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4 **ACADEMIC SENATE**

5 **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

6 September 21, 2022

7 Hybrid Meeting

8 2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

9 **Present (Senate Members):** S. Altman, M. Apostolos, D. Armstrong, N. Ashe-McNalley, C. Barrio,
10 D. Becker, D. Beltran, L. Berntsen, M. Bodie, D. Brooks, K. Carlson, M. Chatterjee, R. Cisclowski, J.
11 Clements, D. Cole, S. Faris, S. Fereshteh, E. Fife (alternate for C. Pantano-Rubino), A. Foster, S.
12 Gruskin, J. Hicham, L. Hoffman, S. Hsu, J. Israel, E. Jonckheere, C. Jones, T. Kirkland, R. Labaree, L.
13 Lewis, W. Mack, J. Matsusaka, T. Mayfield, P.T. McNiff, C. Neuman, S. Nye, L. Olvera, R. Pacula, J.
14 Parr, T. Patel, D. Pecchenino, L. Perin Gallandt, S. Rao, C. Resnik, S. Robinson, A. Rutkowski,
15 A. Sanchez, A. Seigel, T. Tambascia, A. Tzoytzoyrakos, A. Uyeshiro Simon, A. Van Speybroeck, J.
16 Walker, E. Warford, N. Warren, K. Wilber, C. Young

17
18 **Absent:** T. Church, dS. Grimes, K. Imagawa, S. Iqbal, R. Jubran, J. Kickul, F. Liley, B. Salhia, C. Smith,
19 C. Soto, O. Trujillo

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21 **Guests (Senate Member alternates & invited guests):** G. Condell, A. Chen, E. Collins, J. Dinalo, C.
22 Folt, R. Lemarchand, E. Levine, M. Levine, R. MacKenzie, D. Mooko, J. Moore, R. Pak, P. Riley, K.
23 Salva, B. Shuster, A. Stott, J. Zalma, C. Zukoski
24

25 **AGENDA**

26 **Call to order: Dan Pecchenino, Senate President**

27 Academic Senate President Pecchenino called the meeting to order at 2:08 pm.

28 **Welcome back and priorities as a Senate**

29 Academic Senate President Dan Pecchenino started the meeting by expressing his excitement for
30 working with the senators this year and presenting the [Academic Senate Overview and Priorities](#)
31 for the 2022-2023 year.

32 **Approval of minutes from the last meeting: Christal Young, Secretary General**

33 President Pecchenino presented the [May 11 Academic Senate meeting minutes](#) for approval.

34 ***Motion to approve the May 11 minutes.*** Seconded and passed: 16 in favor and 0 opposed, with
35 12 abstentions.

36 **Working together as a Senate**

37 President Pecchenino recognized the way in which the Senate would work together in an hybrid
38 online and in-person model and encouraged respectful discourse in both spaces. He also stated
39 his interest in having presentations to the Senate be as brief as possible so that the Senate could
40 engage in more open dialogue.

41 **Discussion with President Folt and Provost Zukoski**

42 President Folt began her remarks by acknowledging that, with various schools on two different
43 campuses, the university as a whole is working to identify ways to better report information to the
44 Senate. She stated that she has enormous optimism as she enters her fourth year at the
45 university. She believes that the university has accomplished in three years what she thought
46 would take 6 years in a number of critical areas including legal issues, increasing financial aid, and
47 changes in federal issues along reporting and OCR. These accomplishments allow the university to
48 move forward with more attention on what is ahead rather than looking back. The overall quality
49 of the institution continues to be strong with over high application and yield rates, \$770 million
50 raised in philanthropy, and positive publications on work done by the faculty. The President went
51 on to share that our financial situation is steady.

52 **USC Competes:** President Folt shared that we invested more than \$150 million this year to
53 students, staff and faculty including \$110 million in additional dollars matched to faculty salary
54 pools. The RTPC (Research, Teaching, Practitioner, & Clinical-Track) base salary was raised to a
55 minimum of \$72,000. We also raised the minimum graduate school stipend of all PhD students to
56 \$34,000. \$50 million went into raising staff for salaries. President Folt stressed that even in this
57 moment when inflation is high, we are intending to keep this going in the spring and we don't
58 want to reverse this initiative. She is confident that in the next three to five years, we can be back
59 to a point where we are paying top compensation for top people in the most expensive market in
60 the country.

61 **Faculty Diversity:** The summer prior to President Folt and Provost Zukoski's arrival, Provost
62 Michael Quick put \$50 million into a fund to increase diversity in the areas of
63 underrepresentation. This fund was created to help with faculty hiring, retention, tenure, tenure-
64 track RTPC, and matching funds from the schools. It has been extremely successful. The first \$50
65 million has been committed in the last 3 years and they are currently looking to increase this
66 amount going forward. 17 schools participated in this program. 170 offers went through this pool
67 and 103 accepted. Of the offers, 60% went to women or non-binary individuals. 89% went to
68 racially underrepresented faculty hiring. Black/African-American faculty increased from 2% to
69 10%. Hispanic/Latino increased from 11% to 17% and Asian increased from 16% to 20% bringing
70 these underrepresented groups to 50% of our hires.

71 **Accessibility Initiative:** The accessibility initiative started by President Folt for students whose
72 parents make under \$80,000 tuition free has now reached 2,500 new students, which is an
73 increase of about 400-500 students per year.

