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ACADEMIC SENATE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Meeting of October 17, 2018

University Club, Scriptorium Room

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Present: S. Ahmadi, J. Ailshire, J. Armour, Y. Bar-Cohen, R. Beatty, S. Bucher, T.A. Brunn, J. Cantiello, S. Cermak, P. Cizmar (alternate for S. Wickersheimer), D. Crombeque, R. Davila, E. Fife, H. Garry (alternate for S. Altman), A. Gilbert, D. Griffiths, E. Grossman, S. Gruskin, L. Holding (alternate for A. Gilbert), A. Imre, A. Justice, R. Labaree, R. Lonergan, A. Mackay, R. MacKenzie, B. Marcus, J. M. Gray, P.T. McNiff, M. Mohammadi, C. Neuman, J. Parr, D. Pecchenino, M. Polikoff, G. Ragusa, P. Sigismondi (alternate for F. Bar), R. Smith Maddox, J. Steele, J. Silvester, A. Uyeshiro Simon, C. Tucker, T. Tucker, E. Warford, D. Whitsett (alternate for Castro), E. Wojciak

Absent: M. Apostolos, S. Asgharzadeh, S. Daneshmand, M. Frey, L. Grazzette, S. Little, A. McMahon, J. Musso, B.G. Sheehan, A.G. Wilcox

Guests: M. Burgos, S.F. Disner, A. Habibi, J. Gates, M. Levine, B. Marcus, G. Polidori, T. Pinkston, G. Polidori, M. Quick, C. Resnik

AGENDA

23 Yaniv Bar-Cohen, Academic Senate President, called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm and
24 introduced the guests of the Senate.

Approval of March Senate meeting draft minutes

27 Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, Secretary General, presented the September draft minutes for discussion
28 and approval.

30 *Rebecca Lonergan moved to approve the minutes; David Crombecque seconded; 21 in favor; 0*
31 *opposed; 2 abstentions. At the time of the vote a quorum of senators was present, but not all*
32 *senators participated in the vote to approve.*

Nominating Committee announcements

35 Rebecca Lonergan, Academic Vice President, described the Senate Nominating Committee's
36 operations (as stated in [Bylaws 10 and 17](#)) and purpose, which is to nominate candidates to serve
37 on the next Senate Executive Board. Senators may nominate each other by October 31st, 2018.
38 The Senate will vote on Nominating Committee members at the November 14th, 2018 meeting.

Barrett Assessment Tool

41 Bar-Cohen introduced the Barrett Assessment Tool (BAT), which was one of the recommendations
42 put forth by the Task Force on Workplace Standards and Employee Wellness to assess the current
43 and desired culture. It has been used with other universities and organizations with high rates of
44 engagement and good results. The tool consists of 3 simple questions:

- 45 • Select ten values from a list that represent your own personal values
- 46 • Select ten values from a list that represent the current values of your organization
- 47 • Select ten values from a list that represent what you want your organization's values to be

48 The output is a diagram that models the answers of the 3 questions, and data can be broken down
49 by school or demographics. Bar-Cohen posed whether this would be a tool worth implementing
50 throughout USC. He stated if the results were promised to be shared widely with the community,

51 a tool such as this could move the university forward together. He also stated the results of this
52 tool may be beneficial for the Presidential Search Committee, as the search is expected to be a 4-6
53 month process. He clarified that this would not be the only tool used in trying to assess and
54 change the culture at USC.

55
56 Questions were asked about the contents and format of the BAT. The survey is anonymous but
57 also entails demographic questions which can be modified for the organization. The list of values
58 to choose from vary for each question, and part of the process of building the survey is picking
59 which value words to include. Open-ended comments are not incorporated.

60
61 Concerns were raised about implementation, including whether more specific questions would
62 provide better information, response rates, applicability to an academic environment, and
63 timeline. Bar-Cohen stated this could be the first step in a series of steps to change USC's culture,
64 and that he believes the BAT has already been used in different departments at USC. He also
65 stated there would be a lot of messaging before the assessment is sent out so people are
66 prepared when the survey window opens. The BAT response rate is about 80-85%; however he
67 would like to hear recommendations of how to reach people on a personal level to ensure high
68 response rates.

69
70 A comment was made that student input would be vital, and that early January (overlapping with
71 at least 1 week of the start of the semester) would allow students optimal time to participate.

