

# Student Government Association First-Year Senator Candidate Bios

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## Noah Blackburn

Ethics, Culture, and Society; Political Science, Music

### **What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

My proudest accomplishment was being chosen by my high school principal to be Prairie du Chien High School's KWWL "Best of the Class" senior. It showed how all of the work that I had put in over the previous four years had stuck out to someone... even someone who had just met me that year.

### **What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

My favorite thing about Viterbo is the strong sense of community I feel on campus. That, along with the core principles of contemplation, hospitality, integrity, service, and stewardship, really create an environment where I feel encouraged to think beyond what is or isn't, to what could be.

### **What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

Student Council, Graduation Committee, Student Leadership Committee

### **What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

At Viterbo, I am involved in the Honors Program and the community and concert choirs. In my hometown, I was involved as a Teen Court Juror, Lighting Designer for the community theater, and as a swim team coach and lifeguard for the local pool.

### **Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I am interested in serving as a member of the SGA because I want to make Viterbo as amazing a place as is possible, get involved, and learn more about the process of government at a level where changes can be made and felt by all of the student body.

### **How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

I would love to attempt to make Viterbo University a place that is not only accommodating to all people, but exceptionally welcoming. Accessibility on campus for those with mobility issues is compliant with ADA, but there are still many factors that may make the day-to-day life around campus much more difficult than on other schools. This may be alienating to many people who would otherwise have chosen to attend our lovely university. I would also like to do whatever I can to improve the Viterbo experience for all who attend, but I don't know what that would involve yet.

## Xavier Carnicom

Music Theatre Major

### **What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

I am honestly really proud of the person I have come to be. High school and my family life has truly shaped me into someone I am proud of. I would super excited to bring that to this group.

### **What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

I love the community of people who I feel are always welcoming to the others around them.

### **What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

Dance Club Leader and LGBTQ+ Club Leader.

### **What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

Choir, Pride Club, Book Club.

### **Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I want to be able to put all of my ideas to action. I also find it interesting to be able to receive ideas from all spectrums of campus. Not just a specific group, and I believe I would be able to bring that broader spectrum.

### **How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

I would make sure all people who would want to be heard are. It is important that people of leadership are from all spectrums and I believe that focusing on things like mental health, happiness, etc, things like that should be brought to light.

## Spencer Fletcher

Music Theatre Major

### **What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

Getting into a college for theatre. Going to school for musical theatre was kind of just like an unrealistic dream for a while, but my dad encouraged me to audition for places and I got in, and now I go to school for it!

### **What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

The people, I've already made amazing friends and everyone is so nice, it's a super tight community.

### **What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

I was captain of the schools ultimate frisbee team, but that's all the leadership I did in high school.

**What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

Service Saturday at Viterbo, but before Viterbo I would work at Fred My Starving Children through my church and I was a part of my high school's Interact Club, and they did a lot of community involvement.

**Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I'd like to be part of planning and helping with decisions that make Viterbo and better place.

**How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

More activities with transportation, maybe transportation to sports games like a fan bus for the big events. And I'd like to listen to what other students want to improve and work towards getting those things. chosen to attend our lovely university. I would also like to do whatever I can to improve the Viterbo experience for all who attend, but I don't know what that would involve yet.

## Angel Hernandez

Music Theatre Major

**What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

My proudest accomplishment was receiving the band and choir award at my high school as it showed that my hard work payed off and that there was growth within myself.

**What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

My favorite thing about Viterbo is the sense of community and the opportunities students have to engage in activities together.

**What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

I was a former member of student council in High School. I did not have an exact position however I contributed by giving ideas for events and setting things up.

**What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

I was in Student council in high school and was part of our band and choir committee. Back in California I volunteered at the Thomas House Family shelter in the City of Garden Grove.

**Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I'd like to serve my community and hear what changes my peers would like to make for our university. I'd like to see what can be improved and what can be enhanced and I'd like to help by giving creative ideas for student led events.

**How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

I want Viterbo to be a place every student can feel welcome in and seen. I want it to not only be a good place for education but a great place for students to have fun feel welcome and feel included.

## Samantha Hopkins

Biology major, Ethics minor

**What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

Today, my proudest accomplishment is being accepted into Viterbo University. I love this place and I'm very happy that I was accepted into such a good school.

**What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

My favorite thing about Viterbo is how nice everyone around me is. Everywhere I go there is someone holding open a door or students offering their time to help others. It's a wonderful community that I look forward to knowing more about.

**What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

In high school I was an English tutor as well as a mentor for incoming freshmen to help them adjust to high school life. Outside of high school I managed my energy cooperative's social media team and learned how to effectively reach out to community members online.

**What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

I participated in Service Saturday and am joining STEM club.

**Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I love Viterbo after being here for less than a month and I would like to be part of a team that makes sure Viterbo keeps being worthy of the love I have for it.

**How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

I would really like to consider looking into accessibility around campus as well as how tech and access to tech may affect students' learning.

## Gwendolyn Mahoney

Neuroscience Major, Music and Spanish Minor

**What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

My proudest accomplishment was being able to attend college. Neither of my parents attended college and it has always been my dream to be the first one in my family to graduate from college. They both work hard to support myself and my two brothers and someday I want to be able to pay that support forward to other students like me.

