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2 **ACADEMIC SENATE**

3 **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

4 Meeting of May 12, 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, B. Belcher  
8 M. Bodie, D. Brooks, R. Brown, S. Bucher, A. Cannon, P. Cardon, K. Carlson, B. Carrington,  
9 R. Cislowski, J. Clements, C. Clerc, E. Collins, M. Crowley, G. Davison, J. Dopheide, L. Ferguson,  
10 R. Filback, G. Giuliano, L. Gross, S. Gruskin, A. Imre, J. Israel, M. Jacobson (alternate for M.  
11 Mather), J. Kirschner, R. Labaree, R. Lonergan, T. Mayfield, P.T. McNiff, A. Motamed, J. Moore  
12 C. Neuman, J. Nyquist, D. O'Leary, N. Olmos, S. Payne, D. Pecchenino, G. Polidori, M. Press,  
13 A. Rechenmacher, C. Resnik, V. Rindova, B. Salhia, A. Sanchez, T. Sandmeier, T. Tambascia,  
14 T. Tucker, A. Uyeshiro Simon, A. Van Speybroeck, L. Vest (alternate for T. Kobza), J. Walker,  
15 E. Warford, R. Watanabe (alternate for M. Karp), R. Wood, G. Zada, E. Zeamer

16  
17 **Absent:** G. Kung, F. Liley, T. Ton, T. Wattenbarger

18  
19 **Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** M. Chodorowska-Pilch, E. Fife, C. Finch,  
20 C. Folt, S. Helfter, J. Keim, B.-S. Kim, M. Levine, R. MacKenzie, M. Matarić, J. McLaughlin Gray,  
21 T. Mueller, L. Nieto, R. Pak, R. Parke, A. Rutkowski, B. Shuster, S. Simon, R. Turner, N. Warren,  
22 C. Young, C. Zukoski

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24  
25 **AGENDA**

26 **Call to Order**

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

28 **Approval of Minutes of April Senate Meeting**

29 Academic Senate Secretary General Brooks presented the April 2021 minutes for discussion and  
30 approval. A Senator suggested one edit to line 40 of the minutes (involving incorrect tense).

31 ***Motion to approve the edited April minutes. Seconded and passed: 35 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2***  
32 ***abstentions.***

33 **Results of EB Election**

34 Academic Senate Vice President Tracy Tambascia thanked all faculty who stood for election to the  
35 Executive Board and presented winners of the election: Daniel Pecchenino (Academic Vice  
36 President); Alisa Sanchez (Administrative Vice President); and Ben Carrington, Sofia Gruskin, Elisa  
37 Warford, and Gabriel Zada (Members-at-Large). She reminded attendees that she will serve as  
38 President, Paul Adler will serve as Immediate Past President, and Devon Brooks will continue  
39 serving as Secretary General. Tambascia also shared information about voting representation by  
40 school/unit and faculty track, noting that school and faculty type representation are similar to the  
41 representation in the two previous elections.

42 **President Folt Presentation**

43 Adler handed the floor to President Folt who added her congratulations to new members of the  
44 Executive Board and to those stepping into faculty leadership roles. She reflected on the past year  
45 and discussed the “deep dive” undertaken by senior leadership into the root cause analysis of the  
46 previous problems in the university. Folt noted that a website called [change.usc.edu](http://change.usc.edu) contains  
47 more than 600 pages of information about the problems experienced by the university and  
48 solutions. For example, it contains the Office of Civil Rights’ (OCR) findings letter, our resolution  
49 agreement, summaries of data we are required to collect, Cleary data, detailed FAQs about Varsity  
50 Blues and admissions, and our agreement with UC San Diego. Our re-accreditation report and  
51 response to the visit will also be posted on the website. Folt then offered her opinions about three  
52 main root causes: (1) not having the right governance structures in place to ensure accountability  
53 at all levels of the organization from the Board of Trustees on down; (2) inadequate investment in  
54 critical infrastructure, including IT data management systems and cyber security; and (3)  
55 inattention to the cultural gaps between our values—what we said about ourselves and what we  
56 were actually doing. Folt discussed best practices and changes made in response to each of the  
57 main root causes, including those pertaining to the Board of Trustees, compensation of senior  
58 leadership, appointment and re-appointment of deans, advisory boards, governance of the health  
59 system board for Keck Medicine, changes in HR structure, complaint processes, IT systems,  
60 student health and wellness, culture, and DEI.

