Charge

“Perform a broad survey of faculty merit/annual review processes at each school to identify both common practices and heterogeneity of the merit processes; catalog effective practices; and make recommendations to improve merit review at USC.”
Context

- Pandemic/Pause of Merit Raises (FY 2021)
- FEEC Survey of Junior Faculty (2021-2022)
  - Key Recommendation: “overhaul merit review”
- Academic Senate Resolution re: Annual COLA (2022)
- President Folt’s commitment to “address compensation inequities and systemically raise salaries” (2022)
- Academic Senate Resolution re: Compensation Reporting (2023)
Methodology

- Qualitative Data Gathering
- Analysis of Relevant Results of FEEC Survey
- Review of Responses to Task Force Data Request in Joint Memo from the Provost/Academic Senate
  - Mean, median, and mode merit review scores for each department, program, or division
  - Any communications sent from the school administration pertaining to how salary adjustments are determined (i.e. merit vs. equity vs. promotion distinction)
  - Any communications that explain how merit review scores in particular relate to fixed salary percentage increases
Findings

- Lack of Clarity and Transparency about the Process, especially its Relationship to Raises
- Feedback and a Lack of Professional Development Application
- Concerns about Fairness and Subjectivity
1. Improve Transparency and Communication about Individual Scores and the Overall Process/Outcomes
2. Directly and Universally Tie Merit Pay Increases to Merit Scores within a Given Unit
3. Ensure Fairness and Equity in the Process of Assigning Scores and Salary Adjustments
4. Involve Faculty in the Development of Merit Review Processes