

March 6, 2020

Dear USC Community,

We are writing to provide more information about the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights’ (OCR) findings and the required actions under the Resolution Agreement, including [summaries](#) of the Resolution Letter and Resolution Agreement. We are also writing to provide a set of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) that includes more information about Title IX, definitions of sexual harassment and discrimination, OCR, and the investigation, as well as a [link](#) where you can submit questions. This letter also includes information about current University policies and resources. This letter supplements the [information](#) the University immediately shared with students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni last Thursday. That information included a high-level summary and links to OCR’s [Resolution Letter](#) (findings letter) and [Resolution Agreement](#) (actions the University will take to remedy the concerns raised by the findings).

As we shared, on February 27, 2020, OCR announced the resolution of its investigation into the University’s response to reports of potential sexual harassment by Dr. George Tyndall. OCR found that the University did not comply with Title IX, a federal civil rights law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational institutions that receive federal funding. Specifically, OCR found “the University failed to promptly and effectively respond to notice of potential sexual harassment by [Dr. Tyndall] and this failure may have allowed female students to be subjected to continuing sex discrimination.” OCR also identified systemic challenges that inhibited the University’s response, including deficiencies in data and recordkeeping systems, personnel and accountability processes, communication and training.

OCR’s Investigation

During the investigation, the University worked with OCR to provide information and to facilitate interviews with current and former employees. During June and October 2018, University community members were invited to meet with OCR as part of the investigation. At the end of November 2019, OCR concluded the fact-gathering portion of its investigation. Under OCR processes, OCR does not share its written findings with a university until immediately prior to the public release of the Resolution Letter. In contrast, OCR provides a university with a proposed Resolution Agreement, in writing, at the conclusion of the fact-gathering process. Between November 2019 and February 2020, the University and OCR engaged in intensive discussions about the elements of the Resolution Agreement and worked to develop remedial actions to address OCR’s findings. The University received the 51-page written Resolution Letter shortly before its public release on February 27, 2020.

We view OCR's findings in the Resolution Letter as a call to continued action, and a reminder that we must be ever vigilant to protect all members of our University community from harassment and discrimination. I want to underscore that nothing is more important to us than protecting the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and patients. We thank and appreciate those who have spoken up about their concerns and shared information with the University, OCR or law enforcement.

The University is deeply committed to implementing both the spirit and the law of Title IX with fidelity and integrity. That requires continued attention to training and education, communication, resources and reporting options, our policies and procedures, and the steps we take as a University to eliminate sexual harassment and violence, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects on individuals and the University community.

The Resolution Agreement requires the University to take a number of significant actions, which are detailed in the attached summary. The Agreement includes specific dates for completion of the required actions, most of which are scheduled to be completed between April 6, 2020 and the fall of 2020. In some instances, our planned actions must be submitted for OCR review and approval. Some of the other required actions will occur each semester or on an annual basis for the length of the monitoring process (a minimum of three years). As we have additional information about how and when the required actions will affect current University policies or processes, we will share updates with the USC community.

Current University Policies and Resources

I want to make sure that all University community members have information about current policies, processes and resources. Below please find additional information about how to report discrimination and harassment, access University resources, and pursue action under the University's Title IX policies and procedures.

Title IX Policy

The University's current Title IX Policies and Procedures are available here:

- [USC's Student Misconduct – Sexual, Interpersonal and Protected Class Misconduct policy](#)
- [USC's Discrimination policy](#) (policy applicable to staff)
- [USC's Faculty Handbook](#) (policy applicable to faculty)

Under University policy, reporting parties may seek informal or formal resolution of reports related to sexual and gender-based harassment and violence and other forms of protected class discrimination and harassment.

As we review our Title IX processes, we will continue to seek ways to make the University's Title IX policies more accessible and relevant to our community. Like all colleges and universities across the nation, the University is awaiting finalized regulations from OCR that may impact how we investigate and respond to Title IX-related reports. Any changes to University policy will be posted prominently and shared directly with the community in keeping with our Title IX obligation to provide notice of the University's grievance procedures.

