

# USC Staff Assembly

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
General Assembly Meeting – Friday, May 29, 2020  
Zoom Meeting

**Present:**

Abrahamyan, Ann  
Acevedo-Lam, Tanya  
Acosta, Dulce  
Adcook, Steve  
Akulov, Anton  
Alarcon, Patricia  
Almassizadeh, Renee  
Andalon, Tiffany  
Arce, Bertha  
Boeck, Kathleen  
Bonagofsky, Kathleen  
Boyd, Robert  
Brown, Amber  
Castaneda, Agustin  
Chesley, Erika  
Culpepper, Kristi  
Estrada, Laura  
Gorse, Michael  
Halfacre, Gloria  
Hinojosa, Shannon  
Hoang, Queena  
Jacobs, Anette Jeltsje  
Jebavy, Erin  
Jones, Michelle  
Kidder, Eric  
Kirchner, Jake  
Lee, Paul

Lewis, Kierra  
Low, Theodore  
Luna, Sarah  
Malan, Mark  
Martinez, Naomi  
Mizushima, Linda  
Mico, Brian  
Morataya, Claudia  
Nieto, Lou  
Ochoa-Springer, Liliana  
Olivos Romero, Deborah  
Reano, Cory  
Ramirez, Sergio  
Reyes, Natasha  
Rivera, Lillian  
Sandhu, Juggy  
Schroth, Richard  
Sinclair, Sandry  
Turner, Philip  
Vazquez, Lydia  
Wang, Jonathan  
Welch, Ryan  
Williams, Debbie  
Williams, Even  
Yu, Jenny

**Absent:**

Aguilar, Carmen  
Ault, Vannesa  
De la Rosa, April  
De Vera Mata, Nicole  
Gallegos, Lisa

Lynn, Crystal  
Ortiz, Bryan

1 Erika Chesley, Staff Assembly President, called the meeting to order at 9:01AM.

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3 Words of welcome were extended to all assembled and President Chesley  
4 congratulated all assembly members who graduated this spring.

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6 **Guest Speaker: Chip Zukoski, Provost; Felicia Washington, Senior Vice**  
7 **President, Human Resources; Marisol Marks, Associate Vice President, Strategic**  
8 **Communications**

9 Felicia Washington thanked everyone for their hard work. Aware of rumors circulating  
10 that has no context. President Folt and her team are working hard and are sticking to  
11 three principles.

- 12 - Health and Safety
- 13 - Education and Research (Academic Mission)
- 14 - Continue in investment to recover faster and come out stronger

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16 Chip Zukoski thanked everyone for their hard work and resilience. They are going  
17 ahead with Project Restart and it is very chaotic because there are so many threads  
18 and they are so entangled.

- 19 - Financial Response (Income)
  - 20 o 1/3 Comes from tuition and fees
  - 21 o 1/3 Keck Hospital
  - 22 o 13% Research
  - 23 o 7% Contribution spending (gifts that come into the University)
  - 24 o 5% Auxiliary enterprises (Dorms and meal plans)
  - 25 o 5% Sales (dental clinics and pharmacy)
  - 26 o 4% Investment Related
- 27 - Expense
  - 28 o 59.6% Compensation (Employee Benefits and Pay)
  - 29 o 34.6% Other (Materials & Supplies (\$1.4B), Payments to partners for  
30 online programs (\$131.8M), Utilities (\$86.1M), Rentals and leases  
31 (\$62.1M), Equipment and Library Collections (\$57.6M)
  - 32 o 4.6% Professional services (\$115M for the health system)
  - 33 o 1.2% Travel
- 34 - Required Costs
  - 35 o 2019-2020 \$100M essential functions
  - 36 o 2020-2021 \$60-110M additional costs (still being evaluated)
  - 37 o 2020
    - 38 o January-February 2020
      - 39 o 5% of the budget still needed to be evaluated before COVID  
40 hit.
      - 41 o Student health insurance has gone up, the wellness for  
42 employees, carry bonds we borrowed for more money.
      - 43 o How do we keep ourselves safe from cyber-attacks?
      - 44 o Built out HR functions to help support faculty and staff.

