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2 **ACADEMIC SENATE**

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4 **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**  
5 Meeting of April 15, 2020  
6 Virtual Zoom Meeting (due to COVID-19)  
7 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
8

9 **Present:** P. Adler, S. Ahmadi, M. Apostolos, D. Armstrong, Y. Bar-Cohen, B. Belcher, B. Blair,  
10 T. Brun, S. Bucher, A. Cannon, P. Cannon, J. Cederbaum, D. Crombecque, M. Crowley, G. Davison,  
11 A. Elefano (alternate for M. Daniels-Rauterkus), L. Ferguson, E. Fife, R. Filback, M. Finberg (alternate for  
12 Sibyl Wickersheimer), L. Grazette, D. Griffiths, L. Gross, S. Gupta, S. Helfter (alternate for L. Holding), A.  
13 Imre, J. Israel, M. Jacobson (alternate for C. Pike), D. Kelley, G. Kung, (alternate for A. Wilcox), R. Lonergan,  
14 A. Mackay, L. Matchison, T.J. McCarthy, J. McLaughlin Gray, D. O'Leary, C. Park, J. Parr, J. Pascarella, D.  
15 Pecchenino, G. Polidori, G. Ragusa, C. Redfearn, C. Resnik, S. Rich, C. Tucker, A. Uyeshiro Simon, J. Walker,  
16 E. Warford, T. Wattenbarger, T. Williams, A. Wu, G. Zada, A. Zoto  
17 **Guests:** A. Armani, B. Carrington, R. Cisowski, S. Cwalina, S. Dincer, C. Folt, C. Freeman, T. Fritz,  
18 S. Garza, K. Grace, G. Ho, D. Kelley, M. Levine, J. Moore, C. Neuman, N. Olmos, M. Osborne, R. Pak, M.  
19 Press, C. Resnik, C. Roque, D. Sun, B. Turner, A. Van Speybroeck, C. Zachary, C. Zukoski  
20

21 **AGENDA**

22  
23 Rebecca Lonergan, Academic Senate President, called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.  
24

25 **Approval of January Senate Meeting Draft Minutes**

26 Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, Secretary General, presented the March 2020 draft minutes for discussion and  
27 approval.  
28

29 *Rebecca Lonergan moved to approve the minutes; Chimene Tucker seconded. Motion passed with 39 in*  
30 *favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.*  
31

32 **Dialogue with President Folt and Provost Zukoski**

33 President Carol Folt offered warm wishes to everyone in attendance during this COVID-19 pandemic. She  
34 stated she has been grateful for the honest conversations she has been able to have with people, and for  
35 the connection, collaboration, and cooperation that is happening across our university in ways that she has  
36 never seen. For example, she has been talking with Neeraj Sood (Price School) about his work in  
37 understanding how we might reopen doors to society. She stated she will need help soon to identify faculty  
38 experts who can assist with different initiatives for recovery.  
39

40 Currently, Folt stated senior leadership is focused on not laying anyone off for as long as possible, but we  
41 are the largest private employer in the city with most of our revenue coming from tuition. She also plans to  
42 get involved with the city to see how USC, along with others, can use our capacity to help our communities  
43 and work to close gaps of inequities. On a national scale, University Trustees Rick Caruso and Oscar Munoz  
44 were asked by President Trump to be on his Presidential Economic Advisory Panel to think about the  
45 economic future of the country. We are also working with partners to help the State of New York.  
46

47 Provost Chip Zukoski outlined the processes in place to help keep our university operational. He stated  
48 decisions are being made very quickly to ensure we can continue our operations:

- 49 • The President's COVID program management committee oversees the management of the  
50 university to ensure we are still operating. They meet at least once daily.

- 51 • A Provost emergency operations committee (EOC) is looking at issues related to the Registrar,  
52 teaching, online classes, surveying constituencies, and how to continue in our mission during this  
53 pandemic. Lonergan sits on this committee.
- 54 • Zukoski meets with the deans daily to receive updates from their schools and push out information  
55 to them personally. He also meets with the Senate Executive Board each week.
- 56 • We have hit a point now where we are able to pull away from day-to-day decisions. There are still  
57 many issues, but the vast majority of faculty and students are working online. We will begin  
58 looking at a “Project Restart” which examines whether summer session 2 courses should be  
59 online, how to have students return to campus, how to reopen buildings, what management  
60 structures will need to be in place, and more.

