

MEMORANDUM

To: USC Faculty

From: Ginger Clark, President of the Academic Senate

Date: June 15, 2016

Subject: Faculty Governance



Before the end of my term as Academic Senate President, I would like to summarize the work the Senate has done during 2015-2016. Over the next two weeks, I will be sending out a series of memos explaining the resolutions we've passed, the proposals we've endorsed, and the events we've sponsored. This is the first of those memos.

The Senate was very active this year, and faculty participation in the Senate's governing process was quite high. We had more faculty attending Senate meetings than we have seen in the past; so much so that we had to move to a larger room to accommodate everyone. The Faculty Councils, which are both the governing body for faculty within the schools as well as a representative *of* and *to* the Senate, were invaluable in helping the Senate govern in a way that benefitted all faculty. Faculty were engaged in Senate committees, the Provost/Senate retreat, and Senate sponsored events. It was an exciting year to be involved in faculty governance. Because we had so many capable people committed to making change, we were able to make significant progress on many fronts, which I will outline in the coming memos.

The Senate Executive Board spent countless hours hearing and deliberating issues that faculty felt were important for the Senate to consider. Paula Cannon, John Silvester, Rebecca Lonergan, Ange-Marie Hancock, Ruben Davila, Donna Elliot, Nick Stoubis, and Clay Wang worked together to craft and shape topics and resolutions in a way that would best serve the needs of all of the Councils represented in the Senate. All of the Senate Committee Chairs and Members put a great deal of time and effort into carrying out their charges. They are too numerous to list here, but their labors are what propelled the Senate's progress forward this year. The Senators themselves brought issues from their Schools for the Senate to consider, while working with their Faculty Councils to help the Senate refine its attempts to make positive change that would best serve all of the schools and their various faculty models.

I would like to single out a few people who worked closely with the Executive Board to get seven separate resolutions passed and two reports endorsed in the Senate this year. Alison Trope and Jody Armour, co-chairs of the newly formed Senate Campus Climate Committee, were crucial to the tremendous work around diversity and inclusion that got done this year. Bry Danner and Linda Hoffman, co-chairs of the Part-time Faculty Affairs Committee, put in a huge effort to help us propose practices that would make us a leader in attracting and retaining the best and brightest professionals as part-time faculty. Jeff Chisum and Els Collins, co-chairs of the Research, Teaching, Practitioner, and Clinical Faculty Affairs Committee, helped us identify

policy changes that should be made for our non-tenure-track faculty; not the least of which was calling for an end to the term “non-tenure-track,” which refers to faculty by something they are not (non-tenure-track), and instead proposed a term that refers to them by what they are (research-track, teaching-track, practitioner-track, and clinical-track). Yaniv Bar-Cohen helped us through his work on the joint Provost/Senate Research Committee in identifying improvements that could be made to academic computing and reproducibility guidelines. And Ashley Uyeshiro and Ron Ben-Ari worked as co-chairs of the Faculty Environment and Employment Committee to help us propose improvements to the bicycle safety issue on campus.

This has been a tremendous year of growth for all of us. I have learned two things during my term this year that I think are worth sharing:

1. The Senate and Faculty Councils are powerful faculty governance structures. The faculty hold both a privilege and a responsibility to lead in this university. We should understand that governance is just as much a part of our obligation to our university, our students, and our colleagues as the rest of our work here. We should take faculty governance very seriously and commit to doing our share of the heavy lifting.
2. Many of us have long believed that the administration is out of range for us, and that we don't have "clearance" to reach out and share with them our ideas, reactions, and values. I have learned that this is just wrong. The only way the Provost and the President know what we are thinking is if we tell them. I encourage you work through faculty governance structures to address faculty needs, but also to take responsibility to reach out and tell the administration when you believe something is working well, and provide them with your encouragement to keep up the effort on things you think are important. And I encourage you to share when you think the university should take a different approach to something. No arm of governance functions well when it doesn't have a sense of its constituents' mindset.

We have already sent out the invitation to nominate and self nominate for Senate and Joint Provost/Senate Committees for the 2016-2017 academic year. We would like to invite you to take another look at these committees and contact Connie Roque at croque@usc.edu if you would like to participate. The Committees are described on our new Senate Website: <https://academicsenate.usc.edu/committees/>. We hope even more of you will get involved in next year so that we can maintain our momentum.

Be on the look out for more memos summarizing the important governance work your faculty accomplished in 2015-2016 around:

- Deferring Rush to Spring for Greek Letter Organizations
- Diversity and Inclusion on Campus
- Changing Handbook designation of NTT to RTPC
- Part Time Faculty Practices
- Reproducibility Guidelines
- Faculty Salary Benchmarking
- Academic Computing
- Bicycle Safety

We work among giants, and I have been so honored to be a part of what they have accomplished this year.