

From August 30 to September 4, the Marshall Faculty Council (MFC) conducted a survey with the aim of assessing the faculty's reactions to the recent events culminating in Prof. Greg Patton's being replaced in his GSBA 542 class on August 24. Altogether, 105 Marshall faculty members responded to the survey.

This report summarizes the findings of the MFC's analysis of the faculty members' perception of the event as they were expressed in the survey data, as well as the MFC's recommendations for us to learn from this event and move forward constructively as a strong and unified Marshall family.

Marshall faculty have expressed very strong emotions related to this event. Specifically, they reported being concerned for both Prof. Patton and the affected students. There was also an overwhelming sense of vulnerability, worry, insecurity, fear, and anxiety. Most faculty members felt like the same thing could happen to them any time due to a misunderstanding or misconstrual of an innocent example.

Another theme that emerged was that they felt that Prof. Patton was not afforded due process, that harm was done to his reputation, and that he was not supported by the administration. The feelings that were most commonly expressed around this theme were anger, disappointment, betrayal, and outrage. They believe that the administration's response to similar issues should be guided by formal procedures, protecting the professor's reputation pending results of formal investigations. Some Marshall faculty mentioned the threat they see from giving in to cancel culture.

Some faculty members think that the administration's response was driven by the desire to protect the school's reputation. However, they also mention its unintended negative consequences.

Marshall faculty support efforts to bring greater diversity and inclusion into our classrooms and explained many ways in which they do this (e.g., case studies with diverse protagonists, guest speakers that model diversity and inclusion, creating safe environments for discussion of diversity issues). However, a large proportion of faculty members mentioned that, given the atmosphere of fear and perceived lack of support, they think it is too risky for them to continue discussing certain topics with students. This includes topics related to diversity and inclusion, but it also includes such topics as politics and international relations. Many expressed disappointment about how the current atmosphere is counterproductive both to diversity efforts and to our mission as educators.

Faculty members say integrating diversity and inclusion and global business content into the classroom requires creating a culture of trust among faculty, students, and administration. Other faculty expressed a desire to work together with students to learn how to discuss controversial issues while at the same time retaining an inclusive and diverse environment. This would enhance open dialogues and freedom of expression.

The MFC anticipates that in the future we are likely to run into other situations where the communication among members of the Marshall community breaks down. Therefore, it is essential for the faculty and the administration to enter into an open, constructive, and continuing dialogue with the aim of establishing processes that help students, faculty, staff, and the administration to reduce the occurrence of such negative events, and when they happen, guide responses in the most constructive way. Based on the ideas expressed in the survey responses, the MFC recommends the following steps:

1. *Directly address Prof. Greg Patton's case with the faculty.*

1. MFC will share a summary report of survey results with both faculty and Dean.
2. We recommend the Dean hold a moderated town hall (not a webinar) with faculty, to
  1. answer questions about this case and process (to the extent allowed by the ongoing investigation by the Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)),
  2. discuss plans to protect equity/diversity and to support faculty, explain what can and cannot be done,
  3. listen to faculty suggestions, and
  4. give further explanation behind the measures taken, such as removing Prof. Patton from his course and sending a letter to the students calling Prof. Patton's conduct "unacceptable" (8/24/2020).

2. *Develop a Marshall School process for administrative actions that precede the outcome of the Office of Equity and Diversity investigation, which is a required USC-level process.*

1. MFC should include this Marshall process in the Marshall Faculty Manual.
2. The process should be such that:
  1. Faculty representatives are also involved in the process;
  2. There is presumption of innocence of all involved parties pending the outcome of the OED investigation;
  3. Even if it is necessary to change a faculty's job responsibility during investigation, it is clearly communicated that this action is part of the process, not a punishment or implication of judgement;
  4. Students are encouraged to communicate with the faculty as soon as possible, of course without imposing any conditions for a case to be filed at the OED.
  5. There is a clear Marshall process for faculty members who describe being discriminated against or harassed to report such incidents.
  6. There are checks to ensure that feedback loops are effective, such that the results of investigations are communicated to the all involved parties in a timely manner.

3. *Create a safe, open, trusting, empathetic, and communicative atmosphere.*

Faculty are motivated and keen to create an inclusive and supportive environment in which everyone feels safe engaging in intellectually challenging discussions. The faculty's experiences in the classroom, however, are very nuanced and often fall into gray areas. It is therefore important for the entire Marshall family (faculty, students, staff, alumni, and the

administration) to appreciate the complexity of the issues and give each other the consideration and time needed to learn and grow. Faculty members recognize that they have much to learn and are eager to do so. Some steps to accomplish these goals include:

1.
  1. Provide training and support for faculty, but not with consultants lecturing at a high-level about general principles. The training should be tailored to the specific challenges faculty face. It should be a safe learning environment where faculty can explore difficult issues. Faculty need concrete guidance for issues that arise in their subjects.
  2. Create forums for students and faculty to engage in open and constructive dialogue. This should provide an opportunity for students to learn about faculty's motivation and the challenges they face. Together they can create inclusive classroom experiences.
  3. Marshall students receive training that emphasizes the importance of *open communication* in pursuit of our diversity and inclusion goals.
    1. Administration should communicate to students the importance faculty place on diversity and inclusion. At the same, it should state clearly that Marshall affirms USC's commitment to academic freedom, as spelled out in the USC Faculty Handbook.
    2. Administration should work with students and faculty to develop a common understanding about the difference between speech that harasses and speech that is controversial. It should make clear that controversial topics are not personal and serve important learning goals, and that students should openly challenge ideas on their intellectual merit. Administration should encourage students to hold conversations with faculty if they are upset about something.
  4. Administration should inform students about the OED processes, and Marshall school processes (see point 2 above). They should let students know that Marshall administrators cannot prejudge students or professors before the OED investigation is completed.

Moving forward, Marshall administrators should take steps to ensure that all members of the Marshall family (i.e., faculty, students, staff, and the administration) continue to challenge each other and strive to be better.

#### **Appendix: Sample Quotes from Responses to the Faculty Survey**

From August 30 to September 2, the Marshall Faculty Council (MFC) conducted a survey with the aim of assessing the faculty's responses about the recent events culminating in Prof. Greg Patton's being replaced in his GSBA 542 class on August 24. Altogether, 105 faculty members responded to the survey. We report general findings and themes for each of the survey questions.

##### **Q1. How does this incident make you feel, as a faculty member?**

A common theme involved concerns about the fairness of the process and the decision. Faculty members reported primarily negative emotions, with a high level of anxiety, anger, and sadness. Specifically, the emotional reactions were observed: (a) fear, vulnerability, threat, and marginalization; (b) disappointment and sadness; (c) anger; and (d) conflicted feelings. Many

professors also commented on their concern with cancel culture. We provide representative faculty statements for each of these themes.

- **Concerns about the Process and the Decision.** Representative comments include the following:
  - “Marshall (or the university) made an unjust decision. I have little confidence in the fairness of the process. The incident shows that even in the face of clear evidence to the contrary, Marshall's leadership will make the cynical choice to preserve Marshall's own reputation. That's discouraging. Marshall is willing to sacrifice a faculty member's reputation and maybe his future rather than challenge the complaining students' mistaken view of Greg's filler-word example. I have learned that under some equally innocent circumstance, I too would be unsupported. That's both discouraging and frightening.”
  - “It seems that the initial steps of the complaint were correct given the complaints, but then the process got derailed -If the students believed there was malicious intent by the professor, the complaint was the right approach. - Temporarily removing the professor was granted and a simple investigation would have concluded that there was no malicious intent. -The problem to me seems to be the lapse of time between Aug21 and Aug24. It is not clear what the explanation was given (to students and faculty) for reinstatement of professor. It is not clear what was the backlash to the reinstatement. It is less clear what prompted the reversal. -If there had been more transparency in the investigation process, students probably wouldn't have reacted negatively to the reinstatement of a professor and the decision to backtrack this reinstatement wouldn't have been necessary. But this last sentence is just conjecture because we don't know. -So, that is something we should be getting. Information and clarity not only on what determines an investigation, but what is the process after an investigation.”
  - “As a faculty, we need to feel respected and valued. The Dean's office forgets about the fact that they have also responsibility to the faculty to provide a collegial work environment where faculty are listened and respected. The Dean cannot conclude the professor is in fault when actually an active investigation is taking place. That is not the Dean's job to make that conclusion. What the Dean's office did is unfair, unprofessional and totally out of line.”
  - “The decision seemed to be have been taken without due process. I am not a Mandarin speaker but if the word is pronounced in the right way then the situation is more complicated. One of the challenges in preparing our students to work in a global environment is to be aware that certain terms in other languages can seem derogatory when pronounced in English. The student charge that this was malicious and deliberate is very strong and such conclusion can be drawn only after there has been proper investigation with opportunities given to the person accused.”
  - “There was no judge, jury, or anything, only cancellation. If faculty with long records of good performance can lose reputation in a flash or parts of their job for this kind of 5-second mix up, which can happen to anybody by accident given

how much material we have to cover, it means we will become a society where people always talk slow, prescreen every word, and take the safest possible route on everything they say. By nature, that will make us irrelevant.”