**What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

My favorite thing about Viterbo is the way in which the core values are upheld and the family atmosphere. Throughout my life I have always been someone who works hard to be the best version of myself and attending a college where everyone works hard to support each other has been an amazing experience. All of the students and faculty work together to make sure that everyone has what they need to succeed and this family atmosphere makes Viterbo feel like home.

**What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

President of Choir Board, President of Band Board, President of Drama Club, Vice President of Club Interact, Treasurer of FFA (2 years), Treasurer of Spanish Club (2 years), Secretary of 4H, member of Student council (2 years), member of Principals Advisory board (2 years)

### **What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

I am an officer of the STEM club at Viterbo and have become an active member of campus ministry, including joining the St. Francis choir. Prior to starting at Viterbo I volunteered at many different organizations in my hometown, including volunteering as the student director of our middle school musical, volunteering with our local VFW putting up flags around our town and volunteering at our local golf course for the junior golf league.

### **Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I am interested in serving as a member of the SGA because I feel as though I can bring in the perspectives of many different students throughout campus. I have been a part of many organizations that are quite different, and this has allowed me to see many perspectives when it comes to a concern or a problem. Oftentimes I am the person that will walk up to someone I do not know and ask about their day, and this will help me connect to many different students in not only the freshman class but also campus wide. By connecting with students from different backgrounds and majors, I can make sure that the actions of SGA are focused on what is best for all students.

### **How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

I would like to possibly think about ways that connections can be made between underclassman and upperclassman in similar majors. In some majors I have noticed this connection is strong where in other majors there has been little interaction between the two. This would allow new students to get advice from fellow students who have gone through the same coursework. I would also like to create a cheat sheet guide to all of the different websites that are used throughout your college experience at Viterbo. I think that this would help students feel more confident in their use of all of the websites. This could include what Starfish is used for, the THD portal, Moodle, Paper clip etc. and I believe it would allow students (freshman especially) to feel less overwhelmed in the beginning with all of the different website systems and the uses for them.

## **Owen William Mylchreest**

Engineering Major

### **What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

My proudest accomplishment was leading the S.A.D.D (students against destructive decisions) during my 4 years of high school and representing the school on a higher level for our volunteer work!

### **What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

My favorite thing so far has to be the overwhelming sense of community here.

### **What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

I was a student council member and one of four leaders of the mentioned above S.A.D.D group for South St Paul high school. I also led speech volunteer work on Fridays.

### **What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

Prior to coming to Viterbo, I lived in South St Paul Minnesota, but I was able to attend meeting centered around potential volunteer work in rehab clinics in the spring!

### **Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I want to be as involved in student government and representation as possible right now, so in the future I can learn to represent my peers on a higher level.

### **How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

I want to create an overall sense of community regardless of dorms or level of completion in regards to education. I would like to create a safe space for freshmen and even sophomore students to be fearless about asking questions of their upperclassmen or just for advice!

## **Kyle Wynos**

Major: Speech Language Pathology -- Minor: Dance (Possibly adding business management as a double minor)

### **What is your proudest accomplishment and why?**

My proudest accomplishment would have to be graduating high school with high honors. I would say this is my proudest accomplishment because it shows how hard I worked throughout high school and wanted to maximize my education. I would also say that it's my proudest accomplishment because I was very involved in school activities and athletics therefore being able to balance all of my activities and schoolwork. I also took multiple courses at the college level and being able to pass those with high grades is also an accomplishment.

### **What is your favorite thing about Viterbo?**

My favorite thing about Viterbo would have to be how close and inclusive everything is. I have yet to find a club or group who does not accept new people. Being involved has always been a goal of mine because I want to make connections and create the most of my experience so being able to find so many of my interests and be able to join clubs has to be my favorite thing.

### **What student leadership or student government, council, or assembly positions did you hold in high school, if any?**

-3 years as a representative in student council -1 year as a elected Student Body Treasurer (eventually took some power of Vice-President) -President of Show Choir -Co-team Captain (Junior Year) and Captain of Bowling Team

### **What campus and community involvement have you had while at Viterbo or prior to starting at Viterbo?**

I have had no involvement while at Viterbo so far, but I would love to get engaged with the community and campus. Prior to Viterbo I mainly focused in my high school student council on rebuilding student council and rewriting the constitution and rebranding the rules and regulations which followed many colleges level student governments.

### **Why are you interested in serving as a member of the SGA?**

I am interested in SGA because I was so involved with it in high school, and I really enjoyed it. I also want to do SGA because I always wanted to be involved in government, but I instead chose a different route with my life and being able to be in a club where I can do all the things I love is what makes me want to serve on SGA. I also want to serve on SGA to create a better campus culture for myself and the present and the future students and faculty.

### **How would you like to improve student life at Viterbo?**

At Viterbo I would try to improve student life in many ways, but my main focus point would be involvement. I have always been an advocate for getting involved and finding a club, sport, or group that works for everyone and I would improve this by trying to hold more activities like the 'Welcome Back Bash' which allowed for many clubs to come out and allow for new members to come out and find out about each club. I think that each student should be involved in either the community or on the Viterbo campus to allow for connections and creating circles of people with similar interests.