

1
2 **ACADEMIC SENATE**

3 **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

4 Meeting of October 21, 2020

5 Virtual Meeting

6 2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

7 **Present (Senate Members):** P. Adler, M. Apostolos, J. Baker, D. Becker, B. Belcher, M. Bodie,
8 D. Brooks, R. Brown, S. Bucher, P. Cardon, K. Carlson (alternate for D. Armstrong),
9 B. Carrington, R. Cislowski (alternate for L. Palinkas), E. Collins, M. Crowley, G. Davison,
10 J. Dopheide, R. Filback, G. Giuliano, L. Gross, S. Helfter, A. Imre, J. Israel, M. Jacobson (alternate for
11 M. Mather), G. Kung, J. Kirschner, R. Labaree, R. Lonergan, J. Moore, T. Mueller (alternate for C.
12 Clerc), C. Neuman, D. O'Leary, N. Olmos, D. Pecchenino, G. Polidori, M. Press, G. Ragusa,
13 C. Resnik, V. Rindova. B. Salhia (alternate for G. Zada), A. Samkian, A. Sanchez, T. Sandmeier,
14 T. Tambascia, A. Uyeshiro Simon, A. Van Speybroeck, J. Walker, E. Warford, T. Wattenbarger,
15 J. Wong (alternate for T. Ton), E. Zeamer

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17 **Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** C. Adams, M. Bohn, P. Cannon,
18 G. Condell, D. Crombecque, A. Dashiell-Sparks, C. Finch, C. Folt, T. Kobza, G. Kung, M. Levine,
19 J. Loeb, A. Mackay, T. Mayfield, J. McLaughlin Gray, R. Pak, J. Posselt, A. Rechenmacher,
20 P. Riley, B. Shuster, B. Turner, C. Young, C. Zukoski

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22 **Guests (Faculty At Large):** H. Choi, F. Cutrale, I. Ershaghi, J. Ferris, E. Fife, S. Finley, A. Foster, Mike
23 G., Richard G., D. Ghirardo, E. Heikkila, E. Johnson, H. Kaslow J. Keim, kjkim, G. Knatz, Madhukar,
24 D. McCurry, L. McGinnis, E. Nezami, S. Nutt, C. Pantano-Rubino, PhanPhan, J. Ravichandran, Sam,
25 M. Thom, F. Valero-Cuevas, N. Warren

26
27 **AGENDA**

28 Academic Senate President Adler called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm and introduced the guests
29 of the Senate.

30 **Approval of September Senate Meeting Draft Minutes**

31 Adler presented the September 2020 minutes for discussion and approval.

32 *Motion to approve the August minutes was moved and seconded; 39 in favor; 0 opposed; 0*
33 *abstention.*

34 **President Folt, Provost Zukoski, and Mike Bohn (Director of Athletics)**

35 President Folt and Provost Zukoski began their remarks by acknowledging newly named and
36 honored faculty including those appointed as University and Distinguished Professors. Folt then
37 provided important updates:

- 38 • The Board of Trustees continues to work on their own governance and on review processes of
39 the CEO, the senior leadership team, and deans. Folt and the Board of Trustees have discussed
40 names put forward for the Nomenclature Committee by the Senate and are still finalizing the
41 committee which will serve in an advisory capacity. VKC will be the first building to be
42 renamed.

- 43 • Folt is the co-chair for the AAU’s Committee on Sexual Harassment and she is hoping to share
44 a report from the Committee at a future Executive Board meeting. The report is expected to
45 present a set of principles and responsibilities that every AAU university should have as part of
46 its guidelines on how to deal with sexual assault and harassment.
- 47 • USC along with Stanford, Cal-Tech and a number of other institutions filed a lawsuit to contest
48 the H-1B Visa issue. The AAU and the AP have been issuing strong statements in objection to
49 numerous diversity and racial justice issues. Folt thinks it is important for us to stay part of our
50 peer set in this area.
- 51 • We are working hard with the county to safely open some of our campus for some students.
52 Our goal is to have more flexibility in the spring semester, but our main concern is health. We
53 have a much better testing program than we did in August and the campus is well outfitted.
54 We may need to have 50,000 to 80,000 tests a week, which is expensive and still being figured
55 out. Folt hopes that we can bring small groups of people back and she is deeply concerned
56 about the mental health particularly of students.
- 57 • This was the end of LatinX celebrations and Folt had an amazing opportunity to interview
58 activist Dolores Huerta. The interview is available online.
- 59 • Three Deans were installed—Sarah Gehlert, Pedro Noguera, and Geoffrey Garrett—and their
60 installations are available online.
- 61 • Folt got to help introduce the LA Times’ Festival of Books. A number of our own faculty are
62 being featured for their books or as panelists.
- 63 • We have been asking permission from County Health to do things safely, including athletics, to
64 bring researchers and clinical people back, and to open libraries. Most requests were rejected.

