

**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: Susan Solomon
Contact person: Susan Solomon
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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](mailto: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 many years of experience in public education, and union, community, and coalition work have equipped me well with transferable skills that are needed by a City College Trustee.

Qualifications:

- Educator from 1976-2021, including: a community college writing center tutor; preschool and daycare assistant teacher and teacher; home childcare provider; elementary school teacher
- Leader in United Educators of San Francisco: Secretary, 2003-2012; Executive Vice President, 2012-2018; President, 2018-2021. Vice President, CFT: A Union of Educators and Classified Professionals, 2018-present
- San Francisco Labor Council Vice President for Political Activities, 2019-2022
- SFLC Executive Committee, 2016-2022
- Through my involvement and leadership in UESF, CFT, CTA, AFT and NEA, I have been an advocate for public education at the local, state, and national levels for many years.
- Experience with understanding and helping to craft education policy
- Experience with budgets
- I have worked for years in coalitions with labor unions, parents, community members, CBOs, and students on education justice and affordable housing.
- Involvement in the Free City College campaign and previous parcel tax and bond campaigns.
- Member of the CFT Racial Justice Task Force
- I have taken classes at City College over the years, including in child development, which put me on the path to becoming a teacher.

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

I will work to bring authentic input from stakeholders-- students; the people who work directly with students, maintain the facilities, and provide crucial support to everyone on campus; and the unions that represent them-- into conversations. This is essential.

Fiscal stability at City College:

- Passing Proposition O is very important.
- Revenue is dependent on enrollment. We must end the repeated downsizing of City College. Layoffs and cuts to classes lead to lower student enrollment, which leads to reduced revenues.

- Though it can be challenging to share budgets and financial statements in a way that is easy to understand, transparency and comprehension improve when explanations improve.
 - We must review the State Student-Centered Funding Formula for recommending possible revisions to benefit urban community college districts.
- Maintain support services and classes for all students: The immediate step toward this goal is to rescind the layoffs of classified staff and faculty. Beyond that, we must use the CCSF mission statement and vision to guide our work.
 - Implement City College's Facilities Master Plan, supported by an \$845 million bond, which comprehensively covers capital needs, deferred maintenance, and outdated facilities, such as using sustainable practices and materials, and building a Performing Art and Education Center and Child Development Center.

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

I wanted to run with two other like-minded candidates in anticipation of working together with common goals for City College. The experiences and beliefs Anita Martinez, Vick Chung, and I have in common, as well as each of our unique experiences, are why we believe we can be particularly effective serving together in 4-year terms on the Board of Trustees. Additionally, I am committed to spending the full four years to supporting, maintaining, and improving this magnificent public institution.

My guiding principles for this work are to

- work with coalitions and in community with stakeholders;
- use a solutions-based approach; and
- keep students at the center in everything we do.

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 would have voted against the layoffs of classified staff and faculty. Last spring, when the layoffs were being proposed, we could foresee the harm that would be done to students, and many students, and community, faculty, and classified staff members raised the alarm. Five of the incumbents voted for the layoffs anyway. That harm is now being manifested in seeing hundreds of students who need English 1A classes who cannot enroll due to lack of available classes—and that is just one example.

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

The budget allocation for publicizing Free City College should be higher. When Free City College began, there was a more generous allocation for marketing, and enrollment increased. That allocation has been decreased. I have met people in San Francisco who don't know that CCSF is free for residents. We need to increase efforts to publicize this through partnerships with community organizations, especially in the Bayview, Excelsior, Fillmore, Mission, and Chinatown Districts. The budget allocation for technology support should be increased in order to fix the flawed registration system.

Budget allocations for staffing are too low, resulting in hundreds of students being unable to schedule the classes they need. Examples in addition to English are motorcycle technology, horticulture, and floristry.

I would carefully review the CCSF budget allocations for whether there are ways to lower expenditures at the top administrative level, so that if reductions are needed, they are as far away

from the classroom as possible.

As an officer of UESF for many years, and co-lead and lead negotiator in contract negotiations between UESF and SFUSD, I was responsible for reviewing and analyzing the SFUSD budget. In addition, as UESF president, I was responsible for overseeing UESF's 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?

There are many valuable student support services that need to be supported and maintained—see [here](#) and [there](#) -- and I would prioritize them while setting each year's goals and budget. It's wonderful that Proposition O specifically has a long list of "wraparound services supporting students." Once it passes, the trustees must swiftly assure that the required independent oversight committee is appointed, and make sure that there is, at minimum, one report annually. If issues about revenue expenditures are raised, they must be addressed immediately so that the intentions of the measure are fully realized.

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?

More can be done to diversify the faculty. The recruitment and retention of Black and Brown faculty is vital to students, the greater CCSF community, and our collective future.

In 2016-2017, I served on CFT's Racial Justice Task Force. We produced a report, [Reclaiming the Promise of Racial Equity for Black Males in California](#). After deep discussion, we decided it was necessary to focus on Black males in education work. We can apply many of the goals to Black and Brown faculty.

The report's priorities include:

- Develop and implement programs to intentionally help identify, recruit, develop and retain Black male educators and classified staff.
- Provide professional development and cultural competency/racial equity/unconscious bias training that helps teachers and other school staff understand their own personal biases.

This report is a useful roadmap that the BOT can use to work with other organizations to recruit Black and Brown faculty.

We should determine paths for implementation of the District's Affirmative Action and Staff Diversity Plan and/or Faculty and Staff Diversity Plan. We should reach out to organizations, such as the Black Teacher Project, to explore opportunities for partnerships.

The BOT can assure there are active recruitment events for prospective staff, particularly outreach to BIPOC educators.

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