

Report: Faculty Welfare Committee

For December 3, 2014 Faculty Senate Meeting Faculty Welfare Committee Proposal:

FWC proposes that the Faculty Senate approve sending the following letter, requesting an increase in USC's Faculty Staff Dependent Scholarship from \$1,500 to \$4,000 per dependent scholarship, to President Pastides immediately upon approval.

Janet G. Hudson, FWC co-chair

Camelia Knapp, FWC co-chair

Proposal from Faculty Welfare Committee:

Dear President Pastides:

Clearly no one knows and understands better than you that your term as President of the University of South Carolina began just as the national economic recession hit. Thus you are keenly aware of the many challenges this has posed to our institution, its faculty, staff, and students. The Faculty Welfare Committee has a recommendation for your serious consideration that would address a long-standing desire expressed by our faculty and would be of real value to faculty by aiding the University's ongoing retention and recruitment efforts. For many years the Faculty Welfare Committee has received feedback from faculty about the desire for an increase in Dependent Tuition Assistance.

The FW Committee's most recent Faculty Climate Survey, completed by almost 740 faculty members in Spring 2013, listed the top ten policies or conditions important to faculty. "Tuition assistance for children of faculty" was No. 1.

The Committee's previous comprehensive survey to assess the top five concerns of USC faculty, administered in 2007-2008, listed "tuition aid for faculty dependents" just below salary and salary compression. Their research also found 67% of SEC and ACC institutions offer some type of assistance for faculty dependents, and of those institutions 75% offer a tuition fee assistance of 50% or more.

USC's Faculty Staff Dependent Scholarship Program (FSDS), currently funding individual scholarships at \$1,500 per year, is a program of essential value to the University community, which, if funded in greater proportion to costs, would begin to cover the expanding tuition/housing gap.

Therefore, the FW Committee proposes to enhance the impact of FSDS to \$4,000 annually for all faculty and staff dependents attending USC beginning in the 2015-2016 academic year. The increase strengthens the University's faculty recruitment and retention strategies at a time when salary

compression relief is on hold and parking fees are an ongoing expense. Growth of the FSIDS program would be a significant asset and a valuable boost to morale.

The FW Committee also recognizes the need to connect the parents of faculty and staff dependents with USC resources, most especially Financial Aid and Student Admissions information, and is exploring ways to do this through workshops and an information guide.

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the details further at your convenience.

Best regards,

USC Faculty Welfare Committee