

# FACULTY SENATE MEETING

April 3, 2019

## 1. Call to order.

CHAIR MARCO VALTORTA called the meeting to order.

## 2. Corrections and Approval of Minutes

CHAIR VALTORTA - called for corrections to the minutes of the March 6th meeting. There were none and the minutes were approved.

## 3. Invited Guests

GUEST MASON LUFF (Secretary of Academics Student Government) - advocated for the Faculty Senate's support and further, for the general support of all USC faculty in the voluntary adoption of a university-wide Syllabus Bank.

Over the past 2 months he has met with various department chairs to learn how they currently collect syllabi from professors each semester and to discuss the feasibility and benefits of integrating this Syllabus Bank into that method of collection. Through this process, he learned that while syllabi collection is thriving and current in some departments it is nonexistent in others. He stated that integrating the Syllabus Bank into each undergraduate department's current method of syllabi collection is a worthwhile endeavor to increase academic accessibility that, with the proper motivation and organization, can be accomplished without excessive amounts of individual effort from a faculty standpoint.

The Syllabus Bank is an online database that is accessible only to USC students, faculty and staff. It was purchased by the university in what seems to be Spring 2015 based on how far the data goes back and that has the capacity to archive all university syllabi. Each semester it updates class listings and professor listings. A syllabus is often viewed as the intellectual property of the professor who made it. The Syllabus Bank is afforded the same University privacy protections as Blackboard where currently most syllabi exist. Once uploaded into the platform, students can search syllabi by 4- letter subject designator, course number and instructor.

Why create a syllabus bank? Ultimately the goal of this initiative is to provide students with insight on class content prior to registration. From many interactions and discussions with other students about this initiative, he knows that such insight is desired by students and can serve a real purpose. The current class descriptions offered to students on the bulletin are seen by the student body as insufficient, and more in-depth descriptions of some classes that have been made available while meeting with the department chairs proved too elusive to locate.

The syllabus bank, if seriously accepted by faculty, would offer students a much-desired platform to better understand the content, goals, and requirements of a class. To give a better

idea of what the syllabus bank is meant to be in practical terms, he highlighted some of the points made in the disclosure paragraph towards the bottom of the screenshot. Quoted here, “The information collected in the Syllabus Bank is subject to change at the professor's discretion.” “Not intended to serve any contractual obligation.” “Simply a snapshot of what was distributed for a particular course in a given term.” “That professors frequently update their syllabus each term” and that “information in this system should only be used to get a better understanding of the content covered.”

These points speak to some of the concerns about this initiative raised by department chairs throughout his meetings thus far. Due to the reality that syllabi change throughout the year and the potential reality in which students are referencing syllabi from previous years to schedule classes for the next semester it's fair to worry about students complaining about such discrepancies for whatever reason.

The explicit and invisible enumeration that this database, from a student perspective, is for better understanding of class content only, and not for obtaining actual, current class syllabi works to calm such worries.

Another concern he's heard is that this will be used as a tool for avoiding difficult classes. His response is that students who actively seek to avoid difficult classes are already doing so, by way of [ratemyprofessor.com](http://ratemyprofessor.com) and that the students who still end up in classes that are too difficult for them end up dropping out or failing out. If a fully functional syllabus bank were to exist, students would have a better idea of what a class entails thus potentially decreasing the amount of drop classes in the add/drop period.

To date, there have been 272 syllabi uploaded into the syllabus bank coming from Language, Literatures and Cultures, Statistics, Geography, Management Science and Philosophy among other departments which indicates they understand the potential of this initiative but also that his voice has not been nearly loud enough, as there are over 8000 Spring 2019 courses listed in the in the database.

In this endeavor, he is not seeking a complete upload of all syllabi for every class listed in the database but instead to promote the upload of a viable base of Spring 2019 and Fall 2020 undergraduate syllabi over the coming months.

He displayed how a professor or department chair can upload syllabi into the program. So far syllabi have been uploaded by faculty into the syllabus bank one of 2 ways: if the department regularly maintains syllabi department chairs have gained consent from their faculty to task department administrators with transferring those syllabi into the syllabus bank.

If the department does not already regularly maintain syllabi, department chairs have asked via e-mail or department meetings professors in their department to upload their spring 2019 syllabi into the database individually. A process which he favors because it distributes necessary uploads.

He demonstrated how to use the syllabus bank website ([sc.edu/syllabusarchive](http://sc.edu/syllabusarchive)). Questions can be sent to him at [mluff@email.sc.edu](mailto:mluff@email.sc.edu).

