

JULY 2021

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Over the course of FY2021, the Culture Journey has moved from gathering sentiment to implementing action based on community recommendations.

Since President Folt first shared the [USC Unifying Values](#) in November, the Culture Journey has been operating to share those Values with the community and continue seeking improvements to our systems and processes.

We are excited to share the progress of the Journey and outline where the Culture Journey can go from here to continue making a lasting impact at USC.



## Framing the Culture Journey

After receiving over 20,000 responses to the Values Poll and engaging with over 4,400 faculty, staff, and students through Town Halls and Discussion Sessions, the Culture Journey focused on two phases of work: Launch, concentrating on the official release of USC's Unifying Values, and Emphasize, being the focus for the Spring Semester.

JUN – DEC 2020

### LAUNCH

Introduce Values  
and behaviors

Our team reviewed the results of the Values Poll, Town Halls and Discussion Sessions and **shared themes with School/Unit leaders**. We then took these findings to ultimately develop the **Unifying Values**. This phase of work included:

- 33 Leader Debriefs delivered
- Formal Unifying Values Launch from President Folt
- Release of Desired Behaviors
- Leader Packet along with two Toolkits distributed to ~40 Schools/Units

JAN – JUL 2021

### EMPHASIZE

Create greater awareness  
of Values

Once the Unifying Values were approved and released, the next step was to build awareness by ensuring **the Values were readily available**, seen on campus, and utilized within individual Schools/Units. These efforts have focused primarily on:

- Culture Journey Activities Launch, including Working Together Workshops facilitated and produced by our Culture Network
- School/Unit Partnerships
- Launch of Culture Focus Areas

AUG 2021 +

### SUSTAIN

Live the Unifying Values

As we plan for the 2021 – 2022 school year and beyond, the Culture Journey will be working to **sustain the groundwork** laid over the last two years by finding ways to further **incorporate the Unifying Values into daily life**, including:

- Continued Culture Journey Activities
- Ethics and Compliance Code Launch
- Continued Focus Area Alignment
- Continuing Systems/ Process Changes across the University



## Our Unifying Values

On November 16, President Folt announced the Unifying Values to the USC Community. She affirmed the benefits of embracing these Values to “build a culture that instills trust, reinforces ethical decision-making, and provides a strong foundation for our future” and affirmed the commitment of the senior leadership team.



### Integrity

**We do the right thing**



### Excellence

**We bring our best selves**



### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

**We all belong**



### Well-being

**We honor the whole person**



### Open Communication

**We share openly and honestly**



### Accountability

**We take responsibility**

See President Folt's announcement in full [here](#).



## Culture Journey Activities

To spread the word about the Unifying Values, the Culture Journey began holding four events every month focused around one of our Unifying Values.

### WHAT ARE THE EVENTS?



#### Speaker Series

**Five large events** featuring guest keynote speakers, like Dr. Ibram X Kendi, Alex Sheen, and Bonnie St. John



#### Lunch and Learns

**Five mid-sized events** featuring conversation with prominent alumni, like John Lino, the President of the Board of Governors



#### Community Panels

**Five open discussion sessions** with Faculty, Staff, and Students sharing on Values



#### Working Together Workshops

**15 small, intimate workshops** used to prompt discussion on the Values facilitated by the Culture Network

Over **3,750 participants** across all programming!

#### FEBRUARY – Integrity

Our events began with a community panel with student, faculty, staff, and alumni representation.

#### MARCH – DEI

Thanks to a partnership with DEI Week, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi spoke to a virtual audience of over **1,200 participants!**

#### APRIL – Well-being

**Almost 800 participants** attended these events, including around **300** for Dr. Laura Mosqueda's Lunch & Learn!

#### MAY – Excellence

Due to commencement, we limited out events to three this month and still had the largest workshop participation.

#### JUNE – Open Communication

The series has continued into the summer with all four events returning with the same level of participation as the semester.

## → Aligning across Culture Focus Areas

As culture work continues, the Culture Journey prioritizes aligning values, behaviors, systems and processes across these **five Focus Areas**:

### VALUES

Living our Values

### DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening our people and leadership model

### WELL-BEING

Amplifying Connection to Self, Others, and Our Community

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Prioritizing Diverse Viewpoints, Representation, Access and Opportunity

### CONCERNS

Addressing the Concerns of the USC Community

Within each Focus Area, there are ongoing initiatives that support the Culture Journey and respond to community feedback and requests, including:

#### DEVELOPMENT

University HR is currently developing a set of in-person and virtual curriculum for managers at USC to receive consistent skill and competency development with a foundation in our Unifying Values.

#### WELL-BEING

USC Healthy Campus is an initiative aimed at faculty and staff with the goal of embedding and infusing health and well-being elements throughout USC.

