

**ACADEMIC SENATE**  
**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

March 20, 2024  
HSC/Hybrid Meeting  
2:00 - 4:00 pm PST

**Present (Senate Members):** S. Altman, M. Andersen, M. Apostolos, M. Aranda, M. Bayiz, D. Becker, M. Bodie, A. Cannon, K. Carlson, M. Chatterjee, A. Das, J. Dopheide, N. Duquette, C. El-Haddad, S. Faris, E. Fife, S. Gruskin, S. Hsu, K. Imagawa, R. Jubran, S. Kim, M. Kong, B. Lemgruber, J. Matsusaka, C. Neuman, S. Niemiec Schepens, S. Nye, L. Olvera, T. Patel, D. Pecchenino, L. Perin Gallant, M. Philadelphia, S. Rao, A. Siegel, L. Turcotte, T. Tzoytzoyrakos, J. Walker, C. Young

**Absent:**

**Guests (Senate Members alternates & invited guests):** M. Allard (Vice President for Student Life), D. Armstrong, N. Esnaashari, A. Cheung (Chief of Staff, Provost Office), S. Giwa (Vice President, Culture Ethics, and Compliance, Chief Compliance Officer, Provost A. Guzman, H. Jaddoud, K. Ishop, (Vice President for Enrollment), C. Kane, M. Levine, (Vice Provost and Senior Advisor to the Provost), H. A. Magid, M. Mather, R. Newmyer, J. Swift, F. Washington

**AGENDA**

**Call to order: Margo K. Apostolos, Senate President**

Academic Senate President Apostolos called the meeting to order at 2:01pm.

President Apostolos congratulated Member at Large, Sofia Gruskin, on her appointment as Distinguished Professor.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

***Motion to approve January minutes.*** Moved by EB Vice President Rima Jubran and seconded. 28 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention - Passed

**Discussion with Provost Andrew Guzman**

- Provost Guzman gave remarks and recognized the valuable contributions of the faculty. He shared that a part of this job that's very rewarding is that this is a big, sprawling, complex place and there's always something amazing happening.

**Q&A**

- President Apostolos: Thanked Provost Guzman for co-sponsoring joint Provost/Academic Senate Retreat and webinars. She asked if he was interested in

continuing these opportunities. The Provost agreed that the talks are a great vehicle for faculty governance and engagement.

- President Apostolos asked if the Provost has had or would you like more interactions with students? How can the Senate assist? Provost Guzman has had less consistent engagement with students but is comfortable that he made the right call to set priorities on his to-do list. Would like to pivot and engage with students in a more organized way.
- Immediate Past President Pecchenino asked about the financial output for next year and what are the high level priorities and conversations that are happening with the Deans? What's the Provost's philosophy? Provost Guzman responded that we remain a university where the action occurs at the school level. He's having conversations that vary across schools. We are in the process of working on budgets. Are we seeing next year that we're particularly concerned about what is shaping the conversations? We're very comfortable with UG enrollment. It is the Provost's job to adapt to the reality that institutions have to be sober about managing their financial situation.
- A Senator asked about progress of the resolution with regard to compensation transparency and call for annual cost of living adjustment. The Provost stated that an individual faculty member can currently go to their dean to ask for a range for their position. The Academic Senate asked for faculty councils to be given all faculty positions be given in a single delivery. The deans agreed that if the faculty council asks, the dean will provide it. Regarding cost of living adjustment, merit increases are not separated into a cost of living increase and a separate merit increase. The university is keeping with the same model as in years past.
- A guest (James Moore) asked how do we handle the fact that the UCAR process and the Dornsife process is reviewed by the same office of the Provost. Provost Guzman explained that this is not a significant conflict as distinct from other schools. The deans remain at-will. Positions and the processes remain in the academic sense.
- A Senator asked the Provost to address the end of the Academic Achievement Award (AAA) and Exceptional Funding award. The AAA was originally put in place for a long time to attract high achieving students and allow them to take additional academic credits for free in addition to the ones they were taking for their other credits in order for a double major and a minor or a major and a double minor. It's not having a big impact on our recruiting success. A change in philosophy in which we are attempting to direct our financial aid more towards lower income students. The leadership didn't feel this program was justified and felt that funds could be more utilized for students in greater need. The university never wants to take away from students but it becomes a challenge when trying to manage funding and fund out resources.

