

# USC Staff Assembly

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
General Assembly Meeting – Friday, April 24, 2020  
Zoom Meeting

## **Present:**

Abrahamyan, Ann	Lewis, Kierra
Acevedo-Lam, Tanya	Low, Theodore
Adcook, Steve	Luna, Sarah
Akulov, Anton	Malan, Mark
Almassizadeh, Renee	Martinez, Naomi
Andalon, Tiffany	Mizushima, Linda
Arce, Bertha	Morataya, Claudia
Ault, Vannesa	Nieto, Lou
Boeck, Kathleen	Ochoa-Springer, Liliana
Bonagofsky, Kathleen	Olivos Romero, Deborah
Boyd, Robert	Ortiz, Bryan
Brown, Amber	Reano, Cory
Castaneda, Agustin	Ramirez, Sergio
Chesley, Erika	Rivera, Lillian
Culpepper, Kristi	Sandhu, Juggy
De Vera Mata, Nicole	Schroth, Richard
Estrada, Laura	Sinclair, Sandry
Gorse, Michael	Turner, Philip
Halfacre, Gloria	Vazquez, Lydia
Hoang, Queena	Wang, Jonathan
Jebavy, Erin	Welch, Ryan
Jones, Michelle	Williams, Debbie
Kidder, Eric	Williams, Even
Kirchner, Jake	Yu, Jenny
Lee, Paul	

## **Absent:**

Acosta, Dulce	Jacobs, Anette Jeltsje
Aguilar, Carmen	Lynn, Crystal
Alarcon, Patricia	Mico, Brian
De la Rosa, April	Reyes, Natasha
Gallegos, Lisa	Welch, Zelinda
Hinojosa, Shannon	

1 Erika Chesley, Staff Assembly President, called the meeting to order at 9:02AM.

2  
3 Words of welcome were extended to all assembled.

4  
5 **May Staff Monthly Recognition Award**

6 Chesley introduced Dr. Lawrence Opas and Kathy Guzman who introduced and shared  
7 very kind words and sentiments on the May awardee, Michelle Najera, Institutional  
8 Coordinator of the Keck School of Medicine. Najera said a few words and Chesley  
9 relayed that once we are back on campus, we would invite her to come to our meeting  
10 and celebrate her in person.

11  
12  
13 **Approval of May 20, 2020 General Assembly Meeting draft minutes**

14 Katie Boeck, Secretary, referenced the minutes that were distributed to the members in  
15 advance of the meeting for discussion and approval.

16  
17 The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

18  
19 **Virtual Staff Appreciation Week**

- 20
- Chesley thanked Paul Lee and the Staff Appreciation Week Committee
  - The committee had less than two weeks and they have done an amazing job
- 21  
22

23 **Environment and Safety Committee**

- 24
- Chair Naomi Martinez said that she and her committee have helped with the  
25 social media ideas for the virtual staff appreciation week
  - Participation is getting higher every day and it is hard to pick a winner.
  - The Office of Sustainability did Earth Day events on Wednesday April 22, 2020.
  - The Sustainability Forum was well attended and Dr. Folt participated.
  - The Office of Sustainability Earth Day events were recorded and can be viewed  
30 here <https://green.usc.edu/events-2/>
- 31

32 **Discussion Topics**

- 33 - 2020 Elections
- It will be difficult to run the elections while we are social distancing
  - Hard for staff members who are interested in joining to run campaigns
  - Discussion was had about either postponing them until the fall or when we  
37 are back on camps
  - Need to extend those currently on the assembly who are expected to  
38 cycle out this year and stay until we can do an election
  - Chesley opened the floor for feedback
    - Concerns about people who may want to run may be on COVID  
42 Administrative Leave and may not have access to computers or  
43 their community.
    - May not be able to give everyone the voice they deserve because  
44 they don't have access.
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- Want everyone to be able to participate and reach everyone who is potentially able to be elected to Staff Assembly.
  - We don't know the exact number of people on admin leave.
  - Emails may get lost in the system with so much going on and takes away from being able to walk up to people and talk to them.
  - Could run the risk of not having enough non-exempt staff being able to run since they may not have the same access as exempt staff.
  - Should we do an extra year because we don't know if there is another surge and we might be sent home again?
    - We run the risk of losing all 60 people being up at the same time for election and lose the institutional knowledge.
  - Concern about some jobs not being kept in the long run due to money and not sure the University will bring people back.
  - Phil Turner told the assembly that 33 members will term out, 26 are on their first term, 7 are on their second term and are not eligible for re-election.
  - There are two things we need to consider: delaying the election and then extending the term.
    - Richard Schroth made a motion from the floor to extend the term of the 33 members who are due to cycle out until December 2020 or our return to campus if it is sooner. Ryan Welch seconded the motion.
    - Mark Malan suggested that the motion should be to temporarily suspend the election until we know more information about the fall semester. Rules and Elections will begin examining doing the elections online.
    - Malan amended the motion to suspend the election process for the 33 members who are due to cycle out. Anton Akulov seconded the motion.
    - The vote was held: from the chat box: Yes- 43 No- 0 Abstain- 0. From email: Yes-2 No-0 Abstain- 0
- Special Election for Officer
- Boeck needs to step down as secretary at the end of the semester. We will need to have an election to replace the secretary position.
  - Turner and the Rules and Elections Committee thought they could accept nominations for the next week and then send out bios to the body.
  - Can facilitate a special vote or a Qualtrics survey that can be a secure link sent to every member in which they can only vote once.
  - Executive Committee talked about having the vote before May 13<sup>th</sup> so we can do a vote and don't lose anyone on Administrative Leave.
  - If you are interested, please send bios to Turner by next Friday, May 1, 2020.