- “Concerned. The administration appeared to be willing to very quickly name the faculty member and support the students. Perhaps there was a long review that revealed other issues, meriting this sort of a response. But this story feels very troublesome. I worry about how literally a single “wrong” (or perceptually wrong) word can derail a long career. I want to know that students do not have all of the power; sensitivity and upset should not be sufficient reasons for the sort of (very public) change made here. Racial slurs have no place in our discourse or our world, but it does not seem that the professor used a slur. Usage of a word that sounds similar, while not ideal (and perhaps indicative of bad judgment), should result in what happened here.”
- **Fear, Vulnerability, Threat, and Marginalization.** Representative comments include the following:
  - “That the school leadership doesn't have our back. My impression is that a small number of students were offended by remarks that were in no way meant to be offensive, and that the result was destroying the reputation of a valued colleague.”
  - “I feel extremely vulnerable that one incident that was accidental and not at all with malice of intent could endanger a professor with absolutely no support from the administration. To me, this signals that the administration would rather support an overly sensitive student than a long-time professor who has years of excellent teaching behind him.”
  - “Unsafe - a misunderstanding can't be corrected and could end my career.”
  - “Uncomfortable and unsafe as a faculty member within Marshall. Our Dean was out of line and playing to the crowd. Unacceptable.”
  - “My first reaction was heartache for all involved. Clearly the students felt deeply hurt, alienated, angry and well-justified in filing this complaint. But my heartache also extends to my colleague, who cares so much about the student experience and is wholly dedicated to his work at Marshall. After the initial shock, my overwhelming reaction now is simple: fear. I am afraid that these kinds of complaints can be lodged without any obligation to discuss them in a way that would identify a misunderstanding, thoroughly examine the facts, consider the implications before taking action against the faculty member, or move us forward. I also feel fear knowing that students can make these complaints with impunity, and that even in the case of a potentially specious claim, there is no mechanism to hold students accountable. I feel fear for myself, for my colleagues, and frankly for students who run the risk of inadvertently trivializing the importance of the monumental reckoning on racial injustice that our country is, I hope, experiencing at long last. Complaints like this one may diminish the profound effect on all of us seeing and participating in what is described as movement, not a moment, as we finally seem to be coming to grips with racism in this country, forcefully challenging racist policies nationally and locally. Why

might this complaint potentially work against effectively addressing these issues? In my view, the risk is that here, a professor is being punished on the assumption that the words spoken in class were almost as deliberately racist as a knee on the neck. This is very troubling.”

- “I think this incident could have been managed better. Greg Patton's words were taken out of context. Given that he apologized and did not mean to hurt anyone, the actions taken against him were inappropriate. In particular, the Dean's letter was inappropriate and hurtful to Greg. This also puts all faculty on notice and we have to walk on eggshells going forward.”
- “Scared and makes me want to retire.”
- “It makes me frightened to teach students who can have a faculty member removed for giving an innocuous example in another language. It makes me feel like the dean's office is willing to throw faculty under the bus in order to preserve the appearance of diversity and inclusion instead of opening up dialogues on both sides. It seems that a more appropriate response would have been to have Chinese-speaking students talk about the relevance of the example used in class to explain why it was a useful example to give. Going forward, based on the discomfort of African American students, I don't think it's a big deal to stop using the example, but the current response seems over the top.”
- “Based on the public information, I am appalled at the way this was handled. Prof. Patton was using a very common Chinese word to provide an international example of a common speech pattern. There is no reason to believe that he had any intention that it would be associated with an offensive English word by some students. In addition, I think the way it was handled is offensive to Chinese faculty and students. Given that Prof. Patton is using it in a totally appropriate context, the way it was handled suggests that the school thinks all Chinese faculty and students using this Chinese phrase "marginalize, hurt and harm the psychological safety of our students."
- “I am appalled at the way this was handled based on information available to us. Prof. Patton was using a very common Chinese word/phrase in an entirely appropriate context, to provide an international example of a common speech pattern. There is no reason to believe that he had any intention or knowledge that some students would associate the Chinese phrase with an offensive English word. The appropriate course was for the students to inform him of their concern, at which point he would surely have chosen a different example. I have no doubt that the administration acted in what it perceived to be the best interest of students, faculty, and USC in general. But to summarily remove Prof. Patton from the course is a disturbing abridgement of the concepts of open inquiry and discussion, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement. For a top school official to publicly declare Prof. Patton's behavior “unacceptable” and assert that he “marginalized, hurt, and harmed the psychological safety of our students” is unfair and harmful to Prof. Patton's reputation and to USC's reputation as an educational institution.”

- “This is how it makes me feel about the administration, and specifically Dean Garrett: Livid. Furious. Betrayed. Appalled. Far beyond frustrated. Far beyond exasperated. Also, if I may invoke quite specifically the language of victimhood that the Dean apparently prizes, I feel marginalized and hurt, and I definitely feel that my psychological safety has been harmed. For I now know what I always suspected, to wit, that I can be disciplined, punished, publicly humiliated, possibly to the extent of losing MY JOB, by doing my job exactly as required by my job description, regardless of how well I do it. How is that not being marginalized, hurt, and threatened? When may we expect your letter of groveling apology to us, the faculty, for the harm you have willingly participated in, Dean Garrett?”
- **Disappointment and Sadness.** Representative comments include the following:
  - “It is my conclusion that it appears that the verbiage used was appropriate in the context of the course learning objectives. Professor Patton’s use of the term is consistent with common Chinese usage. The last sentence in the extract from ChineseGrammarWiki highlight “ To English speakers not fortunate enough to be fluent in Mandarin this may raise an eyebrow because it can sound a bit "racist," but it's very common in Mandarin and you'll hear it quite often around Chinese speakers.” This comment suggests that the negative reaction by some students should not be surprising but is mistaken. So, how do I feel? I am upset and feel great pain as a professor and on behalf of Professor Patton. I feel that the data suggests that the Professor made use of a common Mandarin Chinese word for a valid course objective. The context does not seem to suggest any ill intent by Professor Patton. While viewing the video I hear pronunciation of a word that is different from N word that is objectionable in English. I feel very sorrowful that this issue was not closed once the facts were reviewed by both the Professor and the students. The student’s letter of complaint appears excessively broad given the context. The responses by the Dean appear excessively apologetic. The reference in the Dean’s letter to the “psychological safety of our students” seems to miss the point that we are a community and the “psychological safety of our community not just students” is the relevant context. The letter from the Dean notes “this caused great pain and upset among students” it does not address the fact that “this caused great pain and upset to me, and I presume other members of the faculty.” It seems to me that this is evidence that accusation of impropriety, supported by the “feelings of discomfort” is sufficient to trigger penalties without concern for whether the “feelings of discomfort” are appropriate. The Dean’s letter mentions some important concerns including “microaggressions” and that is appropriate. The feeling or perception that a “microaggression” exists .. doesn’t mean that a valid concern does exist. How do I feel? I feel sad, upset and threatened.”
  - “Shocked, saddened, pissed off and betrayed by Dean Garrett and the Marshall Administration. We all know that Patton has 100% good intentions and did nothing wrong - are you serious about the claims? So students have heard this for year and were all good and then this year the same event causes deep

mental health concerns? For a cross cultural example in Chinese? For the Dean to put his signature to a letter with such obviously untrue implication which he must know or should know are untrue is chicken shit.”