#### 61 **Questions for President Folt**

62 Folt responded to questions from the floor. A Senator asked Folt if she was aware of any  
63 deliberations to include faculty on the Board of Trustees. Folt does not see the Board putting on  
64 voting members of the faculty but noted efforts to bring faculty voices into meetings of the Board,  
65 which she strongly supports. Two Executive Board members expressed concerns about faculty  
66 serving as ‘observers’ and wondered whether it makes sense for them to serve instead as ex-  
67 officio members. Folt agreed before thanking senators for their patience and expressing her  
68 appreciation for all the work they have done.

#### 69 **Provost Zukoski**

70 Provost Zukoski began his remarks by congratulating faculty and senators for all they have done  
71 this year. He discussed issues related to vaccinations, class teaching modalities, and fall Restart  
72 planning. The administration expects a safe return to a normal range of on-campus activities in the  
73 fall. To achieve this, we will require faculty, students, and staff to be vaccinated. If someone is not  
74 vaccinated by declination, they will be tested twice weekly. Zukoski expects classes to be close to  
75 full density and noted that we will require masks and face shields in accordance with Los Angeles  
76 Department of Public Health guidance. He reported that we have assessed every building and  
77 classroom, made updates where necessary, and are confident about the safety of the teaching  
78 environment when we return to campus. Students who request continued virtual instruction due  
79 to health conditions can be accommodated by our disability services programs, as is appropriate.  
80 Faculty and staff will be accommodated by their deans of faculty or through their HR partners.  
81 Although the administration expects in-person attendance in the fall, Zukoski encouraged  
82 continued creativity in developing and delivering courses. There will be two first year classes—the  
83 rising second year students and true first year students who are coming in.

84 Zukoski discussed the financial outlook of the university. Largely because of COVID and the Tyndall  
85 settlement, we will end the year with an operational deficit, though we have reserves to cover the  
86 deficit. Despite the deficit, we will pursue key university priorities, including sustainability, DEI,  
87 collaboration, some construction, and a series of other initiatives. Zukoski stated that we expect to  
88 continue being “the strongest private university on the west coast... the university forever in and  
89 of the city of Los Angeles and we will strengthen our global presence.” He reported that President

90 Folt asked him and Steve Shapiro, incoming Vice President for Health Affairs, to work with the  
91 schools on expanding and supporting new teaching methodologies, including online, virtual, and  
92 augmented reality; expanded credentials; increasing our global engagement; launching our Cancer  
93 Moonshot and computation in AI projects; promoting and rewarding interdisciplinary and  
94 interschool collaboration; and developing a five year plan for the infrastructure needed to expand  
95 our research and creative expression. Investments will be made to advance these priorities.  
96 Zukoski will ask each academic unit to develop plans for understanding the future of their  
97 disciplines and to imagine how and what they will teach going forward, and what sort of research  
98 programs they wish to build. He would like us to think about the definition of excellence we wish  
99 to use and how excellence of our programs can be measured by the impact of our work in a  
100 discipline or in society. He also encouraged us to establish lofty aspirations.

### 101 **Questions for Provost Zukoski**

102 Following his remarks, Zukoski answered questions from the floor. A Senator asked for additional  
103 details on how faculty with health concerns will be accommodated in the fall by their deans.  
104 Zukoski encouraged faculty to turn to deans of faculty or HR professionals to learn about  
105 accommodations that might be possible. Another Senator asked the Provost to speak about  
106 involvement of faculty, staff, and students in upcoming dean searches. Zukoski described ways  
107 that faculty, staff, and students participate in dean searches. In response to a question about  
108 diversity hiring, Zukoski discussed the \$50 million pool established by the previous provost to  
109 support diversity hiring. He and President Folt are exploring ways to expand opportunities to help  
110 schools higher in diverse ways.

