AGENDA

Approval of February 20 Senate meeting draft minutes.

Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, Secretary General, presented the March draft minutes for discussion and approval.

Rebecca Lonergan moved to approve the minutes; Sofia Gruskin seconded; 27 in favor; 0 opposed; 2 abstentions.

Senate Nominating Committee & Introduction of Candidates

Rebecca Lonergan, Academic Vice President and Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of candidates for next year's Senate Executive Board. She reviewed the Senate voting bylaws, including which Senators had voting rights, how many votes each person could cast for each position, and instructions for voting. Senators need to return completed ballots by April 22, 2019. Results would be announced at the May 1, 2019 Senate meeting.

The candidates were then given two minutes each to introduce themselves.

Candidates for Academic Vice President (will serve one year as Academic Vice President, one year as President, and one year as Immediate Past-President; one candidate is selected)

- Paul Adler, Harold Quinton Chair of Business Policy, Professor of Management and Organization, Marshall School of Business, and Professor of Sociology and Environmental Studies, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences
- Margo Apostolos, Associate Professor of Dance, Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

Candidates for Administrative Vice President (two-year term; one candidate is selected)

- Tracy Poon Tambascia, Professor of Clinical Education, Rossier School of Education
- Daniel Pecchenino, Assistant Professor of Teaching, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences
Dialogue with Provost Michael Quick

Provost Quick thanked the Senators for their service this year. He announced that he will be stepping down from his position as Provost on June 30, 2019 and that he is looking forward to coming back to the faculty. He stated that searching for a new Provost is a priority for President Elect Carol Folt, and that she is also focused on finding a new Vice President for Student Affairs. They are putting together a transition team for Dr. Folt, so she is able to begin working effectively as soon as she starts on July 1st.

Bar-Cohen thanked Quick for partnering with the Senate, particularly his collaborative work in diversity, equity, and inclusion, during his tenure as Provost. Quick stated he would like to reinforce any progress made thus far during his last few months, and asked the Senate to let him know how he can support this effort.

A Senator inquired about progress made on salary benchmarking through the Provost’s Office and also stated that the issue of space inequity between schools was raised at the University Forum, asking if space audits are ever conducted for efficiency and quality.

Quick stated Executive Vice Provost Elizabeth Graddy’s office has been looking at salary benchmarking and understanding salaries, particularly comparing to UCLA’s writing program and languages and to Berkeley’s business school. He stated the best comparison school is UCLA, given that it is an elite school, in the same city, and their information is public. The Provost’s office thinks they know how to obtain the right data and make sense of them, so the next step is to work with schools to show them how to perform benchmarking.

Regarding space, Quick stated the last space audit started about ten years ago, was completed 6 years ago, and looked at equipment along with what the University can manage in terms of enrollment to preserve the quality of students’ experience. Changes like upgrades to the desks in THH were made due to this audit, but he stated it is probably time for another one. Currently, there is a full audit of seismic needs of each building being conducted. Another major audit is needed to look at security (locks on classroom doors, etc.), and they need to decide on the best way to perform this.

A follow-up question was asked if the space audits include dormitories, the larger environment (e.g., bikes), or other things that influence the student experience. Quick suggested the Senate ask David Wright about bike safety, as there was an environmental audit, and they just completed ideating how to make the internal part of campus safer for everyone.

A question was asked about faculty being able to be involved in fundraising and having interactions with donors on things like research, equity work, and more, as fundraising is important to the University. He opined that this would also increase faculty-shared governance.
Quick stated that this is a good idea as faculty are best able to articulate the importance of their work, and that Central Development is enthusiastic about the concept but the execution is difficult. He stated that there are already issues with coordination of communication, even with just the Deans, and we need to have a well-coordinated approach so we do not drive donors away. In the past, the focus has historically been on very large gifts, but he hopes in the future we can have faculty assist in getting mid-range gifts (e.g., more chairs for faculty).

**Romantic Relationships Between Faculty and Students**

Bar-Cohen opened the discussion by presenting Resolution 18/19-05 Proposal on Prohibiting Romantic or Sexual Relationships between Faculty and Students in Supervised Roles. He clarified that a vote in favor of the resolution signifies support for making a change to the Faculty Handbook to reflect the spirit of the Resolution, but that the exact language to be changed in the Faculty Handbook is still to be determined.

He clarified that the Resolution today would prohibit romantic or sexual relationships between faculty and students only when a supervisory or mentoring relationship exists. He gave examples of other universities who have policies with bans on faculty-student relationships, including University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, Stanford, and University of North Carolina. At Princeton, the prohibition of romantic relationships between faculty and undergraduates was just expanded to include all graduate students.

