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ACADEMIC SENATE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

4 Meeting of March 10, 2021

5 Virtual Meeting

6 2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

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

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18 **Absent:** T. Wattenbarger

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20 **Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** E. Dux, E. Fife, C. Finch, J. Kagan, M. Karp,
21 J. Keim, M. Levine, J. Loeb, R. MacKenzie, D. Mazmanian, M. Mataric, J. McLaughlin Gray, A.
22 Motamed, T. Mueller, L. Nieto, D. Ruddell, B. Shuster, R. Turner, J. Wong, C. Young, C. Zukoski

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AGENDA

25 **Call to Order**

26 Academic Senate President Adler called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.

27 **Approval of Minutes of December Senate Meeting**

28 Academic Senate Secretary General Brooks presented the February 2021 minutes for discussion
29 and approval.

30 ***Motion to approve the February minutes. Seconded and passed: 37 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2***
31 ***abstentions.***

32 **Discourse in Senate Meetings**

33 Adler discussed the importance of maintaining a respectful tone in Senate discourse, both in oral
34 and written communications (particularly in conversations that take place via meeting chats).

35 **Provost Zukoski**

36 President Zukoski greeted Senators and began his update with a reminder of the forthcoming
37 Wellness Day. Wellness Days are designed to provide students and faculty with an opportunity to
38 relax. This semester, there are five Wellness Days scattered throughout the semester. Zukoski
39 then provided a vaccination update. As of March 1, we are in Phase I-B, Tier 1, which allows
40 vaccinations of USC faculty, staff and funded graduate students working in research and
41 instruction. Vaccinations can be gotten at USC or any of the county sites. Those living in California
42 should use the myturn.ca.gov website to schedule appointments. Questions about vaccines and

43 vaccine eligibility can be directed to our [COVID Hotline](#) or emailed to COVID19@usc.edu.

44 Zukoski then discussed planning for the fall. We expect student density to be close to normal by
45 the end of August (pre-pandemic levels). Housing will be back at density (double occupancy). A
46 survey will be administered to help us understand and meet the needs of our students. The plan
47 depends on the guidance we receive from Los Angeles County. Student Affairs is preparing two
48 onboarding experiences—one for first year students as usual and the other for 2nd year students
49 in parallel so that we can acculturate both classes on what it means to be at USC. Student Affairs is
50 also planning a robust welcome experience for all students, including those living in university
51 housing.

52 The Provost thanked faculty for their flexibility, compassion, and hard work this year. He reported
53 that he has received remarkable feedback from students who are pleased with their experience.
54 He noted that faculty have delivered very high-quality courses for three semesters, for which he
55 and students are very appreciative. Zukoski went on to explain that we will be online for the 1st
56 term of the summer, but the 2nd term may be on-campus. With restrictions beginning to lift,
57 there are numerous activities taking place on campus. For example, we currently provide space for
58 studying and dining in canopies for students who live around the campus. Doheny Library is open
59 for research; Levy Library is open for independent study; Thornton is open for instrumental
60 rehearsals; Roski is opening individual art labs and studios; architecture has studios open; athletes
61 can participate in study and social sessions; the bookstore can be visited by appointment; and we
62 have opened tracks, tennis courts, and studios. Pools will open soon, once lifeguards are trained.

63 Zukoski reminded Senators that the current week was DEI Week, with over a hundred events (e.g.,
64 trainings, lectures, and discussions) taking place. Additionally, he noted that actions are being
65 taken to enact the recommendations made by the REDI Task Force and the Community Advisory
66 Board. He closed out his updates by sharing that the new Chief Inclusion and Diversity Officer,
67 Chris Manning, arrived the week prior and is meeting with various groups across campus. Zukoski
68 then then took questions from the floor.

69 **Senators Pose Questions to Provost Zukoski**

70 Provost Zukoski then addressed questions posed by the Executive Board and Senators. Adler asked
71 Zukoski about his initial reaction to the WASC Accreditation Visiting Committee Report Out.
72 Zukoski noted that the Report Out was a public, verbal presentation and that we have not yet
73 seen the final, written report. Although the recommendations could change, the Visiting
74 Committee enjoyed conversations, learned a lot, and appreciated the work that went into
75 developing the self-study which addressed three key issues: (1) governance, (2) inclusion, and (3)
76 convergence. The Report Out was positive and upbeat and the Visiting Committee was pleased by
77 the progress we have made. There were numerous recommendations and commendations that
78 presumably will be included in the final report. Regarding reference made by the Visiting
79 Committee to more academic expertise on the Board of Trustees, Zukoski stated that he does not
80 have additional information to share.

81 Noting that several cohorts of students have never been to campus, a Senator asked if there are
82 any university-wide efforts or expectations for schools to address students' return and
83 adjustment. Zukoski indicated that Student Affairs is working hard on these issues and that he will
84 pass on to them the need to consider the needs of *all* students. The Senator also asked if there is a
85 timeline or "drop dead date" that senior administration has set to make decisions and
86 announcements about the fall semester, assuming no other COVID surges or county closures.
87 Zukoski indicated that there will be a drop dead date only in the sense that students will register
88 and be placed in dorms. He went on to explain, however, that we will plan and use parameters to

89 guide our planning.

