

Statement From Concerned Faculty of USC regarding the Admissions Scandal at USC

Many of us were distressed to learn the news last week that USC is again at the center of a scandal involving corruption, greed, and a failure of administrative oversight and accountability. Of course, USC was not the only university involved in this criminal enterprise, and the larger problem of a non-level playing field in admissions (wealthy people buying advantages in college admissions, and athletic admissions going through a separate channel ripe for abuse) is a national scandal rather than USC's alone. But USC's handling of past wrongdoing has engendered so much distrust in our community that we bear an extra burden to act on this case with the highest level of transparency, accountability, and faculty governance.

We call on the Board of Trustees to make public the findings of the completed investigations into Dean Puliafito and George Tyndall, by releasing the reports (redacted as needed for employee confidentiality) that have so far been kept secret, and to pledge that the investigation into the current scandal will be even more transparent and public. USC must let the sun shine in.

We call on the Administration to appoint a faculty-led committee to oversee an investigation of admissions and athletics that will be accountable to the entire community, make clear to everyone who knew what when, hold responsible those who did or should have known, and recommend structural changes to make sure something like this could never happen again. We believe that restoring faculty governance and oversight of athletics and admissions will make real our commitment to academic and ethical standards, rather than ratings and dollars.

Finally, we call on all members of our community, including the Administration and the Board of Trustees, to recommit ourselves to the academic and ethical values at the center of the University's mission, and to stop allowing important decisions to be driven by financial concerns as our paramount value. As our colleague Viet Nguyen wrote so powerfully in the *Washington Post* last week, "after admitting to corruption, university leadership should take the lead and do what the faculty have demanded for years: Commit universities, first and foremost, above money, reputation or ranking, to their noble mission, the light of which still remains, the pursuit of truth and knowledge. We cannot be resigned to less." The USC community expects no less.