GUEST DOUG FOSTER (VICE President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer) updated some of the projects that are going on across the university, spoke about a fairly transformative initiative that his office is thinking about, and talked about how faculty are engaged with the IT organization.

From an initiative perspective, USC has just implemented the People Soft HR project. It's a huge project that also brought in an identity and access management piece. It is a consolidation of identities across the system and makes signing into systems simplified. Both of these systems are 30 years old so there's been quite a lot of work going in to bringing that together. The HR project will take 70 percent of the paper out of the process and streamlines the processes immensely.

Another big project is email migration. They are moving all faculty and staff to cloud platform. That is where all the student e-mail is today and by June the rest of faculty and staff will be there. That is a much more secure platform that allows collaboration across all of USC's constituents in a much easier fashion.

They are upgrading the core network which will have 10 times the capacity in speed when they're done. USC will be sort of leading in that space in this state. It's huge for researchers but just general performance should improve as well.

They have also done a couple things in classroom support. It is really challenging for faculty to be standing in front of a group of students and the light bulb goes out or these kind of problems happen. The challenge that his office has had is USC's classroom utilization is above 90 percent. It is really hard for his staff to get into the rooms to actually do work, so they have started an after-hours process which is complicated. They have to get security, keys, a buddy system in case someone gets hurt, the police have to be notified but they have started this process so they can start to get into classrooms after hours and hopefully start improving that process.

They are in negotiation right now for a 24 x 7 service desk. So that means it will be open and available all day every day.

Some faculty have told him they are unaware of the fact that USC has a research cluster in place. It's at about 100 percent utilization right now. That doesn't mean faculty can't get in it, it just means they have got it queued completely. They've fully utilized the current cluster and they have plans right now of building another cluster and more resources. Storage will probably also be a big component of that.

There's an initiative for a concept called Unite IT at the moment. And what it is really about is bringing the IT community across all of the units, not just this campus but across the system together. There are times they end up on the opposite sides of the rope pulling against each other and this initiative is meant to try to streamline those things. Make the experience simpler and easier and bring some efficiencies and effectiveness to the way they basically perform the IT functions here. It is in its infancy. They are putting together a group of constituents from the comprehensive campuses, all of the school IT people come together and it will be project-based.

They will look at individual services to see how it could be done better. Research computing could be one, all sorts of these processes that faculty deal with every day.

He spoke about governance and how the faculty engages with IT across campus and they would like as much engagement as possible at this point. There is a Faculty Senate IT committee that is sort of part of this group and his office engages with them regularly. They are working on a survey that was done of faculty for IT needs, that comes back into that group and that group is putting together actions on what kinds of things do they need to do to improve services.

His office has a faculty and staff advisory group that is about 30 people. They come together, they break out into small teams and they first they choose problems that they want to address and then they go write reports and make recommendations to him on. They have written at this point 13 separate reports and his office has taken action on all of those things. There are 5 more coming in this semester they're working on.

Faculty are also involved in the Security Advisory Committee. That basically advises IT on what kinds of things can really be done, how intrusive it might be in the classroom, those kinds of things. There's also a Student Advisory Committee that brings together a group of students and they talk about what kinds of challenges they face. How they can work with IT to improve their experience on campus.

His office has started an IT Executive Board and it is the Provost, Chief Operating Officers, Chair of the Faculty Senate IT Committee, a Dean, and a student to bring a cross-section of the population together.

PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER YENKEY (International Business) – asked if there is a sense of what the university IT budget is relative to peer and aspirant institutions and where USC is technologically.

GUEST FOSTER – They are currently working on a benchmarking assessment. It is hard to tell because they can't really get apples-to-apples comparisons, people include different things in different budgets. He does not know that USC has a total financial investment challenge. Due to inefficiency and this effectiveness problem they are not getting the most out of the investment that they are getting. He will be able to answer that question probably in 6 months or so.

PROFESSOR EVE ROSS (School of Law) – asked about the synching with the cloud. This is the only time that she has ever lost data while it was telling her every few seconds that her data was saved in One Drive. She also asked about the Help Desk because her experience has been that whether she is using chat or the phone, every time she contacts the Help Desk about a problem she gets a different answer and it conflicts with what is on the website and it conflicts with the previous time that she asked about it. How are the Help Desk folks being trained and are there any changes planned?

