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To the Provost's Office:

Based on questions received regarding our report, we'd like to take this opportunity to clarify a few of the most pressing requests our committee has identified this year:

First, we ask that all schools and academic units are brought into compliance with Provost Quick's 2017 memo regarding the awarding of multi-year contracts for Associate, and Full Professors, and the creation and implementation of the RTPC Professor of Distinction line. A reaffirmation of this policy by the current administration, and full incorporation into USC's revamped central HR department's communication and expectations of school policies, would go a long way toward addressing the inequities our report has highlighted.

Second, we ask that the de facto policy of awarding a pay raise tied to successful promotion be made explicit and documented. Our committee feels this would clearly serve the university's stated values of accountability, equity, and merit, and circumvents the very real possibility of favoritism, cronyism, and other forms of systemic inequity. We have discovered that, in leaving this decision in the hands of deans, and having no record of it in the promotion letter, there are too many instances where no recourse is given for faculty who are awarded a new title, but given no additional remuneration for their acknowledged, meritorious work. If, for some reason, an exception needs to be made (e.g. due to budget freeze related to the financial effects of COVID-19), this should be flagged for the faculty going up for promotion ahead of time, rather than revealed after the fact, and a sentence acknowledging the exception should be included in the appointment letter documenting the occurrence and thus allowing faculty an opportunity to appeal the decision based on clearly defined policy.

Finally, we found in this inquiry that the diversity of titles and tracks across Schools could, intentionally or not, create barriers and dead ends on the route to promotion for some RTPC faculty when compared to others. We ask that the Provost join with the Senate in requesting data on titles used for RTPC faculty within Schools, years at USC for RTPC faculty, years at rank, and reasonings for use of specific titles. This is a topic rich for study and review, and we believe a request with the power of the Provost behind it will help efficiently secure the data needed to review how titling differs across Schools, what each School's needs are in regards to titling for RTPC faculty, and whether there are any undue barriers to promotion that some title and track diversity may foster.

We are grateful for your time and attention.

RTPC Faculty Affairs Committee