- “It makes me feel upset as Greg was removed by the new dean because of a genuine mispronunciation. It gives the appearance that he is not prepared to separate this from intent, all in order to appeal to a few students and a social and political narrative. I do hope that this is not the case.”
- “I feel so incredibly sad, disappointed, and angry. Regarding Greg, he has spent 25 years building up an amazing reputation. It’s beyond obvious that this was not a racial slur. He was using another language. 100 percent not a racial slur. I’m so deeply sad that he has been treated this way and can only hope that reasonable people will step in and protect him from these unfair accusations. I’m disappointed and angry that the dean would throw him under the bus like this. The letter was absolutely unnecessary. I understand Marshall administration may have had to remove him from the class temporarily, but there was no reason to send a letter naming him. The letter significantly damages Greg’s reputation and basically calls him a racist. Completely unacceptable. If the dean will do this to Greg, who is next? This action by the dean basically makes every professor a target of unfounded racist allegations.”
- **Anger.** Representative comments include the following:
  - “So then the anger came when I re-read the letter from Dean Garrett with this in mind. And to be perfectly honest, it seems like the faculty member was thrown under the bus. From the looks of it (and I concede I have limited information, more on that later), it seems that rather than say "we need to review this so we're taking Prof. Patton out of the classroom pending review," the dean basically conceded all of the students points (one of which appears to be that Prof. Patton was intentionally trying to create racist environment, which seems a nearly impossible point to sustain with any existing evidence that i'm aware of). So this leaves me feeling very vulnerable. I can understand the dean's need to manage the emotions (and presumably the social media activity) of the students. But I don't understand why he couldn't have simultaneously demonstrated some indication of support for the faculty member. His letter felt like a conclusion. It should have been more of an opening. I don't know exactly what he should have said, but i fear that if things are left as they stand now, this will have a very chilling effect on the faculty.”
  - “Disheartened and angry. The Dean did such a disservice to faculty, but especially to Greg Patton, by sending a memo that was highly judgmental and injurious. If you understand the course, the context of the lecture, even the example--there was NO intent to harm. The fact that it upset some students should be dealt with, but not by throwing the faculty member under the bus. Now that some time has passed and people have seen and heard the video, the FC should ask the Dean to walk back his email to the students and present a more reasonable response. We are sorry people were offended. But this was not a racist remark and it is critical that in an academic setting that we all be able to



discuss why this was so upsetting. Greg was removed BEFORE any true review of the situation. Why are 12 students allowed to overturn the classroom experience of more than 200? PLEASE ask the Dean to update his remarks and officially offer support to Greg. Too late to put him back in that classroom, but it would at least be a start to repairing his reputation--which is forever damaged at this point."

- **Conflicted Feelings.** Representative comments include the following:
  - "The incident is multifaceted, so it is hard for me to answer this in one way. How do I feel given that students were clearly very disturbed by something that happened in the classroom? How do I feel given that the professor was removed from teaching this class (for now? forever?)? How do I feel given that school leadership is clearly prioritizing the experiences of students who have traditionally been asked to assimilate into the broader Marshall culture instead of giving voice to their different perspectives? How do I feel about how this incident unfolded? I have different feelings about each of these things - some disappointment that students had this experience, some general sympathy for a colleague, some optimism that we are moving in the right direction, and some concern for creating a transparent and consistent process for these types of issues when they occur in the future."
  - "Concerned on both sides - that faculty could easily be accused of inappropriate conduct in otherwise innocent situations, as well as concern that faculty are not sensitive to their examples."
- **Concern about Cancel Culture.** Representative comments include the following:
  - "I am frustrated. It is an example of cancel culture. I do not think Greg had bad intentions."
  - "It makes me feel that the university is giving into the cancel culture and hysteria around us. If Greg Patton is truly a racist, disrespectful individual, then he should have been reprimanded years ago. However, if he is the fine teacher that is as per his reputation, where is the university support to tell the students that they should communicate with him and work it out? Where is the support for an excellent faculty who brings great honor to USC? Why are we allowing someone to basically say, "I'm upset and traumatized" and then the university reacts. Where is the spirit of work out your differences and communicate? Where is the Due Process for Greg Patton? We are permitting this mindset of "I don't have to work it out and I can do what I want and I can say what I want and I don't have to try to get along with you"? I say the above not knowing all of the facts. Again, if Greg is a racist, disrespectful individual who intentionally used a derogatory term, then, by all means, terminate him. If not, where is the university support for a respected faculty?"
  - "Like the school has let cancel culture get out of control. It was a Chinese word that sounds like a racial epithet - it is not one. While foolish on the faculty's part for including it (not recognizing that a culture like the one we have now would find this unacceptable), it is really a shame that an apology for perhaps being insensitive at most was not enough. We all want to be sensitive, but pulling someone who has no history of any racial bias smacks of overreaction. I feel the

dean's office is kowtowing - though I know this is a horrible PR event, I think the students had the right to have their voices heard, and to express their pain. But open dialogue is the solution, and for them to make such a demand (removing him from the core) is extreme and only shows we are in a climate in which people think the worst of everyone, no matter their true intentions."

## **Q2. How will this incident influence how you teach?**

100 of 105 respondents answered the question "How will this incident influence how you teach?" Roughly two thirds of professors said they would change how they taught by being more cautious, engaging students less in discussions, and even avoiding diversity and cultural topics altogether. When discussing how the incident would impact their teaching, professors tended to respond with tentativeness, anxiety, and anger. The following themes emerged: (a) Professors will be more cautious; (b) Professors will hold less engaging discussions with students; (c) some professors will avoid diversity and cultural topics altogether; (d) some professors will continue to teach in the same way, albeit with concerns; and (e) some professors say they will be generally more fearful in the teaching environment. Representative comments include the following:

- **Professors will be much more cautious.** They often emphasized the importance of simply playing it safe. Typically, they suggested this would significantly diminish the teaching and learning experience. Representative comments include the following:
  - "I feel a threat. This is an example of why use of free flowing conversational communication cannot be utilized in the current environment. I will seek to carefully parse my words and examples. I will be much more careful about comments made recognizing that some students may feel discomfort even though that discomfort is generally neither intended nor justified by those in the community."
  - "I will be more cautious about adding to my course any timely issues in the real world and guiding students' critical thinking."
  - "I will be extra cautious on what I speak. Not sure if any words may be interpreted by some students as offensive and hurtful. Self-censorship is a proper way in this environment."
  - "My teaching will be very boring, and I will be very worried to use real-life examples as there are so many ways they can misinterpreted to mean something they do not."
  - "It will make me even more conservative and guarded than I already am. This makes me feel sad as I never had a complaint, always strive for a positive environment, and simply enjoy being with the students. To have to shut myself down will only make the class experience sterile, dry, and less impactful for the students we so want to help succeed."
  - "I will continue to take great care in my choice of language used in my lectures and interactions with others. I will particularly take great care in my choice of examples, cases, exercises, metaphors, analogies, similes, figures of speech, and any other use of the common vernacular that may be perceived as being offensive to anyone."

