

USC Staff Assembly

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
General Assembly Meeting – April 30, 2021
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Culture Value Spotlight:
WELL-BEING | WE HONOR THE WHOLE PERSON

Present (42):

Acosta, Dulce
Adams, Teri
Azarraga, Arlene
Bartlett, Amber
Bodiwala, Sonali
Boeck, Kathleen
Bonagofsky, Kathleen
Caballero, Marc
Chesley, Erika
Coles, Richard
Culpepper, Kristi
DeFrank, Ginny
De Vera Mata, Nicole
Gorse, Michael
Gratz, Thomas
Halfacre, Gloria
Hansen, Jenny
Harper, Wade Thompson
Hernandez, Irma
Jester, Tonisha
Jones, Michelle

Kirchner, Jake
Lewis, Kierra
Mardirossian, Jackie
Mitchell-Huizar, Nichelle
Mizushima, Linda
Morataya, Claudia
Nieto, Lou
Ochoa-Springer, Liliana
Ortiz, Bryan
Padilla-Casillas, Sara
Preciado, Aida
Reyes, Natasha
Rivera, Lillian
Sandhu, Juggy
Taylor, Bernice
Turner, Philip
Vazquez, Lydia
Welch, Ryan
Welch, Zelinda
Wills, Olivia
Yu, Jenny

Absent (16):

Abrahamyan, Ann
Acevedo-Lam, Tanya
Alarcon, Patricia
Almassizadeh, Renee
Amescua, Josie
Andalon, Tiffany
Brown, Amber
De la Rosa, April

Estrada, Laura
Gallegos, Robert
Hinojosa, Shannon
Luna, Sarah
Lynn, Crystal
Schroth, Richard
Mico, Brian
Zuniga, Randolph

Guest (28)

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

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3 President Chesley extended words of welcome and acknowledged today was a wellness
4 day.

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6 **Culture Value Spotlight Presentation**

7 Allen Weiss, Ph. D., Professor of Marketing and Director of Mindful USC

8 Conducted a guided meditation experience to relax, calm, and connect with the body
9 versus a presentation.

10
11 **Approval of March 26, 2021, General Assembly Meeting draft minutes**

12 President Chesley referenced the minutes that were distributed to the members in
13 advance of the meeting for discussion and approval.

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15 Gloria Halfacre moved to approve the minutes. Jackie Mardirossian seconded. Motion
16 passed with majority voice consent. (Oppose – 0; Abstain - 1)

17
18 **May Recognition Award Recipient**

19 Frances Lezcano, Access Services Manager, Health Sciences Libraries, introduced
20 Brenda Marquez, Computer Services Consultant, Libraries, the May awardee.

21
22 **Committee Reports**

23 **Rules and Elections** (Phil Turner)

- 24 • Thank you all for participating.
- 25
- 26 • Elections completed Wednesday, April 28th without any incidents and the committee
27 is reviewing the results. Offline ballots still need to be processed. Votes will be
28 confirmed from April 29th – May 16th.
- 29
- 30 • 762 staff voted to cast a total of 4,192 votes. The nominee with the highest votes had
31 190 and the lowest had 24. There were 65 nominees on the final ballot.
- 32
- 33 • President Chesley indicated all 4 officer positions will be open for the next term
34 beginning July 1st.
- 35
- 36 • June 25 is the last session with the current body. At that time the body will vote and
37 select officers for the new term. Members wishing to run for an officer position should
38 submit their biography in early June so it can be posted before elections.
- 39
- 40 • The new members will serve from 2021-2023.
- 41
- 42 • President Chesley requested feedback to improve the voting process. She also
43 expressed her appreciation to the Rules and Election Committee for having to
44 conduct the election process so soon after the last election and hopes to have a
45 better system in place next year.
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47 **Communications** (Jenny Hansen)

- 48 • Sending survey next week to members to gather information for celebrations and
49 acknowledgments as well as committee submitted questions.

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- Staff Assembly would like to acknowledge members graduating in May. Send the following to the staff assembly email – 1) name, 2) program, 3) degree, and 4) picture. For those of you not graduating, but enrolled in a program, please send the same information with your expected graduation date.

