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ACADEMIC SENATE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

4 Meeting of December 8, 2021

5 Virtual Meeting

6 2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

7 **Present (Senate Members):** P. Adler, M. Apostolos, D. Becker, C. Beckman, M. Bodie,
8 D. Brooks, P. Cardon, K. Carlson, B. Carrington, M. Chatterjee, J. Clements, D. Cole, E. Collins, P.
9 Crispin, J. Dopheide, C. Finch, S. Gruskin, S. Gupta, K. Imagawa, S. Iqbal, J. Israel, J. Kickul,
10 L. Klerman, T. Kobza, G. Kung, R. Labaree, K. Lincoln, T. Mayfield, J. McLaughlin Gray,
11 A. Motamed, J. Moore, J. Parr, A. Parra, D. Pecchenino, M. Press, S. Rao, A. Rechenmacher,
12 C. Resnik, B. Salhia, A. Sanchez, T. Sandmeier C. Soto, T. Tambascia, A. Uyeshiro Simon, A. Van
13 Speybroeck, J. Walker, E. Warford, N. Warren, R. Watanabe (alternate for D. Armstrong),
14 C. Young, G. Zada, E. Zeamer, S. Zweig

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16 **Absent:** J. Baker, A. Campbell, M. Crowley, L. Gale, A. Imre, M. Karp, F. Liley, W. Mack,
17 D. Milstein, L. Perin Gallandt, A. Yang

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19 **Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** F. Bar, Y. Bar-Cohen, E. Fife, C. Folt,
20 A. Green, M. Levine, C. Neuman, R. Pak, M. Price, I. Puri, A. Rutkowski, B. Shuster,
21 M. Townsend, L. Vest, C. Zachary, C. Zukoski

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AGENDA

24 **Call to Order**

25 Academic Senate President Tambascia called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.

26 **Approval of Minutes**

27 Secretary General Brooks presented the [November 17 Academic Senate meeting minutes](#) for
28 approval.

29 ***Motion to approve the November 17 minutes.*** Seconded and passed: 23 in favor, 0 opposed, and
30 0 abstentions.

31 **Professor Alan Green, Rossier and Faculty Athletic Representative, Discussing Student Athletes**
32 **and Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) Policy**

33 The University's Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR), Professor Alan Green from the Rossier
34 School of Education, discussed various topics related to student athletes at USC, including student-
35 athlete rights; Alston Benefits; Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) policy and status; and the National
36 Labor Relations Board (NLRB) General Council Option. Green pointed out that the NLRB General
37 Council finds the term "student athlete" problematic and therefore will use the term "players,"
38 which is a step towards considering student athletes as employees. However, USC's General
39 Counsel has advised that we will regard and refer to student athletes as we have done historically
40 and that there are no efforts to treat student athletes as employees. A Senator asked Green about

41 the mechanisms to ensure that student athletes are not exploited. Green expressed his
42 appreciation for the question and indicated that the University is looking at ways to ensure that
43 our student athletes are protected, guided, and educated on how to engage with deals involving
44 their name, image, and likeness. Additionally, we are creating opportunities for our students that
45 we feel are aligned with our values in terms of economic opportunity and professional and
46 personal development. We are setting parameters and developing guidelines for working with
47 third parties that have the best interests of our students in mind. Tambascia asked Green if he has
48 a sense of whether the low level financial transactions for individuals under NIL that are occurring
49 at USC are typical of universities across the country. Green thinks currently we are on the lower
50 end and that athletes at other universities have more media exposure and bigger deals than our
51 athletes, but he expects this to change given the emphasis on our new football coach, rankings,
52 etc. Tambascia also asked if there are concerns that female athletes may not benefit in the same
53 ways as male athletes. Green indicated that he wants to ensure that there are opportunities for all
54 students, including women athletes, entire teams, and students in all sports. In terms of
55 movement towards professionalization of student athletics, another Senator asked Green about
56 his perceptions of where USC is headed. Green stated that this is very much on his mind and that
57 the University is obligated to honor agreements made with students. With respect to striking a
58 balance between our mission, vision, and values as a university (which include a top athletic
59 program), Green emphasized the importance of paying attention to relevant issues and asking
60 hard questions so that we do not lose our values in exchange for “professionalization.”

