



MEMORANDUM

Office of the Provost

C.L. Max Nikias  
Provost and  
Senior Vice  
President for  
Academic Affairs

To: Academic Deans, Faculty and Staff  
From: C. L. Max Nikias *C. L. Nikias*  
Date: September 12, 2005  
Subject: Appointment of James Ellis, Gene Bickers, and Marsha Kinder

I am delighted to announce three new appointments in the Office of the Provost: **James Ellis** as senior executive director for global initiatives, **Gene Bickers** as associate vice provost for undergraduate affairs, and **Marsha Kinder** as associate vice provost for research advancement-humanities. Bickers and Kinder are 50% time appointments.

As senior executive director for global initiatives, **James Ellis** reports to Barry Glassner, the executive vice provost. He will work closely with faculty and deans to develop a major globalization initiative that will encompass international instructional and research programs. He will expand the university's international presence, increase our leadership role in the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, and find ways to promote USC throughout the world. He will oversee the USC offices in foreign countries, while maximizing our opportunities in these countries. He will also coordinate visits from international university representatives and foreign government dignitaries to the USC campuses.

As associate vice provost for undergraduate affairs, **Gene Bickers** reports to Elizabeth Garrett, the vice provost for academic affairs, and is responsible for all programs related to undergraduate education, including the Renaissance Scholars, Undergraduate Research, and McNair Scholars Programs. He also oversees the provost's efforts to stimulate pedagogical innovation and enhance learner-centered education at USC, including assistance in coordinating efforts by faculty and information services staff to enhance the classroom experience through technology. He will encourage the creative use of technology and creative teaching in the classroom, while promoting the use of cutting-edge research and practices. He will work with the vice provost for academic affairs to develop new curricular strategies that address USC's commitment to education centered on the diverse needs of undergraduate learners. He will also work to improve the university's curriculum and academic programs, including the core curriculum, interdisciplinary initiatives, and undergraduate research opportunities.

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Academic Deans, Faculty and Staff

September 12, 2005

Page Two

As associate vice provost for research advancement-humanities, **Marsha Kinder** reports to Randolph Hall, the vice provost for research advancement. In this new position, she will be responsible for overseeing the campus research environment as it relates to the humanities and promoting interdisciplinary research that addresses important social questions and the core values of the university. She will be acting as a catalyst by assembling faculty teams in response to external funding opportunities and by developing transdisciplinary research projects that open up exciting new areas of research in the arts and humanities.

Please join me in congratulating James Ellis, Gene Bickers, and Marsha Kinder on their appointments. I am confident they will make considerable contributions to the university. Their biographies appear as attachments to this memo.

cc: Steven B. Sample  
Todd R. Dickey  
Dennis F. Dougherty  
Martha Harris  
Alan Kreditor

**James G. Ellis**  
**Senior Executive Director for Global Initiatives**

James Ellis is a clinical professor in the Department of Marketing at the Marshall School of Business and has considerable experience and expertise in China, Taiwan, India, and Korea. He previously served as the Vice Dean of External Relations for the Marshall School of Business, where he led Executive Education, Marketing and Communications, Alumni Relations, Corporate Relations, and Fundraising. In the classroom, Ellis has been responsible for the School's Advertising and Sales Promotion classes, as well as those in Sales Force Management, Retailing Management, and Marketing Management. He has been named Professor of the Year by numerous student organizations, won The Golden Apple Professor of the Year Award in the Undergraduate Program at the Marshall School, and received the Teaching Has No Boundaries Award from the USC faculty.

From 1970 until 1983, Ellis was with the Broadway Department Stores, rising to the position of Vice President, Merchandising. He spent time in both soft goods and hard goods merchandising—a crossover that is rare in the retailing world. In those capacities, he devoted time to developing products around the world. He served as President and Chief Executive Officer of American Porsche Design, administering to the sales and marketing of Porsche Design products in North America from 1985 to 1990.

Ellis has been involved in a number of entrepreneurial ventures since leaving the corporate arena in 1983. He has been Vice President, Merchandising of Miller's Outpost, a company sold to foreign investors while he was there; Chairman of Socks du Jour, a start-up he began with a partner; and Chairman of Comfort Center Mattress Shops. He was instrumental as a Director in the successful sale of Sideout Sport, a southern California volleyball apparel manufacturer. From 1990 to 1997, he served as CEO and owner of Port O'Call Pasadena, an upscale home accessory retailer that was successfully sold. He was also an owner and officer of Mayco Colors, a ceramic paint manufacturer based in Columbus, Ohio, which has been successfully sold. He is a founding director of Professional Business Bank in Pasadena.

