

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting

Date: January 13, 2021

Location: Zoom meeting

Present (18): Douglas Becker, Jasmine Bryant, Julia Chamberlin, Monalisa Chatterjee, Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch, Jim Clements, David Crombeque, Melissa Daniels-Rauterkus, Jerry Davison, David Ginsburg, Andrea Parra, Stephanie Renee Payne, Gioia Polidori (*president*), Alisa Sánchez (*secretary*), John Vidale, Emily Zeamer (*vice-president*), Tracie Mayfield, Sri Narayan

Absent (1): Matthew Pratt

Approval of minutes from previous meetings:

December 2020 15 of the DFC present vote to approve, zero oppose, and one abstains

FEEC Survey

Emily reported on the FEEC (Faculty Environment and Employment Committee) survey results, which were presented at the December 2020 Academic Senate meeting. **Emily** stated that the survey confirmed what we know, that COVID-19 has impacted faculty workload, performance, and morale, and most severely women, caregiver, and BIPOC faculty. A small number (7-10%) of faculty report a better experience working under COVID, but overwhelmingly faculty report negative impacts. Faculty reported feeling greatest support from colleagues, not their departments or the University. Overall, **Emily** noted the very low faculty morale and exacerbation of existing inequities captured in the survey results, remarking on the powerful impact of the qualitative comments, in particular.

Emily recommended that everyone review the presentation slides and report when they become available and asked the DFC to consider how to use this data. What do we want to request from the Senate or Dornsife administration? How can we use this information to reinforce our claims and requests? **Gioia** proposed that once the report is formally circulated, the DFC can form its own subcommittee to look into issues raised by the survey and recommend how to address them within Dornsife.

Follow up on Research Caucus report

Sri shared an update on the Research Caucus report. The report was prepared in early Summer 2020 by the EWG (Emergency Working Group) on Research, which became the Research Caucus. Dornsife administrators have not yet responded to the issues raised in the report.

Administrators suggested the Caucus highlight the issues that were still pending, but Caucus members insisted on a full response to the report. **Sri** and **Gioia** discussed how to move forward and agreed to send a letter asking for a response while highlighting some of the issues that seem still unaddressed. **Sri** noted that faculty have found ad hoc solutions but developing new pedagogy and online courses has come at the cost of research and publishing; and graduate student issues and money running out for early career tenure track faculty remain critical concerns. **Gioia** planned to draft a letter using Google docs to invite input from Caucus members, then to send the letter and request a meeting with Dean Stephen Bradforth and the full Caucus. **Sri** remarked that the full Caucus was invested in hearing feedback and **Gioia** acknowledged that all divisions would be represented by having the full Caucus present at the meeting.

COVID Impact Statement

Gioia reported good news, that the COVID impact statement (in which faculty going up for tenure can document how COVID has affected their performance) was approved by the Provost. Dean Bradforth presented on the impact statement at the December 2020 Senate meeting, at Gioia's invitation. Schools will determine whether and how they will implement the COVID impact statement. Dean Bradforth indicated it would likely be mandatory in Dornsife. The statement can cover issues such as impact of caregiving or junior faculty using grants to pay postdocs and PhD students while data collection was suspended.

Andrea asked how COVID will impact Merit Reviews. No faculty in Andrea's department went through the optional Merit Review this year. However, perhaps there should be a document about COVID impacts for Merit Review, especially for teaching faculty. **Gioia** noted that the COVID impact statement was focused on tenure track faculty because of the up or out nature of tenure; teaching faculty can reapply for promotion. **Gioia** also recalled that these concerns were a reason the DFC insisted on including a heading on all student learning evaluations about COVID disrupting the semester. **Gioia** asked the DFC how many strongly feel a document like the impact statement should be included for RTPC faculty. **Andrea** responded that perhaps a document was not needed, but at least guidance for departments. **Alisa** added that she would like the College to think about potential issues for teaching faculty; if a teaching faculty's performance was affected by COVID conditions, and Merit Review scores are based on performance and affect decisions about salary and raises, then teaching faculty could experience a COVID-driven negative impact on their salary. **Alisa** noted this could further exacerbate pay inequities among faculty. **Marianna** reflected that, based on her experience, class observations seemed advantageous for faculty this year since the faculty could select a recording of their favorite class. **Emily** noted this time could be a great opportunity to examine Merit Review and that all departments have clear guidance and are following the same criteria. **Gioia** concluded that the RTPC Caucus co-chairs would attend the February DFC meeting and discussion could continue with them on this issue.

Board of Trustees

Gioia shared her conversation with Senate President Paul Adler about changing aspects of the Board of Trustees (BoT). Paul related that the BoT is kept pretty far from substantive operational issues, indicating it might not be so crucial to change the BoT's composition. Paul also stated that the Senate Executive Board has incorporated faculty observers on the BoT and the observers have been able to speak up, for example about teaching under COVID. **Gioia** asked for the DFC's thoughts, whether to ask for the BoT to be brought as an issue for the full Senate or not, for example.

Tracie reflected that faculty have found that pushing issues has been effective; perhaps we could pursue a middle path of keeping attention on the issue. **Jerry** insisted there should be faculty representation on the Board and rejected any idea that faculty presence would be useless or counterproductive. Whether faculty had voting rights or not, faculty could have significant impact by being able to speak up in meetings. **Gioia** proposed inviting Paul to a future DFC meeting to discuss the issue further. **Doug** suggested the DFC identify additional issues to raise with Paul to take advantage of his time at a DFC meeting and added the DFC can prepare research to make the case for a voting faculty member on the BoT. **Stephanie** remarked that public and private institutions she has worked for always included a faculty representative on the BoT. **Gioia** announced she would start a collaborative folder to collect ideas and research.