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- COVID -19 hit
  - \$18M anticipated in decline in state funding for education
  - Before COVID crisis we had \$100M in new central costs that was necessary to mitigate substantial risk. Costs are expected to increase by another \$60-110M in FY21.
  - \$500M is 5% of our total revenue that comes in and how do we close that gap?
    - FEMA might give some money but not enough.
    - \$30M came into the hospital from the CARES Act to help
    - If the government restricts students from other countries that could affect us.
    - Borrowing?
      - Costs are long-term and this may affect us for 3-5 years.
      - We have already borrowed \$500M. Market won't support us to take out more unless we take out very high interest rates.
      - Would use borrowed money to handle costs which we can't do.
    - Endowment?
      - \$6B endowment
      - It is tied up in contracts with donor and have to use it where they specified it to go.
      - Don't want to mortgage the future as it will hurt future students.
    - Revenue Growth?
      - How do we do this?
      - Takes time which we don't have as we have to figure out next year's budget now.
      - Will still work on it but won't generate enough money.
    - Cost Savings?
      - Our key area are people so we don't want to diminish that.
      - Preserving positions because it will weaken us if we cut jobs.
      - Initial actions (could help with ¼ of the amount we need for next year).
        - Salary Freeze
        - Hiring Pause
        - Travel Pause
      - Procurement and benefit changes
        - Professional services
        - Other Procurement
        - Health Benefits

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- IT
- Unit Level
  - Cuts in each unit (5%, 10%, 15%)
  - Not personnel related
  - Academic and administrative units.
- How do we close the gap? Looking at things that are reversible and would keep jobs.
  - Retirement benefit change- Pause retirement contributions
    - Stop all University contributions (\$127-140M)
    - Doesn't impact take home pay.
  - Progressive furloughs
    - Unpaid days off
    - More unpaid days off the more you make
    - Have a floor where no one takes furlough (looking at \$60-80K)
    - Would be over calendar year.
    - May generate \$25-90M
  - Reviewed every 6 months.
  - If revenues are less impacted than expected we could turn these cost savings off.
- Future
  - Continue our upward trajectory as a leading world-class research university
  - Grow revenue
  - Impactful research
- This data was shared with the Board of Trustees and the Academic Senate

Questions below were taken from either the chat or members asking directly.

Question: Would furloughs apply to all employees?

Answer: Yes to those making more than the "floor" amount.

Question: Would this affect the employees contributing to retirement?

Answer: No. This would only be the University matching (non elective 5% as well as the up to 5%).

Question: Can we use sick and vacation days to offset furloughs?

Answer: No. Furlough means they would be unpaid days.

Question: Would they apply to full time and part time faculty?

Answer: This would apply to teaching faculty but not sure about the part time employees.

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Question: Are we stopping bonuses and car payments?

Answer: Bonuses and benefits already contracted are not stopping. Would be in breach of contract if we did. Would affect new contracts going forward.

Question: For the unit level savings, does that incorporate spending on things like COVID supplies?

Answer: No we will make sure we are all safe and will have PPE equipment.

Question: Will there be changes in the number of employees employed?

Answer: There could be changes in the number of employees over the next year as things plan and evolve, but they will not be motivated by the need to close the COVID gap.

Question: Why are you looking at the retirement?

Answer: Retirement is not contractual and everything is up for review going forward.

Question: When would the change in retirement take place?

Answer: Not until January 2021 when the next benefit phase starts.

Question: How long will these freezes and pauses last?

Answer: Things will get clearer as we move forward but looking at 3-5 years for a complete recovery. We want to continue to hire good staff and faculty in the future.

Question: What is the floor for furloughs?

Answer: Looking at \$60-80K.

Question: Are you still working on the Minors on Campus policy?

Answer: Yes we are still working on it.

Question: If someone is brought back for a single shift for one day and not able to work the rest of the time until June 30<sup>th</sup>, are they still eligible for COVID Admin Leave?

Answer: Yes they can continue using it if they are brought back for only a single shift. It would end for people who are brought back to work their normal job and hours.

Additional Questions from the chat were taken by the Provost and will be answered at a future time.

Question: So you are talking about moving towards a centralized procurement?

Question: Any info regarding the winter recess days?

Question: How much will, extending the admin leave to the end of June, cost?

182 Question: For the current staff who have served as essential workers since March,  
183 do you plan to compensate with Hazard pay?  
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185 Question: How long are the retirement benefits estimated to be stopped?  
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187 Question: Right now are you leaning towards the 5, 10, 15% reductions from units?  
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189 Question: The gap between staff and Sr staff (Dean, VP) is huge. Is that being  
190 looked at?

