

Gail Montgomery Brion's Faculty Trustee Statement

Why should you vote for me to be your Faculty Trustee? Many of you do not know me, or have only had limited interactions with me, yet I have been working to support UK students and faculty for decades. I am asking now for your support to extend that history of service to the Board of Trustees, a position where I think I can make a difference and represent the all of the faculty of UK. Although I am from the College of Engineering, I have been in the Senate, and on the Senate Council, for years learning firsthand about the different colleges and programs across our campus. With this background, I am ready to provide a balanced approach to our faculty representation on the Board through an informed, fair, and balanced approach to shared governance. I am asking for your support, so that I can support you.

I came to UK in 1995 to serve my profession, and promote the inclusion of my gender and social class in the field of engineering sustainable environments and infrastructure. This service has taken many forms, but has had only one focus; the growth and promotion of people. By enriching others' lives, I succeed in my objective. Now I am seeking your support in continuing this service by serving as one of our two Faculty Trustees. I promise to promote excellence in education and highlight my colleagues hard work and dedication to providing access to an affordable, relevant, and sustaining academic experience for all students.

Some of the ways I served my profession and the university are reflected in the multiple awards and honors associated with students. I have been recognized for excellence in both teaching and advising, in more than one college. The UK focus on students, especially first generational, was what drew me to accept an offer here, and has been key to my staying for 25 years. In that time, I have helped start new programs, centers, and even been founding faculty of the College of Public Health. Key to my approach has been the integration of research with education, as I know personally that exposure to undergraduate research, and to a special faculty member, started my life's professional journey. I know that students at all levels benefit from exposure to the open-ended questions that are the basis of research and creativity, and to top notch faculty who are willing to invest the time it takes to encourage young people to bloom. I want to bring attention to the Board of Trustees so we can find new ways to support these activities.

One of the ways is I have undertaken that has not directly supported my research focus, but enriched the broader population of colleagues, students, and professional organizations, was the establishment, funding, and creation of the Environmental Research and Training Laboratories (ERTL). As Director of ERTL, which served 5 colleges across our campus for 17 years, I created new summer research programs and top-notch research facilities that have benefitted over a thousand students and hundreds of faculty. I would like to be in a position to stimulate UK investment to support research for all of our students.

I believe in service leadership. When my colleagues asked, I stepped in to help start-up the new First Year Engineering program, fill in as Director of Undergraduate Studies, create new curriculum, revamp our introductory classes, recruit new faculty and administrators, and support promotion and tenure decisions on the Area committee. I have a long history of service on the Senate (10 years), Senate Council (6 years), and Senate Rules and Elections Committee (8 years). It would be an honor to add to that history service as one of your Faculty Trustees.