## **Announcements**

- President Apostolos thanked John Matsusaka and the work he's doing on the Faculty handbook. The first read of the handbook will be in April and the second read and vote will occur at the May meeting.
- During the April and May meetings, council chairs will provide recaps on their work.
- President Apsotolos thanked Rima Jubran and the Nominations Committee for the upcoming election. Candidates will be introduced at the April meeting and ballots will be open for all faculty to vote for next year's Executive Board. She encouraged faculty councils to nominate and self-nominate for University and Academic Senate committees.

### **AI Impact on Curriculum**

The Senate broke into breakout groups to discuss how AI is impacting the curriculum being discussed across the schools. Specifically, are our offerings structured in a way that makes sense relative to what students could, in theory, do to demonstrate knowledge and are these conversations currently happening at department and unit levels?

### **Undergraduate Admissions/Enrollment Update and Discussion**

Kedra Ishop, VP for Enrollment provided updates around enrollment and undergraduate admission. The Undergraduate Admissions office will release decisions on Friday March 22nd with a 20,500 target for undergraduates. Decisions will happen in May. Financial aid has continued to be impacted by the FAFSA simplification. USC uses the CSS Profile, a more intrusive document on top of FAFSA who use institutional dollars to supplement aid. We're in a much better position than schools that only use FAFSA and we're able to move ahead for financial aid estimates for our financial aid applicants.

### **Q & A**

- A senator asked whether students receive a financial aid packet after decisions. VP Ishop stated that financial aid packets go out a couple of days after they receive the acceptance letter and this year, those packets will be structured to include estimates rather than itemized amounts which will be provided later.
- Immediate Past President Pecchenino asked where do we think our average yield is/should be? VP Ishop stated that our yield rate is between 40-43%. Most institutions are in single or low double digits. We don't anticipate them rising as an institution.
- A guest asked how the office works together with schools. VP Ishop explained that undergraduate admissions is fully centralized. Tangentially, who the school/department is interested in admitting is taken into consideration and that feeds into how reviewers are training. VP Ishop has conversations about capacity and yield regularly and that is turned over to the schools for recruitment.

- A Senator asked how is AI changing the student decisions approval process? Currently there is no AI in the decision process. What we'll do after this year is analysis of the process to understand where we are in the ChatGPT space. They are not turning a blind eye to the impact AI may have on admissions process improvements.

### **Student Relationship Policy Discussion**

Monique Allard, Vice President for Student Life, and Stacy Giwa, Vice President, Culture, Ethics, and Compliance, Chief Compliance Officer presented the [Consensual Relationships with Students Policy](#).

- A senator asked about the focus or limit to this policy on the undergraduate population and not the graduate population. VP Allard explained that graduate students are less likely to most amongst academic areas and there are some guidelines already in place for graduate students. Undergraduate students are very likely to move amongst academic units and departments and have opportunities in many areas.
- Vice President Jubran asked whether this policy addresses students that go off campus for internships or other programs. VP Giwa explained that it would depend on the individuals providing the internship; if they are not tied to the university in any way, this particular policy would not cover them.
- A guest asked about an undergraduate that is a year older than a faculty member. VP Giwa explained that the policy is not inherently about age but rather the experience and what the individuals are participating in. It is about the role of the undergraduate student and the faculty or staff in their professional capacity to foster that mission.

### **Adjournment**

President Apostolos adjourned the meeting at 3:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christal Young

Secretary General of the Academic Senate

March 2024 Minutes approved by the academic Senate on 18 September 2024  
(17 in favor, 0 against, 2 abstentions)