Continuing appointment status for RTPC faculty

Gioia discussed the continuing appointment with Dean Emily Anderson. Dean Anderson sees this appointment as extremely selective, a process by nomination, not a natural continuation from Full professor. No one in the University has this title yet; it seems all the schools are waiting for a case to go forward to learn more about the process and it seems Dornsife may be the first.

Emily expressed cautiousness at pushing for the continuing appointment because it has little impact for the larger body of RTPC faculty. It may be a symbolic win without the potential to impact very many people. Bigger issues to advocate for could be salary benchmarking and equity in merit review. **Emily** reiterated that she supported the continuing appointment but was cautious about how to advocate for it. **Julia** considered that at issue was what to call the continuing appointment, whether it would be more of a distinction or a security of employment. If it was security of employment, then it may not be so rare. **Tracie** added that morale and job stability have direct consequences for productivity and performance, such that these matters could be presented in terms of supporting faculty efficacy.

Gioia agreed with pushing for an appointment that is not incredibly competitive, but something more in line with UCLA's security of employment practices. **David C** elaborated that in the UC system, RTPC faculty are split into two groups, those with temporary positions and those with open contracts, and there is the possibility of being promoted within these two groups, and moving from the temporary to the open contract group. **David C** emphasized that salary benchmarking is the critical issue to pursue and an issue the DFC has wanted to address for many years. **Marianna** reiterated that the DFC should focus on having clear criteria followed by

each department. **Emily** advocated for a principled approach where the DFC represents as many faculty as possible. **Emily** considered that in theory RTPC faculty have security of employment with multiyear contracts, once promoted from lecturer, and that the pressing issue is not security of employment as much as fairness and consistency. **Monalisa** agreed on prioritizing equity issues that would affect a lot of people, rather than an issue that would only affect a few in the long run. **Julia** recalled that one of the reasons the DFC was discussing continuing appointment of RTPC faculty was because of salary compression; if faculty reach the level of Full as a younger person, the salary compression would be stark. **Gioia** agreed that the continuing appointment discussion was complex and the DFC would be strategic in its advocacy.

Salary compression

Gioia raised the issue of salary compression with Dean Anderson, who will discuss this with Dean Renee Perez. **Gioia** also reported that members of the Senate Executive Board have formed a Senate Pay Equity Task Force on salary compression and Dornsife faculty who have been working on these issues (Devin Griffiths, Sergio Sañudo, Maggie Switek and Gioia) will meet with them. **Gioia** has already shared the Dornsife salary benchmarking results, an effort led by Devin and Sergio last year. **Gioia** expressed excitement about being able to make progress and hoped to establish salary floors at each rank.

Andrea and **Gioia** remarked on issues with the Dornsife data set; **Gioia** shared that many faculty said they made less than the average salaries as found in the Dornsife salary benchmarking study.

Emily suggested additional strategies for pay equity, since salary benchmarking may establish floors lower than what faculty think they should be; perhaps the DFC could recommend a fair process for evaluating salary, to benefit tenure track as well as RTPC faculty. **Gioia** noted there is a salary review process, in which faculty are compared with faculty in other departments at similar ranks; there do not seem to be salary adjustments based on the market. **Sri** remarked how strange this seemed, having worked at institutions that based pay decisions on market adjustments.

DFC Election

Alisa reported the timeline of DFC elections: a call for nominations goes out by February 18; nominations are received until March 2; ballots will be sent out on March 5, with voting open until March 20. Notification of results will be distributed by March 27. The open seats are: for Humanities – three seats; for Natural Sciences & Mathematics – four seats; and for Social Sciences – two seats; all are two-year terms. **Alisa** encouraged members to recruit colleagues to serve and **Gioia** urged greater representation of tenure track faculty.

Antiracist practice in the DFC

Alisa shared updates on including an antiracism workshop and discussion in an upcoming DFC meeting. **Alisa** and **Stephanie** will plan and facilitate the discussion; any other interested members are invited to join them. The February DFC meeting will include a half hour for this work. **Alisa** noted that there may be asks or materials to review ahead of the February meeting for this discussion and thanked the DFC for its investment in this important work.

Stephanie shared that **Tracie** had been working on a faculty interest survey on learning antiracist and inclusive pedagogy and that work was ongoing to establish a certificate program to demonstrate cultural competency.

Guests to invite to DFC meetings

Gioia asked which guests the DFC would like to invite to future meetings. **Stephanie** recommended being very strategic about invitees and to invite guests who can help the DFC to accomplish a specific goal. **Monalisa** suggested inviting Dean Anderson because she is new in the position and we could learn more about her approach and plans. **Gioia** suggested inviting Dean Anderson in April and that one item to discuss could be the proposal on antiracist and inclusive pedagogy that **Stephanie** is spearheading. **David C** proposed inviting UCLA faculty to explain their RTPC and benchmarking system and **Emily** concurred. **Monalisa** noted having someone familiar with private institutions would be informative.

New business

Stephanie shared that many were upset at the staff layoffs at the end of 2020. **Gioia** responded that this was an issue to bring up with the Staff Assembly and that she has reached out to Staff in the past to offer support. **Gioia** added that to her knowledge, the University had paid all staff, even staff that was no longer working after COVID closures, for two months and that the layoffs were positions that were no longer needed due to COVID closures as the university could not afford to pay salaries for positions that were no longer needed.

The meeting is adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alisa Sánchez,
Secretary
The Dornsife Faculty Council