72

73 **Dialogue with Provost Michael Quick**

74 Provost Quick thanked the Senate for their continued dedication to the University. He stated last
75 month's dialogue on teaching excellence and evaluations was very beneficial, and that he sent a
76 memo to all the deans after our discussion to convey concerns that were expressed and to clarify
77 the policy.

78

79 He then provided updates. A [memo to encourage interdisciplinary teaching](#) went out on October
80 16th, 2018, and he hopes this will kick us off to promote cross-school teaching. All Vice Presidents
81 of the University have said they are happy to come and talk with the Senate if desired.

82

83 He is now working on the [Sustainability Committee report](#) that was submitted last May. He has a
84 meeting with the Deans to talk about collaborations between schools, and he is happy to put
85 resources towards our sustainability efforts, particularly for research and education.

86

87 The Provost's office is collecting data about online and Masters programs (most online programs
88 are for Masters degrees). There has been a lot of growth in Masters programs with many different
89 methods of teaching, and there is concern about quality, relationships with outside for-profit
90 vendors, student debt, and faculty composition. He will be reaching out to the Senate to discuss
91 this further.

92

93 He would like the Senate's help with developing a reasonable policy around cell phone use in
94 class, as emergency alerts are often sent via cell phones, but some professors ask students to turn
95 their phones off. He would also like guidance about the pros, cons, and impact of instituting
96 diversity hiring rules (like the Rooney Rule in the NFL).

97

98 A question was asked about the September 17, 2018 [memo regarding \\$2M grant funding per year](#)
99 to be distributed by the Senate. The Provost will provide these funds through faculty teams

100 created by the Senate that will build programs under each pillar of the Strategic Plan. The Senate
101 teams can design the best way to get people to submit applications.

102
103 A question was asked about who the point-person for sustainability issues is, as an email to
104 sustainability@usc.edu was unanswered. It was clarified that Ellen Dux is the point-person.

105
106 A question was asked about updates on salary benchmarking. Elizabeth Graddy is working on this;
107 they are annually looking at where salary adjustments need to be made. Part of the problem is
108 that we do not have good peer comparisons at other universities. We are trying to look within
109 schools/disciplines for benchmarking data.

110
111 A question was asked concerning the role of faculty in providing feedback for dean reviews.
112 Provost Quick stated including faculty committees, reaching out to more faculty, and 360 reviews
113 were possible roles faculty could play. He also stated this could apply to central administration as
114 well.

115
116 Provost Quick thanked the Senate for having him.

117
118 **Open discussion on Faculty roles**

119 Bar-Cohen stated the goal of the discussion was to find a way to move forward together as a
120 Faculty, recognizing there are differences between the roles of Tenure-line and RTPC faculty. As
121 the Senate, we represent all faculty, and need to be inclusive of everyone's issues and needs. Of
122 our approximate 7,500 faculty, over 4,000 are full-time, and 1,500 are Tenure-line.

123
124 Comments were made about what values will inform our desired shared governance structure,
125 and whether the different roles of faculty (Tenure-line, RTPC, and library faculty) should be
126 considered. Arguments were made that we need to take rigor of appointment and courage in
127 speaking up out of the shared governance discussion, and counter-arguments were made that
128 some have observed RTPC faculty are afraid to voice dissent due to lack of job security.

129
130 A comment was made that there have been reports from both Tenure-line and RTPC faculty of
131 feeling devalued. There was agreement that the progress made to treat RTPC faculty equitably has
132 been good. Another statement was made that as long as there is distance between equity and
133 parity, there will always be tension (e.g., benchmarking salaries).

134
135 An opinion about fear of the growth in numbers of RTPC faculty undermining Tenure was stated,
136 as Tenure is one of the pillars on which academic freedom rests and it should not be devalued to
137 the point of erosion. Other concerns of losing the value of co-occurring research and teaching, as
138 well as the economic sustainability of Tenure compared to RTPC were raised. Counterarguments
139 were made that we should be concerned with protecting academic freedom for all faculty
140 regardless of faculty type, and that we can have the same rights despite faculty type (e.g.,
141 freedom of speech). Suggestions were made that we create academic freedom principles that
142 apply to all faculty, and that we need to look at our systems and policies as they relate to
143 promotion, rewards, and appointment, regardless of track and rank.

144
145 Other comments were made that we need to consider seniority, online vs. on-campus, and part-
146 time and adjunct faculty. We also need to discuss differences in pay, course loads (and ability to
147 function with these loads), space allocations, teaching responsibilities/standards and teaching
148 rights, replaceability (as it relates to pay disparity), and differences between schools. We need to

149 ask ourselves what cultures in our schools are perpetuating a tiered system, as everyone feels
150 they are not as valued as much as they would like.

