ACADEMIC SENATE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Meeting of December 5, 2018
Vineyard Room, Davidson Continuing Education Center
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.


AGENDA

Yaniv Bar-Cohen, Academic Senate President, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm and introduced the guests of the Senate.

Approval of October Senate meeting draft minutes
Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, Secretary General, presented the September draft minutes for discussion and approval.

P.T. McNiff moved to approve the minutes; Rebecca Lonergan seconded; 21 in favor; 0 opposed; 2 abstentions.

Second reading and votes on Senate Executive Board election changes
Resolutions 18/19-001, 18/19-002, and 18/19-003 were voted on. The proposed resolutions were first reviewed. A clarification was made that the language being voted on in 18/19-002 and 18/19-003 is in addition to the current language in the Bylaws, and that these would not replace any of the existing language.

A motion to approve Resolution 18/19-001 was made by the Executive Board; 24 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstentions.

A motion to approve Resolution 18/19-002 was made by the Executive Board; 23 in favor; 2 opposed; 1 abstention.

A motion to approve Resolution 18/19-003 was made by the Executive Board; 21 in favor; 5 opposed; 0 abstentions.

Romantic relationships between faculty and students
Bar-Cohen presented the possibility of a policy change to prohibit certain romantic relationships between faculty and students. Reasons for prohibiting these faculty/student relationships include
inherent power imbalances that compromise the concept of consent, and potential harm done while decisions about mutual consent are being navigated. Bar-Cohen specifically raised the concern that allowing these relationships to be managed after they are disclosed sends the message to Faculty that as long as they believe that the relationships are mutual, they can proceed. Disadvantages of prohibiting certain relationships include interference with people’s personal lives, and possibly causing these relationships to go further underground. There are other universities setting policies to ban relationships now with varying degrees of restrictions, including banning any romantic relationships between Faculty and students in the same program, banning romantic relationships between Faculty and students where a supervisory relationship exists, and banning all romantic relationships between Faculty and undergraduate students.

It was stated that the current Faculty Handbook chapters that deal with this issue are 3G, 3I, and 6I. However, there appear to be potential inconsistencies in these sections. The Sexual Harassment Task Force has been discussing the pros and cons of policy changes as well.

Defining which students a revised policy may cover (e.g., direct supervision, in the same school, department, and/or program, undergraduates in general) was discussed, as was whether educational opportunities and hiring/firing decisions could be influenced. A point was made that an unintended consequence of a ban may include a hesitation to hire women in heavily male-dominated fields.

It was stated that in addition to discussing how to change these policies, it was also important to determine how to enforce these policies.

Next steps were discussed. It was proposed that the Senate use a modular approach to voting on a resolution for this issue, as this issue is very complex and faculty have varying views on where to draw the line regarding which types of relationships to ban.

Committee presentations (with Provost Michael Quick and Executive Vice Provost Elizabeth Graddy)

Provost Michael Quick and Executive Vice Provost Elizabeth Graddy were present for the presentations to allow for greater timely collaboration. See the charges that were read in the meeting here. (LINK: https://academicsenate.usc.edu/files/2019/01/Dec-2018-Senate-Meeting-Committee-Reports-and-Charges.pdf)

Campus Climate Committee

The co-chairs stated they are helping with the development of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Center, as well as with the DEI Council (a subcommittee of this Council will spearhead the proposal for the Center). The various groups have been intentional about the division of labor so as to not replicate work. A comment was made that the school Diversity Liaisons and Diversity Recruitment Advisors need more training.

Committee on Information Services

In addition to the topics stated in their written charge, the co-chairs added a fourth topic that they plan to address this year, which is the utilization of technology to assist with the detection of cheating, specifically in online programs. A comment was made that the committee should collaborate with the developers of a Faculty app that is currently in Beta version.