- “I will become extremely defensive which will undermine the effectiveness of my teaching.”
- “Will not make any jokes or use humor and be as dull as I can as good intentions do not seem to be enough.”
- **Professors will hold less engaging discussions with students.** Similarly, **professors often mentioned how they would hold less engaging discussions with students.** They often explained how this would alter the conversation dynamic in classrooms. Representative comments include the following:
  - Unfortunately, it will stifle dialogue with my students. Before, I was careful and cautious about engaging, using all I had learned from numerous seminars and workshops through the years.. Now, I don't dare engage with students when it is so fraught with unknown ways of unintentionally causing harm.
  - I will continue to second guess every critical comment I make about student work I am asked to evaluate, every example I use in class, every interaction. This may be in fact a good thing, but the overall result is that I am left feeling that I am "playacting" the role of a teacher, rather than engaging authentically with students. I know that the principle of academic freedom is connected to discussing potentially controversial views or events, and protects the right to openly air those views; here, discussing the cross-cultural use of filler words in oral presentations hardly seems controversial. But does the principle of academic freedom apply here at all?
  - Yes. I will shy away from plans to have difficult conversations related to critical thinking.
  - Not much. However, it does reduce my efforts to engage with students personally which I actually enjoy. I think they do too. But what if I say something that can be perceived as offensive by a student? It appears my intentions would not matter and I could lose my job.
  - This rushed judgment will have a chilling effect on having an open discussion. This is also shortchanging in preparing the students for playing effective roles in global markets.
- **Some professors will avoid diversity and cultural topics altogether.** They often voiced regret at this necessary choice: Some typical comments include the following:
  - I will avoid any diversity and inclusion topics and will strictly stick to safe topics, devoid of any potential land mines. Which is unfortunately, because discussing these topics could add richness.
  - I will never teach about anything having to do with diversity, or touching on anything having to do with diversity, if I can at all help it. It will clearly get me fired, regardless of how well I do it.
  - It will certainly affect the way I teach, as i will be careful not to use examples - particularly in international trade and business - that may upset some students' political and social sensibilities. This will lessen the experience and context for the students.

- I will avoid any potentially controversial topics, including diversity and inclusion-- which should NOT be controversial. The risk is too great at this point based on the administration's response in this case.
- I'll be more sensitive. I'll also be more willing to sacrifice student learning for my comfort. I may cut sessions on culture.
- **Some professors will continue to teach in the same way, albeit with concerns.** About twenty percent of professors said they would not change how they taught. Some of these professors argued that they intended to do what was best for students, even if it came with risks or harm to professors. Some mentioned they already taught in inclusive ways and would not have used an example that would be misconstrued by students. Representative comments include the following:
  - I don't think this changes how I teach at all. It does tell me that the process is still not good enough (for both professors and students).
  - I will continue to do what I think is educationally correct for students and consistent with USC's values. But I have tenure and some seniority. I have no doubt that many faculty members in less secure positions will significantly curtail their content as a result of this.
  - It won't. I will continue to try to be as sensitive as I can, and I will take the consequences if someone gets offended.
  - No influence but will not count on dean for backing or support.
  - I don't think that it will. I have striven to be as inclusive as possible. My elective has consistently attracted a diverse set of students.
  - I would never use an example like this. Or, I would at least allude to the example without saying the word. As educators, now more than ever, we need to be sensitive to our diverse student population with varied backgrounds and experiences. I realize that not everything I share will resonate with everyone. I need to be cognizant to always be broad in my approach. Sensitivity is key.
  - It will not because I believe that I am respectful and I generally try to be mindful of my comments. I will be more careful when having personal conversations with students.
- **Some professors say they will be generally more fearful in the teaching environment.** About thirty percent of professors expressed they will feel fearful when they teach. Some professors even mentioned the fear of being unfairly targeted or even fired. Others held a sense that there is no training that can prepare professors for this environment. Others even mentioned they were happy their career was nearly over or that they even wanted to leave USC. Representative comments include the following:
  - Scared of students. This is no longer an educational institution where students respect faculty at all. Whatever has happened to this faculty could have happened to any one of us but in a different scenario. Would the Dean want to be treated this way? He needs to empathize with his faculty. His job is not solely to students. He also has an obligation for his faculty.
  - This incident is a stark reminder that all it takes is a vocal minority to derail an entire career and get a faculty member vilified without any attempt to even understand the context within which something was said. Faculty will have to

walk on egg shells all the time - anyone can be accused of being a racist, bigoted, insensitive, biased, etc. Frankly, I am glad I am in the sunset years of my career. My heart goes out to my junior colleagues for whose sake I hope this madness abates and we practice what we preach - thoughtful, open dialogue and a chance for everyone to be heard, not just a vocal minority with an axe to grind.

- Makes me not want to teach.
- I am always careful of what others may find offensive. But I think Greg would probably say the same. I don't know if it is possible to protect against something like this. Greg's crime seems completely inadvertent. In my wildest dreams I would not have made the connection that was made by the students.
- This has a chilling effect. I plan to be aware and on the lookout for situations that might be misinterpreted, but am concerned that if I start looking over my shoulder and second guessing myself that I might be more inclined to actually make a mistake.
- I'm scared to death to teach in this environment. Any innocent phrase can be turned around on you. I'm scared for my students, especially since everything is recorded. I'm worried students will say something and then become targeted by other students. Overall, this harms the students and it harms diversity causes.

**Q3. How have you been able to successfully introduce issues related to diversity and inclusion? Please relate an experience where you felt you were able to address diversity and inclusion.**

- Faculty listed various methods they have been using to introduce diversity and inclusion related issues to their curriculum (e.g., case studies, guest speakers, examples). 33% of the professors who responded to this question expressed that because they are fearful of the consequences, they will no longer try to bring diversity and inclusion into their classroom. They mention that, unfortunately, this incident was counterproductive to the diversity and inclusion movement. Representative comments include the following:
  - Through case studies. But now I fear I will abandon them. It's too big of a risk that I will unintentionally cause harm to a student and suffer consequences myself.
  - There is one example of recent research that related to race I have discussed in a class before. Because of the administration's action to Professor Patton, I will refrain from this example in the future. How can I be sure that I won't in an attempt to provide curriculum that is inclusive and diverse, unintentionally harm the psychology of our students?
  - Speaking about programmatic and course goals, I would address the importance of diverse ideas. I would form teams based on diverse backgrounds, race, nationalities, gender and provide the reasons for that. I will discontinue that practice to avoid talking about it. I have demonstrated how accents can be an asset. I won't do that again as it might offend. In my opinion, this action has pushed diversity and inclusion efforts backwards. We are a laughing stock--at least at UPenn--where the incident is being discussed online.
  - The only way I feel comfortable addressing diversity and inclusion is by articulating my support for diversity and inclusion -- and by showcasing diversity

(through cases, guests, etc.). I would be too scared to have a deep conversation about the topic in my classroom, for fear that I or someone else would say the wrong thing (no matter how well-intentioned) and cause problems.

- I have talked with students about diversity and inclusion. I wonder what it means to introduce these ideas successfully? In the present context, it would seem that success involves not making anyone upset. In the current politically charged environment, it's only possible to address these issues without creating anger if you do so in a very shallow way. And I've done so in a very shallow way. Unsatisfying on many levels, but I have gotten feedback from students that they appreciate me even broaching the subject, as they feel most professors try to avoid it at all cost.
- Yes, I have. But why should I tell you about it? I will only get in trouble, believe me. Why should I trust you? Why go down this path? It is a game you are forcing me into of Russian roulette, in which the teacher must inevitably die eventually—unless, of course, you happen to be in “a protected class.”
- I don't discuss these issues in my classes. And definitely I will not do it in the near future. It is a shame
- Yes, there are issues in my discipline where a discussion of diversity and inclusion is relevant. I feel it is best to avoid these topics, sadly.
- I go through slides and remove any word or graphic that could be pounced on.. even at the expense of reducing clarity
- No, it is clear that anything remotely close to controversial topics is too dangerous to be introduced in class. Even completely innocent and unrelated comments, such as Prof. Patton, can lead to horrible consequences for faculty.
- I cannot imagine a circumstance under which I would I raise such issues in my class. I am very pro diversity and inclusion, but I worry that I could be misinterpreted. This case with Greg confirms those fears. I don't feel qualified and I am too afraid that I may upset a few students and lose my job. I would rather just avoid the topic.
- Was going to do a lot - but will significantly pull back now. Moving to lowest common denominator to protect myself.

