ACADEMIC SENATE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Meeting of March 20, 2019
Doheny Memorial Library, Room 121
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.


Guests: A. Armani, P. Cannon, R. Caruso, C. Folt, J. Moore, C. Zachary

AGENDA

Yaniv Bar-Cohen, Academic Senate President, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Moment of Silence and Comments for Professor Norman Hollyn
Paul Rosenbloom, Immediate Past President, offered words of remembrance in honor of Norman Hollyn, who passed away while lecturing in Japan on sabbatical this past Sunday. “Norm” held the Michael Kahn Endowed Chair in Editing in the School of Cinematic Arts. He was a true leader in editing, and was known for his work in the films Hair, Sophie’s Choice, and Cotton Club. He frequently traveled the world to teach and lecture. Norm served a total of 4 years on the Senate Executive Board, the most recent being last year. He was a wonderful person, colleague, and true friend, and will be greatly missed.

A member of the School of Cinema stated people in Cinema are in disbelief; she had known him for 13 years, and he was “one of the good ones.” He was a world class editor, celebrated teacher, mentor, had no pretenses, and would have coffee with anyone no matter their rank. He was always the first to serve, first to reply, first to volunteer his time, and a member of the institution with his whole heart. His legacy will stick with us.

A senator added that she served with him on the Executive Board years ago; he was dedicated to our Senate and knew we had good work to do, which is why he came back to serve so many times. He brought humor and common sense to the table.

A moment of silence was observed.

Romantic Relationships Between Faculty and Students
Bar-Cohen opened by stating today’s discussion is about whether or not faculty/student relationships should be banned if there exists any supervisory relationship, compared to mandated disclosure. If the Senate were to decide to change any Faculty Handbook policies, there would be a lot that would go into the actual wording of these changes later. The Handbook
currently states “the University strongly recommends that the faculty member disclose [the relationship] to the department chair or Dean or Vice Provost” (6-I (a)). Although there are many voices on this issue, Bar-Cohen stated he would like to see if the Senate can move towards an agreement.

Bar-Cohen stated he believes mandated disclosure is not enough to protect students who are in a supervisory relationship with faculty, as many instances of harassment occur prior to the point at which a romantic relationship would realistically be disclosed. In his opinion, this makes faculty feel that romantic relationships with students they supervise are acceptable if they believe that the relationship is consensual. However, the student may not reject romantic gestures due to fear of harming their academic careers, which puts the student in a vulnerable position. Bar-Cohen stated he believes it should not be up to the faculty to determine if the student feels the relationship is consensual. Many other universities are moving towards what he is proposing today, or they have exceeded what he is proposing and banned even more; many have banned faculty romantic relationships with all undergraduates, or graduate students they supervise. University of Michigan, Yale, Northwestern, University of Wisconsin, Stanford, University of North Carolina, Harvard, and more all have policies stricter than what we currently have, and are moving in this direction.

A comment was made that there are those that say bans do not work. A question was asked if mandated reporting covers any faculty/student relationship, or just ones in which there is a supervisory relationship. Bar-Cohen stated this could be another direction the Senate moves towards. A statement was made that if a supervisory relationship develops, it can be managed after disclosure with the current policy. Bar-Cohen responded that managing those relationships tends to adversely affect the student far more than the Faculty member.

The practicality and reality of a ban were questioned, despite support for the purpose of a ban. Comments were made that people develop feelings, and realistically these romantic relationships cannot be stopped; a ban would drive them further underground. Sexual harassment training is meant to protect students from unwanted sexual advances, so it was stated that a ban would not further protect students from those or other unwanted relationships. It was also stated that there is no empirical evidence that bans work, and that defining what constitutes a romantic overture is impossible, which impacts implementation. Another comment was that in certain schools, there are also older students, which complicates the issue. A senator stated that Keck has a mechanism for reporting relationships that may cause conflict of interest (like romantic or familial relationships) which works well.

A statement was made that the Daily Trojan just published an editorial about how students were shocked that faculty are allowed to have relationships with students, and that we need to consider this issue from the perspective of students who have been subjected to unwanted romantic gestures from a faculty member.

A comment was made that mandatory reporting and self-disclosure with nuanced, individualized managed plans to supplement existing sexual harassment policy could be effective. If a faculty or student believes there has been any romantic overture that is unwanted, they should report it. If the overture is unwanted, it would be sexual harassment; if the overture is consensual, then the relationship should be allowed.
Due to the Presidential Announcement timing, the discussion was not completed (and deferred until the next Senate meeting).

**Break to attend Presidential Announcement**
The Senate suspended the meeting so all Senators could attend the announcement of Carol Folt as the next President of USC.

**Approval of February 20 Senate meeting draft minutes**
Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, Secretary General, presented the February draft minutes for discussion and approval.

*P.T. McNiff moved to approve the minutes; Adam Gilbert seconded; 23 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstentions.*

**Dialogue with President-Elect Carol Folt and Chair of the Board of Trustees Rick Caruso**
Bar-Cohen introduced President-Elect Carol Folt, and presented her biography. She holds a BA in aquatic biology, an MA in biology, and a PhD in ecology from UC Davis. Most of her faculty life was spent at Dartmouth, studying the role of mercury on aquatic and human health. She was progressively the Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Programs, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Faculty, became the Provost in 2009, then the Interim President in 2012. In 2013, she became the Chancellor of University of North Carolina Chapel Hill until recently. She did a lot for UNC in advancing teaching, the arts, the medical enterprise, interdisciplinary work, and the people and especially students of UNC, all while dealing with some challenging issues. In the most recent “Silent Sam” controversy, she took a courageous step to do the right thing and that type of courage is what USC needs in its leader.