61 **Updates from President Folt and Provost Zukoski**

62 President Folt thanked Senators before discussing plans for the spring semester. To better
63 understand the flexible workplace, we will continue assessing what worked, where we need
64 people, how we work, and how best to do these things fairly. A committee comprised of
65 administration and faculty has been convened to examine workplace needs and opportunities.
66 Though not true across the board, compensation has slipped and we are not as competitive as we
67 were. With respect to staff in the city of Los Angeles, for example, we have fallen below the
68 median, which is not OK. Administration will continue working on rightsizing compensation for
69 faculty, staff, graduate students, and postdocs over the next five years so that we are more
70 competitive. This will be a major thrust of the Provost’s Office and the deans. Currently, about
71 45% of the budget (approximately \$2.6 billion) goes to salaries. Increases in salaries will be
72 supported through tuition, which will require a long-term plan that considers all aspects of
73 compensation, such as daycare, tuition benefits (an expense of roughly several hundred million
74 dollars a year for more than 2000 employees and their children), healthcare, annual retirement
75 benefits (about \$200 million a year), etc.

76 Folt also discussed the hiring of the new football coach and associated costs. She noted that our
77 football team has started losing resources and that athletics, particularly football, pays for all the
78 women’s sports, all the Olympic sports, 250 full scholarships and medical care for students, and
79 advising programs (which she believes were responsible for increasing the graduation rate to 92%
80 for our athletes, compared with 91% across the institution). She emphasized the importance of
81 hiring an athletic director with integrity and who knows how to run athletics in a professional way.
82 Detailed analyses suggest that within a year, all the costs of hiring the new coach and his
83 associates will be recouped and that by the end of the third year, all associated debt will have
84 been paid off.

85 Folt shared some thoughts about faculty governance and the importance for her of working

86 closely with faculty, particularly on significant issues that impact academic programs. She stated
87 that when she first arrived, she pledged that leadership would attend all the Senate meetings, not
88 just because Senate members want them to but also because leadership believes it is important to
89 attend. She promised to include faculty, staff, and students on all significant hires, which
90 happened with the hiring of 29 senior leaders over the past two year (with faculty sometimes
91 chairing the search committees). Other areas and accomplishments where shared governance has
92 been or will [continue to] be critical include: sexual assault and the Interfraternity Council (IFC);
93 the Community Advisory Board (CAB); implementation of recommendations from the Racial
94 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force; a new committee for investor responsibility; the
95 Faculty History Committee; renaming of the VKC building to the Dr. Joseph Medicine Crow
96 building; a scholarship program for indigenous students; and the Sustainability Working Group.
97 Folt expressed pride and gratitude for working with faculty and the Senate on these important
98 issues and initiatives before opening the floor for questions.

99 Academic Vice President Pecchenino thanked the President for taking on compensation issues and
100 stressed the importance of working closely with the Senate to establish and publicize goals early
101 on. Folt strongly agreed with the importance of working closely with the Senate, as well as with
102 the deans. A member of the Executive Board thanked the President for the overview she provided
103 and expressed his understanding of the pressures she and the University face. He asked if she sees
104 any role for the Committee on Finances and Enrollment (CoFE), the Oversight Committee
105 for Athletic Academic Affairs (OCAAA), or other faculty bodies in helping to hold athletics
106 accountable for achieving specified goals. Folt expressed her hope that there is trust from faculty
107 and suggested the need to determine on which issues faculty input is important. She indicated
108 that she registered the question and will continue thinking about it, and perhaps will work with
109 the Executive Board to follow up on it.

110 Noting the issue of strict enforcement of return to work policies and the impact on staff morale
111 and retention, a Senator asked if there will be more flexibility in the future. She also raised the
112 issue of the debt to income ratio as an important metric for programs. Regarding the first issue,
113 Folt clarified that one of the goals for the spring is to rightsize workforce presence and need.
114 Regarding the second issue, Folt emphasized that accessibility, affordability, belonging, diversity,
115 and debt are high priorities for her and have been since she arrived at USC. Debt for our
116 undergraduate students has decreased 16% in the last decade, averaging \$19,000 at the end of
117 four years, which is considerably lower than the national student debt. We have to turn our
118 attention to graduate programs and find a way to reduce debt.