90 **Guest Speaker: Felicia Washington, Senior Vice President, Human Resources;**  
91 **Marisol Marks, Associate Vice President, Strategic Communications**

92 An update from HR was given. Felicia Washington thanked everyone for all that they  
93 are doing in tough conditions. She also enjoyed the coffee break with the staff on  
94 Tuesday and encouraged everyone to join the coffee break with President Folt at noon.

95 • Highlights

- 96 ○ Developed new ground-up guidelines including:
  - 97 ■ COVID-19 Guidelines
    - 98 ● Identifying essential employees
    - 99 ● Work from Home information
  - 100 ■ Interim Hiring Guidelines
- 101 ○ Developed Incident Reporting Tracking
  - 102 ■ Documented reporting process
  - 103 ■ Developed process flow
  - 104 ■ Created HIPAA-protected data collection SharePoint form
  - 105 ■ Notifications to trigger Clery analysis
- 106 ○ Employee compensation analysis that led to:
  - 107 ■ COVID-19 Paid Admin Leave through May 13, 2020
  - 108 ■ Implementation of Work From Home Technology Stipend
- 109 ○ Negotiated new Child Care contract
  - 110 ■ Both child care centers to remain open during COVID
  - 111 ■ Increased health, safety and cleanliness measures
  - 112 ■ Tuition pause for parents unable to use services
- 113 • HR COVID-19 Response
  - 114 ○ Proactive Communications
    - 115 ■ Employee FAQ site
    - 116 ■ Campus Services web page
    - 117 ■ Hiring Pause
    - 118 ■ Salary/Merit pause
    - 119 ■ Continuation of Performance Reviews
    - 120 ■ Advance notice to HR Partners for all employee notifications
    - 121 ■ 11 Zoom Meetings with HR Partners
  - 122 ○ Proactive Actions
    - 123 ■ Essential employee identification tools
    - 124 ■ Employee tracker (on-campus, off-campus, COVID leave, other  
125 leave)
    - 126 ■ Hiring requests governing group
    - 127 ■ Catastrophic Leave Donation program
    - 128 ■ HR COVID Project Management portal
    - 129 ■ Collaborations with Central Communications and Keck  
130 Communications
  - 131 ○ COVID Impact Tracking
    - 132 ■ Identification of work stream teams
    - 133 ■ Flow chart for tracking process
  - 134 ○ Responsive Communications
    - 135 ■ On-campus employee mandated safety requirements
    - 136 ■ On-campus employee mandated symptom checks
    - 137 ■ Informative Gateway Connect articles

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- Responsive Actions
    - Extending paid leaves
    - COVID Technology Work From Home Stipend
    - Renegotiated favorable child care contract
    - Extended pay to all student workers through end of Spring Semester
    - Validated employee visa compliance
    - Adopted virtual I-9 process
    - Ensuring employee relations cases continue being effectively investigated
    - COVID Employee Support Fund
  - Forward-Looking Efforts
    - Analysis and modeling to ensure preparation for what's to come
    - Developing university-wide approach to financial modeling as it related to labor planning, including continuation of health benefits
    - Benchmarking against other universities and industries
    - Understanding new regulations and relaxed government protocols
  - OCR Reporting Requirements Update
    - April 30, 2020
      - Provide OCR with a proposed implementation plan for the Title IX Office data and tracking systems/processes
      - Provide OCR with a draft of revised Title IX Procedures
    - June 1, 2020
      - Provide OCR with documentation of the steps taken to date to address impacts to USC's climate and access programs. Provide OCR with an outline of any climate assessments and plans developed
      - Provide OCR with plan to notify students and former students and current and former SHC employees who worked with Tyndal about individual remedies, and to evaluate appropriate remedies and restore access to the University's programs and activities.
    - June 15, 2020
      - Issue annual report to President, Provost and Chair of the Board of Trustees regarding implementation of culture and climate plan and letter to the community re: the same.
      - Provide OCR with a copy of the annual report and letter regarding implementation of the climate assessment and remediation plan.
    - July 15, 2020
      - Provide OCR with proposed revisions to the employee and supervisor performance evaluation forms and processes
      - Provide OCR with a progress report regarding implementation of the data and tracking system/process
      - Provide OCR with documentation showing completion of the Title IX employee review
      - Provide OCR with draft training materials/information to be used at employee and student trainings.