Folt thanked the Senate for welcoming her, and remarked that she was looking forward to have a dialogue with faculty. She stated how important it was for her to become a member of a department, continue publishing research, and keep the connection to faculty and their goals. She stated service on the Senate shows the care and desire to do the right thing for the university, and that service ethic and shared governance are very important. She has heard a lot about the Presidential Search Committee, and how important it was that this process of shared governance took place. She stated her husband is also a biologist.

Bar-Cohen introduced Rick Caruso, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the Presidential Search Committee. Bar-Cohen stated the great experience on the Search Committee in which faculty and trustees learned to trust each other was because of Caruso’s leadership. He stated that that experience was a crucial step in being able to move forward as a University.

Caruso stated he was more than thrilled that Dr. Folt accepted the position, and that Bar-Cohen was instrumental in representing the needs of the faculty as they worked through all the candidates. He thanked Bar-Cohen for his hard work, which was critical in getting to the right decision. He stated this change started when the Senate, as representatives of the faculty, reached out to him. Caruso thanked the Senate, stating we would not be here today if not for the Senate and its leadership. He stated the plan moving forward is to have trustees, faculty, and deans all working together as they did in the Search Committee.
The floor was opened to questions and comments for Folt.

Comment: the medical school looks forward to working with you.

Reply: She is looking forward to working with the medical enterprise, and that we need to find a way to make the distance between campuses not seem so large.

Q: How did you interact with faculty Senate-equivalent at UNC?
A: She chaired the Faculty Council at Dartmouth. At UNC, she had the chance to address the Senate monthly, then would meet with the Executive Board more frequently. She was primarily there to listen, have a dialogue, and see what resolutions passed. She also had a chancellor’s advisory committee of the faculty. This may not be exactly the same here, but having contact with the Senate is important to her.

Q: There is a lot of concern from faculty regarding all the cumulative scandals due to lack of accountability of oversight responsibilities and concern about those who were supposed to be held accountable getting promoted. What are the plans to establish your own team?
A: It is essential any leader has a team they can trust. At UNC, she hired 16 out of 18 of her team in the first year; she looked for a mix of people within and externally, always looking for diversity. In many cases, faculty were part of the selection process. She does not have specifics about what positions she needs to fill today, but she does know she needs to move fast.

Q: After “Silent Sam” was retired, you resigned. What were your thoughts?
A: Silent Sam was a confederate monument; when the statue was erected, the Board of Trustees at the time told a story that the statue was meant to keep white supremacy alive. The historians found this story in the archives, and this is what started the issue. Prior to that, she was the first president to change a building name at UNC (from Saunders to Carolina Hall); when people found out the truth about why the name needed to be changed, it was easier to do. Three days after the Carolina Hall name change, North Carolina passed a law saying monuments could not be moved. She had to balance the law with safety; she brought in a safety panel who told her it was not a matter of “if” but “when” there would be a disaster due to confrontations. She then went to the Attorney General, who told her she had the sole authority to move the monument due to safety reasons. Folt stated that she stepped down because if she had stayed, the focus would have constantly been about her, and this needed to be about moving the university forward. She has been at peace with the decision.

Q: There has been a lot of discussion around missions and stakeholders, but it is easy for people to feel like they are not being listened to or valued. In your previous role and going forward, how do you manage all of these different missions and make sure everyone feels secure, properly funded, and that they have a stake in the university?
A: We will never make everyone feel like they have everything they want. It is more about managing expectations instead of curbing them. We need a process that will bring people together around a common mission. UNC was in the midst of a strategic rebuild; they were trying to find common values, and were able to whittle them down to a single page, which was made public. Having a shared mission but seeing that we implement it in different ways was helpful. This also helped with building trust and helped her discover what people really cared about.
Q: We have 19 schools; and are dealing with siloes. How do you think you will manage this?
A: Siloing is one of the biggest issues across higher education, because we start small and add/build. We should ask ourselves what things are done best in a particular school, and what are the elements that need a “fast central flow” to work together as an organization? Most places have not done this analysis; most places do not eliminate processes, but tweak them. We need to find the biggest barriers, identify replication of work, and improve the centralized offices. She would like to know more about what faculty want and need, and any impediments faculty see.

Q: Do you have family ties back in Akron?
A: She went to Lebron James’ elementary school. She still has family back in Akron.

Comment: Thank you for your approachability, and thanks to Caruso for creating this mechanism for communication.
Reply: Caruso has talked to her from the start about his experiences attending town halls, and she is not used to Board Chairs going to town halls. The search process was really strong. She does not like being hidden, and hopes she will be accessible.

Q: USC takes pride in our connection to the local community. How do you anticipate or plan to engage with the wider community of Los Angeles and Southern California?
A: At UNC, she had to meet all the legislators, and work with the local community and politicians. She already has meetings scheduled to meet members of L.A. community.

Bar-Cohen thanked Folt for coming to the Senate meeting.

Announcements
(a) End of the Year dinner will be held on May 1, 2019.

Adjournment
Meeting was adjourned at 3:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Uyeshiro Simon
Secretary General of the Academic Senate