

1
2
3

ACADEMIC SENATE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

4 Emergency Meeting of August 11, 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,
8 C. Beckman, B. Belcher, M. Bodie, D. Brooks, A. Campbell, A. Cannon, P. Cardon, B. Carrington,
9 J. Clements, D. Cole, E. Collins, L. Ferguson, E. Fife (alternate for A. Rechenmacher), L. Gale,
10 S. Gruskin, S. Gupta, A. Imre, J. Israel, G. Keating (alternate for L. Klerman), J. Kickul, T. Kobza, G.
11 Kung, R. Labaree, F. Liley, K. Lincoln, A. Mackay (alternate for J. Dopheide), J. Matsusaka,
12 T. Mayfield, J. McLaughlin Gray (alternate for C. Resnik), D. Milstein, J. Moore, A. Motamed,
13 J. Nyquist, J. Parr, A. Parra, S. Payne, M. Press, D. Pecchenino, N. Rajagopalan, G. Ragusa,
14 B. Salhia, A. Sanchez, T. Sandmeier, T. Tambascia, M. Townsend, A. Uyeshiro Simon, A. Van
15 Speybroeck, J. Walker, E. Warford, K. Wilber (alternate for C. Finch), C. Young, G. Zada, E.
16 Zeamer, S. Zweig

17
18 **Absent:** M. Crowley, L. Gross, R. Wood

19
20 **Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** G. Davison, L. Gale, S. Gibson,
21 M. Levine, R. Lonergan, S. Narayanan, C. Neuman, A. Rutkowski, B. Shuster, M. Townsend,
22 O. Trujillo, L. Vest, C. Zukoski

23
24

AGENDA

25 **Call to Order**

26 Academic Senate President Tambascia called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

27 **Establishing Quorum**

28 Academic Senate Secretary General Brooks established that a quorum had been met for the
29 emergency meeting.

30 **Approval of Minutes from the Emergency Meeting on August 4**

31 Tambascia presented the August 4 Emergency Meeting minutes for discussion and approval.

32 ***Motion to approve the August 4 minutes. Seconded and passed: 37 in favor, 0 opposed, and 3***
33 ***abstentions.***

34 **Re-Introduction of Faculty Handbook Resolution #21-22-01, Second Reading, and Continued**
35 **Discussion**

36 Tambascia re-introduced [Faculty Handbook Resolution #21-22-01](#) for continued discussion. The
37 resolution involves the addition of new Faculty Handbook language pertaining to EEO-TIX 2020
38 policies. A Senator expressed concern about proposed changes in wording that would exist until
39 new wording is created. He suggested sunseting the proposed changes by specifying a deadline in
40 the Faculty Handbook, after which the changes would expire. Discussion and debate of the
41 suggestion and other issues ensued amongst Senators and invited guests. Tambascia suggested

42 amending the resolution by adding a sunset clause or date to the resolution rather than to the
43 Handbook. Finding no agreement on amending the resolution, Tambascia called for the vote. She
44 also asked that the minutes reflect the discussion had amongst Senators about holding ourselves
45 responsible for updating Chapters 6, 7, and 8 in the Faculty Handbook and engaging as a Senate
46 and as faculty with Catherine Spear in the annual review process to provide feedback, clarify, and
47 discuss the important points raised during discussion of the resolution.

48 **Vote on the Resolution**

49 Brooks opened the floor for a vote on the resolution.

50 ***Motion to amend the Faculty Handbook. Seconded and passed: 35 in favor, 3 opposed, and 8***
51 ***abstentions.***

52 **Provost Zukoski: Update on Restart**

53 Provost Zukoski thanked Senators for being present and for the important work done during the
54 August 4 and 11 Emergency Senate meetings. He then provided an update on Project Restart.