GUEST FOSTER – Re: the synching problem, the reliability of those platforms as compared to what USC can set up internally is far superior, far superior. The investments that someone like Microsoft makes in these platforms dwarfs USC's investment so there could be something

related to the internal network or a connection problem there but he would have to get more specifics on that. He would be happy to talk with her directly.

The challenge of a service desk is the challenge of any IT organization, especially in higher education, is the diversity of requirement and the diversity of solution. A person would really have to be quite an expert to understand everything that goes on in this place. They have 300 plus applications officially. USC also has many different storage solutions as not everyone uses One Drive. So the issue is that the Service Desk getting that breath of understanding is really challenging. They train regularly and they are primarily a triage unit and they cannot get very deep, so they typically work off of knowledge articles, like a script. They look at something on a problem that has been solved before and they are typically reading off of that script. So normally they are not even having to really invent this solution. They are using someone else's. His department tries to train them up and they try to get real significant issues pushed out to the experts as quickly as possible because it can take a while before they recognize they cannot actually help with a problem. People calling the help desk can help that along a little bit by telling them they have had this problem before, or asking to be moved up to the next level.

PROFESSOR MVS CHANDRASEKHAR (Electrical Engineering) – stated that some colleges at USC are in the process of trying to do data management at the university levels of repositories that they can store that are easy to use because currently individual research groups are managing it and it is not working well. He asked Foster to comment about that.

GUEST FOSTER – What he would like to do is create a portfolio of services based on diversity of need, such as spreadsheets or petabytes of data that need to put somewhere and be able to share it across the world. He'd like to put a portfolio of solutions together and house them as a sort of a set of offerings. It's a partnership that needs to exist and in former lives existed between IT, Libraries and VPR. To come together on simple solutions, basic storage, and something a little more sophisticated that might require sharing with other PI's around the world.

They've started these conversations and they are starting to try to put together sort of a set of recommendations that say if a department has this sort of problem here is what his office recommends they use. They do not want to get into a place where they are saying MUST, or to try to serve 1200 needs. They are trying to take the biggest pieces that they know about, carve them out and produced recommendations.

#### **4. Reports of the Committees**

##### **a) Senate Steering Committee, Professor Elizabeth West, Secretary**

SECRETARY ELIZABETH WEST (University Libraries) – stated that the slate of nominees presented at the last meeting would be voted on today. Nominations will be taken from the floor for vacancies, including the Faculty Grievance Committee where members need to be a tenured full professor or librarian, and on the Committee for Professional Conduct where members must be tenured.

**b) Committee on Curricula and Courses, Professor John Gerdes, Chair**

PROFESSOR JOHN GERDES (Integrated Information Technology) –brought forth one proposal from Arts and Sciences.

There was no further discussion and the proposal was approved.

PROFESSOR GERDES – announced they have one more meeting for this academic year and faculty must submit their proposals by April 19<sup>th</sup>.

**c) Committee on Instructional Development, Professor Michael Weisenburg, Chair**

PROFESSOR KAREN BROWN (University Libraries) - brought forward the following proposals for Distributed Education Delivery: 1 from the College of Education, 1 from the School of Music and 1 from the Arnold School of Public Health.

There was no further discussion and the proposals were approved.

**d) Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions, Professor Brett Altschul, Chair**

PROFESSOR BRETT ALTSCHUL (Physics) – stated that at the last faculty meeting a proposal was introduced to make changes to the attendance policy for undergraduate courses, by Professor Amit Almor. This originally came out of some discussions in the Jewish Faculty and Staff Council where it was realized that it was possible to have 3 of the major Jewish holidays in the Fall, fall on the same day of the week which would lead to a student if they were an observant student who missed all those classes if they had a Tuesday, Thursday class, they missed 3 Tuesdays that could be above the 10 percent threshold at which Professors are allowed to start taking points off for absences. Current attendance policy says *attendance from absence of more than 10 percent of scheduled class sessions whether excused or an excuse is excessive and the instructor may choose to exact a grade penalty for such absences.*

So the original proposal that was first put forward to the Faculty Senate was essentially that for students with certain kinds of reasonable excused absences for illnesses, certain kind of military activity, religious observances, that they should be allowed essentially unlimited excused absences without being penalized. This was referred to the Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions and they met with the Convener of the Jewish Faculty Staff Council, Professor Adam Schor. Adam is a religious historian and so he is actually an expert on Judaism, Christianity and Islam. And he looked for all 3 of those major religious traditions. He found that there could potentially be up to 3 classes that observant students might miss in a semester, which could be over the 10 percent threshold. So the proposal to allow for unlimited excused absences of various types was put before the committee, and there was some opposition to this that many of the faculty members on the committee felt that if they were going to be able to enforce some kind of penalty for students not coming, not attending frequently that they didn't want to have students to be able to have unlimited absences even if they were excused. Some people were

concerned about the possibility of students joining several religions or changing religions in the semester, getting into doctor's notes of dubious validity.

