



Karen Petrone – Statement and Bio

Faculty members across the University of Kentucky have more in common than divides us. Whether we are primarily teachers, researchers, clinicians, or artists, or a combination of all of the above, our work is at the heart of the University. There is no student success or patient healing without us. There is no research or creative activity without us. We are also crucial to the community engagement that fulfills our land grant mission.

If you elect me as Faculty Trustee, I will do my utmost to convey **all** of our perspectives to the Board of Trustees, and work to lead the University in a way that honors the multiple ways in which we serve our students, our patients, the University, the Commonwealth, and beyond. I will help the Trustees and University leadership to understand faculty perspectives on shared governance and enable the University to collaborate with us effectively in utilizing our pedagogical, scholarly, artistic, and clinical expertise.

Having spent my entire 28+ year career at UK, I feel that I have strong insight into both the faculty and the institution, and that I can effectively represent faculty on the Board of Trustees. I am an extrovert's extrovert, and I would enjoy getting to know the Trustees personally so that I can be the most effective at diplomatically but firmly representing diverse faculty perspectives.

I arrived at the University of Kentucky immediately after receiving my Ph.D. in Russian and Soviet History from the University of Michigan in 1994. I moved through the ranks from untenured assistant professor to full professor, becoming History Department Chair in 2011. I have taught across the entire History curriculum from large-format 100-level UK Core classes to advising Ph.D. students. I have won the Chancellor's Teaching Award (now the UK Outstanding Teaching Award) and the College of Arts and Sciences' highest honor, the Distinguished Professor Award, for my research on the cultural history of Stalinism and on war and memory in Soviet and contemporary Russia.

I consider my greatest achievement in my two terms as Department Chair to be in the recruitment, retention and mentoring of faculty. The Department of History is known for having outstanding researchers who are also outstanding teachers. I facilitated the hiring of 12 new people and partnered with the African American and Africana Studies Program to enhance diversity within the Department of History. I mentored 19 faculty (out of 19 attempts) to tenure and/or promotion to full professor. Along the way, I learned a great deal about faculty concerns and the best ways to nurture and advance faculty.

I am the inaugural director of the College of Arts & Sciences' Cooperative for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Its mission is to “demonstrate the value and the contributions of the Humanities and Social Sciences in sustaining our communities and solving critical social problems,” as well as to facilitate faculty and graduate student engagement across disciplines and with the world outside of UK. CHSS has partnered with many units across campus including the College of Fine Arts, the Appalachian Center, the Center for Health Equity Transformation and the Center for Clinical and Translational Science. CHSS has also assisted the College of Arts & Sciences with addressing the problem of interrupted research during the pandemic and with faculty mentoring.

Since 2021, I have been co-director of the grant-funded UK-JHF Holocaust Education Initiative. In this role I have collaborated with colleagues in the UK College of Education to train teachers across the Commonwealth of Kentucky to carry out the mandate for Holocaust education that became Kentucky law in 2018.

As I hope I have conveyed, my experience as a UK faculty member has given me first-hand insight into the teaching, research, and outreach missions of the University of Kentucky. If elected Faculty Trustee, I would enhance my familiarity with faculty matters by getting to know the achievements and concerns of the faculty in the Health Care areas and would work diligently to convey all these multiple perspectives to the Board of Trustees.