61

62 Zukoski reported we are taking an enormous hit to our finances due to revenue loss, clinical care,  
63 reimbursing students for housing, supporting employees for as long as possible, and more. The loss for the  
64 university will be hundreds of millions of dollars. We will need to make decisions to get to stability while  
65 continuing our mission. He also acknowledged each school will be affected differently. To keep enrollment  
66 steady, Zukoski stated 2000 more students were admitted without diminishing the quality of students at  
67 all, and that the rate of acceptances and intentions to enroll is higher than last year at this time.

68

69 Regarding online classes, the university conducted a recent survey that found large portions of faculty and  
70 students are having issues with connectivity (environment, internet capabilities, hardware). This will need  
71 to be thought through over the summer and into the Fall. CET continues to offer online pedagogy classes to  
72 help faculty learn best practices for online teaching. Doug Shook, Chief Information Officer, is launching a  
73 task force to explore issues with “Zoom bombing” which has faculty representation. They realize that some  
74 faculty may need better support for working from home, such as improved IT equipment. Folt stated this is  
75 a scaling issue, so deans may need to identify those who need immediate help first, then we will need to  
76 have a long-term plan for IT support so we are prepared for future emergencies.

77

78 Zukoski stated he also reached out to the new deans of Dworak-Peck and Rossier to welcome them, as well  
79 as to this year’s valedictorian and two salutatorians to congratulate them on their achievements. He is  
80 continuing to work on filling the positions of VP of Research and VP for Enrollment Management as well.

81

82 A question was asked about whether the university would still honor the [new “affordability” plan](#) promised  
83 this year, and if we will also be able to disperse awards to students as usual. Folt stated they are not  
84 planning on cutting back financial aid right now, and that in fact they are expecting to spend more on aid  
85 due to the impact of COVID-19 on families. Zukoski stated he expects that any student awards that have  
86 already been earned would likely be fulfilled, but he would need to check, and he is unsure about next  
87 year.

88

89 A senator asked when more details about the hiring pause would be announced. Zukoski stated the memo  
90 about the hiring pause specified that this would be in place at least until December of this year, and would  
91 be reevaluated at that time. There is an exception process in place that goes through the deans and  
92 Provost, but they are trying to limit these exceptions, and the Provost is looking at each request. Another  
93 faculty member stated that protecting merit raises for assistant professors will be key for ensuring these  
94 faculty stay with our university. Folt stated she is unaware of any university that is not taking the same  
95 steps we are, but that she agrees equity differences will need to be accounted for in our recovery plan.

96

97 Zukoski and Folt answered questions about the Fall semester. Regarding when plans for on-ground versus  
98 online instruction will be announced, Zukoski stated there has been a lot of planning and discussion around  
99 this, and while they have been working on plans as much as possible, there is still a lot of uncertainty so  
100 they have not yet decided. The final decision for Fall must be made at least 6-8 weeks prior to the start of  
101 the semester. Folt stated they are thinking about all options, for example pushing the start of classes back

102 or holding classes on weekends. They stated faculty should assume that some classes in the Fall will still  
103 need to be held online, but classes which require in-person attendance may be phased back first as the  
104 quality of our programs is vital. Maja Mataric is working with research deans in each school to create plans  
105 for resuming research operations with social distancing, as this is a very high priority. They are still working  
106 out how to deal with costs associated with shutting down and restarting labs that were not included in  
107 grant budgets.

108  
109 A senator asked how the administration is ensuring faculty can give meaningful input before decisions are  
110 made. Zukoski stated his office is providing resources, support, centralized trainings, and the like, but it is  
111 incumbent on the deans to hold conversations with their faculty and Faculty Councils to advise them. He  
112 can change some structures, but the curriculum is owned by the faculty and the sequencing of classes is  
113 usually decided by the departments.

114  
115 **Second Read & Vote: Handbook Amendments regarding Prohibition of Romantic Relationships**

116 Sandeep Gupta, Chair of the Handbook Committee, presented the [second read of the proposed Handbook](#)  
117 [amendments](#). They incorporated the feedback from the first read at last month's meeting, but did not  
118 make any further changes.

119  
120 *Todd Brun moved to approve the Handbook Amendments; Paul Adler seconded. Motion passed*  
121 *unanimously with 44 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.*

122  
123 **First Read of Miscellaneous Handbook Amendments**

124 Gupta presented the [first read of miscellaneous changes](#) to the Handbook, suggested by the Handbook  
125 Committee. These amendments reflect updated titles, policies that were in place but were not noted in the  
126 Handbook, references for section and clause numbers, and other related items. He briefly outlined some of  
127 the modifications, but stated senators should read through them thoroughly before they are presented for  
128 a vote at the next meeting. He asked senators to please contact him and Lonergan should any questions  
129 come up. He clarified that senators should pay special attention to the modifications in yellow highlight, as  
130 these require a closer look.