The committee came up with a revised proposal that in terms of specific rules, is to increase the number of excused and unexcused absences that a student may have to up to 15 percent before they could start to be penalized under a faculty member's attendance policy. That 15 percent puts them above the number that observant students of Jewish or of other faiths might happen to miss if they were unlucky in how the holidays fell.

They also added some specific guidance to the proposed policy. *Faculty members are not required to enforce an attendance policy. Generally, faculty members are encouraged to be understanding towards the needs of students beyond the classroom. However, if faculty members choose to enforce an attendance policy and penalize students for excessive absences they must do so consistently and equitably for all students.* They thought it was important to have language in there emphasizing that the professor had to have a uniform policy that applied to all students equally and if there were going to be exceptions that exceptions had to be handled in an equitable manner.

*And if faculty members choose to enforce attendance policy in this class they should notify the class in the syllabus of the policy and the precise penalty for excessive absences.* They also added a paragraph aimed at the students reminding them that *Students are expected to be fully honest with faculty members and university staff and administrators when they make requests to excuse absences. Any dishonesty in requesting excused absences or accommodations for the timely completion of work is a violation of the Carolinian Creed and is subject to disciplinary action.*

That was the proposal that was produced by the committee. It was discussed at the Faculty Steering Committee, and individuals from a number of the departments and units had come forward that they wanted some time to discuss this internally, so the committee is not putting this forward for a vote at this faculty meeting. In any case it would be too late for it to make changes for the next year's bulletin so there's no rush to do that but he's here to answer questions about the proposal and see how things may proceed from here.

PROFESSOR KAREN EDWARDS (Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management) – asked if the 15 percent plus unlimited absences at the discretion of the faculty member would mean there is really no limit.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL – Any faculty member can choose to make accommodations for additional absences, but the rules are they need to be stated clearly in the policy. And faculty can't play favorites obviously with giving some students largely a way to miss classes whereas other students with the same kinds of excused absences would be penalized.

PROFESSOR EDWARDS - commented that if possible additional time for additional commentary through the system to the committee and how faculty perceive this and perhaps some research into how this might affect or impact attrition, academic integrity, student success.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL – Yes.

PROFESSOR EVA CZABARKA (Mathematics) – had several comments. First of all her syllabus usually includes a line that says that even excused absences are rendered unexcused if the student doesn't let her know in reasonable time.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL - There is some verbiage about that in here.

PROFESSOR CZABARKA - She would prefer a somewhat stronger verbiage because she is coming from the other end of the spectrum and in the higher level classes, her attendance policy is actually fairly liberal but in the lower level classes it must not be so because students take advantage of everything if they can. Students have emailed her the night before an exam, for example on Rosh Hashanah, to tell her they wouldn't be there, but her response is that they knew the schedule for the exam and the religious holiday well in advance, so she thinks it is just an excuse not to take the exam. She would prefer to see language that addresses this in the policy.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL – asked if she was saying that the policy should allow the faculty member to require students who have anticipated absences to provide valid information about them well in advance.

PROFESSOR CZABARKA – Yes, because if the student knew the entire semester that that day is going to be a religious holiday and they are going to attend it, they should let her know the second they know that they are going to miss it otherwise it is unacceptable as an excuse.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL - That's a reasonable thing to take that into consideration.

PROFESSOR BETHANY BELL (College of Social Work) - Given that this policy impacts everybody on campus, it is one that should have an open comment period because this is a massive impact on all faculty members as a policy, and for true governance and also equity in time for people to think and the units to discuss.

CHAIR VALTORTA – The simple process would be for senators to bring this discussion back to their units and request that the units discuss internally maybe at a faculty meetings, maybe in some other way and then forward their comments to the committee which will then take them into account at their next meeting or at the first meeting where this is practical and then present again to the Senate a draft that has taken the comments into account and then it can actually have a motion and a discussion on the floor.

