Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (Apr 4 2018)

Date: April 4, 2018

Room: Irani Hall, Rm. 321

Present (16): Brian Bernards; Iva Bozovic; Rebecca Broyer; Jessica Cantiello; Robert Chernoff; David Crombecque; Assal Habibi; Michael Hadjidaniel; P.T. McNiff (secretary); Dan Pecchenino (vice-president); Geraldine Peters; Gioia Polidori; Sergio Sanudo-Wilhelmy; Carolina Sitinsky-Cole; Trisha Tucker (president); Emily Zeamer

Absent (3): Shannon Gibson; Antonio Idini; An-Min Wu

Guest (1): Kimberly Freeman, Associate Dean & Chief Diversity Officer

**Dialogue with Chief Diversity Officer**

**Trisha** updates the Council on a last minute schedule change, with Dean Amber Miller needing to reschedule her visit to the May meeting.

**Kimberly Freeman** speaks about how the faculty and staff open forums on diversity and inclusion have gone (with the student forum scheduled for a future date in April). She refers to an email she sent to Council leadership noting the areas where the DFC could provide input: Academic Prep, Campus Climate, and Curriculum/Teaching Issues. These are areas that will be explored in the final diversity plan, and she foresees the Council being engaged stakeholders in these areas.

She notes that having relevant data be shared and easily accessible will help in diversity and inclusion efforts. Her office is working on an interactive tool for their website to easily sort data via different categories. She shares data from the Provost’s diversity retreat and also what is available on the Office of Institutional Research website ([http://oir.usc.edu/faculty-and-student-diversity/](http://oir.usc.edu/faculty-and-student-diversity/)).

Questions are raised by members of the council about gender equity across both Tenure Track and RTPC lines, as well as possible cases of salary gaps. Kimberly replies that conversations she has had thus far have not been focused on those particular issues, but she would check into them. The college dean and divisional deans would have the ultimate say on sharing such data.

**Dan** asks what resources are available to help in the recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty members. Kimberly says that divisional deans should be the first step and the strongest advocates for such resources, while also noting that the Provost’s office does have a budget for such funding.
Moving from faculty to students, Trisha inquires about getting more support for first year and transfer students who struggle with classes along with a lack of support and resources. Kimberly says they are looking into improving support for these categories of students along with others. She is engaging with divisional deans about pipeline growth, especially Dean Bradforth in the Natural Sciences. Dan asks what resources are available to students, wondering if the problem is a lack of resources or difficulty finding available resources. Kimberly responds that it is a combination of both factors, and that communication about existing resources will be as important as changing and adding to them. She notes that the university needs to wrestle with this as it deals with its public mission and desire to help students from all backgrounds – look at how we are serving them in a more comprehensive way.

David notes that Dornsife departments are being contacted by other schools within USC about setting up summer programs to help students transition to undergraduate life. Will Dornsife take similar active steps to help our students? Kimberly says that Dornsife does have programs that serve the entire campus, and that getting clear central coordination of available resources (likely at the Provost’s office or higher) could be helpful. There is a discussion about whether the college should consider the long-term goal of retaining students who we help with these resources and services. It continues into a conversation about encouraging interdisciplinary studies as a way to both help broaden the experience of under-represented and first-gen students as well as connecting with Dornsife’s mission to create knowledge and engaged citizens.

Sergio remarks that it is important for students to see diversity within the faculty ranks, and that those numbers have not been good recently in some departments. He asks what policies will be implemented to increase such diversity. Kimberly has been and will continue to be in conversation with department chairs about putting together focused plans for recruiting diverse candidates, with one department in particular having already reached out to ask for help doing this.

After Kimberly departs, Trisha asks if there are follow-up ideas or discussion points. The discussion includes investigating options for interdisciplinary majors to bring people into Dornsife; the college improving the discussion of potential paths and benefits of liberal arts majors as something that can help under-represented and first-gen students know what options may be available to them; and the need for transparency about what is available and what resources can be shared.

**Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**

Trisha submits the minutes of the previous DFC meeting, on Mar. 7, for approval. All 16 members present vote to approve.

**Updates and Reports**
I. May Agenda

Trisha gives an early idea of what the agenda will look like for the re-scheduled May meeting; because Dean Miller and other guests will be coming then, it will not be possible to allot the traditional time to caucus co-chairs to present their reports. Caucuses should aim to get reports into the DFC leadership, either before the May meeting (if they would like to discuss it with Dean Miller) or later over the summer.

Assal asks if the Council could hear from Dean Miller before the May meeting about who is in charge of Research faculty in the RTPC track. Trisha and Dan say they will inquire about this when they speak with Dean Stott.

II. Recent Issues Raised By Council Members

Trisha gives an update on the computer policy issue brought up in previous meetings. Lisa Itagaki said they are updating the policy and when ready it will be up on MyDornsife. Trisha also updates on the implicit bias training that was mentioned at the retreat (and referred to in the earlier discussion with Dean Freeman). The training is designed for hiring committees; it is unclear if anyone can do it if they opt in. Trisha has spoken with Provost Quick and Ginger Clark about working with CET to potentially create new training about bias issues in the classroom.

Gioia asks for an update about the new course evaluations. Dan says he will forward them out to DFC, though they should be sent to everyone by CET shortly. He notes it will be important for Dornsife to provide guidance to departments about how they interpret these – there are more opportunities for more critical feedback and no clear central score. A discussion follows about how this might affect merit review and promotion and how Dornsife can provide support for chairs and faculty during this time of transition.

III. Academic Senate Meeting

Dan gives an update on Provost Quick and Rueben Davila's discussion of Project Renewal. The stated goal is a 5% cut on everything not related to academic mission over the course of three years.

Trisha talks about the update from Patrick Prince, the new Chief Threat Assessment Officer. His job is to help determine difference between community members who are dangerous from those who are not. He will be creating training and/or additional resources to help faculty know what to do when dealing with such situations, serving as an outlet for some of these difficult conversations. There will be a website with details and contact information.

Dan brings up that the Office of Research Strategic Plan for Diversity and Inclusion was discussed at the Senate meeting. There, Trisha inquired why there was no
mention of Humanities research in the report; the response was a recognition of the oversight.

IV. DFC Election Update

**P.T.** and **Carolina** share the previously announced winners of the election: Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch (Spanish and Portuguese), Devin Griffiths (English), Yuka Kumagai (East Asian Languages & Cultures), and Michael Petitti (Thematic Option) for the Humanities bloc; Bob Girandola (Biological Sciences) and Jessica Parr (Chemistry) for the Natural Sciences bloc; and Joe Palacios (Sociology), Shannon Gibson (International Relations), and An-Min Wu (Spatial Sciences) for the Social Sciences bloc. The new members will be attending the May meeting.

V. Upcoming Meetings

**Trisha** mentions her upcoming meeting with Dean Stott to discuss mentorship and promotions issues and other related concerns from the DFC.

**Trisha** and **Dan** reiterate that caucus chairs should send in updates to help guide discussion on what caucus missions and makeups will happen next year.

The meeting is adjourned at 5:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

P.T. McNiff, Secretary

The Dornsife Faculty Council