Faculty Environment and Employment Committee
The co-chairs stated that parental leave restricts women who have given birth from entering the labs they supervise, and that this is an issue that will be discussed. The FEEC also continues to monitor childcare issues, in addition to a separate committee that has been set up to deal with child care issues.

**Research Committee**

It was clarified that there are 4 co-chairs to deliberately include different types of researchers. Comments were made about promotion and access to resources, lack of clarity around titles and loads, and eligibility for fellowships.

**Committee on Teaching and Academic Programs**

The committee this year is focusing on the vision for the Teaching 2030 Plan. A question was asked about why 2030 was chosen as the target year, and comments were made both for and against setting a later date. Some Senators felt a plan for 2030 was too short-term for overarching teaching goals, and encouraged the committee to look out even further. Others argued that teaching is changing very rapidly, and this makes it too difficult to predict anything too long from now.

**Dialogue with Provost Michael Quick**

Provost Quick reported that, although there have been concerns about bias, recent statistics from his office about people of color and/or women achieving tenure are encouraging. Executive Vice Provost Elizabeth Graddy stated that these data (available in UCAPT) covered the last 12 years with controls for field and demographics. They have also tried to collect data on faculty who have left during the years prior to when they would have been considered for tenure, but the n is too small, so they have been trying to follow up with faculty who have recently left without tenure to provide more insight. Quick asked the Senate to think about how we can give people more opportunities to get their feet on the ground prior to the tenure clock starting (e.g., the post-doc in humanities).

A question was asked about the news today announcing that Dean James Ellis’s term as dean would be ending early. Quick stated we have been discussing more transparency, shared governance, and more faculty participation in Deans’ reviews, but sometimes these conflict with personnel issues, which often involve sensitive private information that cannot or should not be publicly disclosed. In this case, President Austin invoked her right to end Dean Ellis’s term early after wrestling with the decision and being presented all the information so she could make the best decision. It was not a decision she took lightly. We need to figure out how to balance people’s right to privacy with the calls for more transparency, and he is open to discussing this. He will be meeting with the Marshall Faculty Council later today to talk about how we can move forward.

A question was asked about whether the Marshall Faculty Council was consulted in this decision. Quick replied that the Faculty Council was not consulted in this case, as the information the President was working with was not information she felt could be shared. A comment was made by a faculty member that encouraged consultation with elected representatives (Senate, Faculty Council) in the future to promote more buy-in. Quick responded that in other circumstances (e.g., dean evaluations, dean hiring), shared governance needs to be better and we are working on this. But, we still need to discuss what to do when these decision involve private employment information.

A comment was made that Marshall Faculty are confused and many don’t understand this
A question was asked about the role the Provost’s office has played in pay discrepancy issues, as there seem to be improvements happening that should be shared. Quick shared that both salaries and review of salaries have been enhanced, but we need to think about this more. Graddy stated communication around these improvements needs to be better. A follow-up question asked if there could be a released statement about how these issues are addressed that explains the process, as many faculty do not understand it. Graddy clarified that for personal salary issues, faculty can go to their dean, and if that is not satisfactory they can go to Graddy’s office. Quick stated a communication to clarify the process can be created.

A question was asked if we are moving towards a dashboard type of communication to share both good news and challenges. Quick affirmatively responded we are moving towards this in a few areas, particularly concerning diversity data, anonymized data from Title IX and OED results, and more. They are currently working on this.

Announcements
(a) Please hold February 22 - 23, 2018 for the Joint Provost/Senate Retreat. Venue: The Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites, DTLA; Topic TBD.
(b) The Senate meeting schedule and venues for 2018 - 2019 is posted on the Senate website: https://academicsenate.usc.edu/. Next meeting is Jan 16 possibly in Doheny Library; Bar-Cohen will send communications about this before then.
(c) The roster of Senate members and committee chairs is posted on this link: https://academicsenate.usc.edu/senators/senators/

New Business
No new business was presented.

Adjournment
Meeting was adjourned at 4:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Uyeshiro Simon
Secretary General of the Academic Senate