

USC Academic Senate

Academic Senate Newsletter

January 2023

Dear Colleagues,

To keep you informed of the work of the Academic Senate, this newsletter from the Executive Board (EB) provides updates on the Senate's activities since the December Senate meeting and shares the agenda for the upcoming official Senate meeting.

Announcements

- The next Academic Senate meeting will be held Wednesday, January 18, 2023, 2:00 - 4:00 PST in a hybrid format: in DML 121 for in-person attendees as well as on Zoom. Find the meeting agenda [here](#). The meeting agenda includes Zoom meeting information (Meeting ID: 932 6631 8155 Passcode: 655628). If attending via Zoom, please use your USC Shibboleth sign-in. All faculty are welcome to attend monthly Senate meetings. We are excited to meet and engage in the work of shared governance.

EB Activity Update

The EB met weekly in the last month to address a range of issues, including the following: coordinating with the Provost's Office on updating the Faculty Handbook this Spring; gathering information on pedestrian safety on the UPC and HSC campuses; clarifying questions about faculty health accommodations; organizing continuing support for Faculty Councils this Spring; planning the Spring Joint Provost-Senate Retreat; and meeting regularly with senior university officials to understand recent leadership changes.

Highlights of Meetings

- The [December Academic Senate meeting](#) was held Wednesday, December 14, 2:00 - 4:00 PM PST. After approval of the [November](#) meeting minutes,
 - Faculty Council chairs from fourteen schools shared updates on their Fall activities and discussions. The presentations were extremely informative. We look forward to the remaining schools sharing updates at the January meeting.
 - Academic Senate President Dan Pecchenino highlighted that a new California law taking effect in January offers an opportunity for Faculty Councils to meaningfully engage on compensation issues with their Deans. The law, SB 1162, requires job postings to state an expected salary range and requires supervisors to report the salary range when an employee requests this information for their current position.
 - Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Andy Stott presented on the [PhD Outcomes](#) project, which examines whether the documented outcomes of PhD programs align with the content and the stated goals of those programs. Vice Provost Stott discussed PhD applicant and cohort demographics, graduate student funding, program completion rates, and career pathways.
 - President Carol Folt and Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Elizabeth Graddy shared updates. President Folt thanked Professor Chip

Zukoski for his work improving USC processes and infrastructure during his time as Provost, including revising Dean searches and evaluations, among many other projects. President Folt also noted that Interim Provost Graddy has been closely involved in this work and will keep forward momentum during the interim period. President Folt emphasized the reorganization work underway at USC, notably the health sciences enterprise under the leadership of Senior Vice President for Health Affairs Steve Shapiro. Subsequently, President Folt announced in a memo the elevation of Ishwar Puri from Vice President for Research to Senior Vice President for Research and Innovation. President Folt concluded her remarks to the Senate by celebrating the success of the Provost's Diversity Fund and committed to identifying another \$50 million for the fund, and completing the first of a multiyear plan to improve faculty and staff compensation and graduate student funding with the "USC Competes" initiative. Interim Provost Graddy announced that Kelvin Davies will serve as Interim Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs and brings extensive experience to the position.

The full schedule of official Senate meetings for the year and meeting details are included on the [Senate website](#). All faculty are welcome and encouraged to attend.

We welcome feedback on these issues directly (acsenate@usc.edu) and encourage you to reach out to us or your Faculty Council with concerns, questions, or suggestions. Be well and we will see you soon.

Sincerely,

The Academic Senate Executive Board