President's Report

- President Chesley acknowledged the hard work of the Staff Engagement and Appreciation committee and thanked each team member by name. The Staff Engagement and Appreciation week activities were professionally done. There was good attendance at all the events and positive feedback.
- President Chesley, Tiffany Andalon, and Kristi Culpepper are actively involved with Community Advisory Board (CAB) which meets weekly.
- The Employee Benefits Advisory Committee (EBAC) is meeting this week. Richard Schroth and Shannon Hinojosa will have an update in the coming weeks.
- There will be a change to pedestrian access after May 3rd. Entering campus will no longer need to show Trojan Check. You will still need to complete the Trojan Check. IT will be working behind the scenes and can provide reports showing staff completing Trojan Check.
- We have agreed to partner with CWFL in the upcoming months to promote additional wellness/nutrition offerings. The upcoming Communications survey will include a few questions to assess staff needs.
- Break Out Groups (10 minutes)
 - 1) List your concerns for return to work. What information do you feel you need to have for return to work?
 - Equity – Who gets to work from home? Who must physically return to campus?
 - Compensation – Will there be overload pay for those that have to travel to campus? Will the COVID internet allowance go away?
 - Safety – How will social distancing be enforced? How to confront but be mindful? How to de-escalate conversations? How to report when you don't know their name? What tools will be available to use and signage?
 - 2) What issues or concerns, we as a body need to work on? This is not committee-specific.
 - Student interactions – how to speak with students about a situation in person? What protocols will be in place? How to set the culture? Will vaccines be required? Will students still be required to test? We don't know what they do when they leave the campus.
 - 3) What ideas do you have for guest speakers or topics for the General Assembly meetings?

Human Resources Update – Felicia Washington

99 Felicia Washington reflected on President Folt's "State of the University" address.

- 100
101 1) The vision of USC as a top global research university and "dynamic hub" for
102 innovation, prosperity, humanity, and social justice is forward-thinking. The
103 president also envisioned USC as a leader in sustainability, data sciences, and
104 artificial intelligence (AI). Human Resources (HR) would like to bring more AI and
105 data sciences to the university.
106
- 107 2) Mission-centered focus. We must keep in mind the mission of USC in all that we
108 do. This includes supporting faculty, staff, and students. The mission serves as a
109 check and balance. If we are not meeting the mission, we need to make changes
110 to continue to meet the mission. The central HR team is responsible for and
111 practices to promote an inclusive environment. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
112 (DEI), the Culture Journey, Center for Work and Family Life (CWFL), Wellness are
113 advancing and we need to keep it going.
114
- 115 3) Taking collaboration to a higher level. This is a bold vision, but changes cannot be
116 made without partnerships to foster collaboration. HR appreciates the partnership
117 with the Staff Assembly body. Also, the collaboration with Trojan Council to
118 address concerns and prepare for the future. It has been a challenge to be in touch
119 like we want to during the pandemic, but the Staff Assembly talent show was
120 dynamic and engaging which shows we can do anything, even virtually.
121
- 122 4) Use our collective strengths to take on challenges like climate change and
123 sustainability, racial and social equity, bringing ethical and humanistic perspectives
124 into STEM, upskilling and retraining to offset massive job losses, countering
125 political polarization, and so many others.
126
- 127 5) Operate with the highest ethical standards and behaviors in all that we do. We
128 must continue to strengthen our commitment to ethics and operate with the highest
129 ethical standards. It is necessary to build out employee relation functions so they
130 know where to go with concerns.
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132 Lastly, President Folt congratulated all USC employees with the USC Presidential
133 Medallion. Many work behind the scenes and are not recognized. All the work done
134 by staff is appreciated and the heart of the Trojan spirit.
135

