

Minutes of the Dornsife College Faculty Council Meeting

September 2, 2015

3:00-5:00 pm

Present: Darren Ruddell (President), Jeff Chisum (Vice President), Farida Habeeb (Secretary), Wiebke Zeiebis, Ed McCann, Lowell Stott, Antoine Bechara, Giorgio Coricelli, Bob Girandola, Sheila Briggs, David Tomkins, Gerald Davison, Lori Mesrobian, Nathalie Burle, Alison Renteln

1. Review of the August 18 Academic Senate Fall Retreat:

Vice President Jeff Chisum and Secretary Farida Habeeb provided a summary of the Academic Senate Fall retreat. Highlights included:

- The panel on campus climate suggested that USC is doing well in terms of student diversity at the undergraduate level but needs greater faculty diversity.
- The Senate communications panel indicated mass ignorance about the Senate's existence among faculty; the panel pledged to remedy this ignorance through social media initiatives, including a Senate Instagram account and interactive President's blog.
- The NTT panel discussed the growing number of non-tenure track faculty across higher education and its implications for student retention and success, equal pay, and promotion. Part-time faculty's inclusion in faculty governance will be of particular importance to the Senate's agenda this year.

2. DFC Board and Monthly Meetings:

Ruddell, Chisum, and Habeeb will serve on the executive board. All minutes will be posted on the DFC website; past minutes are also available there. The Council will meet on the first of every month. There will be no January meeting.

3. Academic Senate and DFC Caucuses Membership:

Senate members this year will be Ruddell, Chisum, Habeeb, Girandola, Ziebis, Renteln, and McCann (alternate).

DFC Caucuses and co-chairs are as follows: NTT Affairs (Tomkins; Erin Moore); Research (Bechara; Stott); Faculty Affairs (Briggs); Curriculum (Burle; Trisha Tucker).

The purpose and goals of the DFC Caucuses ignited healthy discussion.

- It was decided that each caucus must be structured with specific charges, the outcome of which must be delivered to the Council in a Spring report. Membership should come from the entire college, with 6-10 members, per caucus, ideal.
- Consensus concerns were raised as a result of the subdivision of Council members into caucuses. It was determined that issues will be raised collectively, among all Council members, but that caucus co-chairs will serve as points of contact for potential meetings with administrators.

4. Meetings with and Memos to Dean Kay:

The Council's first meeting of the semester with Dean Kay will take place on November 4. Topics to discuss with the Dean, and possible memos, were tabled for the October meeting.

5. Topics for DFC to Address in 2015-2016:

The following issues were mentioned by Council members:

- Dornsife's budgetary shortfall and its effect on faculty research, hiring, and expenses
- Faculty access to funding for computers. DFC broached this issue with Dean Kay last year, but several Council members requested to see an official copy of the Dean's response from former DFC president, Eric Webb. President Ruddell promised to follow up and report back on his findings.
- Sabbatical pay
- Greater faculty involvement in searches and hiring of new colleagues
- Collegiality among faculty/building a greater sense of community at USC

6. Proposed changes to Dornsife College Constitution:

Vice President Chisum brought up the possibility of two major changes to the Dornsife College Constitution: 1) allowing part-time NTT faculty to vote in and participate on DFC; 2) the removal of the Non-Divisional category from Council membership, thereby leaving the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences as the three disciplinary areas from which the Council recruits its members. The rationale for these changes included the need for greater representation among contingent faculty and the fact that "non-divisional" is not a discipline and therefore unnecessary as a category. A vigorous discussion ensued:

- Concern was raised that removing the Non-Divisional category might undermine the democratic representation currently fostered on the Council by tipping its TT and NTT balance toward NTT. Such a change might reduce the Council's bargaining power with the administration and, therefore, TT faculty's interest in even joining the Council.
- It was suggested that the DFC bylaws could be changed in order to ensure balance between TT and NTT faculty.
- Part-time faculty's willingness to do committee work was also raised as a point of concern, as many contingent faculty are overworked and underpaid.
- Members of the Council were informed that part-time faculty will be paid to do committee work, as is USC's policy.
- It was decided that the Council must continue this discussion amongst Dornsife faculty more broadly before it can move forward with any proposed Constitution changes.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Farida Habeeb
Secretary, Dornsife Faculty Council