

SENATE ELECTION 2025-26

Candidate Statements: Faculty of SOCIAL SCIENCES

Gill BISHOP (School for Business and Society)

I would like to express my interest in learning about the institutional challenges for York and to seek colleagues' support for the role of Senate Member for the Faculty. I see this opportunity as a way of advocating for Teaching and Scholarship (T&S) staff in delivering the UoY strategic aims of inclusive, ethical and empowering education. I fully endorse the University's priorities for widening access, locally and internationally, and its work around closing awarding gaps.

I joined the UoY Management School, now the School for Business and Society, in 2018, on a fractional Teaching and Scholarship (T&S) contract. During this time I have worked for the University in a range of teaching and citizenship roles. Most recently working with students and staff to develop inclusive teaching and learning, as part of the UoY 'No Gaps' project. This builds on previous work supporting PGT international students to engage with academic skills support through the introduction of a PGT skills module (with up to 850 students annually taking this module).

I have led initiatives to support T&S staff secure research leave (sabbatical) on the same basis as Research and Teaching contract staff, thus contributing to SBS outputs in relation to pedagogical research. And through my initiative to introduce a teaching and learning track to the School's annual SBS/CEGBI conference, around 40 T&S staff annually now present their teaching innovations and pedagogical research at the conference.

Previous governance experiences include Board Member of a BME Housing Association (2008-2012), Academic Staff Governor for a Further Education College (2003-2007), and School Parent Governor (1993- 1997). In these roles I have supported initiatives and developments including the setting up of a £multi million skills centre to address the skills shortages in deprived areas.

Naomi GIBBS (Centre for Health Economics)

I am seeking election to Senate to contribute a research-focused perspective to the University's academic governance. As a Research Fellow in the Centre for Health Economics (CHE), my work spans applied and methodological health-economics research, including economic evaluation in low- and middle-income countries, public health decision modelling, and collaboration with external partners to ensure research informs policy and practice.

Through this work, I have developed a strong understanding of how high academic standards, clear governance processes and an inclusive environment underpin excellence. I believe these are central to Senate's role in overseeing the University's academic direction, maintaining quality and standards, and advising on academic policy. I serve as a Dignity Contact, a university wide role, providing confidential support to colleagues experiencing bullying, harassment or hate. I also coordinate a peer coding support group, helping to build skills and community within the department. These roles have strengthened my commitment to an inclusive and supportive research culture and given me insight into how institutional policies affect staff wellbeing and engagement.

If elected, I would bring:

- A research-focused understanding of academic quality and integrity.
- Experience working collaboratively across disciplines, departments and external partners.
- A commitment to fairness, transparency and constructive scrutiny in academic decision making.
- An appreciation of how governance structures can enable excellence in research.

I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to Senate's work in ensuring that York's academic governance remains rigorous, inclusive and aligned with the University's mission to deliver research and scholarship for the public good.

Jessica OCHALEK (Centre for Health Economics)

I am standing for Senate because I care deeply about the University's academic mission and believe I can contribute constructively to Senate's role. As a researcher in the Faculty of Social Sciences for over a decade, based at the

Centre for Health Economics (CHE), my work addresses how health systems allocate resources efficiently and equitably. I have worked extensively with national and international partners, including NHS England, the InterAmerican Development Bank, and health ministries and arm's length bodies across Asia and Africa, which has given me experience navigating complex governance structures, interrogating evidence, and balancing academic rigour with strategic and operational constraints. These skills translate directly to Senate's responsibilities in advising the Council, monitoring academic quality, and providing scrutiny on matters that shape the University's research culture and institutional priorities.

I serve on CHE's Equality, Diversity and Action Team and supported our successful 2025 application for an Athena Swan Silver renewal award, giving me insight into how policies and culture shape inclusion, equity, and staff experience. My editorial work and role in coordinating large, interdisciplinary research collaborations have strengthened my commitment to transparent decision-making, high standards of academic integrity, and processes that support both excellence and fairness.

I would bring to Senate an evidence-informed, collegial, and independent perspective: someone who reads proposals carefully, understands how decisions cascade across departments, and is committed to maintaining the University's reputation for research excellence. I aim to support Senate in ensuring that policies, structures, and strategic developments genuinely enhance the academic environment and uphold the University's core values of integrity, inclusiveness, and public good.