Bar-Cohen provided the Senate with the University of Michigan’s policy, which provides a good example of how our own policy could be laid out (although the prohibitions in the University of Michigan’s policy were different than what we were discussing). He noted there is an exception statement in Michigan’s policy that seems to apply to limited circumstances, but may give some people more comfort in establishing a policy such as this one. He acknowledged concerns about a policy like this, including legal challenges and difficulty with enforcement. Despite these concerns, Bar-Cohen stated he still believes the Senate should move in this direction to protect students and faculty, to clearly state these relationships are harmful, and because the potential negatives outweigh the potential benefits of these relationships.

All Senators who opined were in support of protecting students and faculty, and in the belief that faculty should generally not have romantic or sexual relationships with students they supervise. However, there were differing opinions about whether a ban of these relationships would be effective, enforceable, and clear enough to make a difference.

A comment was made that banning relationships does not ban “hitting on” students. Bar-Cohen replied that the policy wording needs to be very clear that romantic or sexual advances are equally prohibited and harmful.

A suggestion was made that the words in the Resolution “likely to be supervised” would be more clear if changed to “majoring, minoring, or getting degrees in the department or program.” A later comment was made that we need to redefine the “faculty,” as there may be staff who teach, or other people who are not technically considered faculty now that this policy should cover.

Another Senator asked if there are data about efficacy of these policies, as she had heard from a colleague at another school that a policy similar to this one did not work well. Bar-Cohen stated information about efficacy of these programs is limited, and most have not been in place for a long time.

Another comment was made that the policy needs to clarify who is included in the policy as the faculty supervisory-type role sometimes can be performed by a graduate student. Bar-Cohen clarified that we as a Senate can only set policy for faculty, but the Senate can pass this Resolution knowing this needs to be considered in a wider context. For example, a policy prohibiting Teaching Assistants from having romantic or sexual relationships with their students may be implemented, but the Senate does not make policies for students.
A comment was made that ultimately this decision comes down to making USC a welcoming environment, which requires sacrifice from faculty and students. We want to continue to empower our students and not treat them paternalistically, but we also do not want to create environments where students cannot thrive because they feel they are unable to say “no” to a faculty member, and this ban would provide them an opportunity to say “no.”

Some Senators were concerned about voting on a Resolution before knowing all of the details this policy would entail. Bar-Cohen responded that he has heard from people with different opinions, and it is difficult to agree to move forward without first undertaking this vote. He clarified that today’s vote is only to decide if the Senate would like to move in the direction of determining a policy, for which the details would be discussed later.

A statement was made that having a policy is good, but enforcement, education, and resources will be paramount. Favor for the clarity of Michigan’s policy (their “Covered Relationships” definition, enforcement measures, etc.) was expressed. Education particularly for vulnerable populations (e.g., international students who may not question power dynamics) will be very important.

A follow-up statement was made that investigating policy violations is very difficult: documentation, deciding where investigational information goes, if the results are confidential or released, and more.

Some Senators expressed concern that the Resolution mandated an absolute prohibition of romantic or sexual relationships without room for exceptions. However, it was later clarified that passing this Resolution would still require drafting of the policy itself, and first and second reads of these Handbook changes, into which exceptions can be written. It was later discussed that the wording of the resolution still allows room for rare exceptions (such as stated in the University of Michigan policy).

**Vote on Resolution 18/19-05**

*Motion was made by the Executive Board of the Senate; resolution passed with 25 in favor, 5 opposed, and 2 abstentions.*

**First read of Proposed Changes to Faculty Handbook**

Jessica Parr and John Silvester, Co-Chairs of the Faculty Handbook Committee, presented proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook. Senators will be asked to do a second read at the next Senate meeting on May 1, 2019. After changes are voted through by the Senate, there are additional steps prior to being posted, including being sent to the President for sign-off.

The Co-Chairs asked the Senate for direction regarding the proposed change to Section 3G. If accepted, this modification would change disclosure of family, sexual, or other intimate relationships with supervisees from “recommended” to “required.” A comment was made that we should also consider faculty who have children as students at USC. The Co-Chairs stated they have modified the language in 3G to include more information about what qualifies as a supervisory or evaluative role.

A vote was held to determine if the language in Section 3G of the Faculty Handbook should change from “recommended” to “required” in regards to disclosure of family, sexual, or other intimate relationships.

*Motion was made by the Executive Board of the Senate; resolution passed with 25 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention.*

The Co-Chairs also stated the changes in faculty bereavement leave will be made in the Handbook, then it will need to be approved by the President, and afterwards it will become policy and be reflected online.
The Co-Chairs asked Senators to email them with any comments in anticipation of the second read on May 1, 2019.

