Resolution: 03110315
Author(s): Rini Sampath, Student Body President; Luis Vidalon-Suzuki, Academic Culture Assembly Assistant Director; Paul Samaha, Marketing Assistant Director
Sponsoring Senator(s): Alec White
Supporter(s): USC Academic Culture Assembly
Date: November 3, 2015
RE: College Affordability and Financial Transparency at the University of Southern California

WHEREAS, every qualified applicant should have access to an education from the University of Southern California without the added stress of making tuition payments,

WHEREAS, universities such as Princeton University, University of Washington and the UC System froze tuition in order to accommodate students burdened by financial debt.\(^1\)\(^2\)

WHEREAS, tuition increases place an unequal burden on families with lesser financial ability,

WHEREAS, families with lesser financial ability have comparatively lower graduation rates,\(^3\)

WHEREAS, USG has made efforts to raise awareness and have discussions about college affordability through Program Board and the Executive Cabinet,

WHEREAS, USC currently charges $49,464 for tuition for the 2015-2016 school year.\(^4\)


\(^{4}\) USC. Schedule of Classes. "Fall 2015 Tuition and Fees," University of Southern California. <https://classes.usc.edu/terms/20153/registration-and-fees>
WHEREAS, every qualified applicant should have access to an education from the University of Southern California without the added stress of making tuition payments,

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WHEREAS, families with lesser financial ability have comparatively lower graduation rates, 3

WHEREAS, USG has made efforts to raise awareness and have discussions about college affordability through Program Board and the Executive Cabinet,

WHEREAS, USC currently charges $49,464 for tuition for the 2015-2016 school year, 4


WHEREAS, tuition continues to rise without transparency to the student body each subsequent year,

WHEREAS, the most recent tuition increase for the 2015-2016 academic year was not made public knowledge to students apart from the notice on students' e-bill,

WHEREAS, USC undergraduate tuition has increased by an average of 4.28% per year over the last five years,

WHEREAS, the cumulative inflation rate from 2012 to 2015 is 3.9% while the USC undergraduate tuition rise from 2012 to 2015 is an increase of 11.6%,

WHEREAS, the USC undergraduate tuition rate that a current senior pays is nearly $6,000 more per year than when they began their academic careers as a freshman,

WHEREAS, Undergraduate Student Government conducted a college affordability survey that received 1,903 respondents from our undergraduate population,

WHEREAS, 76% of respondents report knowing someone who has transferred out of USC or considered taking a leave of absence from USC because of tuition costs, with a 2.39 confidence interval using a 99% confidence level,

WHEREAS, 98% of respondents indicated that they do not know why tuition increased by $2000 for the 2015-2016 school year, with a 0.78 confidence interval using a 99% confidence level,

WHEREAS, 20% of respondents take out private loans to help pay for USC, with a 2.24 confidence interval using a 99% confidence level,

WHEREAS, 84% of respondents believe a tuition freeze would alleviate financial burden for students, with a 2.05 confidence interval using a 99% confidence level,

WHEREAS, 93% of respondents reported they do not know where their tuition dollars go, with a 1.43 confidence interval using a 99% confidence level,

WHEREAS, the 72 page 2014-2015 yearly financial report published by USC is not easily accessible nor understandable for students,

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WHEREAS, the elite institutions USC aspires to compete with academically have implemented tuition freezes or full tuition coverage.¹

WHEREAS, these tuition freezes or tuition coverages promote equal opportunity for the most academically-skilled candidates, despite their family's income,

WHEREAS, our university is currently losing out on talented candidates who could contribute tremendously to our campus community academically, socially, and professionally,

WHEREAS, these candidates may select other institutions due to their tuition rates,

WHEREAS, other universities publish interactive websites and infographics to help students become more knowledgeable about their university's financial model,⁹

WHEREAS, the University Student Fee Advisory Committee was last utilized in its intended capacity during academic year 2013 to 2014 at the University of Southern California to allow voting members of Graduate Student Government, Undergraduate Student Government and Faculty Senate to identify, discuss, and consent to all adjustments for the subsequent academic year as they relate to tuition, student programming fees, and/or student services fees,

BE IT RESOLVED, the University of Southern California implements a tuition freeze until the University develops and publishes a strategic plan to address the issue of college affordability

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University of Southern California create an interactive website or publish a report of where tuition funds go yearly,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Undergraduate Student Government recognizes Graduate Student Government's resolution¹⁰ regarding the Reinstatement and Subsequent Modification of the University Student Fee Advisory Committee,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University of Southern California officially reinstate the University Student Fee Advisory Committee,

⁶ Clark, J. Andrew III. 02 October 2015. "Reinstatement and Subsequent Modification of the University Student Fee Advisory Committee," <https://psc.state.co.us/54502>
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University Student Fee Advisory Committee retain the express authority in perpetuity to either consent to, deny, and/or negotiate any and all adjustments to both the Student Programming and Student Services Fees as proposed by the University of Southern California,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University Student Fee Advisory Committee be expanded to five Graduate, five Undergraduate, and two Faculty Senate voting members,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that three Graduate and three Undergraduate voting members be appointed by the Student Body Presidents from within their respective student governments,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that two Graduate and two Undergraduate voting members be appointed by the Student Body Presidents from outside their respective student governments,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that two Faculty Senate voting members be appointed at the discretion of the Faculty Senate,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be delivered to President C.L. Max Nikias, Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs Michael Quick, Vice President of Student Affairs Ainsley Carrey, Vice President of Admissions Katharine Harrington, Assistant Provost for Student Engagement Monique Allard, and USG President Rini Sampath by Secretary Amy Perez within 2 weeks of being passed by the Undergraduate Student Government Senate.

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Rini Sampath
President 2015 - 2016

Luis Canton, Witness