



Committee on Academic Senate History

Annual Report to the Senate, 2016/2017

Committee Membership: Dr. Robert V. Labaree, Chair, USC Libraries; Dr. Radha J. Sarma, Keck School of Medicine [retired]; Claude Zachary, University Archivist, USC Libraries

After Claude Zachary and Dr. Radha Sarma agreed to be re-appointed to the Committee, we met once each semester during the academic year. The issues and action items discussed during each meeting are described below.

The first meeting of the Committee on Academic Senate History was held on Friday, October 7th from 9:30am - 10:30am in the Von KleinSmid Center Library, Multimedia Room.

The following topics were discussed:

- The Committee reviewed the new Senate website to discern where archived documents are located or could be located. Currently, archived information is under the drop-down menu for Senators, listing past presidents from 1947 to the present and past senators from 2009-10. Information is also located under the drop-down menu under Meetings, listing meeting minutes from 2012-2013. There was then a discussion about how to integrate the scanned archives of meeting minutes and resolutions that Claude has been overseeing in the University Archives during the summer. This material is located on the USC Libraries' Digital Library Collections page [<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/collections>] and linked under the heading, "University of Southern California History Collection," "Academic Senate Records." There are currently 464 full-text, searchable records on the site. A list of missing documents will be identified and a call for copies of the documents will be sent to current and past Senators. A lack of staff in the USC Libraries Special Collections department has hindered some of the work but student assistants from the Senate have helped with the scanning and loading of documents. Claude noted that he is waiting for Connie to download recent Senate documents that she has on her computer so they can be added to the Digital Library page. It was decided that the Committee's recommendation would be to perhaps have a link to archived materials under the Resources drop-down menu where all older materials [past presidents, past Senators, committee reports, etc.] could be consolidated and a link to the Digital Library Senate archives could be provided to take people to archived meeting minutes and resolutions. Radha pointed out that it would be nice to have pictures accompany the list of Presidents and Senators, although this would require digging through the University Archives to locate appropriate pictures of past presidents. It was also noted that additional documents from the Senate President binders, such as, white papers, reports, and bylaws could eventually be added to the Digital Library. Here again, though, short staffing in the Libraries' Special Collections department would require staffing assistance from the Senate and long-term planning. It was agreed that this would be a worthy goal, though.

- Robert reported that he will try to finish his draft blog that discusses the need for Faculty Councils throughout the university to have a formal records retention plan in order to retain and preserve the local history of governance on campus. The Committee hopes that, as more blogs are added over time, the site can be organized around the contributions of individuals, committees, or topics [e.g., a blog entry from a committee chair about an issue they are addressing]. In the meantime, we agreed that the general topics remain the same: Robert will write about the need for a localized record retention and document preservation plan; Claude will discuss the types of materials that are important to retain and the need to transfer materials to the University Archives; and, Radha will discuss the process for records retention from the perspective of serving on the Keck School of Medicine Faculty Council. Robert pointed out the need to formalize records retention well beyond that which is stated in the university's records management policy.
- Robert announced that he conducted a very informative and candid interview with Dr. Ken Servis over the summer [July 29th] as part of the Past President Oral History Project . However, the tape recorded failed to capture the interview so the interview will have to be rescheduled. To avoid this issue in the future, particularly since scheduling a day and time to meet can be difficult, Robert bought an Olympus digital recorder. Robert stated that rather than adhere strictly to pursuing interviews with the oldest past presidents first, he is going to contact existing Senate presidents who are on-campus [of which there are currently eighteen] to schedule interviews. The interviews will be downloaded onto Claude's office workstation for transfer and storage to the University Archives. We agreed that these oral histories could be eventually integrated into the Digital Library's Senate archives site. There are audio files included with the Viterbi Collection.
- Robert proposed that the Committee take the lead in exploring the possibility of promoting an exhibit for next year that marks the 70th anniversary of formal academic governance at USC [1947-2017]. There is a variety of materials from the University Archives that could be used. However, Claude suggested that we post-pone this project until the 75th anniversary because all of the display spaces in the Doheny Library [where we agreed such an exhibit could reside and be viewed by the greatest number of people] has already been claimed for the 2017/18 academic year. Postponing until the 75th anniversary would also provide more time to consider what to do. Along with an exhibit, there could a panel discussion among past presidents or other programming that would not only celebrate the anniversary, but it could help publicize governance and cooperative decision-making at USC. Anything that is done should also involve and draw from the various faculty councils of the schools and the University Archives. The Committee agreed to wait but also agreed that thinking about what to do for the 75th anniversary can begin now.