PROFESSOR MVS CHANDRASHEKHAR – clarified that the 15 percent threshold includes all absences. It's not distinguishing an excused and an unexcused. That 15 percent is sort of just like a flat base. It does not distinguish between kind of absences.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL – Yes the current policy is that faculty can start penalizing students at a total of 10 percent excused or unexcused. This policy says that they can set a minimum a point at which they start penalizing students at 15 percent excuse/unexcused together.



PROFESSOR AMIT ALMOR (Psychology) - In the original proposal that he brought in front of the Senate there was stronger language on requiring faculty to actually consider a certain small number of unexcused absences as not counting towards that percentage. The reason was that by counting both excused and unexcused absences, people who do observe for example certain holidays can easily kind of max out and kind of be at fault just because they observe all this.

He proposed leaving it at 10 percent but making mandatory the accommodation of requests of students for as long, he would like to emphasize, as they notify in advance. The kind of increase of the threshold from the 10 percent as it is now and as was in his proposal addresses the issue of not making anyone just violate the attendance policy just by simple observance. But it is still not equitable in the sense that if a student is observant and misses 3 classes because of a religious reason the kind of the left over times he or she can miss classes is not equal for them as compared to someone else.

During the discussion by the committee there was a very large weight given to faculty consideration and the faculty oversight and trying not to invade the control of any faculty member into implementing whatever attendance policy they wish for their classes they deem appropriate. Nevertheless it does leave open by this university the potential for inequitable treatment of students from different religious backgrounds. He asked if there is any way the committee can set that more rigidly for those aspects that are considered by federal law illegal to discriminate on this basis. That at least for those aspects there will be strict protection that absences due to these reasons (as long as indicated especially in advance), do not count towards absences under any circumstances and therefore expressing the commitment of USC as an institution to not discriminate on the basis of religion.

CHAIR VALTORTA – asked if it were prudent for the Legal Office to be consulted on this matter.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL - There was strong opposition in the committee to allowing for an extended number of religious absences in addition to other absences. That may not have been personally his preference but the committee was strongly in favor of something of the order of the 15 percent rule cross the board.

PROFESSOR ALMOR -clarified he didn't mean to wave the threat of legal issues. He referred to the ethical right thing to do. He realizes that it has to be balanced with the freedom of faculty to control their own syllabi but he does have some concern with the non-level playing field that is now created.

PROFESSOR CZABARKA – expressed concern that to raise the 10 percent to 15 percent blanketly for whatever reason because that means that 15 percent completely unexcused absences are also okay. She doesn't necessarily see why USC cannot keep the 10 percent rule. The statement that if a student has 10 percent unexcused absences, they can get penalized no matter what. And say 15 percent over or for both excused and non-excused. That somewhat addresses is the problem of inequitable.

Her other concern is that if faculty allow too much of this for whatever reason, then how do faculty then at what point and how much do faculty need to check it on the validity of the excused absence.

PROFESSOR ALTSCHUL - In terms of a religious holiday, they are listed in a calendar of many major and minor religious holidays and various traditions can be found at [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org). So faculty can please verify that there are religious observances of the kind that the student has claimed.

PROFESSOR CZABARKA – It has happened to her that a student claimed that he is not any of those but he is observing one of those and he needs more.

**e) Faculty Advisory Committee, Professor Andrew Graciano, Chair**

PROFESSOR ANDREW GRACIANO (School of Visual Art and Design) – brought forward 4 proposals to the Faculty Senate. This first is a change in the Faculty Manual under the IT Committee description. The word *cyber infrastructure* to *computing* so that it reads research computing instead of research cyber infrastructure.

CHAIR VALTORTA – This is a motion to approve this change and if approved it will go to General Faculty Meeting and if that is approved then it will go on to the Board of Trustees.

There was no discussion and the motion passed.

PROFESSOR GRACIANO - The 2nd item is a correction to the description on the Library's Committee. This is language that was already approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee and believe Faculty Senate. But when the committee description was updated in the Faculty Manual, the language was input incorrectly so the motion is to simply correct it to read, *three at-large faculty members appointed by the provost*.

There was no discussion and the motion passed.

PROFESSOR GRACIANO - In the Faculty Manual in the section on Tenure and Promotion and Third-Year Review, the term *Third-Year Review* has been changed throughout the proposal to read *Tenure Progress Review* and this is so that it's not directly pinned to the 3rd year given that some people have tenure talk extension that becomes confusing. So the more general language of tenure progress review seemed appropriate.