119 Another Senator remarked that it appears we are seeing more crime alerts and wondered
120 whether the President could speak to this. Folt speculated that the increased alerts could reflect
121 more reporting of crime than an increase of actual occurrence of crime. She noted that increased
122 reporting is a good thing, but that there is still more for us to learn.

123 Provost Zukoski took the floor and expressed his pleasure with where we find ourselves at this
124 point in the semester. He offered his thanks and congratulations, and shared some notable
125 achievements of a few faculty and academic units before providing important updates:

- 126 ● The IFC, Interim VP of Student Affairs Monique Allard and Chris Manning, the Chief Inclusion
127 and Diversity Officer, are developing short-term recommendations that would allow Greek
128 Row to open for social events at the beginning of the Spring semester and long-term
129 recommendations for dealing with sexual assault in the Greek system and across campus.

- 130 ● Central leadership will provide written responses [addressing their decision not to act on](#) two
131 recent resolutions—one related to faculty contracts (21-22-03) and the other related to merit
132 and retirement (21-22-02). Regarding Resolution 21-22-03, the Provost indicated that the
133 University can amend its retirement plans to address goals of the institution as a whole or in
134 response to changes in applicable law. Such actions have to be consistent with the terms of
135 our retirement program, which is heavily regulated by the state, the federal government, and
136 the Faculty Handbook. Our retirement plan is also governed by IRS rules which restrict our
137 ability to offer a specified level of retirement benefits to particular constituencies. This has
138 implications on how we can change retirement benefits overall. Regarding Resolution 21-22-
139 02, Zukoski acknowledged the painful long-term impact of last year’s pause in merit pay raises
140 and benefits. He stated that administration is working hard to figure out how to make up for
141 the pause and to have competitive compensation for faculty and staff as we move forward.

142 A Senator clarified that the “zero percent raise for a year” remarked on by the Provost is actually a
143 zero percent raise for all years moving forward since the pause affected base salaries, to which the
144 provost responded, “absolutely.” Another Senator asked if there was any news about spring
145 teaching masking indoors. Zukoski replied that there has been no indication of change and that we
146 will resume in the spring with the same teaching conditions currently in place (e.g., mandatory
147 testing and indoor masking)

148 **Ishwar Puri, Vice President of Research**

149 Vice President of Research Ishwar Puri provided an update on research activities and plans. He
150 noted that there is broad appreciation that USC would benefit from a research strategy and that
151 there are certain issues in research compliance that have become too bureaucratic. He is
152 examining these and other issues. Funding from the Provost will be used to address understaffing
153 in certain areas, such as the IRB, which should improve outcomes. Puri is looking into reported
154 issues with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and issues with
155 commercialization, which the Research Committee of the Academic Senate is also examining. On
156 the positive side, there have been efforts to increase inclusion of disciplines, and a concierge
157 service has been implemented for investigators competing for very large grants in order to ensure
158 that proposals get submitted on time.

159 A Senator expressed her gratitude to Puri and the IRB staff for their assistance and quick response
160 to questions and a recent submission. Puri pointed out that the efforts were those of the IRB staff
161 and he promised to convey the praise to them. He went on to say that he expects there to be a
162 culture shift in the office, with movement towards less friction and greater recognition that staff
163 are there to serve and facilitate. On behalf of a Senator, Tambascia asked Puri what the goal is in
164 terms of average wait times for IRB and how soon the goal might be achieved as experiences with
165 quick turnaround do not appear to be universal. Puri agreed and suggested that experiences
166 should improve as a result of new hires and educational efforts. His goal is for wait times to come
167 down to four weeks, which is the national average, and he hopes to achieve this sometime next
168 year.

