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ACADEMIC SENATE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

4 Meeting of April 21, 2021

5 Virtual Meeting

6 2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

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

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18 **Absent:** M. Crowley, G. Giuliano, F. Liley, T. Wattenbarger

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20 **Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** A. Alfaro, P. Cannon, G. Condell, D.
21 Crombecque, E. Fife, R. Heinrich, C. Jones, J. Keim, M. Levine, R. MacKenzie, M. Matarić J.
22 McLaughlin Gray, L. Nieto, G. Painter, R. Parke, B. Shuster, R. Turner, 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. He apologized to Senator
27 Jim Moore because the last Senate Newsletter unintentionally mischaracterized Moore's question
28 to the Provost during the March Senate meeting. The official March minutes are more accurate.

29 **Approval of Minutes of March Senate Meeting**

30 Academic Senate Secretary General Brooks presented the March 2021 minutes for discussion and
31 approval.

32 ***Motion to approve the March minutes. Seconded and passed: 39 in favor, 0 opposed, and 3***
33 ***abstentions.***

34 **Provost Zukoski: Budget Update**

35 The Provost began his remarks by sharing good news. Numerous indicators suggest this was a
36 highly successful year in terms of teaching and applications for next year are strong. We had
37 70,000 freshmen applications for the fall, representing all states and 88 countries. Approximately
38 14% of admits are international, 20% will be the first in their family to attend college, and 72% will
39 be students of color.

40 Zukoski then provide important updates about our planning for the summer and fall. We will start
41 the 1st summer session mostly online and move into the 2nd summer session with as many in-
42 person activities as possible. Although the Administration is still figuring out testing policies, we

43 should expect to return in-person in the fall. Trojan Check will continue to be used to verify if
44 people are vaccinated or have positively declined. The University has not yet decided whether to
45 *require* vaccinations for the fall, given the legal and ethical implications for those not willing to be
46 vaccinated.

47 According to Zukoski, while USC remains a residential university for our undergraduates, in
48 considering graduate programs and how to help students who cannot return in person due to visa
49 or health reasons, on-line options may be appropriate. The choice of on-line versus in-person
50 teaching should be made through the curriculum committees within each school. In our in-person
51 classes, we should continue exploring how on-line resources can complement and enrich the in-
52 person experience.

53 Zukoski then reflected on the spring [Joint Provost/Senate Retreat](#) and how discussion from the
54 retreat might influence how the university moves forward. Topics included liberal education and
55 General Education courses; teaching effectiveness, including whether it is better to teach online or
56 in person; changing modes of certifications for degree and non-degree programs; and PhD
57 education, including the quality, quantity, and content of degrees, expected outcomes, and what
58 we are trying to accomplish as we think about the world we are in—a post-pandemic world,
59 where we address issues of social justice and sustainability. In thinking about what things might
60 look like when we return, we must consider our goals. We want to be recognized as the strongest
61 private research university on the west coast. We expect our students to be leaders, professionals,
62 and engaged citizens who will change the world. We also expect to change the world through
63 research and scholarship—through new ideas, technologies, therapies, narratives, and arts. We
64 will continue embracing LA, and to expand our partnerships to sustain a vibrant, sustainable, and
65 equitable culture and economy in our local community. As part of this process of thinking about
66 how to take the mission of USC as written 150 years ago and modernizing it for the 21st century,
67 Zukoski and President Folt are working with the deans to identify programming that might fall
68 between the cracks, as it is not discipline specific. This will require more coordination between
69 and among disciplines and schools.

70 To meet our expectations and the needs of our students and society, the Provost explained that
71 the University is going to invest resources, including money, time, and creativity. As a campus, we
72 have a large base. We are a \$6.5 billion dollar operation, \$3 billion of which is on the academic
73 side and the remaining is in the health system. We will end this year with an operating deficit that
74 is within the expected bounds, about \$170 - 200 million. That deficit would have been
75 considerably larger without the cost-saving and revenue-generating measures that were
76 implemented. For FY22, he anticipates pre-pandemic levels for student enrollments, auxiliaries,
77 and patient care, and thus for revenue. There will continue to be COVID related costs (e.g.,
78 testing) which we expect to decline over time. We expect to have a tight budget, but we are not
79 expecting an operational loss for next year. Merit pools have been approved and in January 2022
80 the university's contributions to retirement will be fully restored. Hiring will be limited, but there
81 will replacement hiring and hiring in priority areas.

82 Zukoski then discussed the Tyndall settlement, which along with the pandemic, impacts our
83 budget situation. He stated that the University believes the settlement is fair, equitable, and in
84 accordance with our principles. It is a large settlement, in part because of the number of women
85 and patients that were impacted. Money will be paid in August 2021 and in August 2022. The cost
86 of the settlement will be paid from five sources: (1) slowing capital expenditures; (2) selling
87 unused assets (e.g., fraternity buildings); (3) revenue in litigation reserves; (4) insurance returns
88 (which are substantial but will not cover the entire amount of the settlement); and (5) operational
89 improvements (i.e., increased revenue and decreased cost). Zukoski discussed the implications of

90 the settlement for our ambitions and our aspirations of continuing academic excellence. We will
91 slow capital expenditures, but we will have funds to renovate as needed, and there will be some
92 investment in new capital construction projects. Zukoski does not expect the settlement to
93 diminish the quality of USC education, research, and clinical care.

94 Before taking questions, the Provost offered a reminder about the forthcoming Wellness Day and
95 that there should be no classes, assignments, or tests. He asked faculty to be mindful that we are
96 using Wellness Days as a replacement for spring recess, which we eliminated to reduce risk and
97 stress.