The second meeting of the Committee on Academic Senate History was held on Tuesday, April 11th from 10:00am - 11:00am in the Von KleinSmid Center Library, Multimedia Room.

The following topics were discussed:

- Claude stated that he is still waiting to receive files from Connie to transfer into the University Archives. The delay is due to Connie needing to review all of the document files and removing confidential items. Claude said that he was not sure when Connie will have completed redacting individual items, but he assumes that it will be sometime this summer.

- Claude confirmed that all resolutions and meeting minutes from the University Archives presidential binders have been successfully scanned and placed on the Academic Senate archives site under University of Southern California History Collection in the Digital Library [<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/collections>]. The next stage of archiving will focus on inventorying the contents to identify missing items. Once these missing items have been identified, faculty members on the Senate will be asked if they could provide a copy of the missing document(s) to the University Archives so that it can be scanned and uploaded. The Committee will seek clean copies of documents [i.e., without any marks], but it was agreed the most important thing would be to acquire the missing document even if it has notes or other markings on them. The acquisition of missing resolutions and meeting minutes will focus on those produced prior to 2000. Further discussion again centered around eventually expanding the scope of digitizing materials to include supporting documents, handouts, and reports distributed during the monthly meetings. Robert noted that placing these items on to the Digital Library website carries the added advantage of making the contents of these items searchable by keyword. Robert also noted that once an item or sets of items are identified as missing, we can begin soliciting copies immediately. This is particularly important for acquiring materials from the missing Sol Golomb and Robert Kaplan presidential binders.
- On December 6th, Robert had submitted a blog entry to be placed on the Senate webpage that described the need for faculty councils to create a formal records retention policy and procedures around academic governance as well as to take ownership over ensuring records retention within their school. Robert had not heard back for some time, so he contacted Mike Lee last month regarding the status of the blog entry. In response, Mike recommended making a presentation on this at a Senate meeting instead. Robert drafted the PowerPoint slides and shared them with Radha and Claude. Robert announced that his presentation is on the May 10th Senate meeting agenda. It is assumed the presentation will be loaded onto the Senate web page, perhaps with an accompanying blog. Radha noted that, besides ensuring that the school-specific [local] history of governance at USC is archived, the preservation of Faculty Council and committee work in academic units is important in facilitating collaboration and sharing of information among units over issues common across the campus, but that may not be addressed by the Academic Senate.
- The plan is to identify and interview former faculty presidents this summer when there is presumably more time to do so. Ultimately [and if they give their consent], the interviews will be loaded on the Digital Library Academic Senate archives site. Frustratingly, there is little time to schedule and coordinate the oral history interviews during the Fall and Spring semesters but, as was the case last year, hopefully the summer affords more time to do this.
- To keep everyone informed about requests for information made to Robert as Senate Historian, he summarized a request made in February by Jeff Chisum, President of the Dornsife Faculty Council and Chair of the Senate's RTPC Faculty Affairs Committee. Jeff had requested if Robert knew of any historical Senate resolutions or other documents that represented a case of tenured members of the Senate voting to change the tenure system or if there were any documents to show when the senior administration had made changes to the tenure system without approval from the Senate. Robert noted that the only items he could find related to changes in faculty rank and tenure was during the 1975/76 academic year when there was a lot of discussion around identifying "specialized professorate" designations while, at the same time, reaffirming the principle of tenure at the university. No other formal requests for information were directed to the Committee.

- In the spirit our Committee's mission to help ensure access to information, Robert reported on a feasibility study conducted by three members of the library faculty. They are pursuing a grant funded project to promote campus-wide use of open educational resources to help ameliorate the rising cost of textbooks and its impact on our student's financial well-being. Robert noted that faculty who substitute open access scholarship for commercial course materials are also expected to contribute their own materials to these non-profit open education clearinghouses; this is how content is built within these sites. The faculty group researching this issue met with the Academic Senate Executive Board on Wednesday, April 26th to discuss the project and obtain feedback on how to encourage use of open educational resources for selected courses at USC.

Respectfully submitted,
April 27, 2017