131  
132 **Upcoming Direct Election of Executive Board Members**

133 Paul Adler, Academic Vice President, gave an [update](#) on the upcoming Senate Executive Board elections  
134 and introduced all of the candidates. He stated all faculty (full-time, part-time, and retired) will be getting  
135 an invitation to vote tomorrow, and faculty can vote until April 27<sup>th</sup>. He expressed his gratitude for those  
136 willing to serve, and for the diversity of the slate. He noted the Executive Board added two voluntary  
137 questions at the end of the ballot (about school and track) to get a measure of engagement in these direct  
138 elections.

139  
140 **Discussion regarding New Scientific Misconduct Policy and Lab Safety Policy**

141 Travis Williams, Chair of the Research Committee, and Kristen Grace, Research Integrity Officer in the  
142 Office of Research, gave a [presentation](#) concerning two new policies that the Research Committee is  
143 recommending USC adopt.

144  
145 The first is a [laboratory personnel protection policy](#) which seeks to institute safety measures to adhere to  
146 safety policy. Williams stated a UC Regents settlement defined stringent lab procedures for safety, and USC  
147 will be held to these standards if sued. Should a student be injured in a professor's lab or class, that  
148 professor bears personal, civil, and other liabilities which are exacerbated if that professor is running  
149 multiple labs and/or lectures at the same time. There are also situations in which some graduate students  
150 are teaching at night, without immediate access to staff or the professor should something go wrong. This  
151 policy charges the administration, and especially Facilities Management Services, to provide spaces that are  
152 compliant with these standards, ensures proper oversight of all classes and labs, and considers PI safety

153 records for promotion, tenure, and merit review as recommended by the National Academies. The  
154 Research Committee is currently seeking approval for the policy at the administrative level.

155

156 The second policy would control [research and scholarly misconduct investigations](#). Williams stated USC's  
157 current policy only meets minimum standards, and that we have fallen behind our peers. Kristen Grace was  
158 hired last summer to help us become leaders in this area. Significant policy changes that are being  
159 recommended include

- 160 • Having a standing committee on research integrity (with members appointed by the Provost to  
161 serve for 3 years) instead of an ad-hoc three-person committee, which will oversee panels of at  
162 least three people needed to review the documents and make recommendations and send them to  
163 the Provost.
- 164 • Inquiry panels will be appointed by the Vice President of Research. Previously deans appointed  
165 panels, which introduced potential conflict of interest.
- 166 • Timelines are well delineated, as are processes for what to do if timelines are not met.
- 167 • The overall process is more carefully detailed (see the [presentation](#) for an overview).
- 168 • Only the Research Integrity Officer, in consultation with the Vice President of Research, can dismiss  
169 an allegation or start an inquiry after a preliminary analysis. Inquiries involve preliminary fact-  
170 finding, and the ultimate decision of whether to launch a full investigation goes to the Provost for  
171 approval.

172

173 It was clarified that the purpose of this presentation was to get recommendations from the Senate. The  
174 Senate Executive Board recommended the policies be approved, and the approval process is awaiting the  
175 Provost and President.

176

177 A question was asked about how to get someone to review high-hazard materials. The presenters advised  
178 people email [labsafety@usc.edu](mailto:labsafety@usc.edu) to bring someone from Environmental Health and Safety and Shop Safety  
179 to the space and do an interview. They will work with the course directors to come up with  
180 recommendations. Williams recommended faculty write to their deans if they believe there should be  
181 faculty or staff oversight mandated for certain courses or labs.

182

183 Faculty were asked to contact Williams if they have questions.

184

#### 185 **New Business**

186 No new business presented.

187

#### 188 **Announcements**

189 (a) Next and final Senate meeting of the year will be on May 13, 2020

190 (b) Direct election of Executive Board members will begin April 16 and close April 27

191 (c) Senate's end-of-year party will be delayed this year due to the "stay home" directive

192

#### 193 **Adjournment**

194 Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

195

196 Respectfully submitted,

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198

199

200

201

202 Ashley Uyeshiro Simon

203 Secretary General of the Academic Senate