**Q4. Have you personally experienced a challenge in your classroom, related to diversity and inclusion? Please relate an experience where your students were uncomfortable with an aspect of your course content or delivery.**

Altogether, 87 professors responded to this item, with roughly 75 percent reporting no negative teaching events and about 25 percent reporting some type of negative event. These negative events were classified as (a) international culture, policies, and politics; (b) cases and guest speakers; (c) gender identity; (d) nationality; ethnicity; (e) engagement and stress in D&I discussions; (f) nature of class participation and assessment. Representative comments include the following:

- **International Culture, Policies, and Politic.** In discussions about cultural differences across countries, national policies, and international politics, some issues have emerged. Representative comments include the following:

- “When discussing cross-cultural differences in consumer behavior, even though I emphasized that research has shown that certain cultures tend to behave a certain way, students get very defensive and somewhat offended that I'm stereotyping...”
- “A student complained when I referred to someone in a video clip we watched as Chinese when the person was from Hong Kong - I made a sincere apology to the student and discussed with him.”
- “I ran into a similar problem last year when talking about Chinese policy concerning COVID. I had raised a possibility among many others that I clearly told the students that I did not endorse, but which I thought it appropriate for them to think about, along with many others that we talked about. I did this in an attempt to teach them the discipline of seeing everything from every possible angle before drawing conclusions. Apparently some student was offended.”
- “Only one. I had students read an op-ed that was critical of the Chinese government's crackdown on Hong Kong--not because I agreed with the op-ed but just to use it as something to analyze. This student e-mailed me and said it was one-sided and not a fair view of the situation. I was very open and said I think she made a good point and that 1) she should communicate this to the class in our next session and 2) I'm happy to share any articles with the class that she has that would offer another side of this issue. She seemed content with this response.”
- **Cases & Guest Speakers.** Representative comments include the following:
  - “There are challenges with case protagonists for several reasons. It can be a challenge if too many are white males. If they are not white males but portrayed negatively, that can also be a challenge. Additionally, guest speakers sometimes make statements that are not well received by students.
  - “Students feel uncomfortable whenever there are any negative examples that includes a main character that anywhere related to them or their background - you can only use positives or they think you are uniquely calling them out.”
  - “A few students in one section last year didn't like a description of the protagonist's wife in a Harvard Business School case and voiced their displeasure with the focus on white male protagonists. I have worked harder to mix up the protagonists in the cases.”
  - “A few times, always involving guest speakers/mentors in group interactions where I wasn't present to hear what was said. I now preface guest visits by explaining to students how the guests are briefed and trying to clearly define what lies within the scope of their visit, soliciting feedback about the visits after the guests depart. I promise out of the gate that I will not invite guests back if they behave in a way that is perceived to be problematic. Though I've not invited guests back for various reasons, two were never asked back because of things they said.”
- **Gender Identity.** Several professors noted they had unintentionally caused offense by referring to gender in binary terms. Representative comments include the following:

- “Last spring I was attempting to explain what an indicator or binary variable was and asked the students for some examples. One student suggested "gender" as an example, and I expounded a bit on the idea. Later, a student emailed to tell me she realized I wasn't TRYING to be malicious, but that it was insensitive to classify gender as strictly binary, saying it made her feel like she "didn't belong" if she didn't choose one of two options. I immediately apologized and requested a meeting with her so she could potentially help me identify other areas where I might have unknowingly been insensitive. (she didn't take me up on this).”
- “We have had discussions about the evolution of language as usage shapes it: for example, the broad acceptance now of the gender-neutral singular pronoun "they." As for a challenge, I always strive to be sure every student voice is heard, and of course that's not always easy. In an effort to get everyone engaged in a conversation about our goals for class, I did accidentally refer to a trans student by the wrong pronoun on the first day of the term a couple of semesters ago. Her name was neither typically male nor female, and she presented as a gay man (or so I wrongly assumed). She corrected me, very politely; I apologized and was embarrassed enough to discuss it with my department chair. But there were no repercussions and I ended up having a very productive semester with that student, and the entire class.”
- **Nationality/ Ethnicity.** Some challenges have arisen based on nationality and ethnicity. Representative comments include the following:
  - “Yes, I got hammered 2 years ago for calling on Asian students to do their team's final presentation, rather than calling on students randomly. I should have told them I was calling on those with lower participation scores. All students on each team were told to be ready to speak in advance of class. I sent out an apologetic email, got a bunch of emails from students who said they actually thought I was one of the more inclusive profs. So it just depends on student's perception of one's intent.”
  - “Yes, I have both experienced and heard from other international faculty members about being questioned in class or in the teaching evaluations, due to some cultural biases and misunderstandings. I can't recall the details but they were more about students complaining about faculty members' accents, judging the home country of international faculty members, etc. I would love to see more support from the leadership team for faculty members to make them feel comfortable in teaching.”
- **Engagement and Stress in Diversity and Inclusion Discussions.** Professors often want to engage in these D&I discussions but find that it's not always engaging or even stressful for some students. Representative comments include the following:
  - “Yes..several times with other students comments or actions. I do my best to address and look for ways that everyone can improve going forward.”
  - “I believe students are always uncomfortable when issues of diversity and inclusion come up. These are not conversations that all students are willing to have. Some are comfortable, and they tend to be the ones to offer opinions. But,



no, no one has openly challenged. It is the silence of some that I sometimes perceive as a cloaked challenge.”

- “Yes, I have experienced a challenge in the classroom -- the student body is not diverse relative to societal norms, so students of color or other underrepresented identities have at times felt self-conscious about those identities. This is unrelated (so far as I am aware) to the course content and delivery.”

Faculty members report responding to these challenges in a number of ways, including engaging, coping, holding private conversations, apologizing, making it safe for students to correct professors, and building a trustful environment where these discussions can occur.

- Typical statements of professors who do not face these challenges include the following:
  - “I have not. I am so proud of my students and their ability to work as well as their emotional intelligence. Students have at times expressed discomfort when I asked them for their input on defining diversity. But, they expressed this discomfort and it was very useful in furthering discussions about the importance of including all people and points of view.”
  - “I can very fortunately say that I have never faced a problem like this. I like to think this is because I am very careful and because I strive to create a positive and aspirational environment. But the truth is that I feel the kind of example that happened with Dr. Patton could happen to anybody including me as we cover a ton of curriculum and often have to move fast and humans cannot with 100% accuracy predict every single misunderstanding that might occur.”
  - “So far I have not perceived any challenge in my classes related to the issue of inclusion and diversity. This does not necessarily exclude the possibility that some students felt the problem but they did not complain. However, as I said above, the subject matter of my teaching can be taught without touching issues that could be sensitive and I am very careful in making sure that this is the case. I know that the school would like us to talk more about inclusion and diversity. But I feel that this will place us at great risk.”
- Several professors noted that they have raised complaints about D&I issues but have not received responses from the administration.
- **Nature of Class Participation and Assessment.** Representative comments include the following:
  - “Some small percentage of student's may be uncomfortable with either the format of the class or the specific questions on exams. Some students do not prefer to be called on unless they raise their hands. Some students even object to questions on exams when those specific questions were identified as exact study matters prior to the exam. One or two students asked for clarification on how to answer a multiple choice question. I have expanded discussion of these matters both in the syllabus and in class lecture and sought to provide a friendly challenging environment in the classroom. I have explained that when specific questions were identified as possible exam questions that student preparation for those questions was appropriate. I reviewed the need to select one answer of those offered on multiple choice exams I have encountered a student last

semester that I perceived was trying to trap me in a circumstance where there could be a dispute between what each person had claimed. I made a careful and contentious decision to have others present in the room while meeting with the student. When the student then directly asked whether we could meet one on one to discuss issues related to exam questions I signaled that I didn't think it was necessary for the other person to leave."

- "A female student in my [program name redacted] class alleged that because I cold called her (just like I did to everyone in the class) that I had created a hostile environment."

**Q5. Do you feel you have the skills and tools to handle diversity and equity issues in your classes?**

- About 55 percent of professors said they do have the skills to some degree.

