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2 **ACADEMIC SENATE**
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4 **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

5 Special Meeting of the Academic Senate

6 May 23, 2018

7 GER 230

8 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
9

10 **Present:** S. Ahmadi, J. Ailshire (alternate for S. Curran), S. Altman, J. Armour, S. Asgharzadeh, Y. Bar-
11 Cohen, S. Bucher, P. Cannon, D. Crombeque, S. Dincer (alternate for J. Son), E. Fife, K. Finney, L. Grazzette,
12 E. Grossman (alternate for S. Little), S. Gruskin, E. Horowitz, R. Jubran, A. Justice, J. Kagan, R. Labaree,
13 M. Lee, J. McLaughlin Gray (alternate for C. Resnik), P.T. McNiff, E. Pacifici, G. Painter, J. Parr,
14 D. Pecchenino, M. Polikoff, R. Randhawa, P. Rosenbloom, S. Shroyer, T. Tambascia, T. Tucker, A. Uyeshiro,
15 E. Warford, G. Zada

16 **Absent:** M. Apostolos, L. Bahn, D. Brooks, R. Broyer, L. Castaneda, P. Chang, S. Daneshmand, R. Davila,
17 M. Frey, A. Goldkorn, N. Hollyn, J. Israel, G. Polidori, J. Sapkin, K. Servis, J. Steele, A. Wilcox
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19 **AGENDA**
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21 Paul Rosenbloom, Academic Senate President, called the meeting to order at 3:51pm.
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23 Professor Rosenbloom noted that the purpose of this special meeting was to discuss the situation
24 regarding Dr. Tyndall, to consider a broader question about the leadership of the university, and
25 to have open discussion on related topics. The meeting followed immediately after a Town Hall
26 meeting that the Senate had instigated to hear faculty concerns. Earlier, the Senate had also met
27 with President Nikias and members of his cabinet, and had heard from the Office of Equity and
28 Diversity about the investigation into Dr. Tyndall.
29

30 **Discussion regarding President C.L. Max Nikias and Senior Leadership**

31 The discussion began with the question of whether the Senate should vote on whether it has no-
32 confidence in President Nikias to continue as USC's President, and if so, whether that vote should
33 be taken at this meeting or later after senators will have had more time to discuss this issue with
34 their faculty.
35

36 Senators reported on feedback from their faculty councils. The Rossier, Gould, and Gerontology
37 school councils have voted no confidence in President Nikias, or requested his resignation. It was
38 mentioned that the Keck faculty council appeared mixed, but had not yet formally voted. Other
39 schools reported that they are in the process of voting, or are still soliciting feedback, or have not
40 yet had a chance to consult their faculty.
41

42 Senators reflected on the differing voices and opinions they had heard. Several Senators
43 expressed concern that President Nikias has not sufficiently engaged with faculty, that his
44 administration has lacked transparency, and that this has contributed to a lack of trust in the
45 President. Several Senators expressed that President Nikias may not be the person that can lead
46 the change that is needed at the university.
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48 A discussion was also held about leadership by the Provost, with the general consensus being
49 support for Provost Quick, and recognition that he communicated with faculty and was trying to
50 make a difference.

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Discussion regarding Senators voting on behalf of Faculty

A discussion was had regarding the role and responsibility of senators in voting on Senate resolutions. Some senators expressed concern that they had not yet had a chance to fully receive feedback from their faculty councils or their school’s faculty, which would allow them to make a more representative decision. Other senators reported that they had consulted their faculty and that their faculty councils had already taken a vote of no confidence in President Nikias. Others noted that the senators present at this meeting had been present at both the earlier meeting with President Nikias and the Town Hall, and were listening to today’s discussion, so that they were able to weigh the issues and then vote as representatives of their schools.

Discussion regarding the scope of a resolution

A discussion took place regarding the content of a resolution to be voted on: whether it should only call for the possible resignation of/no confidence in President Nikias, or should also contain other statements. It was concluded that the resolution should focus on the question of President Nikias’ resignation, with other topics to be addressed later.

Vote on timing for when the Senate should hold a vote on the resolution

Several senators expressed concern about voting today, stating that they preferred to get more feedback from their faculty before voting. Others felt that waiting until Friday would merely delay necessary action, and that a vote would be most appropriate today.

A vote was taken to determine when the Senate should vote on a resolution concerning a call for President Nikias’ resignation. The specific question was “Should we vote on a resolution today?”

16 in favor; 12 opposed; 0 abstentions.

Accordingly, the vote will be held today.

Vote on the resolution to call for the resignation of President C.L. Nikias

“We the Academic Senate, as the elected body of the Faculty of the University of Southern California, believe that new leadership is in the best interest of the University now and going forward. Therefore, we call on President Max Nikias to resign.”

[Correction: President Nikias’ name was corrected to President C. L. Max Nikias in the resolution after the meeting.]

Morgan Polikoff moved to approve the resolution; Scott Altman seconded; 24 in favor; 0 opposed; 4 abstentions.

During the voting process, an unauthorized visitor (a reporter from the LA Times) was identified and asked to leave the room, as the Senate was in executive session at the time.

Link to final resolution:

https://academicsenate.usc.edu/files/2018/05/Resolution-17_18_03_-call-for-Resignation.pdf

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 5:13 pm.

100 Respectfully submitted,

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103

104 Mike S. Lee

105 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike S. Lee", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

DRAFT