

1
2 **ACADEMIC SENATE**

3 **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

4 January 19, 2022

5 Virtual Meeting

6 2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

7 **Present (Senate Members):** P. Adler, D. Armstrong, M. Apostolos, J. Baker, D. Becker, C. Beckman,
8 M. Bodie, D. Brooks, A. Campbell, P. Cardon, K. Carlson, B. Carrington, J. Chamberlin (alternate for
9 M. Chatterjee), J. Clements, D. Cole, E. Collins, P. Crispen, J. Dopheide, S. Enguidanos, E. Fife
10 (alternate for S. Gupta), C. Finch, A. Foster, L. Gale, A. Grossman, S. Gruskin, L. Hoffman, K.
11 Imagawa, A. Imre, S. Iqbal, C. Jones, L. Klerman, G. Kung, R. Labaree, K. Lincoln, T. Mayfield, J.
12 McLaughlin Gray, P.T. McNiff, D. Milstein, A. Motamed, J. Moore, J. Nyquist, J. Parr, A. Parra, D.
13 Pecchenino, L. Perin Gallandt, M. Polikoff, S. Rao, A. Rechenmacher, A. Sanchez, T. Sandmeier C.
14 Soto, T. Tambascia, A. Tzoytzoyrakos, A. Uyeshiro Simon, A. Van Speybroeck, L. Vest (alternate for
15 T. Kobza), J. Walker, E. Warford, N. Warren, R. Watanabe (alternate for J. Israel), C. Young, G.
16 Zada, E. Zeamer, S. Zweig

17
18 **Absent:** M. Crowley, F. Liley, W. Mack, M. Press, C. Resnik, B. Salhia, C. Soto, A. Yang

19
20 **Guests (Senate Member alternates & invited guests):** Y. Bar-Cohen, K. Culpepper, C. Folt, J. Keim,
21 M. Levine, C. Neuman, R. Pak, M. Price, A. Rutkowski, B. Shuster, B. Turner, C. Zachary, C. Zukoski

22
23 **AGENDA**

24 **Call to Order**

25 Academic Senate President Tambascia called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

26 **Approval of Minutes**

27 Secretary General Brooks presented the [revised December 8 Academic Senate meeting minutes](#)
28 for approval.

29 ***Motion to approve the December 8 minutes.*** Seconded and passed: 30 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2
30 abstentions.

31 **Update from President Folt and Provost Zukoski; FY '22 Update**

32 President Folt welcomed everyone and gave important updates.

- 33 ● The additional week the University added to the winter break was appreciated, particularly by
34 staff.
- 35 ● Folt's senior leadership team and the deans have been setting priorities for the first few weeks
36 of the semester and beyond; Folt encouraged others to prioritize as well. Offering competitive
37 compensation, retention, and maintaining quality of our top programs are among her main
38 priorities. Senior leadership is still responding to the Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
39 (REDI) Task Force report and the work of the USC DPS Community Advisory Board (CAB). Folt
40 highlighted the [hire](#) of Dr. Errol Southers as Associate Senior Vice President of Safety & Risk
41 Assurance.

- 42 ● The University needs to continue its work on principles of community. Managing social media
43 is difficult and USC, like other universities, has not determined how deeply to get involved in
44 social media. If anything goes wrong, it can influence the way USC is perceived. We have to
45 think about how best to address free and protected speech, online identities and the online
46 atmosphere, all of which will require building on the work of the Culture Committee. Many
47 schools at USC have a code of conduct or behavior that students are expected to read, but
48 very few require students to sign and agree to honor their respective code. This could help
49 students better understand expectations and shape student behavior. Folt plans to work with
50 the Senate, Student Assembly and other student groups to examine and address these issues.
- 51 ● Sexual assault is another community-wide issue that Folt plans to continue addressing. This
52 involves working with our Inter-Fraternity Council and other student organizations.

53 A Senator asked the President about involvement of faculty in efforts to address sexual assault,
54 particularly among fraternities and sororities. Folt emphasized that there was no intention to
55 minimize involvement of faculty and that she expects new groups to be formed to address these
56 issues in a larger context. Another Senator asked if a date has been set for the dedication of the
57 Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow Center for International and Public Affairs. Folt indicated that a date has
58 been set and that a wonderful weekend of events is planned for the dedication. A final question
59 for Folt addressed her earlier comments about social media. Folt stated that USC faces social
60 media issues, including some that involve serious bullying and harassment of students and
61 antisemitism. These issues could have significant consequences for the individuals involved in
62 them as well as reputational consequences for the University. Folt does not want to control
63 speech, but she does want to make sure that we keep people safe and that we follow the law.