In addition to that there is some new language that requires that tenure-granting units provide a unit specific tenure promotion calendar to the candidate. Tenure-granting units often have particular deadlines that they abide by for their candidate before it leaves the tenure-granting unit and sometimes these calendars are provided to the candidate and sometimes they are not and it is found out late in the game, so this is a way to provide them with something up front. The idea is to have these calendars posted online where the T&P criteria are posted so the T&P criteria for each individual unit will be posted next to their unit specific calendars eventually.

PROFESSOR GWEN GEIDEL (School of the Earth, Ocean and Environment) – When it is changed from a Three-year Review to a Tenure Progress Review, could it be construed then, if there is no year on it that some units may require a 2nd and a 3<sup>rd</sup>-year review since it's no longer clear?

PROFESSOR GRACIANO – It's covered in the ACAP 1.05 where it outlines that it is supposed to be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

CHAIR VALTORTA – The Faculty Manual states it is expected to be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, unless there is an extension.

PROFESSOR ANNE BEZUIDENHOUT (Philosophy) - asked if these unit-specific calendars can by default be the university one.

CHAIR VALTORTA - The university leaves some dates flexible, unspecified not underlined, and those are the dates that have to be specified locally.

PROFESSOR BEZUIDENHOUT – Since they have to be specified and they have to be updated every year because the dates change year by year, this is a substantial burden on somebody in the department to keep this consult calendar and see how things would pan out each year.

PROFESSOR BELL - In her college they've done this already and they don't change them because if January 15<sup>th</sup>, is a Sunday, it's the next working day and faculty just build it in. They've been using this for 3 years now and she plans to provide that to the Chair of UCTP to use as an example at the next Reading Day discussion and she'll be happy to share it with others as well. It isn't meant to be burdensome. It is meant for equity and welfare because there are units on campus that do not provide this information to their faculty or they say in an email and then it changes the next year. It's so everyone can plan accordingly because it is an equity thing, it is a welfare thing and ultimately, faculty have no protection if it is not written anywhere and there have been too many cases where this is happened for 3-year progress review or T&P. The goal is not to make it burdensome but to make it so everyone knows what's expected of them.

There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

PROFESSOR GRACIANO - So the 4th item is a proposal to add new language to the Faculty Senate Bylaws. A new section 7 that will govern the removal of Faculty Senate leadership.

This originated during the time when Faculty Advisory Committee and Faculty Senate discussed and voted on the revised and new language governing the election of the new chair-elect in the event that the chair-elect could not continue in his or her duties. It became clear that there was also no line of succession in the event that the Chair of Faculty Senate was not able to carry on. And then there was also no policy governing the potential removal by Faculty Senate of the Faculty Senate Chair. So this whole Section 7 provides for that possibility.

CHAIR VALTORTA - This being a change to Bylaws it would not be voted today. It would be voted at the next meeting of the Senate which would be the summer meeting. So, this is presented for information and discussion.

PARLIAMENTARIAN BILL SUDDUTH (University Libraries) - Line 28 says a 2/3 vote of the Faculty Senate is required to remove an officer of the Senate. His question is this is a 2/3 vote of a meeting that constitutes a quorum which would be 80 individuals which means that only need 54 individuals would be needed to vote the Chair of the Faculty or vote an officer out. Two-thirds of the full membership of the Faculty Senate would be 107. There's a great deal of difference there. Looking at it as the number of units that would have to coalesce to do this, only the 7 largest voting units in the Faculty Senate would be needed to constitute that number of 53. That would then be only 15 percent of the voting units. To get to an in-between number of 80, eighty individuals, only 25 percent of the voting units of the faculty of the actual units represented of the Faculty Senate would be needed to do this.

He brings this concern to the Faculty Senate that this is an extraordinary measure and they need to make it an extraordinary number to do this. He would not feel comfortable seeing this organization put the hands of its leadership in 15 percent of the voting units.

His other concern is that he looks at this as almost like an impeachment process that there should be procedure for the individual if it's said they're no longer fit for office, for that individual to defend themselves in some manner. So there should be some process that goes along with that.

PROFESSOR TRACI TESTERMAN (School of Medicine) - asked if could be a little different for if the senate is removing the chair versus an individual senator. Removing the Chair is a much more weighty matter than an individual senator. The Senate has some serious attendance problems. If someone never attends a meeting and it might be appropriate to remove that individual, how many votes are required? A 2/3s of a quorum may be be okay for an individual senator but when it comes to the Chair or the Chair-elect perhaps there needs to be a larger body voting on it.