#### CONCERNS

To create greater ease around reporting concerns, EEO-TIX and the Office of Professionalism and Ethics have created an internal workflow to maximize centralization of concerns review.

## → School/Unit Culture Updates

As our Culture Journey has progressed, we continue to build meaningful partnerships with Schools/Units across USC. Here are some examples of how we work with Schools and Units:

#### USC Culture Toolkits

The **Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance** created **3 university-wide** Culture toolkits to help the USC community facilitate conversations and explore our values.

#### Culture Champions

The **Office of SVP, Finance** and **Athletics** created a network of Culture Champions within their Units to facilitate workshops and serve as role models for the values.

#### Organizational Clarification

Senior Leaders from the **Office of SVP, Administration** engaged in a **4-part module** to better align organizational structures and to clarify the team's identity, vision and purpose.

#### Leader Exploration

**134** leaders from **Auxiliary Services**, including **6** sub-units, worked to identify how the values and behaviors fit within their Unit and to assess the needs within their community.

#### Town Halls and Discussion Sessions

Almost **200** staff and leaders in **Student Affairs** and **Auxiliary Services** participated in in-depth sessions to voice opinions and openly discuss issues and ideas regarding culture.

#### Culture Integration

The **Viterbi School of Engineering** engaged the Culture Team and USC's Health Promotion Strategy group to collaborate on **8+** culture discussion sessions on values and behaviors.

#### Partnership Exploration

The **School of Dramatic Arts** sought a partnership to create workshops, speakers and panels in support of their Unity Day and living the adopted values within their community.

#### Working Together Workshops

**University Advancement** completed a workshop to incorporate values within their orientation program and **USC Libraries** is in advanced stages to bring the Unifying Values to life for their community for a total of **6** workshops.

#### Leadership Development

The **University Relations** leadership team engaged in values assessments, coaching and workshops to engage with and better embody the unifying values.

DECEMBER 2019

## Guiding Meaningful Change

The University of Southern California's (USC) organizational culture is defined by shared values, goals, and practices that drive how people behave and respond to opportunities and challenges in their environment. USC is currently focusing on values to allow a deeper understanding of the culture required to support their mission: to serve students, patients, and communities through excellence in teaching, research, artistic creation, professional practice, outstanding medical care, and public service.

To define shared values and behaviors, USC conducted a university-wide Values Poll. A total of 19,756 students, faculty, and staff participated in the poll and provided input on values that drive the Current Culture and the values that support the Desired Culture at USC. The results of the Values poll serve as a starting point for conversations designed to capture the community's feedback on values and behaviors. The process will bring to light what is working well and what needs to change to support USC in achieving its highest potential.

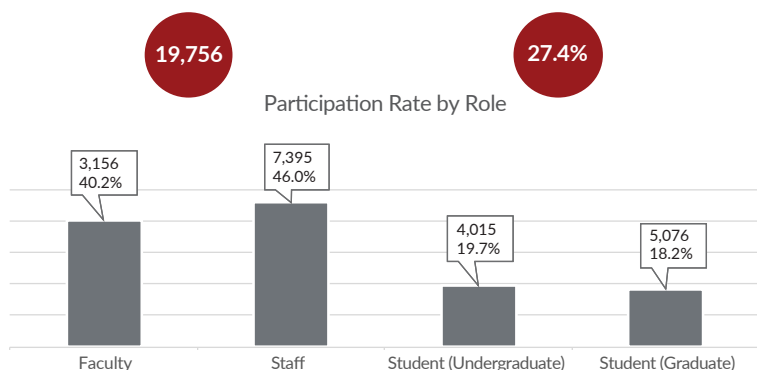
## Values Poll Methodology

The Barrett Values Centre (BVC) cultural transformation assessment is a globally-recognized process used by organizations to understand the values that are of importance to their people - employees, leaders, and stakeholders. USC used this approach as an initial step to explore their values and culture.

The USC Values Poll was open to all students, faculty and staff from October 14 to November 3, 2019. Each respondent was asked four values questions and one open-ended question: to identify their personal values, their school/unit's values, their experience of USC's current values, and their desired values for USC's culture. The open-ended question was included to gather additional feedback and comments. Respondents were asked to select their role, school or unit, and had the option to provide their gender identity and race-ethnicity. This allowed BVC to receive input from groups who are thriving within the overall USC culture and groups who are identifying challenges within that same culture.



### Who Responded to the USC Values Poll?



*I'm a two-time alumnus of USC, and currently a full-time staff member. Over the past decade in various roles related to USC, I have seen multiple facets of Trojan life. Overall, I will always be proud of the Trojan armor that I wear every day; however, there are definitely aspects of USC that I feel need attention in order to move forward in the transformation of culture.*

Values Poll anonymous response



### Key Themes and Findings

1

Students, Faculty, and Staff were very consistent in how they describe both the Current Culture and the Desired Culture at USC. All three groups identified five of the same values to describe the USC Current Culture, and five of the same values to describe their Desired Culture.

