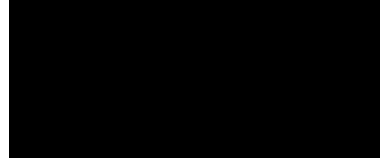


## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2009



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## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ROSSIER SCHOOL OF EDUCATION FORMS DISTINGUISHED ADVISORY COUNCIL TO NEW MAT@USC

*Council to Advise Rossier's Unprecedented Online Master of Arts in Teaching Program to  
Prepare High-Quality Teachers for High-Need Schools*

**LOS ANGELES (May 4, 2009)** – The University of Southern California (USC) and its prestigious Rossier School of Education today announced the creation of an Advisory Council to provide ongoing guidance to MAT@USC, Rossier's new online Master of Arts in Teaching program. The Advisory Council to MAT@USC is made up of 25 nationally recognized leaders in education who represent diverse perspectives and expertise, ranging from research, policy and advocacy to school reform and administration. They include Gary Huggins, director, Commission on No Child Left Behind, The Aspen Institute; Lisa Graham Keegan, former Arizona superintendent of public instruction and senior policy advisor on education issues to Senator John McCain; Maria Ott, superintendent of schools, Rowland Unified School District, California; and Dr. Rudolph Crew, professor of clinical education, K-12 policy & leadership, Rossier, and an advisor on education to President Barack Obama's administration.

The Advisory Council to MAT@USC will provide thoughtful insight on teacher preparation and student achievement, in particular for underserved students in high need schools. MAT@USC is the country's first and only Master of Arts in Teaching program delivered online from an elite research university. It will have the capability to train and prepare candidates who are new to the teaching profession, as well as providing current teachers a dynamic, online program to improve their skills. MAT@USC allows students to obtain a California teaching credential and will assist candidates in transferring to local certification.

"As we chart a new path for producing teachers with the skills, knowledge and commitment to help all children succeed in school, we want to enlist the best minds in education to serve as a sounding board and source for ideas and advice," said Dean Karen Symms Gallagher of USC's Rossier School of Education. "We are honored and gratified that these impressive leaders are joining with us in pursuit of this innovative new model for teacher education, one that speaks to the core mission of Rossier: to make a significant contribution to education reform."

The Advisory Council to MAT@USC held its inaugural meeting April 5-6<sup>th</sup>, where members participated in energetic discussions focusing on knowledge and tactics teachers must institute in order to ensure student success, the development of a research and evaluation agenda, problems with the current practice model for teacher preparation, and other pressing issues.

“I am honored to be a member of the Advisory Council to MAT@USC and look forward to conferring with so many distinguished colleagues on the most challenging issue facing K-12 education today: Ensuring there are effective teachers in every classroom, especially those in underserved communities,” said Ott. “I commend the Rossier School of Education for not only taking on the challenge of creating MAT@USC, but also for utilizing the most current research on teaching and learning, using innovative new technologies, and enlisting advice from a broad range of experts outside its own institution.”

In addition to holding regular meetings, both in person and virtually, the Advisory Council will continuously communicate via a wiki, which has been specifically designed to encourage ongoing dialog among the members. The wiki will give Council members the opportunity to experience for themselves how new technology can be used to facilitate sharing and discussion, an important attribute of the new MAT@USC program.

“As the Obama administration and the Department of Education grapple with ways to reform our schools and reward our finest teachers, this new initiative at USC Rossier is a concrete example of the kind of innovation that will take us to the next step,” said Crew.

MAT@USC combines online learning with carefully selected field-based experiences and provides ongoing support for new and current teachers, including job placement assistance and partial tuition reimbursement opportunities. The program can be completed in as little as one year on a full-time basis or can be spread over two to three years part-time. Students may complete the online program from anywhere in the world. The MAT@USC is now accepting applications with the first cohort starting in June 2009. For more information, please visit <http://mat.usc.edu>.

For a complete list of Advisory Council members, please visit <http://mat.usc.edu/advisors>.

#### **About the USC Rossier School of Education**

As part of the University of Southern California and located in the heart of urban Los Angeles, the USC Rossier (ross-EAR) School of Education is one of the world's premiere centers for the study of urban education, preparing teachers and educational leaders who are committed to strengthening urban education locally, nationally and globally. USC Rossier is leading the search for innovative solutions to the challenges in urban education, and creating mutually beneficial partnerships to rethink curricula, develop sound policy and improve educational environments (<http://rossier.usc.edu>).

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