



September 8, 2020

Thank you for your email. I am responding on behalf of President Folt and Dean Garrett.

We appreciate your concerns and take them seriously. In this particular case at the Marshall School, the course was scheduled to run for three weeks and, after student complaints were lodged, the professor volunteered to step away for the final two weeks. He was not dismissed nor suspended nor was his status changed. We are required to investigate all complaints and have a thorough process for doing so which we began immediately.

The complaints occurred in a course in communication across cultural lines. Its purpose is to prepare students to be successful in business around the world. There is no intent to impose U.S. cultural norms on communications in other languages and cultures. Indeed, this situation arose when students questioned the polarizing example chosen to illustrate a reasonable and important point about communication and had nothing to do with the Mandarin language itself. As the professor said in his apology, the example used in this lecture could have been better chosen.

USC is a multicultural institution dedicated to providing the very best education that prepares our graduates for success in their chosen careers across the globe. We are committed to meeting this mission for our more than 45,000 students through robust debate of ideas across 8,000 classes every term. Occasionally, anomalies like this occur and we can assure you that our internal procedures are fair and appropriate.

Thank you once again for your message of concern.

Sincerely,

Charles F. Zukoski
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs