April 24, 2019

Dear USC community,

I want to update you on the significant steps we have taken to review and strengthen our admissions process for prospective student-athletes since the U.S. Justice Department investigation was announced last month. We are determined to take all necessary steps to safeguard the integrity of our admissions process and to ensure we conduct ourselves in a manner that is consistent with our values.

While we continue to cooperate with the government’s investigation, and while our own investigation led by the Office of Professionalism and Ethics remains ongoing, USC has greatly strengthened its process for reviewing applications of prospective student-athletes, effective this month. The improved procedures provide multiple levels of oversight and ensure that our admissions staff receive accurate information about these prospective students.

- Every student-athlete candidate’s file will be reviewed on three levels – by the head coach, the senior sports administrator overseeing the team, and the USC Office of Athletics Compliance – before being sent to the admissions staff.
- The head coach will certify in writing that the student is being recruited for athletic abilities.
- Athletic rosters will be audited at the beginning and end of every academic year and cross-checked with admissions lists.

This enhanced policy is currently in force for any student-athlete considered for admission during the 2019-20 academic year.

Meanwhile, the university is presently reviewing the status of certain currently enrolled students. Their cases are proceeding through the USC Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (SJACS) process. Each of those students has been notified of the review and given a deadline for response. Most have completed initial interviews. The possible outcomes range from no finding of violation to revocation of admission, and will depend on the facts of each case.

While student-athlete admissions is at the center of the Justice Department’s allegations, USC will also examine the wider scope of how students gain admittance to our university.
Apart from the previous employee terminations, if the ongoing investigations reveal additional misconduct, appropriate employment actions will be taken.

Ensuring the integrity of our admissions process remains a top priority of university leadership. I appreciate the patience of our community as we continue to work toward making our university stronger.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Wanda M. Austin
Interim President