90 Another Senator posed several questions related to Ibram X. Kendi. He pointed out that Kendi, in
91 his book *'How to be an antiracist,'* states, "The only remedy to racist discrimination is antiracist
92 discrimination. The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy
93 to present discrimination is future discrimination." The Senator also pointed out that race is a
94 protected class and asked the Provost if he was in agreement with this position. Zukoski
95 responded that he was not going to take a stand one way or another on the quote presented by
96 the Senator. The Senator expressed curiosity about Kendi's payment. Zukoski indicated that he did
97 not know Kendi's fee, but that he understood the fee to be within the normal ranges of speaking
98 fees.

99 Adler shared that there were numerous questions about our finances and the budget. Zukoski
100 stated that there have been no changes to what he shared previously with the Senate in past
101 weeks, including the parameters for planning for the next academic year. He intends to provide an
102 update at the April Senate meeting.

103 In response to a question about whether the University will require students to be vaccinated in
104 the fall in order to visit campus, the Provost indicated that we are not for several reasons, the
105 most common being that all existing vaccines are under an emergency use protocol, that is, they
106 are experimental. We are, however, strongly encouraging everyone to get vaccinated. Those
107 wanting to come to campus will have to get the vaccine or actively decline getting the vaccine.

108 Regarding the University's decision to pause unmatched contributions to retirement, a Senator
109 noted that it was not clear if the decision applied to \$19,500 matching for faculty making more
110 than \$218,000 a year under Section 457B. The Senator also noted that the policy seems quite
111 regressive given that junior faculty are least able to make matching contributions and have the
112 longest time for those investments to compound. Zukoski replied that he did not know the answer
113 to the part of the question related to Section 457B and that he would try to get an answer. While
114 not contesting the statement about the regressive nature of the plan, Zukoski stated that this was
115 the plan that was chosen after being after being heavily debated, but that he could not remember
116 the precise reason for the decision. Adler suggested that the question was a fair one that deserved
117 an answer and proposed working with the Provost to follow up.

118 A Senator queried the Provost about whether anyone is thinking about lifting travel bans in the
119 near future. After noting the reasons for the travel ban (to save money and to promote safety),
120 Zukoski stated that he expects to see changes in the ban starting in July and that he looks forward
121 to being able to travel again.

122 Finally, on behalf of her School's Faculty Council, a Senator asked about the relationship of County
123 and USC going forward, and whether we are going to continue offering experiential learning for
124 students in health professions at County facilities. Zukoski asserted that the relationship with
125 County is not changing and that it is not necessary to find alternative experiential learning. There
126 are contractual issues, however, but those issues do not threaten our long-term commitment to
127 our partnership with the County and LAC. New medicine or psych faculty can still utilize County as
128 their practice site.

129 **Resolution to Change Senate Constitution's References to Part-time Faculty (2nd Reading)**

130 Adler moved to accept the Resolution to Change Senate Constitutions' References to Part-time
131 Faculty and provided background about the resolution. The Resolution aims to make that the
132 Senate Constitution consistent with the Faculty Handbook and to ensure that the concerns of
133 part-time faculty (part-time RTPC faculty and Adjuncts) are heard in our governance structures.

134 The resolution does not aim to impose a one-size-fits all structure on Faculty Councils in the
135 schools. Nor does the resolution aim to constrain how Faculty Councils choose to implement the
136 proposed change.

137 A Senator recommended that the record acknowledge the enormous variation across schools and
138 offered a friendly amendment to the resolution to emphasize that “each school’s Faculty Council
139 will determine how best to include part-time faculty in the School’s governance mechanisms.”
140 Other Senators presented concerns and questions; some spoke out against or in favor of the
141 resolution. A motion to table the vote failed.

142 ***Motion to table. Seconded and failed: 18 in favor, 26 opposed, and 0 abstentions.***

143 Without further discussion, the [amended resolution](#) was then voted on and passed.

144 ***Motion to approve the resolution with friendly amendment. Passed: 40 in favor, 5 opposed, and 2***
145 ***abstentions.***

146 **Presidential Working Group on Sustainability: Progress Report: Dan Mazmanian**

147 Profess Dan Mazmanian presented an [overview](#) of the work of the [Presidential Working Group on](#)
148 [Sustainability \(PWG\)](#), which he chairs. Last year Mazmanian presented the PWG’s
149 recommendations. This year, the PWG has focused on implementation of some of the major
150 recommendations and developing a multi-year implementation plan, referred to as the USC
151 Sustainability and Social Impacts – Equity and Justice – Plan 2028. Mazmanian and other PWG
152 colleagues will present a fuller progress report for discussion with Senators and other interested
153 faculty and on Wednesday April 14.

154 **Announcements and New Business**

155 Adler encouraged senators to email him with suggestions for new business and he made several
156 quick announcements.

157 **Adjournment**

158 Meeting was adjourned at 4:01 pm.

159

160 Respectfully submitted,

161 

162

163 Devon Brooks

164 Secretary General of the Academic Senate