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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

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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
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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

his interest in having presentations to the Senate be as brief as possible so that the Senate could engage in more open dialogue.

Discussion with President Folt and Provost Zukoski

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

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

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

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

Athletics: In July, the university announced we are moving from the Pac-12 to the Big 10 in two years' time. President Folt noted this move will cause a number of changes that are very positive for the university and our athletes. We have launched the University Student Advisory Committee which is run by Alan Green. This committee brings together a lot of faculty governance around how we work with athletes in their academic programs and make them successful both on and off the field. This committee reports directly up to Provost Zukoski's office via Andy Stott. Please contact Andy or Alan with any questions about the committee. There will be a subcommittee that will help us be "Big 10 ready" and advise the university on what needs to be done as we begin to

look at the policies and practices that are in the Big 10. The joining of the Big 10 isn't purely athletic. The Big 10 is also associated with the Academic Alliance where universities convene to discuss shared issues. It brings us together with major research universities that are in the AAU, who share common problems and issues, and are of a similar scale at the undergraduate and graduate level. This move will enrich our conversations and help us think about what we're going to do going forward as a university.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Presentation about Office of Academic Integrity and Office of Community Expectations

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

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

Presentation from Employee Benefits Advisory Committee

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

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christal Young

Secretary General of the Academic Senate