CHAIR VALTORTA - This proposed change only addresses officers including Chair, Chair-elect and Secretary. The language is a little ambiguous, but this means the officers of the Senate and those three are the officers of the Senate, that's it.

PROFESSOR BELL – stated she is concerned over allowing this issue to be voted on in the June meeting, given the traditionally low attendance for that meeting.

There was a motion to vote on the proposal at the June Senate meeting. The motion did not carry.

## **5. Report of Officers**

PRESIDENT HARRIS PASTIDES – It has been a hard week a week and a half, during which four USC students died. Starting with a young man from Columbia who took his own life in the parking garage, followed by an apparent homicide at USC Upstate, a baseball player at USC Salkehatchie who was taken away from the practice after being stricken and didn't make it and then finally Samantha Josephson who tragically died while thinking that she was getting into an Uber.

And after meeting with the family extensively on Sunday morning, he pledged to them that USC would do all it could to try to improve Ride Share safety and not only at USC but nationally. USC has started a campaign called “What's my name” but that is not the only good thing to do.

In South Carolina there are no license plates on the front of vehicles so almost by definition if a car comes up to a person, they would have to walk to the back to see it and students are not all that willing to do that. It might be in traffic, there might be someone honking and if the student states the driver's name, the driver can always say that is their name. But if the driver knows the student's name that is a pretty good indication that they are in indeed the driver the student is waiting on. Her family is very engaged. So is the student body here at Carolina. The campaign has gotten good traction so far, been interviewed by NPR, by NBC, by the LA Times, by the New York Times, by Fox News and Uber itself. This is in Uber's interest too given that the villain was not an Uber driver and it could make it safer for their drivers as well.

That is minor solace to the campus community including her friends. She was a very bright light and had already been admitted to Drexel School of Law with a lot of scholarship support. If not for the two hunters that came upon her body in an extremely rural place in South Carolina, she might still have been a missing person for who knows how long. And then an astute police officer who grabbed the alleged assailant, who had the either audacity or depravity to return to the place of the crime 24 hours later and his car was identified. He made a run for it and was apprehended.

The data show that Five Points is safer now than at any time in recent memory. Statistically it improves every time USC and the city have increased policing, increased education, and increased transportation. It is not ever fully safe and there is a lot of education left to be done with respect to travelling in groups at night in particular, alcohol use in particular, and the university has collaborated with the city on wanting to close all bars at 2 am. There has been partial success there, so to stay open beyond 2 bars have to pay an extremely high license price and in addition have to show that they serve food beyond 2 am.

Friday morning Pastides is having a video town hall with parents from around the country who are concerned on how everyone can better collaborate to ensure not only Five Points safety but safety in general and in particular Ride Share safety is one of those areas where there's a lot of opportunity. Somebody told him informally that no more than about 10 percent of Uber riders confirm that the driver knows their name. And so there's a huge amount of opportunity to help ensure that this doesn't happen again or doesn't happen again commonly.

He provided a legislative update. Senate bill 298 is making its way through the General Assembly. It's back with the Senate now and that would provide some recovering funding to the University of South Carolina. It's extremely good news but not perfect news and the reason is

they may give USC some money and then pass a whole bunch of mandates. Mandates being good by the way like pay raises, like increased employer contributions to health benefits and increased contributions to retirement benefits. But what he is worried about is they give USC some money, pass the mandates and then USC has to increase tuition anyway. USC administrators are telling legislators what they need if they are to have a 0 percent tuition increase. The governor, the House and the Senate are behind an initiative to have new and for the first time recurring funding for the university.

Academic good news. U.S. News rankings that came out recently placed USC nationally ranked in 56 programs. That's twice as many as the next most cited university in the state.

The widow of Bob McNair has funded another \$18 million for the McNair Scholars Program.

The first phase of the Excellence Initiative was about \$5 million recurring roughly and \$5 million of one-time funds as well. Congratulations to the recipients. The committee headed by Dean Cutler particularly found collaboration between units to be of great of great relevance.

Pastides will make some interim appointments before he leaves: an interim Provost, an interim CFO, an interim VP for Development and some other interim appointments but he will wait until there is a President-elect announced and then confer with them in order to let them know what he's thinking who he might recommend and then let them have some input because for the most part those appointments would last a year.

