

Academic Senate Executive Committee
Officer Elections
Candidate Statement: Aylin Atilgan Relyea
Position: Associate



My name is Dr. Aylin B. Atilgan Relyea. I am an applied linguist. I teach English academic skills and tutor in the English as a Second Language Department with a very diverse student population with diverse needs. As an educator, diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and access (DEIAA) are my societal responsibilities.

I have had the honor of serving as the Senator for Area 13 over the last two years. In the recent election, I was reelected to represent associate faculty from 2023-2025. I have enjoyed being a part of shared governance, representing associate faculty in the Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) Academic Senate (AS) and Academic Senate for California Community College (ASCCC) meetings, and voting to make a meaningful change in education for the success of our students and community. I have also found it essential to diagnose the academic needs of the associate faculty and meet these needs

through equitable practices. I am excited for the opportunity to run for an associate representative seat on the Santa Rosa Junior College Academic Senate Executive Committee (ASEC).

During my service as a senator, I have been involved in many important decisions regarding our institution, faculty, and students. I personally contributed to the writing and passing of a resolution that aims to bring associate faculty pay parity to enhance student success. All Faculty Association (AFA) is working to bring this pay parity to our SRJC Associate Faculty.

After the recent devastating earthquakes in my home country of Turkiye, I felt compelled to reach out to the AS President Persons and AFA President Martin to request preparations, trainings, and drills for natural disasters for senators, faculty, and students. President Persons and Martin responded positively to this request, and President Martin informed that he would start discussions with the district about preparedness for disasters. I am happy to contribute to this cause for the safety and well-being of our community.

In my role as Senator, I have communicated with associate faculty, providing them with an equity needs analysis survey, so that they can be equipped with all the resources to provide effective education. Some faculty have expressed that they have been at SRJC for many years, and they had not had this outreach. One faculty member sent me a touching email saying "I've been at this college for 27 years. This survey is a first. I'm too old now, and I'll retire soon, but I'm glad the young people will have better conditions". This shows how much associate faculty appreciated this outreach. The faculty members shared that they felt comfortable expressing their opinions and concerns in a confidential manner, and I was able to bring these to the senate.

I would like to continue serving in the AS so that I can provide my devoted service towards SRJC so that our college continues to be a role model in our community in educational excellence, abiding by the DEIAA principles, and caring for our community. I feel that I add to the diversity in our Senate as an international voice, an American scholar and U.S. citizen, with Turkish roots, a less represented population in our institution. We need more global voices to meet the needs of our students from all around the world.

I have enjoyed being a part of the AS and working with my senator colleagues. In addition, I have attended ASCCC meetings, and I have found them very informative and fulfilling to talk to other senators from California Community Colleges. It was productive to collaborate with senators who have similar goals, and advocate for associate faculty from all over the state.

This has given me an awareness that SRJC is doing a lot more for the associate faculty than some other colleges. For that, I am grateful!

I have learned a lot about shared governance, and I realize that senators should continue their work in the senate to build upon what they have learned over the years, so the conversations in the past can carry out into the future. Prior to this position, I worked on the TESOL International Second Language Writing Interest Section Executive Committee which led to a Chair position, so I am familiar with working in Executive Committees. I would like to continue to advocate for my fellow associate faculty colleagues through equitable and fair practices. I have worked with passion on this cause, and I recently was awarded a 2023 SRJC Senate Award for Outstanding Contributions by Associate Faculty Member.

I look forward to getting better acquainted with my senator colleagues by listening to them carefully, and creating a friendly culture in the AS. I am committed to transparent decision-making, professional and friendly communications, and productive and interdisciplinary collaborations. This year I enjoyed working on the Steering Committee for We the Future Social Justice Conference and organizing community bike tours with community bike leaders for climate change awareness and women's liberation.

I look forward to serving at the SRJC ASEC. Thank you for your confidence and trust in me.

Respectfully,

Aylin