

**Potrero Hill Democratic Club
City College Board of Trustees Candidate Questionnaire
for meeting Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 6:30pm
Potrero Hill Neighborhood House
953 De Haro St**

Candidate name: Anita Martinez
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*Please write a brief response (up to 200 words) to each question. **Please email the completed questionnaire to contact_us@phdemclub.org by Monday, September 5.** The questionnaires will be made available online to club members.*

Please describe your qualifications for this office.

My entire work life has been in higher education starting at San Francisco State where I worked as part-time English teacher before being appointed Associate Director and then Director of the Educational Opportunity Program. Upon returning to graduate school, I began working as a part-time ESL teacher at City College. As a full-time teacher, I was elected President of my union, AFT 2121, and the Academic Senate. In 1989, the Board directed a new chancellor to address an accreditation recommendation to reorganize City College into either a multi-college district or a comprehensive single college district. The Board chose the latter, so the chancellor pulled many faculty leaders into administrative roles because we knew and understood the entire budget as well as all of the campuses. I was appointed Vice Chancellor of Instruction and to lead the reorganization team. We reorganized the College into its present structure, realizing substantial budget savings and discovering that the largest pool of students matriculating into credit studies came from noncredit, not the high schools. Other administrative roles included Dean of Students at City College, Dean of Language Arts at Skyline College, and Vice President of Student Learning at the College of Marin. As a faculty leader, I gained experience in budget/planning, accreditation, policy development, and governance. I gained more experience as a senior administrator at two colleges; I also participated in closed Board sessions observing the interaction of the chancellor and the board. These experiences prepare me to readily step into the role of an effective trustee.

If elected, what are your top 3 goals for CCSF? Specifically, how do you plan to accomplish these goals?

1. Rescind the May 2022 layoffs of tenured and tenure-track faculty and classified staff. When full time faculty are laid off, all part-time faculty must also be laid off and may not be rehired until every fulltimer is rehired or 3 years pass. One example of this devastating action is that the English Department is now 35% smaller than it was a year ago, and there are 300 students on a waitlist for English 1A (a required course for graduation, transfer, and other program completion). I am not convinced that the budget required this action, especially when we knew there would be more funding coming from the state. To accomplish this, I would ask Board colleagues to join me in an immediate rescission.
2. A more transparent budget that focuses not on meeting accounting goals but on providing the resources needed for student learning opportunities. There appears to be a larger reserve than required and other pots of available money, such as an unnecessary double expenditure on at least one budget expense this past year. It is not clear if the budget cuts were made to balance the budget or to reduce the numbers of faculty and staff to reach an ideal percentage for personnel expenditures. Might not cuts instead have been made to expenditures on consultants and out-sourced work? These two substantial expenditures also count against personnel costs. To accomplish this, I would ask Board colleagues to require that budgets presented for adoption be

circulated for at least a week rather than in the way that the budget was presented at noon on the same day that the Board was expected to approve/decline to approve its adoption in May 2022. I would also propose that the Board schedule public study sessions on the budget. I'm not clear that the current board truly understood the budget or what they approved. It takes more time than was allowed even for an experienced community college budget manager to review a proposed budget.

3. Build enrollment. FCMAT, the state agency that advises community colleges and K-12 districts about financial concerns, has consistently pointed out that the drop in enrollment, as well as specific finance issues, must be addressed. Administration has focused more on finance issues and forgotten about enrollment. And the Board has gone along. The most reliable, stable funding source for the College is state funding based on student enrollment (apportionment). When enrollment is cut in year one, that results in less funding in year 2. If enrollment is cut again in year 2, even more funding is cut. I would address this by asking that if an enrollment management plan is in place, the Chancellor review it for its effectiveness and present findings based on data to the Board. If it is still based on primarily recruiting future students from the high schools whose population has been steadily declining, I would ask how the largest pool of students (noncredit) are being helped to matriculate to credit instruction. Moreover, I would request that faculty and staff, not an outside consultant, be assigned to advise the Chancellor. (At the College of Marin, the President assigned this to me as the result of a Board directive. Enrollment grew because employees knew where enrollment could grow.)

Why did you choose to run for a 4-year term and not a 2-year term?

I believe that it may take 4 years to turn the College around. It has been in steady decline since the accreditation crisis in 2012. I believe that my expertise developed from years of work in community colleges, especially my three decades at City College, could be of value not just to the Board elected in 2022 but also to the Board elected in 2024.

If you are an incumbent, please tell us what you are most proud of. If you are the challenger, describe something the incumbent(s) did that you would have done differently.