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- Provide OCR with copies of all communications with students and employees regarding notice of individual remedies
  - Provide OCR with copies of all communications with Patients I-9 (Employment Verification) regarding the availability of individual remedies
  - Provide specified Nurse Supervisor with documentation OED notice of outcome and offer to conduct investigation/ remedy impacts of potential retaliation.
  - Provide OCR with a spreadsheet of reports/ complaints of sexual harassment and sexual violence pending and closed as of the last day of the academic term
  - Summer 2020
    - Supervisory reviews of past complaints 2016-2/2020
  - Mid-August 2020
    - Provide OCR with self-monitoring assessment report regarding the University's provision of a prompt and equitable response to reports/ complaints of sex discrimination and Title IX statistics.
    - Provide OCR with a copy of the written self-assessment report provided annually by the Title IX Coordinator to internal stakeholders
  - August 24, 2020
    - Provide OCR documentation that USC has adopted its revised Title IX procedures
  - Mid-September 2020
    - Provide OCR with documentation that remedial actions, if any, arising from the Title IX employee review have been implemented for any relevant employees or former employees
    - Provide documentation that the University has disseminated its revised Title IX procedures to students and employees.
  - Mid-October 2020
    - Provide OCR with a spreadsheet of reports or complaints of sexual harassment and sexual violence pending and closed as of the last day of the academic term
  - November 20,2020
    - Provide OCR with documentation that the University has implemented sexual harassment training for students, staff and employees.
  - Leave Donation
    - Didn't have one before and have created one
    - Committee included people from all across campus
    - Catastrophic Leave program will allow people to donate vacation time to people who exhausted the vacation, sick, winter leave time, and PTO during emergencies (The Governor of California has declared this an emergency).
      - The person who donates will not be taxed, but the person who accepts it will.

- 230                   ▪ It will end when the disaster ends.
- 231                   ○ Still working on getting approvals.
- 232 • Employee Support Fund
- 233                   ○ Link to all support funds: <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/support-funds/>
- 234                   ○ Link to support fund FAQs: <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/support-funds-faqs/>
- 235
- 236                   ○ Specifically designed for employees who were being affected by COVID-19 so that they could apply for funds
- 237
- 238                   ○ Simple application that is reviewed by a team. If accepted, the team will notify employee and work with payroll.
- 239
- 240                   ○ For employees who receive funds, Federal Taxes will not be taken out. California State Taxes will, but the fund will cover the cost of the taxes.
- 241
- 242 • Employee Experience
- 243                   ○ Would like to know what people are experiencing working from home and would like input on the following Questions
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246 Q: How do we keep our employees engaged with the University, with the community?

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249 A: Continue on-line activities such as the ones done during Virtual Staff Appreciation Week.

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251

252 A: Include Vision and Voices.

253

254 A: Mindfulness meditation with Mark Miller Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at noon.

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256

257 A: Create on-line group activities such as fencing, meditation, USC Competition Badges

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259

260 A: Give staff an additional 30 minutes of break to participate in on-line mindfulness/ mediation classes to help relieve stress.

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263 A: Additional on-line group activities (for small groups) anything that can give new/ additional purpose and decrease anxiety.

264

265

266 Q: What are some of the challenges that people are having working from home and how can the University help?

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268

269 A: Create a staff-wide needs based survey to see what the concerns are.

270

271

272 A: People are concerned about what happens after May 13<sup>th</sup>.

273

274 A: How to address departments that are short staffed. For example, if we have someone who needs to go on leave during this time are we able to hire for coverage?