191 Question: Can we save overhead by allowing some people to work 100% remotely?  
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193 Question: What protections will be put in place to respect unpaid days off -especially  
194 for exempt employees?  
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196 Question: When the furloughs are implemented, will vacation/sick day accruals be  
197 stopped as well?  
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199 Question: Will Winter Recess be cancelled or could those be considered furlough  
200 days?  
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202 Question: During the cultural sessions, we had staff from departments serving as  
203 facilitators. How can we expect staff to be vulnerable and share issues if their  
204 leadership is facilitating the session? We should have taken an unbiased approach.  
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### 206 **June Staff Monthly Recognition Award**

207 Chesley introduced Caitlin Marinovich who introduced and shared very kind words and  
208 sentiments on the June awardee, Gayle Friedmann, Student Services Advisor for  
209 Financial Aid. Friedmann said a few words and Chesley relayed that once we are back  
210 on campus, we would invite her to come to our meeting and celebrate her in person.  
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### 212 **Approval of April 24, 2020 General Assembly Meeting draft minutes**

213 Katie Boeck, Secretary, referenced the minutes that were distributed to the members in  
214 advance of the meeting for discussion and approval.  
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217 The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.  
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### 219 **Rules and Elections Committee**

220 Chair Phil Turner gave updates  
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- 222 • Withdraw the Secretary Election as there were no nominations and Boeck can  
223 continue.
- 224 • Postponing Elections
  - 225 ○ Encouraged anyone who has restrictions or challenges to work with  
226 Chairs for modification of service.
  - 227 ○ Will extend all members until we can do an election.

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- ITS has asked for a 90 day advance window on the list of employees for elections
  - Trojan Council- change of bylaws
    - Thought we needed a quorum but do not because it went through the committee and Executive Committee first. Just need a simple majority.
    - Turner moved that the language of the bylaws be amended to what was relayed on the screen)

## **Article VI: Provisions for Amendment, Change, or Dissolution**

### Request for Revision:

A request for a revision of the Constitution or Bylaws may come either from the Assembly itself or from the constituency. Requests from the Assembly shall be submitted to the Executive Committee by any full member of the Assembly, with a second of at least one-quarter of the members present at any regular business meeting of the Staff Assembly. Requests from the constituency may be submitted to the Executive Committee in the form of a petition bearing the valid signatures of a number of constituents equal to or greater than one-quarter of the number voting in the most recent general election for members of the Staff Assembly.

### Certification of Amendment:

The Executive Committee shall review the proposed amendment, obtain certification of any petition from the Executive Committee, and make recommendation for further action.

### Recommendation for Action:

If the sponsoring member or constituent group is not satisfied with the recommendation of the Executive Committee the recommended action may be challenged in the following manner: within the Staff Assembly, the proposed amendment may be brought to the floor with an appropriate motion and may be discussed in full session, if a majority of members present approve the motion to do so. The constituency may, upon petition of at least one-third of the number of constituency members voting in the last general election, bring the proposed amendment directly to the ballot. All proposed amendments recommended favorably by the Assembly or by petition of the constituency shall be voted upon by the constituency in the next general election. A majority vote of those casting ballots will determine the outcome.

Step 1 -

A request for a revision of the Constitution or Bylaws may come either from the Assembly itself or from the constituency. Requests from the Assembly shall be submitted to the Executive Committee by any full member of the Assembly, with a second of at least one-quarter of the members present at any regular business meeting of the Staff Assembly.

Step 2 -

The Executive Committee shall review the proposed amendment, obtain certification of any petition from the Executive Committee, and make recommendation for further action.

Step 3 -

All proposed amendments recommended favorably by the Assembly or by petition of the constituency shall be voted upon by the constituency in the next general election. A majority vote of those casting ballots will determine the outcome.