65 Folt accepted questions from Senators before turning the floor over to Director of Athletics Mike
66 Bohn who thanked the Senate for the invitation to meet with the Senate. Bohn then expressed his
67 excitement over the engagement with Keck Hospital officials who have helped us immensely with
68 challenges associated with testing and the safety of our student athletes during the pandemic. He
69 is thrilled with the engagement with deans and faculty members helping Athletics on numerous
70 initiatives. With the help of President Folt, Bohn and the Provost formed a task force to examine
71 the experience of student athletes at USC. Faculty have helped Athletics with their Black Lives
72 Matter and social justice initiatives. Bohn described various testing and training protocols for
73 student athletes before answering questions from Senators on a range of issues including Varsity
74 Blues.

75 Provost Zukoski recognized the hard work of faculty and staff, and asked faculty to continue trying
76 to reduce stress that some students are experiencing. To help reduce stress, the University
77 extended dates that students can choose a pass/no pass option and to drop a course. Zukoski
78 encouraged faculty to turn to the Center for Work and Family Life and the Trojans Care for Trojans
79 programs for support with their own stress. He then discussed plans for the spring semester. We
80 will be starting in the middle of January and ending at the normal time. There will be no spring
81 break, so we are adding “wellness days” throughout the semester. Zukoski pointed out that what
82 happens in the spring is heavily influenced by decisions made by LA County. We are interested in
83 having students come back to campus primarily because the on-campus experience can be
84 beneficial to the mental health of students. Zukoski thanked Senators for working on the spring
85 calendar and modalities they would use to teach in the spring. He continues to work with the
86 Committee on Finance and Enrollment (COFE) and the Executive Board to understand University
87 finances and how we are going to progress into the spring.

88 **Election to Nominating Committee**

89 President Adler opened the floor for nominations and self-nominations to serve on the
90 Nominating Committee, which is charged with forming the slate of candidates for the Spring 2021
91 election of new members of the Executive Board. With no nominations from the floor, a vote was
92 held to elect four Senators from the existing slate of nominees put forward by the Executive
93 Board. The Senators elected were Anita Dashiell-Sparks (Dramatic Arts), Jesus Dominguez (Ostrow
94 School of Dentistry), John Matsusaka (Marshall School of Business), and Alison Wilcox (Keck).

95 **Greg Condell on Benefits Plan 2021**

96 Vice President of Finance Greg Condell reviewed [changes to the Medical Benefits plan for 2021](#).
97 He explained the process that we go through every year to evaluate health plans and to propose
98 ideas to the Senate and a steering committee comprised of the Provost, SVP for Finance and CFO
99 James Staten, SVP for Human Resources Felicia Washington, and SVP for Administration David
100 Wright. The steering committee makes recommendations to the President's senior leadership
101 team. Changes for 2021 include the following: a new vendor for the health assessment; slight
102 increases to deductibles and co-pays; a new benefits manager (which will result in cost savings of
103 \$7 million dollars a year); premium increases; phase-out of the tobacco-free incentive program;
104 availability of flu shot events; and a new dependent eligibility audit.

105 **Resolutions on the University's FY 21 Budget**

106 There was extensive discussion of a draft Resolution put forward by the Executive Board
107 concerning the University budget for FY21 and beyond. Also discussed was an alternative draft
108 Resolution submitted by the Faculty Councils of Pharmacy and Viterbi. At the outset, Adler stated
109 his desire to bring one resolution to be voted on that reflects the broad views of the Senate. He
110 provided the rationale for the Executive Board draft Resolution and then opened the floor for
111 comments. Several Senators expressed concerns about the Executive Board draft Resolution and
112 the way the resolutions were being discussed. The floor was then opened for discussion on either
113 draft Resolution. While Senators expressed different views on the wisdom of the University
114 budget and strategies to be used, there was wide consensus that the Administration has not
115 involved faculty enough nor shared enough details. The majority of the Senators wanted stronger
116 language calling for rescinding of the decision to pause the retirement benefit and merit increases
117 and for a more explicit commitment to involving faculty in future decision-making involving the
118 budget. An [amended resolution](#) reflecting these views was put to the floor.

119 *Motion to approve the amended Resolution was moved by President Adler; 36 in favor; 1 opposed;*
120 *1 abstention.*

121 **New Business**

122 A suggestion was made for the Executive Board to consider consulting with an independent
123 outside labor law attorney to advise them on faculty rights and options as they negotiate with
124 administration.

125 **Adjournment**

126 Meeting was adjourned at 4:07 pm.

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128 Respectfully submitted,

129

Devon Brooks

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131 Devon Brooks

132 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

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