Representative comments include the following:

- "I do feel that I have the skills and tools to handle diversity and equity issues in my classes."
- "I feel very strongly that I do, and I feel committed to follow any and all advice, training, or other preparation that the Marshall leadership recommends. I am 'all in' on this and want to strictly avoid scenarios like what happened here."
- "I feel equipped to handle some issues. I do not feel equipped to handle others. Obviously, the range of potential diversity and equity issues that might arise in a classroom is very broad."
- "I do. I feel blessed by the broad experiences I've had in my career with gender, race and cultural diversity, and I think they have helped me."
- "I think I use common sense and am sensitive to others' feelings."
- "I think I do. However, it seems that what I think is irrelevant. The standard of skill and tools seems to be migrating to what any particular student "feels" whether justified or not."
- "I think so but who knows what might hurt some students' feelings."

- About 25 percent say they are not qualified, or that they now question their skills.

Representative comments include the following:

- "At other times, I would think so. But I am not sure if I could handle it well enough without being misunderstood or misinterpreted by some students in this environment."
- "Honestly, no. I don't think the faculty have been given tools to avoid situations like the one that Professor Patton encountered. If he had thought the word he used sounded like a racial slur, clearly he wouldn't have used it. I'm not exactly sure how such a scenario could be avoided for all of our faculty, no matter how many sensitivity trainings we are given. Some issues are common sense, but it's also impossible to anticipate how many different ways someone else might interpret what you say."
- "I feel equipped to handle some issues. I do not feel equipped to handle others. Obviously, the range of potential diversity and equity issues that might arise in a classroom is very broad."

- Just under 20 percent of professors say they want to learn more. Representative statements include the following:
  - “I think we can all learn more. I am eager to learn more. I love learning. It is part of why I teach. I would be very open to opportunities to learn more in a positive way about diversity and equity in a positive fashion rather than in seeing a colleague vilified in this way.”
  - “I would definitely like to have more tools -- it all feels like a bit of a minefield, and so the impulse is simply to stay as far away as possible from potentially difficult conversations. But it would be healthier to feel more confidence in talking about these issues.”
  - “I've been actively working to build these skills and acquire the tools for several years. I'm the type, however, who would probably never feel that my skills and tools are adequate.”
- About 20 percent of professors expressed a disinclination to engage in these types of issues in class. Representative statements include the following:
  - “I thought I did but this example makes me question and not want to address these topics in the classroom.”
  - “No, and I don't want them.”
  - “To what end? Do I have the skills and tools to dance away and keep the conversation shallow enough to avoid angering people? Probably 9 times out of 10, as I would imagine most professors have. But the fact is that it's fairly inevitable that many of us will, at some point in our careers, make a statement that inadvertently triggers one or more of our students' experiences of racism or sexism or other forms of oppression. And when that happens, I want to believe that the administration has my back and will help me make sure it's a learning opportunity and not the end of my career. And until I see more evidence that the administration has Prof. Patton's back, I just can't feel this level of confidence at this point.”
- Just under a third of professors feel that learning the necessary skills is too challenging in this environment for the following reasons: (a) the atmosphere is too charged and unpredictable; (b) the administration is not supportive. Representative statements include the following:
  - “Not really. I feel I have the skills and tools to be a good person, but students choose how they want to interpret interactions. In the current environment, it is hard to know what might provoke.”
  - “Honestly I don't think anybody can possibly have such magical skills in the current climate, which Dean Garrett and the rest of the administration are now making worse.”
  - “I've done the training. But make no mistake, anyone who initiates a discussion in their class takes on way too much risk. Let's see the dean do it when he teaches his lectures on capitalism. Let's see him criticize the Chinese power structure, and the Chinese system of stealing IP and knowledge transfer in front of Chinese students.”

- “I don't think anyone does in this climate. I don't want my class to be a ‘safe space’ when it comes to discussing ideas that some might find offensive. That's not our purpose.”
- Some professors expressed that the prior Diversity and Inclusion training has not been particularly helpful for classroom situations. Representative statements include the following:
  - “No. I do not think I have the skills to handle diversity and equity issues. I also believe, though, that nobody really have the perfect skills. As a validation of this I remember attending a training workshop on diversity a couple of years ago led by a professional hired by the Marshall school. During the workshop the professional ended up making a statement that clearly offended some of the people in the audience. It was 100% unintentional. An honest mistake. But it shows that even professionals with the highest level of training and experience could make mistakes. This is why I think that it is important to give the benefit of the doubt. What is needed is understanding and not vengeance. There is no manual in which we can read what is offensive and what is not. It is the offended person that defines what is offensive. At least this is what I learned in the training course mandated by the University. This makes sense. I wish, though, that the offended person would be more open to accept an apology. Unfortunately, in many instances, I do not see that. Instead I see a deliberate attempt to harm the person that made the mistake and, indirectly, the institution the person represents.”
  - “Not especially. And, worse, I feel like there has been limited honest conversation about this at Marshall. We are encouraged to engage in these conversations, and yet most discussions we have had about this issue tend to be 1. abstract rather than practical, and 2. optimistic about students and their ability to deal with challenging conversations. In addition, we had a consultant come in a year or two ago to do some training, which was well-intentioned but largely unhelpful - in addition to mostly setting out to explain microaggressions and such to an audience already familiar with this topic, the trainer gave what I thought was somewhat controversial advice (e.g. be curious in the face of difference - that could totally go terribly! Plus, where was any empirical support for this tactic??). I think Marshall needs to be much clearer about this set of issues - including free speech and academic freedom and how it balances this important issue with DEI issues and also with cancel culture. This question came up at the all faculty meeting and it was disappointing to hear a “non-answer” type of answer to an increasingly important issue.”

**Q6. In your opinion, what administrative processes should be in place, with respect to immediate actions, prior to an official OED inquiry, (a) Faculty communications with students; (b) Personnel decisions about the involved faculty member; and (c) Formal communications with students about these incidents.**

Overall, professors mentioned a number of desirable “end” products, including (a) To have more conversation between faculty, students and administration; (b) To give faculty defense mechanism and support; and (c) A need for transparent, standard protocol, and a consistent

and clear process. They also mentioned a number of strategies to reach these goals, including (a) educating students about the process, (b) de-escalating through three-way conversations, (c) no prior judgments before the EOD process is complete; (d) adhering to current policy; and (e) encouraging conversations. These various issues can be characterized as preventative actions and post-incident actions.

- **Preventive Actions.** Representative statements include the following:
  - “Instill a more open culture with students. Maybe during orientation, highlight the drawbacks of being over-sensitive and the value of having constructive discussions about issues, rather than being so reactive and escalating things so quickly.”
  - “We should train our students--especially our graduate students--to challenge the faculty more. Misunderstandings fester, especially when they are repeated out of context. If someone is offended in the classroom, they should say so. And we should have mechanisms to protect students from retaliation should they speak out.”
  - “Collective discussions in the best interest of all stakeholders and the school, understanding how we are educating our students as a whole.”
  - “Have students and prof start a conversation to understand each other.”
  - “The administration needs to encourage students to relate to one another. Then faculty to communicate with students. I think that removing a faculty member from the class "pending investigation" while also indicating something about that faculty member's long and positive track record would be appropriate. Also, I think since we (in theory) teach students how to lead and manage organizations, we could foster sessions that openly talk about how students and faculty from different backgrounds can be more sensitive to others' cultures and feelings”
- **Post-Incident Process.** Over 30 percent of faculty mentioned the importance of direction communication between instructors and students. Also, over 30 percent of professors mentioned the importance of ensuring that professors are innocent until proven guilty and that this process must be transparent. Over 15 percent of professors mentioned the importance of leaving the process solely to OED. Representative statements include the following:
  - “In my view the faculty should first address the issue with students. .... “
  - “I would hope that the first step should always be between the instructor and the student(s). If it goes beyond that, there should be no formal communication with students (perhaps beyond saying that the situation is being investigated) before a completed OED inquiry (and maybe not even then, depending on the outcome of the inquiry).”
  - “I don't fully understand the processes that were in place, but I would guess most incidents can be settled by de-escalation at a low level. Before elevating misunderstandings to the felony level, so to speak, a three way sitdown between the alarmed or offended students and a designated third party and the faculty member might be a good first step. In an era of cancel culture, defusing may be the best answer.”