64 Provost Zukoski began his remarks by expressing his joy of the semester and classes starting. He
65 provided updates on the work of the Interfraternity Council Culture, Prevention and
66 Accountability Task Force and on the Restart Process, as summarized below.

- 67 ● The two charges of the Task Force are to (1) create long-term strategies for improving the
68 culture, enhancing accountability, and addressing systematic challenges within the IFC
69 chapters, and (2) develop short-term [guidelines](#) for the resumption of social activities at the
70 IFC organizations. The Provost echoed what the President expressed earlier about needing to
71 work together as a campus and as a community to end sexual assault across our entire
72 campus. He appreciates everyone who brings these issues forward and alerts us of sexual
73 assault or other issues impacting the safety and well-being of our community. Zukoski
74 reminded Senators that in the fall, social activities of all 16 fraternities were paused
75 indefinitely and one fraternity was placed on interim suspension. Since then, three additional
76 fraternities were placed on interim suspension and one on modified suspension pending the
77 outcome of investigations by EEO-TIX. Sigma Nu remains on interim suspension. Currently, the
78 University has placed five fraternities on suspension, which is one of the most stringent actions
79 taken by any university in the nation in recent years in response to the kind of behavior
80 reported last fall. The eleven chapters in good standing have been provided details about
81 actions required under close university oversight and partnership before social activities can
82 resume. IFC chapters in good standing have been allowed to resume recruitment activities and
83 are expected to resume hosting social gatherings by February 3, assuming they meet specified
84 requirements. Academic Vice President Pecchenino asked what constitutes an “event.” The
85 Provost pointed out that our risk analysis involves large-scale parties but some provisions
86 apply to other activities. Another Senator asked for clarification about the [Centralized
87 Reporting Directive](#) issued by the University, specifically the requirement to report regardless
88 of how the information is learned— whether from a direct report from a reporting party, from

89 social media, from a concerned third party, or through any other source, which might include
90 reporting rumors. The Provost confirmed that reporting rumors is indeed expected and that
91 the EEO-TIX office is designed to assist those who report rumors. President Folt shared that
92 this is one of the areas that people are trying to clarify and that we are following the guidelines
93 of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). She indicated that the University will share with OCR the
94 question posed by the Senator and encouraged anyone concerned about whether to report to
95 err on the side of reporting to EEO-TIX.

96 ● Regarding Restart, the plan is to be back in person on January 24th. Zukoski suggested that we
97 are beginning to move past the peak of the Omicron surge. There have been no outbreaks on
98 campus and we are essentially 100% vaccinated and soon to be 100% boosted, which—along
99 with masking, surveillance testing, and isolating those who test positive— gives us a very high
100 level of protection. Zukoski explained that the University chose January 24 as the return date
101 because it would allow us to re-populate slowly and not overwhelm our infrastructure. We are
102 requiring boosters and the enforcement guidelines will go into effect January 31st. In terms of
103 classroom expectations, our Public Health Policy Advisory Group suggests that we are on the
104 right course and will be able to protect our population with the practices we have in place.
105 Still, we need to consider how to provide continuity of education for our students, especially
106 since we expect to have more students with COVID than we had in the past. This means
107 making content available online, including streaming, recording of lectures, posting of lecture
108 notes, providing handouts, etc. The Provost encouraged Senators to think about how we can
109 make accommodations for students and to reach out to the Center for Excellence in Teaching
110 (CET) for support. For those concerned about ventilation, USC's Office of Environmental Health
111 & Safety (EH&S) maintains the [building readiness dashboard](#) on their website. Zukoski is
112 pleased that we will be back in person. We will not be risk free, he points out, but we are
113 navigating the transition from COVID where we had no tools to protect ourselves to COVID
114 that is endemic.

115 The Provost addressed questions and comments related to the plan to return to campus on
116 January 24th. He indicated that he is sympathetic about concerns about exposure, but believes our
117 campus is protected. The positivity rate is lower on campus than in the community. He pointed
118 out that Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) would have allowed us to return
119 in person on January 3rd and that there are no DPH stipulations limiting our ability to return. A
120 Senator suggested that January 31 might be a more appropriate return date than the 24th since
121 the 31st is the date by which everyone is required to have received their booster shot. Zukoski
122 expressed his appreciation for the suggestion and reiterated his belief that the University is
123 following the best available public health guidelines.