275

276  
277 A: Is the administration looking into allowing staff members to take home some of  
278 their equipment from on-campus and using it during the work from home period?  
279  
280 A: What if you have employees who are concerned about going back?  
281  
282 A: Does USC have a phase plan to reopen? Support services given a day or two  
283 to make sure they are ready? The concern that some of us may be higher risk  
284 and given more time before returning.  
285  
286 A: Could staff potentially be allowed to continue working remotely if schools,  
287 childcare, summer camps, etc. remain closed?  
288  
289 A: KSOM is starting to look at it, but it would be nice to have something from the  
290 University regarding equipment.  
291  
292 Q: What are the top three things that employees could have to make work from  
293 home easier?  
294  
295 A: Equipment such as chairs or better computers.  
296  
297 A: Maybe have an enterprise account with a company that does short-term  
298 rentals of furniture, equipment, printers, scanners etc.  
299  
300 Q: What are things that will help people feel more comfortable coming back to  
301 work such as space etc.?  
302  
303 A: Welcome Back Party  
304  
305 A: Protocols for external facing departments such as admissions and outreach.  
306  
307 A: Better protocols for purchasing food on campus.  
308  
309 A: It will be hard for parents whose kids are still out of school.  
310  
311 A: Very clear social distancing requirements for physical spaces; we need clear  
312 direction from our leadership on these specifics.  
313  
314 A: Will cleaning protocols be maintained even if the pandemic is over especially  
315 with the frequent use of elevators, restrooms, and frequent face to face contact  
316 with students, staff, and faculty?  
317  
318 A: An available on-line plan when and how we can go back including protective  
319 equipment needed for coming back.  
320



321 A: Sufficient supplies in place- plenty of hand sanitizer stations, plenty of staff/  
322 supplies for housekeeping to keep public spaces clean and safe. If masks are  
323 required, possibly having supply of masks to distribute or for periodic cleaning or  
324 changing out.

325  
326 A: A plan from leadership of what will be done should the virus come back again.

327  
328 A: Cleaning of all spaces should be more than twice a week when we return.

329  
330 A: Reconsidering regular business hours, allowing more staggering of shifts early  
331 in the morning, late in the evening, or on weekends- particularly in confined  
332 workspaces with small cubicles where staff are otherwise in close contact.

- 333
- 334 ● Return to Work
    - 335 ○ There is a team working on the return to work and opening back up safely
    - 336 ○ Will the public health mandate be such that we have to have access point
    - 337 to make sure people are symptom free coming to work? Will we be
    - 338 wearing masks?
    - 339 ○ There may be some employees who continue working from home and
    - 340 may have some that work with students come back.
    - 341 ○ From chat: I have been asked by several staff if there is any chance of
    - 342 “hazard” pay for essential workers who have to be on campus? IE FMS,
    - 343 DPS, Housing etc. Given they are putting themselves at risk?
      - 344 ■ They have received this question and there is no answer at this
      - 345 time.
      - 346 ■ They are looking at it more on the health care side for the workers
      - 347 who are in direct contact with COVID-19 patients.
    - 348 ○ From chat: Has there been discussion about being lax with the maximum
    - 349 accrual of vacation or sick days?
      - 350 ■ There have been talks but no decision at this time.
  - 351 ● Definition of COVID-19 Administrative Leave
    - 352 ○ Question came up earlier in the meeting about the interaction with the
    - 353 University and the difference between COVID-19 Administrative Leave
    - 354 and other leave.

355  
356 Q: Should someone out on COVID-19 leave still be reading email, still be a part  
357 of departmental meetings.

358  
359 A: Washington said the expectation is that people should be engaged as they  
360 can be because the definition is more around not being able to do their actual  
361 job.

362  
363 Q: H many staff members do we have out on COVID-19 leave?  
364 A: Around 1,300 but might be closer to 1,400.

365

366 Q: The Provost Policy about minors on campus was passed in November 2018  
367 and nothing has been done about it. It would be nice to have very clear policies  
368 about what do parents do when their children's schools have vacation days and  
369 parents have no other option then to bring children to work. Is something being  
370 done about this?

371  
372 A: Washington wasn't aware of the policy and said she would look into it.  
373

- 374 - Chesley noted that we needed to end the meeting, but would like to reconvene  
375 next week to talk about the four things under discussion that were not talked  
376 about.
- 377 - Turner asked if we could do it the following week so we could also vote on the  
378 Secretary position.
- 379 - Gloria Halfacre moved to end the meeting now and reconvene in two week to  
380 work on the following discussion points:
- 381 ○ Scholarship Program
  - 382 ○ Monthly Recognition Program
  - 383 ○ Charge for Staff Member Handbook and Appeals Board
  - 384 ○ Telework From Home Policy
  - 385 ○ Reorganization
  - 386 ○ Election for Secretary
- 387 - Claudia Morataya seconded the motion.
- 388 - The vote was held: from the chat box: Yes- 45 No- 0 Abstain- 0. From email:  
389 Yes- 2 No-0 Abstain- 0  
390

391  
392 **Adjournment**

393 Meeting adjourned at 10:49 AM.

394  
395 **Next Meeting**

396 TBD

397  
398 Respectfully submitted,

399  
400 Katie Boeck

401 USC Staff Assembly Secretary