- “I assume this is asking about now, as opposed to processes for the future when this is likely to happen again: Ask Sharoni if she's willing to mediate a discussion between Greg and the students (allow all students to join), since he is in her department, and ask Marion to be involved as well, since she's taking over the course. ...”
- “I think in this current environment, students who have a complaint should address it with the professor directly while copying via email/looping in (for transparency's sake) two Vice Deans. For example, Vice Dean Little and Vice Dean Ku. I feel a conversation directly dealing with the situation should take place before things escalate outside of a transparent setting with all key parties and decision-making administrators. I feel like that opportunity was lost here. I do not feel personnel decisions should be reversed because administrators or the Dean suddenly fear public repercussions. This is not effective leadership in my opinion and undermines trust and credibility. I think expressing understanding that someone feels hurt is of course the first step--acknowledging and validating an individual's feelings. But going beyond that should be put off until all of the facts are gathered which would include a direct meeting with all involved parties. Therefore formal communications with students need to be transparent to all parties and not be made in haste or out of fear of retaliation.”
- “I think there should be due process when charges are made against a faculty member to ensure she/he is given an opportunity to explain. There should be more faculty governance.”
- “There should be an independent body of faculty (perhaps the faculty council) that should work with students to address issues like this. Administration is always in a difficult spot and it may be easier if a group of faculty communicate with students to try and resolve such issues.”
- “None of the things highlighted is appropriate. The reason is once someone feels they have been subjected to a legally protected category, the only place to go is for OED. What the Dean's office should have done is to express students that they will take their concerns to the appropriate investigative units which in this case is the OED. Since the responsibility of this office is to handle protected categories, they are in a better position to derive conclusions and consequences associated with it.”
- **Assessment of the Case of Professor Greg Patton.** 4 faculty stated that the administration did what it had to, and 12 faculty stated that the Dean should have been more cautious. Representative statements include the following:
  - “complicated. to remove the faculty member casts an impression that they did something wrong. to fail to remove a faculty member casts an impression that the administration is unresponsive.”
  - “When a critical mass of students gets behind a complaint of this sort, I think the administration has to get involved like it or not. I think the Marshall leadership did well to do so, although pulling Dr. Patton from the class is potentially a case of overreaction. Yet I know the risks of underreacting too, so I don't fault

Marshall leadership for making the call. I labored over this question quite a bit, but my best suggestion would be for a committee of peers to oversee the complaint at this early stage (before OED takes it on as I know fast decisions must be made). When crimes are committed in society at large, the alleged offender is judged by a jury of peers. The consequences for Dr. Patton or whomever this happens to are not small. Firing or even dismissing from a class is a strong position to take and there is damage. For that reason, I see the judgment of peers as being the right process. Of course, the peer committee can hand a recommendation to the Dean, and can also talk with the students in a meeting where the instructor is not present. They can hand a recommendation to the Dean, who can view it as the committee's recommendation, although the Dean should still have fiat to do what he or she pleases after reading and considering the recommendation."

- "This is a bit hard to generalize as every case and evidence in each case can be different. But in this case I think the tone of the Dean's e-mail to the students was prejudging the case."
- "As much as possible, administrators should keep these matters private. The dean's letter to students is a case study in what not to. It unfairly and unnecessarily accuses Greg of racist actions. This is a clear example of when administrators must push back against students. We must make students feel safe to share their experiences with administrators, yet we shouldn't accept all of their unreasonable demands. In this case, Greg apologized as soon as he learned a few students were offended. There should not have been any escalation beyond that point. Administrators need to hold the line with students and defend professors from disproportionate responses. Kicking Greg out of the class was an excessive action. Publicly accusing him of racist behavior was unconscionable."

**Q7. Do you have any other thoughts and suggestions? We are especially hoping to get some ideas about how we can create a supportive culture, improve trust, empathy, and communication at Marshall.**

This final question elicited a broad range of responses. Given the open-ended nature of this question, responses are much more varied. Nevertheless, a few themes emerge.

- About one third of respondents use this question to press for changes to the policies that would guide how Marshall should respond to this type of incident in the future. Representative statements include the following:
  - "We know about a process, but at the end of the day, the "process" seems to be irrelevant to the outcome. Whatever the 'process' determined, was not communicated in a transparent way to students/faculty. More importantly, it was quickly reversed by a set of meeting and a last-minute decision, so the investigation process seems totally irrelevant. I don't know what happened from Aug 21 to Aug 24, and it seems that this meetings and last-minute calls were the important determinants of the outcome. It is not comforting to know that in paper there is 'a set of rules to deal with this' but in practice every single situation will enter into a blackbox."

- “Insert de-escalation measures in the first stages of response. Students do need to be heard, but when their claims are the results of misunderstanding, the situation should be diffused as early and quickly as possible.”
- “There should be a clearly articulated series of steps taken prior to opening an official inquiry through the OED. And if a student claim is found to be capricious or simply without merit, the student should know that there can be consequences. Of course, to hold students responsible for the veracity of their accusations should not be permitted to impose a chilling effect on their raising questions or concerns in the first place. I realize that's a very tricky line to walk. Ultimately I worry that this complaint, sadly, takes away from the importance of rooting out behavior and policies that are truly racist, discriminatory, harassing, or insensitive. We are at such an important time in our history. At USC and across the country, many people are dedicated as never before to working to create a world that is fair, just, open, and inclusive. It is painful to consider that the progress made may be potentially threatened -- progress in creating awareness, encouraging open dialog, and launching policy debates that grapple with the history and structures that have led to what is now broadly called systemic racism. I fear this hard-earned progress is at risk when we give knee-jerk credence to an accusation like the one at issue here.”
- “Form a committee to evaluate the evidence and don’t give into pressure from any group including the students.”
- “I think that the Marshall admin needs to establish a process that protects both the students and the faculty. And this is OED's job, not a dean's, who is concerned with rankings and student satisfaction.”
- “The issues of diversity and inclusion are clearly very important. However, there has to be process that is balanced so that it does not unduly hamper free speech and thoughtful discussion that can be sometimes unpleasant. This is the world our students will be exposed to so we are doing a disservice if we do not prepare them for this.”
- About 10 percent of the responses indicated an absence of trust and transparency in the relationship between students, faculty, and administration. Representative statements include the following:
  - “It will be difficult to improve trust and empathy, if all communication with the leadership is formal, channeled through the hierarchy, and vetted by "gate keepers"”
  - “Tough to trust in such an obvious situation. I’m just going to teach and stay out of the way.
  - “This episode, like the mess with Dean Ellis, lacks transparency and has bred mistrust. At the beginning of his term, that's a shame.”
  - “It starts with honesty from the university administration. Unfortunately there isn't a culture of honesty. Worse still, there is a lack of respect and tolerance for people who hold different opinions to the prevailing woke narrative. There is a growing culture of fear and intimidation towards anyone who doesn't agree with what's going on. Faculty have to accept the prevailing woke narrative, otherwise



we will lose our livelihoods. Fine, but you don't gain respect through intimidation."

