ACADEMIC SENATE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Meeting of February 15, 2017
University Club, 2nd Floor, Scriptorium Room
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.


Guests: G. Clark, E. Collins, M. Hrovat, M. Levine, S. Park, S. Pratt, M. Quick, E. Saucedo

AGENDA

Paula Cannon, Academic Senate President, called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm.

Approval of January Senate meetings and February 8 Additional Senate meeting draft minutes
Mike Lee, Secretary General, presented January draft minutes for discussion and approval.

Corrections were made to the date and the attendees present at the meeting.

Genevieve Giuliano moved to approve as corrected; Jeff Chisum seconded; 24 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstentions.

February 8 special meeting notes were also presented for review. No corrections or approval of notes were required.

Update from the Nominating Committee
Paul Rosenbloom, Chair, Nominating Committee and Academic Vice President, provided an update from the Nominating Committee.

Committee has met in December and February. Currently have 2-3 candidates for Academic VP nominations. Once have at least two committed, will focus on Administrative VP and then At Large members. The nominees will be introduced at the April Senate meeting.

Plans for joint Senate/Provost retreat
Paula Cannon, Academic Senate President, provided an update on what will be covered at the
retreat that will take place at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel on February 17-18, 2017. Retreat will focus on the progress that has been made across climate, safety and wellness.

Friday afternoon’s focus will be “Progress on diversity and inclusiveness initiatives” chaired by Renee Smith-Maddox from the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. This session will include Shaun Harper, who will be speaking on his new USC Race and Equity Center.

Saturday early morning will focus on “First Year Student and Wellness” and will be chaired by Tracy Poon Tambascia from the Rossier School of Education.

Saturday later morning will focus on “Campus Safety – Faculty Training and Resources” and will be chaired by Raphael Bostic from the Sol Price School of Public Policy.

More information: https://academicsenate.usc.edu/meetings/joint-provostacademic-senate-retreat/

Discussion re the Fall Break
Edwin Saucedo, President of Undergraduate Student Government, presented a proposal on adding a Fall Break to USC’s academic year.

“USC currently has the longest academic semester with the most instructional days out of all semester-system universities ranked in the Top 25 in the United States. During the stretch from Labor Day to Thanksgiving Break, USC students have 56 consecutive instructional days. The university’s counseling center has been known to be frequented at higher-than-normal rates from the 8th to 10th week of school. The counseling center’s evaluation of the Behavioral Health Measure shows a peak in mental health crisis from fall 2012-2016, where students scored, on average, 2.58 out of 4 (Healthy is between 2.94-4.00). Data from Medical Services noticed a peak in appointments that spanned between weeks 10-14, and fell after Thanksgiving break.”

Spring semester has a peak of the Behavior Health Measure in the finals period, but the average measure is higher at 2.8 (vs. 2.58 in the Fall midterm peak).

Proposal is to introduce a two-day Fall Break during the 8th week of classes. “Universities with similar academic calendars such as Cornell University, Georgetown University, Washington University in St. Louis, Vanderbilt University, Emory University, Duke University, and Rice University all have at least two days off during respective midpoints of their semesters.”

More information: Fall Break Initial Proposal (3 pager) / Fall Break Initial Proposal (presentation)

Dialogue with USC’s Provost, Michael Quick
Michael Quick, USC Provost, discussed the university’s response to the immigration and travel ban.

When the immigration and travel ban came out, the Office of International Services (OIS) sent out emails to potentially impacted members of our community to offer assistance. The Provost then followed this with a memo that went out to all of the USC community. A number of faculty have
been very helpful in giving him feedback on his memo. Top feedback included getting the message out that the university was against the order, lack of clarity on what USC was doing to communicate, and what additional resources we are providing to USC Gould Immigration Clinic.

A site has been created to consolidate communications, events, and information related to the Immigration and Travel Executive Order:  
https://www.provost.usc.edu/information-on-the-immigration-and-travel-executive-order/

University has provided additional funding to the Gould Student, Faculty, and Staff Immigration Advice Project:  
http://gould.usc.edu/academics/clinical-programs/immigration-clinic/advice/

Commencement. One of the big concerns of students impacted concerned families coming to graduation. They are looking into making all ceremonies available via streaming.

International conferences. Reached out to students impacted to see if they can possibly participate in international conferences using remote technologies.

Deferrals. Some students will be admitted from the impacted countries – Provost is working with Dean of Admissions to work out deferrals. In process of sending out letter to all applicants that we will support them.

For more information or to request assistance send email to uscprovost@usc.edu or visit:  
https://www.provost.usc.edu/information-on-the-immigration-and-travel-executive-order/

Changes to PhD Stipends
Sally Pratt, Vice Provost for Graduate Programs, discussed upcoming changes to PhD stipends.

Provost and Provost council, which consists of the Deans, has decided to increase the PhD stipends. A benchmark of peer and aspirational peer institutions showed an average minimum stipend of $27K. Stanford and Harvard show higher end of $42K or higher. Argument is how to be among the best in the field. Not just the average.

Stipend minimum will increase to $26K next academic year (2017-18). Plan is to increase to $30k the year after (2018-19). This is for a 9-month stipend.

Some challenges mentioned include current research grants, where it may be hard to go back to program managers and say that RA salaries going up.

Provost office will work with the schools and disciplines to make the changes happen. For more information, contact Sally Pratt at pratt@usc.edu.

Update on the University Response to the Executive Order on Immigration, and
Resolution 16/17-02:
Paula Cannon presented for discussion and approval a draft resolution in response to the January 27, 2017 Executive Order affecting individuals from 7 countries.
Friendly amendment to add a short explanation of Pac 12 Academic Leadership Coalition that states “which is a forum for faculty governance leaders of PAC-12 universities.”

26 in favor; 0 opposed; 2 abstentions

Resolution can be found on the Academic Senate’s resolutions page:
https://academicsenate.usc.edu/documents/resolutions/

Plans for the End of the Year Dinner, and Announcements
Paula Cannon, Academic Senate President, provided an update on the end of year dinner and announcements.

Dinner will be open to spouses and will be planned for May. Date, time and venue are TBD.

Announcements
Paula Cannon, Academic Senate President
(a) Joint Provost/Senate Retreat is this Friday and Saturday, February 17 and 18, 2017
Venue: Westin Bonaventure; Agenda is attached
(b) The Senate meeting in March is on the 22nd (as originally scheduled)
Venue: HSC, Broad CRIM Center 1st floor seminar room

New Business
• None stated

Adjournment
Meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mike S. Lee
Secretary General of the Academic Senate