



USM Student Council's September 2024 Report to the USM Board of Regents

Good morning Chair Gooden, Chancellor Perman, the Board of Regents, and University Presidents,

I am extremely grateful to serve as the President of the University System of Maryland Student Council for the 2023-24 term. I would also like to re-introduce Arsalan Siddiqui from UMCP as the Vice President of Graduate Affairs and Meghna Chandrasekaran from UMBC as the Vice President of Undergraduate Affairs.

Since the start of the term in July, the Executive Team has had multiple meetings to discuss our goals for the term and plan for the execution of various initiatives. We also sent out applications and collected interest for Board of Director positions. Candidates were interviewed and then selected in early September.

Below are the Board of Directors for this term:

Directors of Government Affairs: Jefferson Vasquez-Reyes (UMCP), Jaden Farris (UMBC)

Director of Student Affairs: Francois Nicholas (UMGC)

In August, I met a few times with the Governor's Office for Children and nominated a student from the USM to serve on the Maryland Youth Advisory Council. I hope to continue collaborating with them throughout the year to see how important conversations on climate change, civic engagement, mental health and more start earlier on in K-12.

On Sunday, September 15, we hosted our first General Body Meeting at the Elkins Building in Adelphi which was attended by almost all USM institutions. Apart from the general onboarding protocol, we had an open conversation about topics that were pertinent to many institutions:

- Health insurance for non-traditional students and students with temporary disabilities. *Despite the policies being campus-specific, could there be a USM-wide protocol for dealing with extenuating circumstances?*
- USM Statement on Marking Oct 7. *Questions on what "Day of Dialogue" would look like, and whether the protocol differed among institutions.*
- Civic engagement efforts across campuses. *Various initiatives including debate watch parties, open bipartisan conversations among students and political leaders, advertising ballot dropboxes on social media, various residence hall competitions that encouraged Resident Assistants to get students registered to vote...*
- Vast majority believed students in shared governance had a good relationship with faculty and the faculty senate.

This year, along with the Student Regent interviews and the Board of Regents Student Excellence Scholarship program, our goals for the council are more qualitative. The hope is to help foster a more open and collaborative environment for student representatives in line with Vision 2030 and the transition from institution-centric to student-centric dialogue. For virtual meetings, this might include incorporating breakout rooms led by directors on various topics of interest. For in-person meetings, this might involve having campus reports lead into an open conversation rather than being a standalone agenda item.

Thank you, and we look forward to a wonderful term ahead.

Vainavi Gambhir

President, University System of Maryland Student Council