

Name: Umut Kaan Önen

College: Merton College

Position applied for: Elections Committee Member

Reason you should be elected:

1. The ability of candidates to meaningfully and truthfully connect with the student body is necessary for both democracy and meritocracy.
2. By democracy, I mean the ability of the students to impact the decisions of the Union, an ability that only extends as far as the student body is truthfully informed about their choices. By establishing fair and equitable rules that allow every candidate to meaningfully connect with the student body I aim to have the students form a closer relationship with their candidates and get involved with the union more closely. This will increase accountability, student representation and make the system essentially more democratic.
3. By meritocracy, I mean the ability of hard-working, experienced, and moral candidates to succeed in getting elected. Such candidates are usually already the favored candidates of the student body, who often are the greatest advocates of a well-performing, effective, and receptive union, but they can be disadvantaged through loose regulatory mechanisms which reward excessive rhetoric and political maneuvering. As an election committee member I will put extra emphasis on candidates' ability to advocate for themselves fairly, truthfully and in an equitable manner, which will allow students to earn a more complete understanding of the candidates and make more informed decisions in the ballot box, regardless of the candidates' political shrewdness.
4. In addition, I will advocate for better protections of the ballot boxes, defend the already existing policies. Some highlights being that all candidates should nominate their own witnesses to each ballot box (in addition to the usual guard) to make sure the process is up to standard; all voting should be done in secret and all counting should be done openly; the voting system should not allow a candidate to win without a majority.
5. For these reasons, I believe that my contributions will allow the SU to become more democratic and meritocratic, while ensuring the elections are fair both for the students and for the candidates.