Today he gave his final presentation to the University Associates. They're a group of several hundred people some of whom went here and some of whom did not but who support the university. And it was for him a mind spinning experience to see all that has been accomplished. When his team put together the Capital Projects, the Programmatic Projects, the Diversity and Inclusion Advances, the Capital Campaign, Athletics, it really was for Pastides a good feeling. He's leaving because he and Patricia both felt satisfied when they looked back at the accomplishments, and it is time to have another president come in with good energy and keep the forward momentum going.

Tonight he's giving what's called "The Last Lecture" walking in the footsteps of the dying Carnegie Mellon professor who was asked to give his advice to students. What would you tell students if you only had one lecture left? It's very hard. What would you tell them? Would it be fact-based? Would it be advice? Would it be about you? Would it be about them? And so he's spent a long time with it. It will be live streamed. He went back to over 40 e-blasts that he sent the students. Some of them born out of tragedy frankly, some of them born out of natural disaster. Some of them out of remarkable happy occasions and most of them as he went back, out of just "common sense."

Pastides chose 3 basic themes. The first was to "Set a high bar with respect to your goals and work with excellence to achieve them." The second is "Be an independent thinker and think critically." And the third will be a little bit about approaching life and challenges that they will face and let them know their lives for the most part have been pretty good and there yet will be ups and downs.

USCPD has 2 new canine officers. They're black labs on campus that are vapor dogs. They are there only to sniff out bombs. They will be used in athletic facilities or at other large events maybe like commencement outside. They're not drug sniffing, and they're not there to control crowds. They are called Poppy and Sherry.

Pastides will take his last mini conversation on Saturday morning. Having one of the hardest decisions ever. How do you pick 4 students among the many dozen who sent in video clips of why they wanted to ride in the mini? It was the hardest thing he could ever do but he did pick a freshman, sophomore, junior and senior. That'll be 5 grown people in one mini cooper but then they're going to take all of the others and put them on a bus. I wanted to drive the bus they won't let me but we'll go for a ride. So there will be a 2- part mini conversation; one with those selected and then one with all of the other students and ride off into the sunset on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

General Faculty Meeting will be April 30<sup>th</sup> Reading Day at 2pm.

## **6. Report of Chair**

CHAIR VALTORTA - welcomed Professor Jennifer Bird-Pollan who is the Chair of the Faculty Council, the equivalent of the Faculty Senate at the University of Kentucky and she's here observing. She has a grant from the SEC Academic Development Program. She has already made some interesting comments during the Steering Committee Meeting.

Some activities of the Chair. Last Friday there was the yearly USC System Faculty Senates Assemblies and Organizational Conference. There were representatives from the USC Aiken, USC Beaufort and USC Upstate and no one from the Palmetto College unfortunately. An action item will result in having a regular reporting at each Senate of the actions of the other Senates.

The Presidential Search Committee is on schedule for visits by finalists in the 2nd half of April.

Valtorta did follow up on the issue of making the questions to these semifinalists available to senators so that faculty have them before they meet with the finalists on campus. That was a request from the floor of the Senate and he hopes there will be a positive answer.

He attended the meeting of the South Carolina AAUP in Charleston. He highlighted two things. One is the report by Professor Julia Eichelberg on the policies and practices concerning adjunct faculty at the College of Charleston. The Senate has an ad hoc committee on non-tenure track faculty. Non-tenure track faculty and adjunct faculty are overlapping but not equal concepts. Definitions vary but they don't always mean the same thing. USC's ad hoc committee on faculty may benefit from the work done by Professor Eichelberg, and he plans to facilitate communication.

Another highlight was the address by the President-elect of the College of Charleston, Andrew Hsu who will assume the position in about 2 months. It was a good thing that he addressed the AAUP Council and was introduced by the Chair-elect of their Faculty Senate so that bodes well for harmony there.

Professor Hsu stressed the need for the university to be united in the face of challenges due to perceived lower net benefits of a university education and to demographic pressures.

He also stressed his commitment to academic freedom which he said is almost nonexistent in his native China. The situation there he said it's gotten worse in the past 6 years and he denounced that a prominent law professor at Tsinghua University where he obtained his B.S. and M.S. degrees was just suspended from teaching without pay after writing critical articles.

### **8. Unfinished Business**

There were no nominees from the floor and the slate was approved.

### **9. New Business**

There was no new business.

### **10. Good for the Order**

There was nothing for the good of the order.

### **11. Adjournment**

The next Faculty Senate meeting is Wednesday, June the 5th at 3pm, Gambrell 153.  
The General Faculty meeting is April 30<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 2 pm, Gambrell 153.