I am a challenger. I would not have voted to lay-off tenured and tenure-track faculty because of the cascading effect of having to lay off all the part-time faculty in the affected departments, especially if I knew additional state might be forthcoming. I wonder if the current board understood or were made aware of that impact and the probability of increased funding. Students were hurt, some having to study extra semesters because of the unavailability of required courses or some having to sit on a 300-person waitlist. In ESL, 185 students are enrolled in one class! Even if that were an acceptable learning environment, where is the classroom space? Most students learning a new language learn better in smaller, in-person classes. And no one seems to have explored other cuts that could have been made. Further, tenure exists to protect academic freedom which includes academic discourse, or free speech. The first two years of college are designed to give new students skills not only in reading and writing but also in critical thinking, especially in freshman composition. Critical thinking is needed for an informed public and democracy, especially when there is an increased reliance on social media with its algorithms sending users further to the right or left.

What allocations in the current budget are higher/lower than needed and why? Please describe your current or previous experience with budgetary oversight.

I believe the allocations for faculty and staff should have been higher so layoffs would not have been required. If I had been on the Board in May 2022, I would have looked at future allocations for consultants and other secondary personnel costs. Those costs should have been considered first, and cuts made there. My graduate advisor/professor at UC Berkeley sagely said, "How you spend your money shows what you value." At City College, we should value student learning opportunities the most.

I was Union President (AFT 2121) prior to the district re-organization in the question 1 response. I and my colleagues had to study the budget so we would know what monies might be available to fund our proposals. I was surprised to learn that while our union had the entire budget, the Presidents of the two

divisions did not. I asked the Chancellor to provide these two top administrators copies so that we would be looking at the same budget when cost items arose. When I became an administrator, I managed budgets of varying sizes and complexities. While City College's Vice Chancellor, I had to not only manage the budget for all of instruction, but I also had to understand the budget implications for the reorganization we proposed. As the College of Marin's Vice President of Student Learning, I managed the budgets for all of instruction and all of student services. Finally, I was appointed twice as a Commissioner on the Human Services Commission with oversight for the department's budget; at the time, it was larger than the City College budget.

In addition to what you might have cited in your goals, what is CCSF doing well that needs to be supported and maintained? How would you support these strengths as a trustee?

Classroom instruction is overall superb with students often maintaining ties to the College through their instructors. The College is different from all other public higher education because of its exclusive focus on teaching and learning. Teachers work at City College rather than at a state college or university because they want to teach, not do research. An example: when I was the College's Dean of Students, I helped a student who had delayed admission to UC Berkeley. She enrolled in a chemistry class and loved what she was learning. When she stopped by to say goodbye, she said that she would have chosen to stay at City College and transfer in two years, but she had to accede to her parents' wishes.

I would support this strength by keeping cuts as far from the classroom as feasible. I would also ensure that the participatory governance system is well functioning (it appears not to be) which provides faculty and staff input into planning and budget decisions. This governance system also ensures that planning leads budget; that is, budget decisions are based on multi-year planning which itself is based on data, research, and reasonable forecasts. Cuts over the past decade appear to be on the advice of one individual and based primarily on class size, not student need for a comprehensive academic program needed to transfer, graduate, complete a program, or pursue lifelong learning for work or personal growth. The experts on these matters are the people who work closest to students.

In addition to what you might have cited in your goals, what is CCSF not doing well and how would you bring about improvement or change as a trustee?

City College is not doing well in being a community college. It appears to be being downsized into a junior college without public discourse about this potential policy change or the impact on noncredit instructional programs. (I graduated from a junior college - one of the California community colleges functioning as such.) This might work in the city where I graduated from junior college; there is a state funded Adult Education Program in that city. But in San Francisco, the state funded program is through noncredit instruction; there is no separate Adult Education Program. I would bring back the noncredit Older Adults program, a program that costs less than the revenue it earns and serves San Francisco's growing senior population. I would also reverse some of the cuts to ESL; these courses are critical to immigrants, cost less than they earn, are better funded under the current state funding formula than they were in the past, and provide a steady pool of students to matriculate into credit instruction.

I would also bring back more night classes in the neighborhood campuses; these classes serve people who must study at night and do not have time to travel to and from the Ocean campuses. I would also focus on better supporting some of the career/technical programs, for example, Nursing. At one time, Nursing offered two cohorts per year, one starting in the fall and the other in the spring. The College cut one of the cohorts several years ago, not only cutting in half career opportunities for potential Nursing students but also depriving the larger community of more trained health care professionals that are so needed due to the pandemic. Nursing programs are expensive, but any competent chief instructional officer (CIO) knows how to balance the cost by importing revenue from instructional programs that earn more than they cost, for example, Older Adults and noncredit ESL. It appears that the prior CIO made cuts without taking into consideration student and community needs and how to balance costs throughout all instruction.

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out, and thanks for running!