- "Right now, trust needs to be worked on between faculty and administration. This example based on the information conveyed (and I have not yet viewed the video recording of the class) appears that the Professor was taken out of context and punished for a "crime" he did not commit."
- The administration's actions in this incident have unfortunately moved us toward (and set the stage for) a less supportive culture with diminished trust, empathy, and communication at Marshall. Like I said, I am despairing."
- About 15 percent of the responses discussed training/education. Nearly all focused on training for faculty, but many also suggested steps to help students deal with what they perceive to be offensive language. Representative statements include the following:
  - "Both students and faculty may benefit from resources and educational material about how to make the classroom and work setting an inclusive and diverse environment. I think the emphasis should be on learning, as opposed to getting it right every single time: Students and faculty should feel that, even if we all still have some learning to do, we are all striving to create a supportive culture and community. The wellbeing of students and faculty should matter."
  - "Faculty need specific training on what to do in the classroom - more than simply a Trojan Learn discrimination and Title IX training. They need to be made aware of how little comments can be taken quite differently by a student, and they need to see how their course materials may have inherent biases."
  - "In addition to training for students and faculty related to diversity and inclusion, we need speakers and training about the purpose of an academic institution to increase discourse and opinions from both sides of an issue. This could be covered in program orientations as well as in individual courses. Why not encourage the discussion of such an event among all parties--not just allowing those who feel injured to shout at the deans and vice deans, to disregard them and DEMAND their solution to what may not even be a true problem."
  - "I think open communication and potential training could be very helpful. Not just in terms of "how to not be offensive", but also in terms of "how to be more inclusive".
  - "Building more programming into student orientation about this kind of subject matter and the care we faculty take to avoid these situations could help. Also, having a faculty training session on the subject matter would also help. Faculty need to hear this just like the students do."
  - "I hope to learn how to prevent. Can we have seminar to review past cases? Or a seminar that will give us some guidelines to follow."
  - "Creating Psychological Safety (aka enabling open, honest conversations) in the first sessions"
- Faculty members offered suggestions about how to build trust between students and faculty:
  - **Include Faculty and Students in Dialogue.** Representative statements include the following:

- “I believe this issue should be addressed both on the faculty and the student side. Having to walk on egg shells is not beneficial to either group.”
- “It is **\*CRITICAL\*** that the Dean communicate to both the MBA students and to the Marshall faculty about this incident. How should we make sense of what happened? What are our norms as a school? Was it right for the student to politicize this situation and seek to "cancel" their professor? Should other students do the same? Or was this an immature and ill-advised response? Was it wrong for the professor to have used the example he's been using for 10+ years? Should we see that as an act of racism? If so, why? If not, why was he removed? Are faculty safe at Marshall? These and other questions are being asked by students and faculty. To remain silent is to lose an important opportunity to shape who we are as a Marshall family.”
- “We need to have a town hall with students and faculty where we can have a thoughtful, reasonable dialogue about what is acceptable and not acceptable.”
- “a town hall led by a diverse set of students which the faculty and students should attend. it is not the entire answer, but it would be a nice step”
- “Student complaints deserve a respectful response but there has to be open and two-way communication not a rush to judgement. Appeasing the students in this manner is an insult to their intelligence. The communication to the student body naming and shaming the faculty member is simply unacceptable and has to be acknowledged as such.”
- “I think that the faculty, particularly in the core, should be mixed in with the students for team building exercises during orientation, so at least some students from each core feel like they know the professors as people and can help their core see that person as a human before things like this happen. This exercise with the faculty needs to be meaningful and will involve time to be effective, so please compensate faculty with a teaching load point or a gift certificate to Amazon. Don't try to make it a small ask and try to get the faculty to do it for free: that's useless; in that case. don't do it at all.”
- “We should remind all our students (and faculty) that they are adults who should exercise control over their lives. We need to emphasize that learning is a cooperative activity and not an adversarial activity. We need to focus achievement on personal recognition of knowledge gained and not on grades. We need to create and support more opportunities for students to meet with faculty out of the classroom and away from the course... We should organize the undergraduate students in their primary departments just as Entrepreneurship does so well. Everyone will have better experiences at USC if the students feel that they belong and are a part of the primary departments in which they study. To this end, the

departments should be able to email their students, they should sponsor scholastic enrichment activities and social activities that mix students with the faculty. If we give them more respect as members of our community instead of simply treating them as customers, we will all benefit.”

- “the departments should be able to email their students, they should sponsor scholastic enrichment activities and social activities that mix students with the faculty. If we give them more respect as members of our community instead of simply treating them as customers, we will all benefit”
- “Maybe circulate a more detailed description of our students, who they are, what their backgrounds are etc. Currently the only information we have are "rankings" related, average GPA, GMAT etc. and a little bit of demographics. Even this information was not provided this semester. The administration talked about the number of students admitted but said nothing about the usual metrics that characterize an incoming class. This incident seems to highlight the importance of knowing more, not less about the students you are teaching”
- “if you already have a safe space for discussion, it is much easier to have discussion. While it's an ideal principle to ask everyone to be open to all dialogue, it's just not the climate right now. So to get to that ideal, you definitely need the social connection established BEFORE things like this happen. I think that the faculty, particularly in the core, should be mixed in with the students for team building exercises during orientation, so at least some students from each core feel like they know the professors as people and can help their core see that person as a human before things like this happen. This exercise with the faculty needs to be meaningful and will involve time to be effective, so please compensate faculty with a teaching load point or a gift certificate to Amazon. Don't try to make it a small ask and try to get the faculty to do it for free: that's useless; in that case. don't do it at all. Require faculty to commit to the effort it would take to make a difference in their relationship with the students before class starts, and compensate them accordingly. Also, maybe see if faculty want to pair up and help each other to flag potential hot spots in teaching plans. We won't catch everything, but we might at least help faculty to be prepared to engage in discussion. This should just be voluntary. We do some of this in core FT MBA, but usually ex post rather than ex ante, with the term faculty meetings. Probably should have term faculty meetings in all the programs to flag issues”
- **Develop a culture of Positive Intent and Open Dialogue.** Representative statements include the following:
  - “At what point do we teach students that teachers are human and may make mistakes. If given feedback and the teacher acknowledges it and then changes the behavior, does that not take into account that as

human we make mistakes and learn from them? If he had been given that feedback and continued doing it, that would be different. From what I see based on the information given, this was the first time Greg had been given the feedback. I have read the comments on Black@USC and personally appalled by those examples. This does not seem like the same level but the actions taken have been very strict/punitive. Not only did he send an email to the class (which was appropriate) but to have this become so public seems like throwing salt on his wounds”

- “Culture is difficult to engineer, but a sense of trust that people make mistakes but generally have good intentions, and that faculty is not the enemy, is important. At the same time, there should be trust that there is a system in place that if something does happen it will be handled with fairness to all involved.”
- “To me, it starts with clear statements and communication about values and community norms. Then we act in accordance with those values and norms. I doubt we would choose to have community values and norms that say community members have the right to never feel offended or uncomfortable with anything that is said or done by another community member. Of course, neither do we want values and norms that allow people to speak and act without regard for the impact of their words and actions. Academic communities seem to have a particular challenge in reconciling the interaction of DEI values and freedom of speech and expression values. Good luck to our leadership.”
- **Dean reinstates support for faculty.** Representative statements include the following:
  - Frankly, I think the dean owes the faculty member in question an apology. Beyond this, the dean should issue a clear statement affirming that open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement are our core values, and send it to all students and faculty members. The dean should also affirm these values in all public discussions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Most important, the Faculty Council itself should issue a clear statement of general principles, that our core values include open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement. Faculty members could be allowed to sign onto the statement as individuals as well. Having spent much time in administration, I believe this would have a powerful positive influence on the university leadership moving forward. The voices of reason are being drowned out now and the leadership is confused; it is important for those who share what I believe to be our core values to speak up so that decision makers understand they are present.”
  - “Act supportive of everybody. Not just the loudest voice in the room.”
  - “This is the first major action taken by Geoff as our new dean. It creates a climate of fear and sends the signal that faculty will not be protected. This comes across as a PR move and politically expedient. Bad way to

start of his time as dean. I sincerely hope he will reverse course. Given the fear this will create with faculty, the dean should issue a public apology to Greg and assure professors that he will not give in to the most vocal students.”

- **Greater involvement of faculty and self reflection.** Representative statements include the following:
  - “This survey is a great start. I would like to feel part of a process vs. the process being placed on me. Defined processes and group wide understanding of those processes is pivotal. I think it is important to not just create the above at Marshall but at USC as a whole. I read the Instagram page of #blackatusc all the time. The occurrences that I read about are unacceptable. This needs to be a university wide initiative, not just at the school levels.”

“I really think we need to take a deep look within ourselves, more and more of these issues will come to light in the next few years. We need to realize that we have Generation Z in our classes now (born between 1995 to 2010). These students care deeply about social causes (unlike Millennials) and are not afraid to speak up. We need to make sure that as faculty we are getting the tools that we need to be able to educate the new generation. I think the need of hour is more empathy, for students, Greg and Geoff. This is a learning opportunity for all of us faculty and if we use this opportunity to take a deeper look into our classes and our pedagogy”