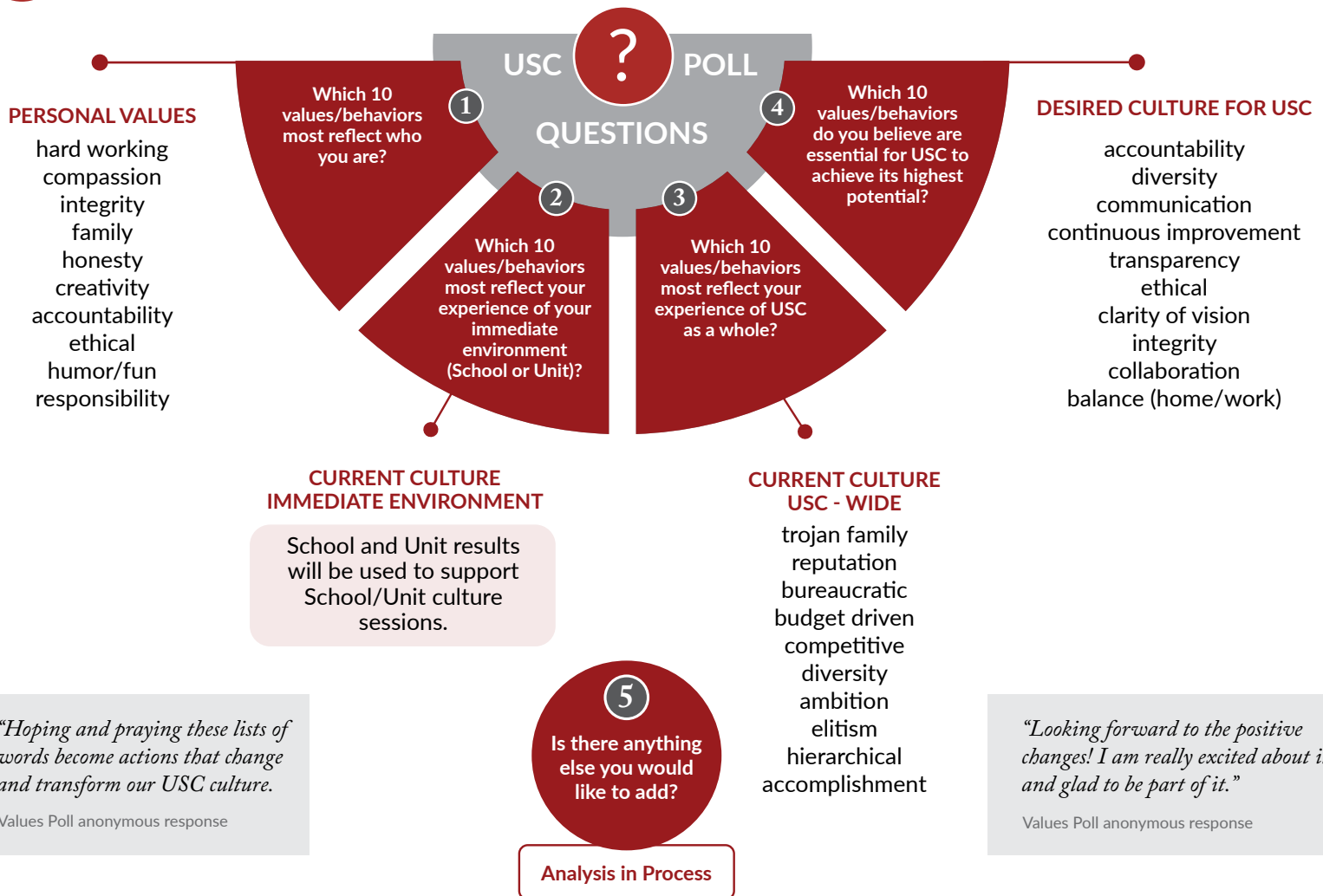
2

Some significant issues have been identified in USC's culture that require attention. While there are certain values in the Current Culture that USC may want to leverage or enhance, there are some values (e.g. bureaucracy, elitism and hierarchical) that typically reduce organizational effectiveness.

3

Specific demographic groups are experiencing more significant challenge in the current USC culture. Gaps between personal values and both the Current Culture and the Desired Culture are identified for Faculty (tenured and non-tenured) and non-binary gender identities. These results will be explored further in Discussion Sessions.

