor in the Biological Systems Engineering department, I am a strong advocate for the shared governance model at UNL. By joining the ARR committee of the Faculty Senate, I hope to make a meaningful contribution to this governance structure. I believe my experience and skills align well with the tasks and responsibilities assigned to ARR panel members. My top five strengths, according to CliftonStrengths®, are Learner, Responsibility, Includer, Harmony, and Communication.

Link to my webpage: <https://bse.unl.edu/person/saleh-taghvaeian/>