



Committee on Academic Senate History Annual Report to the Senate, 2017/2018

Committee Membership:

Dr. Robert V. Labaree, Chair, USC Libraries

Mike Lee, USC Viterbi and Secretary General, Academic Senate

Claude Zachary, University Archivist, USC Libraries

The first meeting of the Committee on Academic Senate History was held on Thursday, January 18th from 11:00am - noon in the Von KleinSmid Center Library. The following topics were discussed:

Digital Library Senate Document Archiving

In his role as Senate Secretary, Mike brought up the issue of records retention for senate documents [confidential and open access], given that his term as Secretary is ending in May 2018. In particular, the topic of what type of documents should be published on the Senate website and what should be our policy on digital documents being transferred and made accessible from the University Archives was discussed. Robert noted that University Archives keep in perpetuity materials that record and represent the history of the university. Claude is able to restrict access to certain documents deemed by the Senate as confidential. However, because Claude could not attend, document type and specific archiving policy issues related to publically accessible transient and permanent items and the acquisition and maintenance of transient and permanent confidential documents was postponed until Claude could speak authoritatively about this. There was then a discussion about the need to categorize Senate documents and identifying what types of documents should be preserved. Mike took note of the following possibilities: meeting agendas, supporting documents, job descriptions, working documents, and works in progress and process documents of the Senate Executive Board. The latter Mike was going inquiry about with the board. The discussion then moved to enhancing access to documents on the Senate website, including materials from the old website as well, and the need to create a formal queue for future archiving of documents. It was noted that it could be helpful if past committee memberships were on the website.

Senate Historian Blog

Robert noted that he had submitted a Senate Historian's blog last year for posting on the Senate website but had never heard back about whether it would be posted. The blog described the current records management policy of the University of Southern California and the need for Faculty Councils to develop a formal, unit-level records retention and preservation program around academic governance. This brought up the possibility of other committee chair posting blog entries. Also discussed was a Facebook presence for the Senate and re-constituting the Senate newsletter. However, Mike clarified that the Senate Blog was primarily for communicating updates from the Senate President and Senate retreats. Most updates from committees are presented at the monthly Senate meeting and/or through annual reports.

The second meeting of the Committee on Academic Senate History was held on Thursday, April 19th from 10:00am - 11:00am in the Von KleinSmid Center Library. The following topics were discussed:

New Charter for the History Committee

Mike reported that the Senate Executive Board was contemplating expanding the committee's responsibilities to include history of distinguished faculty. Discussion focused on emphasizing the importance of preserving the history of academic governance. With this in mind, Mike set up a shared Google document to work in an efficient manner on a proposed new charge to the committee. Once the draft is completed, Mike will bring it to the Senate Executive Board for feedback and to address questions about how to proceed.

Archiving of Senate Documents in Digital Library

Carried over from the first meeting, Claude described the University Archives policy and procedures for handling of confidential documents. This discussion centered around whether the Archives could serve as a confidential repository for documents produced by the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee and the Executive Board. Because the University Archives does not collect records related to personnel matters or issues, it was decided that the current practice of keeping confidential documents in locked file cabinets in the Senate office will be maintained. Related to this, we discussed the need to retain documents from the old Senate website [Constitution, By Laws, Resolutions, Meeting Minutes, etc.]. Claude noted that he routinely crawls the USC website for the purposes of using the Internet Archive [<https://archive.org/>] as the repository for our web archive.

We then discussed queue procedures for future documents into the USC Digital Library and the possibility of adding past committee memberships to the Senate website. Mike made the request that all documents under the Academic Senate's document section be archived. The documents in this section include: Constitution, Bylaws, Resolutions, End of Year Reports, Endorsed Reports, and Meeting Minutes. Since a list of committee members is not always included in the annual year-end committee reports, the committee recommended to the Executive Board that the listing of the committee members be required in all annual reports going forward. The Executive Board agreed with this recommendation and Academic Senate Committee Guidelines web page [<https://academicsenate.usc.edu/committees/committee-guidelines-the-basics/>] has been updated to reflect this recommendation.

University Archives

The meeting ended with a discussion of progress towards inventorying and soliciting missing documents from the Presidential binders in the University Archives. Resolutions and meeting minutes were scanned and posted on the USC Libraries' Digital Library Collections webpage [<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/search/collection/p15799coll104/searchterm/Academic%20Senate%20Records/field/parta/mode/exact>] and linked under the heading, "University of Southern California History Collection," "Academic Senate Records." There are currently 464 full-text, searchable records on this site. Claude reported that he has not had time to identify missing documents. When this is done, the committee intends to request that relevant faculty who have served on the Senate look through their old files for any copies of missing documents that could be scanned and added to the Digital Library collection. Related to this, Mike added links to Meeting Minutes and Archives under the Documents drop-down menu on the Senate website.