124 In response to several questions about teaching, the Provost indicated that hybrid teaching is not
125 expected (though those who choose to do so, may) and that the rules that were in place last
126 semester are the rules in place this semester. He also affirmed that there should be no penalties
127 for teaching remotely when doing so has been approved by those responsible for such approvals
128 (e.g., curriculum committees, deans, chairs, etc.).

129 A Senator asked if there is an official position on whether students should resume face-to-face
130 meetings when engaged in research in K-12 settings. Zukoski replied that yes, there is an official
131 position but that it will vary depending on the nature of the activity. He encouraged the Senator to
132 reach out to Ishwar Puri, Vice President of Research or Sarah Van Orman, Associate Vice Provost
133 for Student Health, for additional guidance.

134 As we transition out of COVID, another Senator offered observations about how well we are
135 managing continuity of education, and rigor and expectations of our educational system. He asked

136 the Provost if there is a plan for getting standards back on the table so that the education we offer
137 is rigorous and valuable. The Provost indicated that he has heard similar concerns and shares
138 them himself. His expectation is that we will return to having high standards and that it will take
139 time to think through how we do that. The Senator also pointed out the need to consider the
140 possible impact of imposing tougher standards on student evaluations, on which RTPC faculty and
141 pre-tenured faculty rely heavily. The Provost agreed and suggested that these types of
142 conversations should continue.

143 Tambascia closed the conversation with the Provost by summarizing comments made by Senators
144 in the Zoom chat: several Senators would like to see another week of online instruction, either at
145 their discretion or in consultation with their dean; aligning the return date with the booster
146 deadline date of January 31 might reassure faculty that their concerns are being addressed; some
147 faculty face childcare issues due to school closures and disruptions; the mental of faculty is
148 important.

149 **Resolution, FRR Bylaws Changes, Second Reading**

150 Tambascia presented for a second reading [Resolution 21-22-04](#) resolving to amend the Academic
151 Senate's Bylaw 18 to reflect the following:

152 **Bylaw 18: Composition of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.**

153 The co-chairs of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities shall be one
154 tenured professor and one full-time RTPC associate professor or professor (or equivalent
155 ranks). The committee will also have other members.

156 Upon opening the floor for discussion and receiving none, Tambascia called for the vote.

157 ***Motion to approve Resolution 21-22-04. Passed: 41 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.***

158 **Faculty Awards Nominations: Julie Nyquist, Chair of the Faculty Awards Committee**

159 Julie Nyquist, Chair of the Senate Awards Committee, announced the [Call for Nominations](#) for the
160 Distinguished Faculty Service Award, which honors faculty service related to governance through a
161 life-time of service (typically 10 or more years) and the Walter Wolf Award, which is bestowed on
162 a USC faculty member for defense and advocacy for academic freedom or other manifestations of
163 social conscience. Nominations are due March 4.

164 **Open Discussion Related to Spring Semester Restart & School FC Priorities for the Semester**

165 Tambascia facilitated an open discussion on the Spring semester Restart and school Faculty
166 Council priorities for the semester. Among the Restart topics discussed were those related to lack
167 of availability of IT support; concerns about safety; students' expectations for faculty to teach in a
168 hybrid format despite lack of faculty and institutional capacity to support hybrid teaching;
169 confusion around the concept of continuity of education and challenges of ensuring continuity of
170 education; vulnerability of part-time and adjunct faculty; trauma and anxiety experienced by
171 faculty and overall morale and well-being of faculty; heavy workloads and the impacts of heavy
172 workloads on staff and faculty; compensation, COLAs, and merit increases; lack of
173 communications from administration to faculty and students regarding learning and attendance
174 expectations; roles of the Senate and Faculty Councils; the desirability and logistics of the Senate
175 formulating formal positions and offering them to senior leadership; confusion about university-
176 wide versus school-level expectations, guidelines, and flexibility around online instruction.

177 Before opening the floor for Senators to discuss priorities of their Faculty Councils, Tambascia
178 presented [Executive Board \(EB\) priorities](#) (shared governance; building faculty leadership capacity;
179 faculty well-being; and faculty salary and compensation) and described several initiatives to

180 support the priorities, including the convening of a Task Force on Faculty Councils (co-chaired by
181 Elissa Grossman and Morgan Polikoff) and a Task Force on Merit and Annual Review (co-chaired
182 by Jessica Cantiello and Larry Picus); formation of a Faculty Leadership Fellows program; and
183 development of a Faculty Service database. Among the priorities shared by Senators were faculty
184 governance, compensation, faculty recruitment, and Deans Review policies and processes.

185 **Adjournment**

186 Tambascia thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting at 4:01 pm.

187

188 Respectfully submitted,

189



190

191 Devon Brooks

192 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

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