## Overall Values Selected in Response to the Values Poll



## What Does This Mean?

### Considerations

- Nine values in the Desired Culture are not identified as top 10 values in the Current Culture. When values are selected in both the Current Culture and the Desired Culture, this is indicative of alignment on what is needed to deliver on the organization's mission. However, nine values in the Desired Culture are not identified as top 10 values in the Current Culture.
- Values that appear in the Current Culture but not in the Desired Culture (e.g. trojan family, reputation, accomplishment) can be an indication of: values that are strongly present in the Current Culture not needing additional focus; or values that are not a priority compared to other values selected in the Desired Culture.
- Diversity is ranked #6 in the Current Culture and ranked #2 in the Desired Culture. This indicates that this value is important to the people of USC and requires sustained and even increased attention. One matching value (diversity) between the Current Culture and the Desired Culture typically indicates a request for a focus on other values.
- Three of the desired values are important to people at a personal level: accountability, ethical, and integrity. Research shows that higher matches between personal values and the Current Culture leads to a more engaged culture.

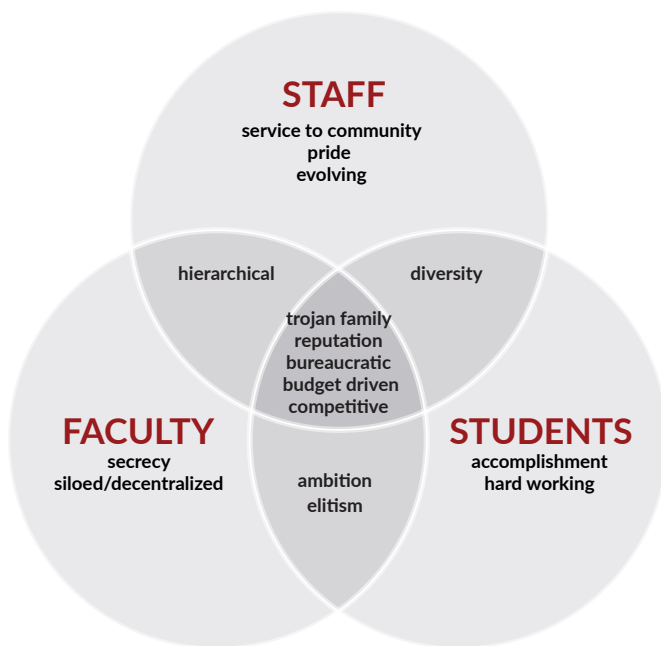
**The values identified in this process are the foundation for further discussions to define the values, detail the associated behaviors, and provide insight to shape the path forward.**



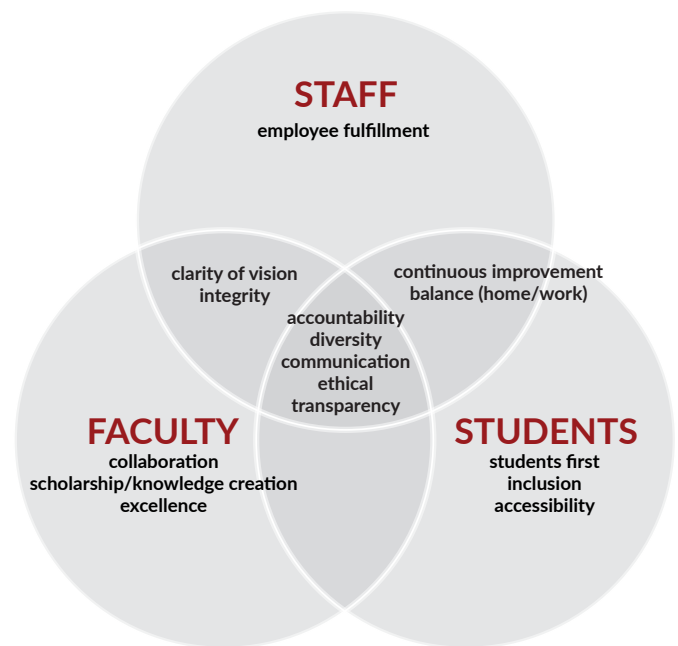
## A Consistent Story

Students, Faculty, and Staff are very consistent in how they describe both the Current Culture at USC and their Desired Culture. The diagrams below show the overlap in the Top 10 values identified by each of the three groups.

### USC's Current Culture



### USC's Desired Culture



Exploration of these values through meaningful discussion will help identify aspects of the Current Culture to leverage as strengths and aspects of the culture, including systems and processes, that need to be revisited moving forward



## Next Steps

These results provide a high-level understanding of USC's current and desired values, and are a valuable starting point for conversation. Further detail, context, and dialogue that involves input from the USC community is required to move this work forward.

Over the coming months, more information will be shared via Town Halls and small group Discussion Sessions to solicit this feedback. People who didn't complete the Values Poll can still participate in these sessions.

There are elements in the USC culture that need to be leveraged while building clarity on the behaviors that are essential for USC to achieve its highest potential.

This is your chance to have your say and shape how the culture of USC evolves.