98 **Questions for Provost Zukoski**

99 Before field questions from the floor, Adler expressed concern that the Senate has not done more
100 to encourage faculty to address student stress.

- 101 • A Senator asked about our plan for accommodating international and other students who may
102 be unable to return to campus in the fall. Zukoski indicated that a team is examining these
103 issues and guidance is forthcoming, although it will be specific to schools and dependent upon
104 faculty.
- 105 • Another Senator asked if members of central administration received bonuses this year. They
106 have, replied the Provost, when contractually obligated as part of compensation packages.
- 107 • On behalf of faculty who submitted questions ahead of time, Adler shared concerns about
108 McKinsey, including those related to the impact of our association with McKinsey on our
109 reputation; how much we are paying McKinsey; whether McKinsey is providing
110 recommendations to leadership about the future of our core mission; and the Strata
111 Consortium. Zukoski affirmed that McKinsey is not directing or giving advice on the core
112 mission of USC. Those decisions are made by President Folt, Zukoski, the deans, and faculty;
113 McKinsey provides potentially useful data and background material. There is an ongoing
114 conversation about all expenditures, including those associated with McKinsey and other
115 consultants. McKinsey convened and supports the Strata consortium, of which USC is a part.
116 Consisting of 30 to 40 colleges and universities, the consortium examines post-pandemic
117 higher education opportunities and best practices. A faculty guest pointed out that our faculty
118 have significant expertise in higher education issues and wondered why we do not rely more
119 on them. She also asked about McKinsey's scope of work and deliverables, and she expressed
120 concerns about alleged unethical and corrupt behavior. Zukoski pointed out advantages of
121 having external consultants like McKinsey (e.g., they can devote time undiluted by other
122 responsibilities, such as teaching and research, to answer specific questions). He further noted
123 that Administration does involve our faculty, whom he agrees have considerable expertise in
124 these areas. McKinsey's scope of work has evolved and the contracts are winding down.
- 125 • In response to questions about Varsity Blues, Zukoski stated that USC was a victim of illegal
126 activity and that substantial changes have been put into place to mitigate the chances that it
127 will be repeated, including how we recruit and accept student athletes. Outcomes of 33
128 student cases that were reviewed range from no violation to expulsion. The law firm
129 representing us in the government investigation has not produced a summary report, but
130 information on the issue, including root causes, is available on our change.usc.edu website.
131 More information on root causes is forthcoming.
- 132 • A final question was asked about consequences of not being vaccinated for those required by
133 USC to be vaccinated. Zukoski replied that we are still exploring the various issues involved, as
134 well as options and implications.

- 135 • Zukoski closed by acknowledging how difficult the semester has been, and by congratulating
136 and thanking Senators for all their good work and resiliency.

137 **Community Advisory Board Report: Professors Ange-Marie Hancock Alfaro and Erroll Southers**

138 The Community Advisory Board (CAB) was convened by President Folt in the summer of 2020 to
139 conduct a thorough examination of USC’s public safety practices, including hiring, finances,
140 accountability, and bias training. Professor Ange-Maria Hancock Alfaro, previewed
141 recommendations as part of the CAB’s co-design process. Hancock Alfaro provided an overview
142 and timeline of the CAB and co-design processes before describing the data that were reviewed
143 and what was heard from participants. In total, 8 pilot conversations were held with community
144 stakeholders, 11 co-design public safety sessions were held, and 659 people participated (a
145 quarter of whom were community members with no affiliation to USC). Two general
146 recommendations were previewed: (1) create a permanent USC DPS oversight institution and (2)
147 re-envision public safety. Also previewed were recommendations relating to and organized
148 around four pillars, including accountability, alternative armed response, community care, and
149 transparency. Hancock Alfaro then invited feedback from Senators before taking questions from
150 the floor. Those interested in attending or reviewing a CAB report presentation can contact
151 Alejandro Maldonado (armaldon@usc.edu) and those who would like to provide feedback can
152 email dpscab@usc.edu.

153 **Handbook Changes – 1st Reading**

154 Adler introduced for a 1st reading [a motion](#) to make changes to the University Faculty Handbook.
155 [Proposed changes](#) and a [guide to the changes](#) were prepared by the Handbook Committee and
156 distributed prior to the April Senate meeting. The proposed changes are non-substantive, aiming
157 to reorganize the text of chapters 1-5 and 9. Further changes will be needed to address the
158 outstanding substantive issues posed by outdated language in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. Adler
159 explained that there was some urgency to changing those chapters because our Handbook is not
160 consistent with either law or USC policy. While we are moving forward with the misconduct
161 review and Handbook revision, the legally mandated EEO-TIX policies and procedures currently in
162 place will govern protected class matters. New draft language for those chapters will come to the
163 Senate in the Fall. Handbook Committee co-chairs, Profs John Matsusaka and Alison Wilcox,
164 presented additional background before leading a short discussion about the proposed changes
165 and their rationales. A Senator recommended that we seek out legal advice from independent
166 counsel about issues addressed in chapters 6, 7, and 8. Adler encouraged Senators to share the
167 proposed changes with their colleagues, particularly those serving on their School’s Faculty
168 Council.

169 **Candidate Self-Introductions**

170 Senate Academic Vice President and Nominating Committee Chair Tambascia provided an
171 overview of the Senate election process and [ballot](#). The meeting concluded with brief self-
172 introductions from each of the candidates standing for election.

173 **Adjournment**

174 Meeting was adjourned at 4:11 pm.

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176 Respectfully submitted,

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Devon Brooks

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179 Devon Brooks

180 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

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