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- 238           ○ Turner opened the floor for questions and comments.
- 239                     ▪ Member mentioned concern that this could be abused by future
- 240                     presidents and wouldn't make them bring information/ votes back to
- 241                     the body. Turner responded that the bylaws and constitution allow
- 242                     for things to be changed and undo a resolution but would require a
- 243                     75% quorum to undo.
- 244                     ▪ Member asked what the Academic Senate does. Chesley will find
- 245                     out.
- 246                     ▪ Member suggested additional verbiage should be added that the
- 247                     President would abstain from a vote and bring back the vote to the
- 248                     assembly.
- 249                     ▪ Mark Malan made a motion to have the Rules and Elections
- 250                     Committee work on additional verbiage and take it back to the
- 251                     Executive Committee. Robert Boyd seconded.
- 252                     ▪ Vote results: Yes: 31 No: 0 Abstain: 5

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### **Scholarship Committee**

256 Chair Gloria Halfacre gave an update. There have been 17 application submissions.  
257 Looking at extending the deadline to give people more time.

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### **Reorganization Committee**

260 Co-Chairs Renee Almassizadeh and Brian Mico gave a recap.

- 261       - We are not a representative body from everyone coming from the various parts
- 262       of the University.
- 263       - Looked at how many staff there were and how many we represent.
- 264       - 60 members each represent 232 employees
- 265       - The three options
- 266           ○ Proposal 1- Direct Representation

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**PROPOSAL # 1**

Preliminary & Pre-Decisional

**One seat for every 232 employees – direct representation model**

1) Keck Medicine of USC	26) Auxiliary Services	50) School of Pharmacy and School of Architecture
2) Keck Medicine of USC	27) Auxiliary Services	51) Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, Roski School of Art and Design, Iovine and Young Academy, and Fisher Museum of Art
3) Keck Medicine of USC	28) Auxiliary Services	52) Rossier School of Education and Bovard College
4) Keck Medicine of USC	29) Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences	53) University Advancement and Capital Construction
5) Keck Medicine of USC	30) Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences	54) Sol Price School of Public Policy and Thornton School of Music
6) Keck Medicine of USC	31) Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences	55) Office of Research and Leonard Davis School of Gerontology
7) Keck Medicine of USC	32) Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences	56) Gould School of Law and Office of Legal Affairs and Professionalism
8) Keck Medicine of USC	33) Viterbi School of Engineering	57) Human Resources & USC Credit Union
9) Keck Medicine of USC	34) Viterbi School of Engineering	58) School of Cinematic Arts, School of Dramatic Arts, and Kaufman School of Dance
10) Keck Medicine of USC	35) Viterbi School of Engineering	59) Dworak-Peck School of Social Work and USC Libraries
11) Keck Medicine of USC	36) Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry	60) Office of the Comptroller, University Finance, Strategic and Global Initiatives, Communications, The Graduate School and Administration
12) Keck Medicine of USC	37) Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry	
13) Keck Medicine of USC	38) Administrative Operations	
14) Keck Medicine of USC	39) Administrative Operations	
15) Keck School of Medicine	40) Facilities Management Services	
16) Keck School of Medicine	41) Facilities Management Services	
17) Keck School of Medicine	42) Information Technology Services	
18) Keck School of Medicine	43) Marshall School of Business	
19) Keck School of Medicine	44) Enrollment Services	
20) Keck School of Medicine	45) Athletics	
21) Keck School of Medicine	46) Office of the Provost	
22) Keck School of Medicine	47) Student Affairs and President's Office	
23) Keck School of Medicine	48) University Relations and External Relations	
24) Auxiliary Services	49) Financial and Business Services and Investment Office	
25) Auxiliary Services		

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o Proposal 2- Unit Based Membership

**PROPOSAL # 2**

Preliminary & Pre-Decisional

This proposal primarily allocates seats based on the unit that the individual is an employee of. 5 units have more than one seat from the get-go due to the size of their staff. Three additional seats are set aside for extra non-exempt employees to ensure that they are fairly represented (at least 9 of the 60 seats will be non-exempt employees/15%).



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o Proposal 3- Hybrid model for seat allocation

**PROPOSAL # 3**

Preliminary & Pre-Decisional

This proposal allocates 30 seats based upon unit and the other 30 seats are distributed using other metrics. This is likely the closest to our current model but ensures representation.



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- Assembly was broken out into breakout rooms for a 15 minute discussion and came back to share the thoughts.