**Upcoming benefits changes**

Representatives from the Employee Benefits Committee (EBC), which is made up of faculty, staff, and administrators, presented proposed forthcoming changes to the health benefits plans for 2020. They reminded the Senate that the “benefits pool” of funding pays for many things such as healthcare, retirement, and tuition benefits and that the EBC works each year to manage costs and benefits. The monthly healthcare premium costs that employees pay is less than 25% of the actual premium cost, with the rest coming from the benefits pool. Healthcare costs have increased about 10% each of the past 5 years, which is unsustainable, and the EBC is working to mitigate this rise in costs.

Today about 25% of USC employees are enrolled in the USC EPO, and about 42% are in the PPO. The main differences between the EPO and PPO are that the EPO has a drug formulary (that was developed by our own School of Pharmacy in conjunction with a pharmacy advising company), and the EPO also gives people access to doctors only in Southern California, and does not cover certain out-of-network doctors or hospitals (e.g., Cedars Sinai). The PPO currently allows access to all drugs, and access to any doctor and hospital nationally and internationally. The EPO drug costs are 42% less than the PPO drugs costs because of the drug formulary. To assist employees who switched to the EPO, a drug transition plan was executed, including communication with members and providers prior to launch, a 90-day transition period for members to switch drugs, and a live concierge service with a dedicated pharmacist during the transition phase.

The EBC is proposing that the PPO have the same drug formulary as the EPO, with the following components:

- The PPO formulary will exclude:
  - High cost brand/generic drugs with cheaper generic identical alternatives are available
  - High-priced combination drugs where separate drugs can be taken
- For drugs with multiple versions or formulations, members will be required to start with the first (cost-effective) version
- For certain drugs, where a lower cost drug is available that is clinically similar, even if not chemically identical
- Certain high-cost and sensitive maintenance drugs will be available only for 30 days quantity at a time

The EBC explained that the vast majority of anticipated disruption will result from people being switched from brand to identical generic drugs, which is also where the majority of savings will lie. When asked why the new formulary could not just consist of this one category, the EBC responded this change is about setting the expectation of how drugs will be prescribed, and also about ensuring the sustainability of the health plans long-term, which requires addressing all areas upon which the formulary touches. They later stated that as our employee population ages, the numbers of people who fall into these categories may change, so addressing each category furthers the sustainability of the PPO. They stated our peer institutions have formulary plans already.

The EBC then gave examples of different types of drug transitions that could occur.

A comment was made that if this new plan is implemented, the Senate would like to receive feedback about how it went, if it was smooth, and how people were impacted.

A question was asked if those who will be switched to a new drug with a similar clinical effect (but different chemical composition), which accounts for the least number of people affected by this change, can just be
allowed to continue with their current drugs. The EBC replied this recommendation follows USFDA guidelines, but stated this category is the most difficult to implement, and there is still more work to be done to iron this out. They stated the concierge will give feedback to the EBC and Health Plans department as to whether certain categories are too difficult to manage.

In response to a comment about the possible negative impacts of formularies, it was clarified that there are many different types of formularies, and the level that is being proposed is the least restrictive type. A follow-up statement was made that for those that will be most affected by this change (those who are asked to decouple drugs, and those who will be switched to a different chemical composition drug), we need to do anything we can to make sure they are okay.

A question was asked if USC Health Plans is working with Keck IT, to integrate these changes into Keck’s prescribing system. The EBC replied that they are working with Keck, and they anticipate these changes will be integrated into their system by the second quarter of 2020.

Some examples were given that demonstrated the importance of having a live concierge, and a robust process for exceptions. The EBC replied that they are working on communicating with providers and employees, to educate people about why the formulary is there but also about how to obtain exceptions. They stated they will work hard on implementation to ensure the concierge service is done correctly.

A follow-up question was asked if there is a communication plan for non-USC physicians, as people who have the PPO can see any doctor. The EBC stated they will try to educate members as best as possible, and will use Anthem Blue Cross to send letters to the physician community, but there are hundreds / thousands of providers. They plan to educate physicians at the most-visited sites (Keck, UCLA, Cedars, etc.), and will there will be a lot of communication with the pharmacies.

A second follow-up question was asked if part of the concierge process will be a conversation with another prescribing provider. The Committee stated that for those who are asked to switch to a drug with a similar clinical effect (but differing chemical composition), there will be a pharmacist on-staff who will do their own literature search, and who will then have a peer-to-peer discussion to determine if the drug can be used for that particular diagnosis.

A question was asked concerning how often new drugs will be evaluated. The EBC stated they will evaluate new on- or off-market drugs every quarter.

**Announcements**

- a) The Senate meeting schedule and venues for 2018-2019 is posted on the Senate website: [https://academicsenate.usc.edu/](https://academicsenate.usc.edu/)
- b) The Senate End of the Year dinner will be held on Wednesday, May 1st. Cocktails: 5:00; Award Presentations: 6:00pm; Dinner: 5:30 to 8:30pm; Venue: Davidson Conference Center, Vineyard Room

**Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Uyeshiro Simon
Secretary General of the Academic Senate