Minutes of the Dornsife College Faculty Council Meeting

October 5, 2016

Present: Jeff Chisum (President), Trisha Tucker (Vice President), Dan Pecchenino (Secretary), David Tompkins, Antoine Bechara, Iva Bozovic, Micheal Hadjidaniel, Bob Girandola, Lori Mesrobian, Rebecca Broyer, Geraldine Peters, Nathalie Burle, Gioia Polidori, Alison Dundes Renteln

Absent: Matthew Kahn, Shannon Gibson, Sheila Briggs, Wiebke Ziebis, Emily Zeamer

I. Reports
   a. Approval of Previous (9/7) Meeting Minutes
      i. Unanimously approved (11-0)
   b. Academic Senate Meeting Summary
      i. Trisha Tucker and Rebecca Broyer recapped 9/21 Academic Senate meeting
         1. New Academic Senate website was discussed
         2. Michael Quick discussed postponement of Dornsife union vote and ongoing efforts to replace company running UPC daycare
         3. Much of meeting was devoted to discussing proposed smoking ban on campus
   c. RTPC White Paper
      i. Jeff Chisum talked about the RTPC White Paper that was distributed and asked that those who have not yet read it do so

II. Discussion Points
   a. Caucus Update
      i. Curriculum Caucus
         1. Pulling together meeting
      ii. R, P, & D is working on establishing first meeting
         1. Might add some agenda items
         2. Gioia Polidori has joined Caucus
      iii. Faculty Affairs
         1. David Tompkins was asked to join committee and agreed
            a. Mentioned that ten years ago a similar benchmarking project was done and data was given to DFC (minus Economics professors’ salaries, as they’d skew data)
      iv. Elections
         1. Six people have joined
   b. Topics of Discussion for Dean Miller
      i. Merit Review
         1. Lori Mesrobian says that Dean Miller mentioned perhaps decreasing the frequency with which faculty are evaluated
This is causing some confusion, as information about merit review hasn’t come out from the College.

Jeff Chisum wondered what the actual policies are in each department in terms of frequency of review.

- Some departments review every year, regardless of promotion, others it’s less frequently

Jeff Chisum asks if we should make some concrete recommendation.

- What are the pros and cons of less frequent merit reviews?
  1. Would we miss out on chances to get raises?
  2. How would this impact promotion?

What is actually looked at in the merit review process?

- Teaching observations?
  1. Michael Hadjidaniel suggests that we need to have these be consistent

Should we address the quotas in each rank?

Jeff Chisum suggests a possible opt-out clause for people who are happy with their previous merit scores.

Geraldine Peters says that for Research faculty in her department, merit review happens every three years, but that there are no junior Research faculty in the department.

David Tompkins mentions that there might be pushback from individual departments/programs that have developed their own systems.

Student Evaluations

- It’s unclear at this point if any changes are coming, though recommendations have been made.
- Should we suggest that students shouldn’t be able to see their final grade until they have filled out a course evaluation?
- Other technical problems were discussed.

Academic Integrity issues

1. Gioia Polidori brought up the issue of “test banks” (old tests being sold)
   - Rebecca Broyer writes new tests each time
     1. Chemistry Department puts all of its old tests online
   - Iva Bozovic says that something similar is happening with slides and notes
     1. Alison Dundes Rentln mentioned that she saw her materials being sold
   - Should students have mandatory ethics training about these issues?

Policy about Research faculty who run into funding issues

1. Current policy could use clarification
   - Antoine Bechara brought up concept of “bridge funding”
v. Faculty training for identifying students with stress/mental health issues
   1. Alison Dundes Renteln also brought up the idea of establishing funding for student emergency medical issues

vi. Work environment/civility issues
   1. Broader communication issues within Dornsife

vii. Space
   1. Lori Mesrobian brought up two issues in relation to her department
      a. Offices aren’t centralized
      b. Some faculty are 3 to an office (Michael Hadjidaniel said some in his department work in offices with 4 desks for 6 people)
         i. Leads to privacy issues for students and faculty
         ii. Could become an issue related to perceptions of quality of education
   2. Alison also brought up the broader issue of students no necessarily knowing when and where office hours are being held

viii. Soliciting the Faculty
   1. Alison suggested sending out a survey of faculty of things they’d like us to address with Dean
      a. Dan will set up a Qualtrics or Google Form

ix. USC “Signature” Curriculum
   1. Trisha Tucker suggested we think about specific ideas to bring to Dean Miller

x. Recycling

xi. Infrastructure
   1. Do the departments have access to funding for building upgrades/basic repairs?

III. Establishment of DFC Lecture Series
   a. Alison Dundes Renteln suggested doing it in honor George Olah or Dean Miller
      i. Alison Dundes Renteln moves for a vote
         1. Vote is unanimous (13-0)
            a. Final vote on naming it postponed until next meeting

IV. Announcements
   a. Discussion of Resolution 16/17-001 Postponed until Dec. 7
   b. Caucus rosters and part-time faculty

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Pecchenino, Secretary

The Dornsife Faculty Council