Reporting Harassment or Discrimination

While we build the Office of Equity, Equal Opportunity and Title IX, I want to remind the community of the current resources available to students, faculty, staff and alumni. There are multiple reporting options on campus, and University community members are encouraged to use the office, location, or method of reporting that is most accessible and convenient. All of the below reporting offices will ensure that the report is shared with the Title IX Office. Currently, University community members can report harassment or discrimination, on the basis of sex, gender, race, national origin, age or other protected class, to:

The Title IX Coordinator

Phone: (213) 740-5086
Email: titleix@usc.edu
Mail or in person:
USC Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX
Stonier Hall, Basement
837 Downey Way, STO-B
Los Angeles, CA 90089

Office of Equity and Diversity (University Park Campus)

Phone: (213) 740-5086
Email: oad@usc.edu
Mail or in person:
University Park Campus
3720 S. Flower Street 2nd floor
Los Angeles, California 90089-0704

USC Department of Public Safety

Emergency:
UPC: (213) 740-4321
HSC: 323-442-1200
Non-emergency:
UPC: (213) 740-6000
HSC: 323-442-1200
<https://dps.usc.edu>

Office of Equity and Diversity (Health Sciences Campus)

Phone: (323) 442-2020
Email: oad@usc.edu
Mail or in person:
Health Sciences Campus
2001 N. Soto Street, Suite 203
Los Angeles, CA 90002-9236

Reports can also be made anonymously by calling the USC Help & Hotline at 213-740-2500 or 800-348-7454, using a secure online [form](#), or through [Callisto](#) (a third party reporting option that allows a reporting party to maintain anonymity).

Community members can also seek confidential assistance from [Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services](#), [Counseling or Mental Health](#) within the [Student Health Center](#) or the [Center for Work and Family Life](#). After-hours medical, counseling or sexual assault survivor support assistance is available at (213) 740-9355 (WELL).

Accessing Interim Measures and Remedies

The Title IX Office/Office of Equity and Diversity are able to provide [interim supportive and protective measures](#), including accommodations, services, and other assistance the University can put in place to facilitate an individual's continued access to educational programs, activities, and/or employment and will keep these measures private to the extent possible.

With respect to students or former students whose educational environment or access to educational programs or activities may have been impacted by their interactions with Dr. Tyndall, they can contact Lauren Helsper, Interim Assistant Director of Title IX, at (213) 821-8298 or elan@usc.edu to inquire whether they may be entitled to counseling, academic accommodation or the opportunity to retake classes. Similarly, current or former employees who worked directly with Dr. Tyndall may also contact Lauren Helsper to inquire whether they may be entitled to counseling or workplace remedies.

Moving Forward

As we move forward, we want you to know that we are committed to learning from the past to inform our future. This includes carefully listening to the needs of our community and keeping you updated on our progress to create lasting change that builds a better USC.

Our efforts as a University must include attention to culture and climate, to accessible policies and resources, and to changing the way we communicate. University community members are important partners in the success of our efforts. I want to express my deep appreciation to the hundreds of members of our community who have joined together as part of our Culture Journey to share their experiences and insights and are helping to make real change happen.

Please review the attached [summaries](#) of the [Resolution Letter](#) and [Resolution Agreement](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information. We understand that University community members may have additional questions about OCR's investigation and the University's response. We encourage you to share your questions [here](#) so that we can continue to provide candid, relevant and helpful information to the USC community. I want to assure you that we are listening and are committed to taking action.

We look forward to sharing progress with you as we work together to reshape campus culture and strengthen the policies, procedures, and practices that foster a healthy, safe campus environment for all.



FELICIA A. WASHINGTON J.D.
Senior Vice President of Human Resources

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Felicia A. Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Felicia A. Washington
Senior Vice President of Human Resources