74
75 **Athletics:** In July, the university announced we are moving from the Pac-12 to the Big 10 in two
76 years' time. President Folt noted this move will cause a number of changes that are very positive
77 for the university and our athletes. We have launched the University Student Advisory Committee
78 which is run by Alan Green. This committee brings together a lot of faculty governance around
79 how we work with athletes in their academic programs and make them successful both on and off
80 the field. This committee reports directly up to Provost Zukoski's office via Andy Stott. Please
81 contact Andy or Alan with any questions about the committee. There will be a subcommittee that
82 will help us be "Big 10 ready" and advise the university on what needs to be done as we begin to
83 look at the policies and practices that are in the Big 10. The joining of the Big 10 isn't purely
84 athletic. The Big 10 is also associated with the Academic Alliance where universities convene to
85 discuss shared issues. It brings us together with major research universities that are in the AAU,
86 who share common problems and issues, and are of a similar scale at the undergraduate and

87 graduate level. This move will enrich our conversations and help us think about what we're going
88 to do going forward as a university.

89 Graduate Student Debt Reduction: Less than 30% of our students take on debt and most take on
90 less than \$20,000 at the undergraduate level. The place we are struggling is at the graduate and
91 professional level. Provost Zukoski has started a group that will examine how we set graduate and
92 professional tuition and how we think about the debt our students are taking on. Provost Zukoski
93 encouraged the schools to think about the debt that our graduate students are taking on, its
94 appropriateness, and how we think the cost of that education, and the nature of the degree that
95 we're supplying.

96 The President and Provost then took questions from the floor. A Senator had a clarifying question
97 on whether the stated minimum salary was for all faculty. The \$72,000 minimum salary was for
98 tenure, tenure-track, and RTPC faculty. The second question was for Part Time faculty. Provost
99 Zukoski stated he would have to check but believes those amounts increased accordingly.

100 A Senator asked if the Keck School of Medicine is prepared to join the consortium on cancer
101 research efforts currently taking place among Big 10 schools. President Folt shared that we have
102 been asked to participate in advance and it will happen. She stated that the conference is very
103 powerfully oriented towards faculty and working together with athletics.

104 A Senator asked the president for her vision at the university. President Folt shared that we're a
105 great university right now but we should be one of the top national universities in America. That
106 is our next step. She went on to state that a leading national university means that your voice is at
107 the table at every single one of the big stories, you're serving on those panels, etc. And the way
108 that we do that is by the initiatives that we institute, by continuing to press on our academics, by
109 reducing our affordability and our accessibility. We need to capitalize on what we already do but
110 then take this model because we're doing it at scale. She went on to envision that everything that
111 we're known for here, we are known for nationally, leading the way in innovation and advancing
112 the professions.

113 A Senator asked if the salary program addressed compression. Provost Zukoski confirmed that it
114 does. Another question for Provost Zukoski revisited his statement on cost reduction as a way to
115 address debt and graduate programs and whether this meant that reducing nominal tuition was
116 an option rather than increased scholarship spending. Provost Zukoski stated that everything is on
117 the table. He added that there are financial implications of every option and that we spend every
118 penny that we bring in. As a result, we must think about what we will have to cut or how we are
119 going to replace that which is cut.

120 A Senator asked why there was no high or low salary information shared at the university
121 level. President Folt explained that we let the schools and the deans translate to the faculty what
122 their raises are. Provost Zukoski added that the complications exist due to the heterogeneity of
123 the schools. President Pecchenino added that the Senate is starting a compensation committee
124 and encouraged faculty councils to do the same in order to make those differences at the school
125 levels more clear.

126 President Pecchenino asked about the role of the faculty handbook in relation to other policies.
127 What should the committee work on as they wait for changes to be approved? President Folt
128 noted that those policy changes that were previously submitted have been approved and will be
129 returned shortly.

130 A Senator asked about the value they see in the merit review process. Provost Zukoski stated that
131 the merit review process varies from school to school and varies depending on the basis of the
132 way they do their work.

133 **Presentation about Office of Academic Integrity and Office of Community Expectations**

134 Jacques Zalma, Director of the Office of Academic Integrity and Daren Mooko, Assistant Vice
135 Provost for Student Affairs for the Office of Community Expectations presented an [update](#) to
136 changes in how Student Conduct, both academic and non-academic, is addressed and how these
137 two offices work in tandem to address issues that arise. They introduced the new “Living Our
138 Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook” which has replaced the former SCampus and
139 outlines information and policies for students. The Office of Academic Integrity has been formed
140 and is charged with handling matters that deal with academic integrity. SJACS has also been
141 replaced by the Office of Community Expectations which addresses issues of student behavior and
142 student conduct. They explained changes made to academic misconduct processes. Most notably,
143 the responsibility of assigning a grade outcome has been returned to the faculty.

144 A Senator asked why the faculty were not included in the changes. Another question was raised
145 that if efficiency is such an important aspect of these offices, why is that efficiency being put on
146 the faculty. Zalma explained that consultants were hired to work on these changes and that they
147 spoke with stakeholder groups. Zalma also stated that by separating the two offices, both can
148 focus more on their specific areas, thereby increasing efficiency. He added that the grading policy
149 has not changed. The grade assigned has remained the responsibility of the professor.

150 **Presentation from Employee Benefits Advisory Committee**

151 Patti Riley, EBAC Chair, Greg Condell, Vice President, Finance, and Alice Chen, Assistant Vice
152 President, USC Health Plans presented a [Health Benefits](#) changes update. New benefits for this
153 year include hearing aid services, fertility benefits, transitional services, and maternity care
154 program. There were little to no changes to the medical, dental, or vision plans.

155 **Adjournment**

156 Meeting was adjourned at 3:56pm.

157

158 Respectfully submitted,

159 *Christal Young*

160 Christal Young

161 Secretary General of the Academic Senate

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