136 Tim Bessolo provided an update on USC Workforce Planning.

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- 138 • A committee is working through the results of the survey launched in January.
139 We are looking for the right balance of return on-site and working remotely.
140 Hoping to have more information and provide guidance by June.
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- 142 • The University would like to bring the students back in the fall
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- 144 • The University is guided by the Los Angeles County Department of Human
145 Services (LADPH). They are still limiting on-site activities, but expecting a
146 change on June 15. USC is assuming that students will be able to return for the
147 fall semester.
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- USC Workforce Planning Overview - HR, Finance, and Office of the Provost are looking at the future of work approach with the administrative units. The planning design meetings looked at new ways to work. What does it look like now? What are the capabilities? What technology is available? How to collaborate? What is the culture?
 - Three areas of focus:
 - Work** - streamline to more effective
 - Workforce** – understand diverse skills and development needed for the future
 - Workplace** – the future potential of remote and hybrid location of work
 - Design series – break the mental fix, unlock new ways of thinking of work:
 - Review** – survey data, analyses
 - Define** - what is the future of work, vision statement, where we want to go, what is the mission?
 - Brainstorm** - ideation design session, explore, prioritize
 - Create** key activities to achieve the vision over a 3-year timeline
 - The goal of the exercise was for the participants to come up with a plan to align an effective strategy with the business need. This was an engaging process for leaders to walk through and design a future strategy.

171 The floor was opened for questions:

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- Pilot groups that conducted the process from beginning to end were Auxiliaries, Enrollment Services, and Information Technology. The HR partner led 8-12 members in each unit through the process.
 - It takes time to go through the process and business units may not be completed by June 15th.
 - June 15 is the expected re-opening date for the state of California. There is a lag between the state and LADPH. Higher education falls under LADPH guidelines.
 - The pandemic has empowered students to interact or connect with others differently. Do they still want in-person or virtual? How do we test? It may be necessary to start one way but be flexible to change as needed.
 - It will be up to unit leaders to make the business decision on how work needs to be completed. More mature units have committees to help with this process. These units are more transparent on how decisions are being made. Some leaders are not aware of what the lower administrative staff need to do when bringing everyone back. Leaders should be made aware of these concerns.

195 **Findings of Department of Public Safety (DPS) Community Advisory Board (CAB)**

196 Dr. Ange-Marie Hancock Alfaro & Dr. Erroll Southers Co-Chairs, USC DPS Community
197 Advisory Board. (President Erika Chesley, DEI Co-Chair Kristi Culpepper, and Assembly
198 Member Tiffany Andalon are members of the CAB)

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- Dr. Erroll Southers provided an overview and background of the CAB. He was recruited by President Folt to look at DPS. He established a 19-member advisory board of faculty, staff, neighbors, and students. The members were comprehensive and inclusive with pilot conversations held with the community and stakeholders. The committee reached out to key stakeholders to identify who to invite and what to ask. Students wanted to participate and understand the purpose of the CAB.
- The sessions were co-design and not just listening. It created empathy and a safe space to speak about the items to address.
- 24 recommendations are presented, based on the four pillars, and with the voice of the participants. Some recommendations are:
 - 1) Accountability – DPS has a memorandum of understanding with LAPD. This should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure the relationships are clear. CAB endorsed.
 - 2) Alternatives to armed response – Reallocate duties to others in the university for a more appropriate response. Rededicate resources best trained and equipped for a response. Collaborate and suggest community-based responses. Conducting a wellness check after 8 pm.
 - 3) Community care – DPS response is not the same as a municipal response. DPS should focus on community well-being as part of its mission.
 - 4) Transparency – DPS should emphasize and clearly publicize its mission. There are differences and similarities to LAPD and each serves a different purpose.

The floor was opened for questions:

- The CAB started with 44 recommendations and reduced them down to 24 by voting, prioritizing, and listening to feedback.
- The agenda includes using the community demographics to reimagine DPS community activities.
- Staff expressed DPS making people feel safe which was in contrast to how DPS made faculty and students feel.

Announcements

None

Next Meeting

General Assembly: May 28, 2021, 9:00 -11:00 am on Zoom.

Adjournment

Kristi Culpepper moved to close the meeting. Dulce Acosta seconded. Motion passed by unanimous voice consent. Meeting was adjourned at 10:58 am.

248 Respectfully submitted,
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250 Linda Mizushima
251 USC Staff Assembly Secretary
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APPROVED