



October 10, 2018

Dear USC community,

It is already the middle of the fall semester and a good time for me to provide a brief update on our progress. In recent weeks, I attended listening sessions for the presidential search on both campuses, and met privately with a range of groups, including the Academic Senate. In smaller settings I met with deans and faculty, boards of councilors, undergraduate and graduate student leadership, leadership of the staff senate, and gatherings of university departments and units. I have also had some very insightful conversations with student, staff, and alumni groups and community leaders. Many of you have provided feedback via digital media. These interactions have provided critical insights into the range of perspectives on a number of important issues.

Listening is crucial if we hope to effect meaningful change, as is deeply considering others' perspectives. Overall we are aligned regarding the importance of living our values. Our commitment to excellence, trust, and transparency is foundational to our success. We will encourage everyone on our campuses to strengthen our culture by being collaborative, being better listeners, and being part of the solution.

I have also completed a number of media interviews, which have provided the opportunity to answer tough questions from those outside of our community. Many of those questions focused on what went wrong and what we are doing to fix things. But they also offer the opportunity to share information regarding the amazing research, innovative faculty, and outstanding students who enable our phenomenal achievements.

I previously wrote to you about some initial changes at the university that are intended to address our most urgent needs. I am pleased to report that the Office of Professionalism and Ethics is established, the USC Office of Ombuds Services has a presence on both campuses, and the President's Campus Culture Commission is engaged. You can follow our progress at [change.usc.edu](http://change.usc.edu).

We have a lot of work to do, but we have ample Trojan creativity, intellect, and commitment to get the job done. Thank you for the confidence, encouragement, and support you provide every day.

Fight On!

Wanda M. Austin  
Interim President