October 19, 2015

TO: Leo Estrada, Chair, Academic Senate

FROM: Benjamin Williams, Chair, HSSEAS Faculty Executive Committee

RE: Proposed Revision to Presidential Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) of the Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science (HSSEAS) discussed the proposed changes in our meeting of October 9. In general, the FEC was very supportive of the proposed revisions, especially the intent of having a clear policy to protect students, staff, and faculty.

Several concerns were raised during discussion. First, we wish to emphasize the importance of training on the topics of Sexual Violence and Harassment for both the students and faculty. This particularly important since it appears that nearly all faculty will be classified as mandatory reporters, so faculty must be clearly aware of their responsibilities, and their limitations when advising students. Second, some of us felt there is some ambiguity about the details of the universities adjudication process, particularly as it relates to the interaction with law enforcement and the criminal justice system. It would be helpful for the policy to clarify these issues as much as possible, and for the results to be clear to faculty, staff, and students in any future training. Third, it is not very clear how third party reports will be handled. Specifically, will the reporting third party be informed of the summary of any findings? Fourth, the rights of the Respondent to contest any findings of “Alternative Resolution” or “Formal Investigation” are not clear. With anonymous third party reporting being encouraged, this becomes particularly important.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this memo.