169 **Update from Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Co-Chairs, Devon Brooks and Ashley Uyeshiro** 170 **Simon**

171 Devon Brooks and Ashley Uyeshiro Simon, co-chairs of the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities
172 Committee (FRR), gave an overview of the committee. Brooks began by thanking former FRR co-
173 chairs Jerry Davison and Steve Bucher. He then explained that FRR is available to faculty

174 experiencing a problem with a Dean, other administrator, or a colleague, or if they are considering
175 filing a grievance under Chapter 7 of the Faculty Handbook. FRR aims to help faculty understand
176 options and resources available to faculty, and the committee's work with faculty is confidential
177 when possible. Legal advice, however, is not offered by the committee. Brooks encouraged
178 Senators to let colleagues in their academic units know about FRR and to share a 2-slide
179 [PowerPoint](#) about the committee with their colleagues. Uyeshiro Simon presented the members
180 of FRR and discussed changes in the size and composition of the committee, which were designed
181 to address workload issues and to enhance diversity in experience of the members.

182 Pecchenino expressed thanks to Davison and Bucher for their work over the years and to Brooks
183 and Uyeshiro Simon for agreeing to serve as the new co-chairs. He then asked if Brooks and
184 Uyeshiro Simon could distinguish between the work of FRR and that of other offices like the Office
185 of the Ombuds. Brooks explained that there still is confusion around roles and responsibilities of
186 FRR in relation to other offices and that the committee is currently working to define roles and
187 responsibilities. Uyeshiro Simon went on to clarify that there are similarities between FRR and the
188 Office of the Ombuds, but that the primary difference is that the Ombudspersons are formally
189 trained mediators who are entirely neutral, consistent with their professional principles, whereas
190 members of FRR can provide advocacy on behalf of faculty. A Senator asked what rights we have
191 under Chapter 7 of the Faculty Handbook. Jessica Parr, Co-chair of the Faculty Handbook
192 Committee, explained that everything in Chapter 7 stands as written, even if it is not clear (which
193 the Faculty Handbook Committee is working to address). She further explained that the Faculty
194 Handbook Committee is reconciling policies that guide FRR. Tambascia acknowledged the amazing
195 work done by Davison and Bucher and expressed her gratitude to Brooks and Uyeshiro Simon, as
196 well as the other members of FRR, for their efforts.

197 **Resolution 21-22-04: By-Laws Amendment Regarding FRR Co-Chair Roles, First Reading**

198 On behalf of the Executive Board, Tambascia presented Resolution 21-2204 for a first read. The
199 resolution proposes to amend the Academic Senate's Bylaw 18 to reflect the following:

200 *Composition of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities. The co-chairs of the*
201 *Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities shall be one tenured professor and one*
202 *full-time RTPC associate professor or professor (or equivalent ranks). The committee will*
203 *also have other members.*

204 Tambascia noted that the resolution is designed to address a disconnect in the language of the
205 bylaws and she opened the floor for questions or discussion. A Senator asked for the rationale for
206 the proposed change. Tambascia explained that existing language specifies that a tenured full
207 professor shall serve as chair and vice chair of the committee, although we have been operating
208 under a co-chair model that distributes the work across the two co-chairs. The proposed changes
209 would reflect past and current practice. Following up, the Senator asked why not rectify the
210 practice instead of changing the bylaws. Tambascia responded by suggesting that the practice has
211 been working for the FRR committee for a number of years. Pecchenino added that the existing
212 structure is at odds with other Senate committees, which have a co-chair structure. The Senator
213 asked if there is an unspoken concern involving parity between tenure track and RTPC lines of
214 faculty. Pecchenino responded that he did not see why there would be vice chairs for FRR and no
215 other committees. A Senator asked for clarification about whether the proposed changes would
216 only allow faculty with a rank of professor to serve as co-chairs. Tambascia explained that tenured
217 professors are either associate or full professors, so it did not seem necessary to specify rank for

218 them. Another Senator suggested that perhaps it would be desirable to require at least one co-
219 chair to have the rank of professor.

220 **Adjournment**

221 Tambascia thanked Senators for their service and dedication. She wished everyone happy holidays
222 and adjourned the meeting at 3:53 pm.

223

224 Respectfully submitted,

225



226

227 Devon Brooks

228 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

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APPROVED