

My name is Edward Davis, and I am an Associate Professor of Earth Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences as well as the director of the Condon Fossil Collection, a division of the UO Museum of Natural and Cultural History (MNCH). I have been in roles with the MNCH since 2007 and on the tenure track since 2013. Since 2021 I have served as Chair of Organizing and Membership for United Academics.

What experiences have prepared you for the responsibilities of being Senate Vice President?

I have been a UO senator eight out of the last nine years, consistently serving on Senate committees. I helped shape the process of teaching evaluation on the Senate Task Force on Course Evaluation and the Continuous Improvement and Evaluation of Teaching Committee. I was part of reimagining our Core Education Curriculum on the Core Education Council. Most recently, I served on the Senate Task Force on Faculty Service, working to make service loads equitable and transparent. In addition to Senate service, I have been in United Academics leadership, initially as Chair of the Representative Assembly, and currently as Chair of Organizing and Membership. I have been on the MNCH Leadership Committee since 2009.

Why are you running for the position of University Senate Vice President and what specific goals or initiatives do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I am running for University Senate Vice President because I believe that in this evolving landscape of higher education, particularly under a challenging federal administration, it is critical to vigorously defend the core principles of academic freedom and uphold the University of Oregon Senate's constitutional rights. My primary goal is to ensure that our faculty, staff, and students can pursue knowledge, research, and expression without undue external influence or fear of reprisal. If elected, I will work to establish a rapid-response committee to monitor and address any threats to academic freedom stemming from federal policies or executive actions. Furthermore, I will advocate for increased transparency in all administrative decision-making processes, ensuring that the University President and Provost consistently respect the Senate's authority as outlined in the UO Constitution, particularly as they navigate budgetary pressures or shifts in educational priorities. My commitment is to foster a robust and independent University Senate that stands as a bulwark against any attempts to compromise our academic mission or shared governance.

How do you foresee establishing a productive and collaborative relationship with the Senate constituents, the President, and Provost?

In my years advocating for the Condon Fossil Collection, I have created a community of supporters, both local museum members and professionals in the paleontology and Federal resource management communities. I have put that same community-building mindset to work in my role as Chair of Organizing for United Academics. I am a team-builder and my focus is on the legacy of the institution, not my own accomplishments.

I agree with Provost Long that an essential value for university shared governance is trust. The University of Oregon community has a long-standing trust gap with the upper administration. Our current upper administration does not have enough history with the university to warrant the level of distrust they have inherited. I will work with Senate and Union leadership to attempt to bridge this trust gap. I hope that we can establish the mutual respect that Provost Long invoked in his most recent address to the Senate, because we are all in this same boat together and our shared actions will determine how we weather the storm that is upon us.