- 55 • 44,000 students and 4,000 faculty and staff will be coming to campus over the next week and
56 a half. This drove the decision for administration to call for “all hands on deck” two weeks
57 prior. Administration felt it was imperative that we all return for the first month in order to
58 determine what services and supports are needed by students and faculty as we achieve our
59 in-person academic mission.
- 60 • Going forward, Zukoski expects the lessons learned during the pandemic about remote work
61 will be examined by administration and allow administration to figure out how to do a
62 substantial amount of work remotely. This will be determined through an evaluation process
63 that will be undertaken after the first month of the semester.
- 64 • Zukoski stated that the university has put in an enormous amount of effort to create a safe
65 environment, one that is compliant with county, state, and federal guidelines. He reminded
66 Senators about a webinar taking place the following day to discuss health and safety measures
67 put into place by the university.
- 68 • Faculty, students, and staff are required to be vaccinated or to get an exemption for medical
69 or religious reasons. Less than 1% of faculty, 4% of undergraduate students, and about 5% of
70 staff have an exemption for religious or medical reasons. About 91% of faculty, 93% of
71 postdocs, and 94% of staff are vaccinated; over 90% of undergraduate students are compliant
72 with our vaccine policy. The university is serious about enforcing vaccine protocols. They have
73 contacted those who are non-compliant and will continue contacting them. Sanctions for non-
74 compliance are significant. Registration holds have been placed on about 3,000 students who
75 are non-compliant. Faculty and staff who are non-compliant as of August 16 will be prohibited
76 from entering campus and are at risk of disciplinary action, including unpaid leave of absence
77 and termination. Administration has created subcommittees to review faculty and staff cases
78 and to determine sanctions.
- 79 • On campus, masks will continue to be required indoors and at large outdoor events. Faculty
80 can wear clear, transparent facial covering or regular masks, and microphones if needed. We
81 are reestablishing Trojan Check access points and instituting regular testing for students
82 regardless of vaccination status, and for onsite faculty and staff who are unvaccinated.
- 83 • Outdoor canopies are being set up across campus to help de-densify buildings and to provide
84 students with more study spaces. New and stringent cleaning measures have been instituted
85 for all classrooms and offices. Each classroom and indoor space meets new, heightened air
86 quality standards, and there have been tremendous efforts across campus to ensure that
87 airflow meets the appropriate safety standards.

- 88 • Faculty are in control of their classrooms. Students must wear masks in classrooms until we
89 come out of the surge and the public health order requiring masks has been lifted. Faculty can
90 tell students that they must wear masks. Students who do not wear masks are violating
91 university policy, which is a health and safety matter. Willful defiance of this manner is
92 considered disruptive classroom behavior and a violation of our policies. Faculty can tell
93 students engaging in such behavior to leave their classes and if they do not, faculty can end
94 class. Students engaging in disruptive classroom behavior will then be sanctioned and go
95 through the SJACS process.
- 96 • When students return, we can expect an uptick of COVID cases because of the Delta variant.
97 We have increased our ability to isolate students in the USC Hotel where a substantial number
98 of beds have been set aside. There may be an unusual number of students who are ill and
99 unable to attend class. The university will not require sick notes. Zukoski encourages all faculty
100 to ensure continuity of education for students and to be flexible in how they approach
101 classroom attendance. The university is not asking for high-flex or streaming of classes,
102 however.
- 103 • Those who feel sick should not come to work or class; they should stay home and if their
104 symptoms are COVID-like, they should be tested. Zukoski reminded Senators that the USC
105 Office of Institutional Accessibility has a dedicated team and will continue working with faculty
106 and staff who have needs for ADA accommodations.
- 107 • Zukoski closed by stating that the university is re-emerging and that we all need patience and
108 flexibility. He suggested that we must learn to be flexible and work in a new environment that
109 contains this transmissible disease. At the same time, we are a residential university and our
110 students are enormously excited about coming back to campus, in-person.

111 In response to a question from a Senator about health and safety protocols of cleaning staff
112 contracted by the university, the Provost maintained that such staff are vaccinated and required
113 to comply with the same protocols as everyone else on campus. He encouraged those with
114 concerns about cleanliness of classrooms or offices, or compliance with cleaning protocols, to
115 speak with managers in their departments/schools. A Senator asked what faculty should expect if
116 they defy directives to return to campus. Those faculty, Zukoski indicated, would be referred for
117 disciplinary action, such as leave without pay and movement towards termination. Teaching
118 modalities, including remote teaching policies and protocols, should be determined through
119 curriculum committees at the school/departmental level, not at the individual level. Another
120 Senator inquired about the nature of accommodations for students who cannot attend class in-
121 person. The Senator was especially interested in whether faculty are expected to provide
122 particular types of online or remote experiences, such as asynchronous content or recorded
123 lectures. Zukoski indicated that the university expects continuity of education and is not
124 mandating particular types of accommodations. He pointed out again that we are a residential
125 campus and much of the education that is offered comes from that residential experience, and
126 that in-person attendance is expected. A Senator sought clarification on whether faculty in her
127 school (Kaufman) are required to be tested weekly and asked on the record if it would be OK to
128 request special classroom/space accommodations. The Provost indicated that weekly testing of
129 faculty might be required in some instances, but that he would need to explore the matters
130 further. Finally, a Senator expressed concerns about data suggesting that vaccinated faculty and
131 students can catch and spread the Delta variant, and take it home to their unvaccinated children
132 and older family members. Zukoski assured the Senator that the administration has been talking in
133 depth about such concerns and encouraged the Senator to attend the forthcoming webinar where
134 others with more expertise than him can address risk.

135
136 **Adjournment**

137 Tambascia thanked the Provost and encouraged faculty to attend the webinar he mentioned. She
138 thanked Senators and adjourned the meeting at 3:36 pm.

139

140 Respectfully submitted,

141

142

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Devon Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' and a stylized 'B'.

143 Devon Brooks

144 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

DRAFT