151
152 A statement was made that we need to gauge the feelings of the community throughout the year,
153 and have meaningful, anonymous, ongoing grievance channels which allows groups and
154 individuals to emerge. Comments were made about considering student viewpoints in this
155 discussion.

156
157 A comment was made that composition of representative bodies and participation are important,
158 and that we should encourage people to run for representative positions, ensure chairs are
159 supportive of service, possibly create value for service (like teaching relief), and have faculty
160 protections against retaliation.

161
162 A question was asked about who gets to have a conversation with Administration, Deans, and
163 Department Chairs to make things more equitable. Bar-Cohen stated this is part of the
164 conversation being discussed in the Task Force on Shared Governance, which is underway. A
165 follow-up comment was made that our feeling of job security relates to our leadership, and now is
166 the time to voice our concerns to the President.

167
168 Steve Bucher, Co-Chair of the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, encouraged anyone
169 who feels their rights and responsibilities have not been respected to contact the committee. They
170 help all faculty, the committee is expanded this year, and they work with other resources on
171 campus.

172
173 A summative statement was made that there seems to be broad agreement about two things,
174 that we can move forward from:

- 175 1) RTPC should have more job protection than they do
176 2) Having TTT faculty is important. These are common ground agreements that we can move
177 forward from.

178
179 Bar-Cohen then asked the Senate to focus on solutions, and what we can do to move us forward
180 in the right direction together.

181
182 A question was asked about the 3- and 5- multi-year contracts for RTPC teaching faculty ([see the](#)
183 [September 17, 2017 Provost's Memo here](#)), and whether the process has started. There were
184 reports of some schools and Deans being confused about how this should have been enacted.
185 Concern was raised about the lack of compliance to this policy. Bar-Cohen clarified that this
186 currently only applies to teaching faculty (>75% teaching), and there are efforts underway to apply
187 this to other RTPC faculty as well. He stated he would follow-up about this as this was where the
188 Senate can help. Rebecca Lonergan, Academic Vice President, asked the Faculty Councils to report
189 issues like this to the Senate leadership, so they can elevate them to the appropriate parties.

190
191 A statement was made that we need to better understand what each type of faculty is doing, as
192 some teaching faculty do not have research in their profiles, and some RTPC faculty are research
193 faculty but not Tenure-track. Another comment indicated we need to separate out the needs of
194 each of the RTPC tracks, as we have been heavily teaching-focused in this conversation. The library
195 faculty continuing appointment model was also highlighted, as they all conduct research and
196 teach.

197

198 A comment noted the University of California system grants tenure-type status for a different set
199 of skills; and a question was posed that if we were to do something like this, what would the
200 concerns be? Concerns included 1.) difficulties in evaluating teaching whereas we think we know
201 how to evaluate Tenure, and 2.) Tenure faculty potentially feeling even more replaceable. An
202 opinion was stated that extending the value of Tenure to all faculty is a valid solution, but a large
203 part of our faculty should still do research, arts, or the other roles that Tenure faculty primarily do.
204

205 A suggestion was put forth to put more emphasis on service in the Tenure track by rewarding
206 people, to help correct the disproportionate RTPC/Tenure-track representation. A different
207 commenter reported not being concerned with higher RTPC representation on the Senate, as the
208 Senate can and does have power. However the Senate does have a responsibility to protect the
209 rights of the faculty and make them feel secure, regardless of rank, title, track, etc.
210

211 **Announcements**

- 212 a) The remainder of the Academic Senate meetings will be held in the University Club 2nd
213 floor Scriptorium
- 214 b) There will be a Nominating Committee election (4 Senators will be elected) at the
215 November 14 meeting
- 216 c) Please hold February 22-23, 2019 for the Joint Provost/Senate Retreat. Venue: The Westin
217 Bonaventure Hotel & Suites, DTLA; Topic TBD
- 218 d) The Senate meeting schedule and venues for 2018 - 2019 is posted on the Senate website:
219 <https://academicsenate.usc.edu/>
- 220 e) The roster of Senate members and committee chairs is posted on this link:
221 <https://academicsenate.usc.edu/senators/senators/>
222

223 **New Business**

224 No new business was presented.
225

226 **Adjournment**

227 Meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.
228
229

230 Respectfully submitted,
231

232 
233
234

235 Ashley Uyeshiro Simon
236 Secretary General of the Academic Senate
237