Ellis holds an MBA degree from the Harvard Business School and a BBA degree from the University of New Mexico, serves on a number of non-profit boards of directors, and is active in community affairs. He is the former Chairman of the San Gabriel Valley Chapter of the Young Presidents Organization, and has served as its Regional Vice President and on its International Board of Directors. In addition, he was the Chairman of the Board of Kidspace Children's Museum in Pasadena, Past Chairman of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the International Board of Directors of World Presidents Organization.

**Gene Bickers**  
**Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs**

Gene Bickers earned his bachelor's degree in physics and mathematics with highest distinction at the University of Virginia in 1981. His master's (1983) and doctoral (1986) degrees in theoretical physics are from Cornell University. After completing a two-year postdoctoral appointment at the Institute for Theoretical Physics in Santa Barbara, he joined the faculty of the University of Southern California as an assistant professor in 1988. He was promoted to associate professor in 1992 and professor in 1998. He served as chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy from 2003 to 2005.

Bickers' research has concentrated on the physics of strongly correlated electrons in solids. His group has developed novel computational schemes for treating models for electron conduction and has used these methods to investigate high-temperature superconductivity and quantum magnetism. He has supervised four doctoral dissertations, and his research has been supported by the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research.

He was an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellow from 1991 to 1993. He is the recipient of the USC College's Raubenheimer Junior and Senior Faculty Awards (1992 and 2002). Bickers' teaching has been at all levels, ranging from the introductory course for non-scientists to advanced graduate courses in condensed matter theory. He is known for enlivening his introductory courses with a range of demonstrations, including an annual firewalk to illustrate the principles of heat transfer. He is the recipient of a Mortar Board Excellence in Teaching Award (1994), the College's General Education Teaching Award (2000), the University's Teaching Has No Boundaries Award (2003), and the University Associates Award for Excellence in Teaching (1999). He was also a Faculty Fellow in the University's Center for Excellence in Teaching from 1997 to 2000. He has been a member of the National Committee of Examiners for the Graduate Record Examination in physics since 2001, serving as committee chair beginning in 2004.

## **Marsha Kinder**

### **Associate Vice Provost for Research Advancement-Humanities**

Marsha Kinder began her career as a scholar of eighteenth century literature with a Ph.D. in English from UCLA. Writing on Henry Fielding's movement from theater to fiction, she became a specialist in studying transmedia migration across various art forms—literature, cinema, television, dreams, and new media. She currently is a professor of critical studies in USC's School of Cinema, where she has been teaching since 1980.

Since 1997 Kinder has directed The Labyrinth Project, a research initiative on interactive narrative at USC's Annenberg Center for Communication. With a team of media artists, Kinder has been producing new models of digital scholarship and a series of award winning database documentaries made in collaboration with filmmakers, writers, scholars, students, archives, and other cultural institutions. Labyrinth's first four projects were official selections at the Sundance On-Line Film Festival, where "Dawn at My Back" won the Jury Award for New Narrative Forms. Other Labyrinth projects won design awards from New Media Invision and the British Academy of Film & TV Arts. Three were featured as museum installations in the "Future Cinema" exhibition at the ZKM Multimedia Center in Germany, and subsequently traveled to Helsinki and Tokyo. Her work at Labyrinth has been supported by grants from the Annenberg, Ford, Getty, Rockefeller, Skirball, and Irvine Foundations. Labyrinth currently has two projects in production. "Russian Modernism" is experimental on-line courseware with a role-playing game at its center, which is being developed in collaboration with Professor John Bowlt and the IMRC from Slavic Studies (and outside scholars from Berkeley and University of Chicago) and Victor LaCour from the Game Pipe at the Viterbi School of Engineering. "A Tale of Two MAOs: Exploring Aggression and Anxiety in Mice and Men" is an interactive installation and website that document thirty years of pioneering molecular research by Professor Jean Chen Shih of USC's School of Pharmacy.

Also a cultural theorist and prolific film scholar, Kinder has published over 100 essays (which have been widely anthologized) and ten books, including: *Playing with Power in Movies, Television and Video Games* and *Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain*. She has also edited several anthologies, including *Refiguring Spain*, Buñuel's *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, and *Kids' Media Culture*. She was the founding editor of *Dreamworks* (1980-88) and of *The Spectator* (1982-the present), and since 1977 has served on the editorial board of *Film Quarterly*. In 1995 she received the USC Associates Award for Creativity in Research and Scholarship, and in 2001, in recognition of her innovative transdisciplinary research, was named a University Professor.