November 13, 2018

Dear USC community,

I am pleased to announce the launch of the President’s Culture Commission, which will oversee our efforts to improve campus culture. I am personally chairing this group and have attached the roster of students, faculty, and staff who will serve with me on the commission. They represent a broad range of perspectives from our university community.

I also would like to extend my gratitude to the faculty, staff, and students serving on the Task Force on Workplace Standards and Employee Wellness who recently provided their recommendations regarding culture improvement at USC. This group has met regularly for the past 18 months and has dedicated a tremendous amount of time and energy to exploring how a large, diverse organization such as USC can become more connected and better aligned in its mission, vision, and values.

As an initial step, the Task Force recommends conducting a university-wide values assessment, which will be shared with our entire community to raise awareness of our collective values, as well as our shared strengths and opportunities. Gaining this insight will help us identify where we should focus our initial efforts in addressing culture. The President’s Culture Commission will consider the Task Force’s recommendations on the best partners and tools to conduct such an assessment, and will keep the community informed in the process.

One method to track our progress is a new dashboard: [https://change.usc.edu/change-progress-dashboard-grid/](https://change.usc.edu/change-progress-dashboard-grid/). This dashboard, which we will populate over time with new information and details, will track key change initiatives, including our culture improvement work.

Culture change is a journey and not a simple fix, and demands a sustained focus on genuine listening, open dialogue, and meaningful follow up. Our work on culture and values will help us become stronger as a Trojan Family. I believe that for USC to continue to be the remarkable place that it is, we need to commit ourselves to hearing the voices of our community, engaging with one another in an open and authentic way, and committing to actions that we believe will change USC for the better.

Sincerely,

Wanda M. Austin
Interim President