### 111 **Senate Awards**

112 Robert Labaree, member of the Senate Awards Committee, announced award winners: Ashley  
113 Uyeshiro Simon and Nick Stoubis received the Distinguished Faculty Service Award, and Jody  
114 Armour received the Walter Wolf Award for Defense of Academic Freedom and Faculty Rights.  
115 Labaree encouraged senators to attend the award ceremony immediately following the Senate  
116 meeting.

117 Tambascia presented Paul Adler a plaque in honor of his outstanding leadership, intellectual  
118 integrity, innovation, and dedicated service as president of the faculty, 2020-2021.

### 119 **Resolution Faculty Handbook: 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Vote**

120 Adler introduced for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, a resolution to the Faculty Handbook. Academic Senate  
121 Secretary General Brooks opened the floor for a vote on the resolution.

122 ***Motion to amend the Faculty Handbook. Passed: 44 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.***

### 123 **State of the Senate Report**

124 Adler provided a State of the Senate Report, intended to provide Senators his impressions on  
125 where we stand as an Academic Senate. He began by indicating his main priority for the year: to  
126 strengthen shared governance. He believes we made modest progress in this area. Adler  
127 explained how he sees the basic challenges of shared governance, reviewed a few of the big  
128 agenda items tackled by the Senate, and offered a few words about the work ahead. Regarding  
129 challenges, our goals as a faculty and as a Senate require us to integrate two sets of interests—  
130 those that are specific to the Senate and those that are shared with administration. Achieving this  
131 integration is complicated by the fact that faculty are dependent upon their income from USC and  
132 far more dependent on USC than USC as an institution is dependent on any particular member of  
133 the faculty. So there is a tension between financial needs of the faculty and the financial priorities

134 of the institution. The absence of public funding, Adler suggested, leaves USC competing for  
135 students and their fees, as well as for other sources of revenue. He believes this creates pressure  
136 on faculty salaries and for the university to use resources in ways that sometimes undermine our  
137 shared mission and that tempt senior leaders to defensively protect the university's reputation  
138 rather than expand transparency and accountability. In this context, shared governance means  
139 looking for ways to advance both sets of interests. This is challenging by nature and made more  
140 challenging by three factors: most faculty and students are dispersed across 22 very independent  
141 schools, resulting in lots of different types of education and research aspirations and processes;  
142 other stakeholders' interests need to be considered and sometimes those interests do not always  
143 align with ours; and as the university has grown, so too has its administrative and support  
144 functions, overshadowing the academic core.

145 Next, Adler discussed shared governance strengths and weaknesses, and achievements made over  
146 the year. He believes the administration heard our voices and that we made progress on some  
147 issues (e.g., revisions to the constitution, representation on important issues and committees), but  
148 that we failed in a couple of key respects (e.g., there was a pause in merit pay, we did not avoid  
149 staff layoffs, lack of faculty involvement by deans in COVID and budget planning). Adler lamented  
150 the persistent tone of distrust that he believes characterized conversations with and about senior  
151 administration. This distrust, he suggested, is corrosive.

152 Looking forward, Adler sees 5 big challenges that we face in the Senate and in shared governance:  
153 (1) the changing context of higher education, (2) development and deployment of research  
154 capabilities, (3) expansion of patient care, (4) growing administrative infrastructure, and (5)  
155 economics of education in private universities. He closed by acknowledging and thanking those  
156 involved in faculty leadership and governance this past year.

157 **Adjournment**

158 Meeting was adjourned at 3:59 pm.

159

160 Respectfully submitted,

161



162

163 Devon Brooks

164 Secretary General of the Academic Senate