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- Proposal 1
    - Not a lot of positives. More negatives
    - Too many Keck Staff especially when meetings are at UPC
    - No real representative if two schools have to share one seat
    - Does Keck have their own assembly?
    - Would their schedules allow for people to attend meetings?
  - Proposal 2
    - A lot of units even with 50 aren't represented
    - What happens when new units come on board?
    - How are we flexible?
    - How do we change when we add or lose areas?
    - Could look at this every 5 years.
    - Positive that it does represent all areas.
    - How do we assign a seat when no one presents themselves?
    - How do we reach out to units and help get interest?
    - How do we gauge interest?
    - Would we have to have additional rules for someone who would come in in case someone has to leave and what if they don't represent that area that left?
  - Proposal 3
    - Biggest concern is that it is more of a senatorial base and just gives unit a voice
    - The organizations that are squeezed together didn't seem to make sense like why is Roski with Kaufman and not with architecture? Almassizadeh responded that she did her best to put areas with similar numbers together and that this list wasn't set in stone. It was more of an example.
    - Things change over time and areas get larger but in this area it wouldn't matter because equal representation.
    - All have a focus of what group you work in and not geographically located. Example someone from Engemann could say that they represent Keck because they are a part of Keck but would have no idea what is going on at Verdugo or HSC.
    - A member suggested a Swiss example where things are still sent out to constituents but certain levels are still voted by assembly.
    - Does Academic Senate only represent faculty on the teaching side or do they also have representatives from the medicine side of things?
    - Can't really have one body that represents everyone.
    - There would be additional seats and the hope is that it would create geographical areas.
- Would like to let people have more time to talk.
  - Will send out a poll next Monday to everyone to have them rank the three proposals.
  - Then the committee could talk about it more.
  - Need to move forward to the next level.

- 323 - Almassizadeh opened the floor up for discussion. Questions come either from  
324 chat or members asking in person.
- 325 ○ Was looking at just the number of staff members in each area and  
326 calculating with math the different areas.
  - 327 ○ One member was concerned that libraries is always lumped with the  
328 Provost Office but they never think of themselves under them. The  
329 concerns are that are the needs of the libraries being met under the  
330 Provost.
  - 331 ○ One member thought that proposal 3 is the most viable since it is similar  
332 to what we have now. They did think it was important to have equitable  
333 representation as well as wiggle room if we grow. Group 1 thought that  
334 even if we gave representation to a certain area then we won't necessarily  
335 know if someone has any interest.
  - 336 ○ Almassizadeh said it would require rewriting of the bylaws, but nothing is  
337 final and we are just having a discussion.
  - 338 ○ One member was concerned that if we nominate someone from Keck and  
339 they don't come, then we are wasting a seat and we won't have a quorum.  
340 The way we have it now is that if people are interested then they come  
341 and show up. If more people from Keck nominate themselves and are  
342 elected then they will have a way to join. We shouldn't be pushing people  
343 into seats who aren't interested.
  - 344 ○ A member said more information is needed before we can make a  
345 decision. Maybe have a separate assembly at Keck and then have  
346 representatives come to the main assembly.
  - 347 ○ Another member said that the staff group is larger than the faculty group.  
348 There is not going to be any realistic way to be representative of all units.  
349 Worried that people might not be that interested and are just nominated by  
350 a supervisor or elected by their group and they may not be as committed  
351 to service.
  - 352 ○ A member likes the idea of finding representation from every unit and it  
353 does help small units get a voice and it isn't a popularity contest. Thought  
354 Keck staff would need to want their own assembly. Gave the example that  
355 the libraries thought they needed a voice so they voted from someone to  
356 represent them on the assembly. Would like to have a priority of small  
357 units so then they would vote for proposal 3.
  - 358 ○ A member cleared up that Keck Medicine is the hospital and Keck School  
359 of Medicine is the academic unit.
  - 360 ○ Almassizadeh reminded the assembly that we represent all non-union  
361 staff.
- 362 - From the chat:
- 363 ○ We are doing math on schools but can we see that we are staff? We want  
364 to represent the staff not the schools.
  - 365 ○ Our group (Proposal 1) was almost unanimous that it should be  
366 eliminated. Can we possibly agree that the proposal isn't viable?
  - 367 ○ There can be a mechanism to open unelected seats as being a one year  
368 term open to the entire staff.

- 369                   ○ What do we do if a school or group does not show up or does not want to  
370                   give a staff member the time to participate?  
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372 **Adjournment**

373 Meeting adjourned at 11:17AM.  
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375 **Next Meeting**

376 June 26, 2020 9-10:30 AM on Zoom.  
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378 Respectfully submitted,  
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380 Katie Boeck  
381 USC Staff Assembly Secretary

DRAFT