

Minutes of the Dornsife College Faculty Council Meeting

October 7, 2015

3:00-5:00 pm

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

1. Review of prior meeting minutes: The council approved the minutes from the September meeting.

2. Academic Senate 9/30 meeting summary: Council members provided a summary of the September Academic Senate meeting. Highlights included:

--Jeremy Kagan from Cinema Arts is spearheading an initiative to address sustainability issues on campus. Provost Quick regards sustainability as one of a set of “Wicked Problems” that he wishes to address under his tenure. The Senate has assembled a subcommittee on sustainability, of whom President Ruddell is a member.

--The Senate unanimously voted to move Fraternity and Sorority rush to the spring in order to give freshmen more time to acclimate to campus life.

--Senate President Ginger Clark raised the issue of renaming “non-tenure-track” faculty according to three possibilities: RTPC-track faculty (Research, Teaching, Professional, and Clinical), professional-track faculty, or no change. The Senate voted for RTPC.

3. DFC Caucus updates: Co-chairs of each DFC caucus gave a brief summary of the major issues they wish to address this year and their progress so far.

--Curriculum caucus will focus on student retention problems in Dornsife. Caucus members will ascertain whether USC's peer institutions are also experiencing a loss of LAS students and attempt to replicate the liberal arts college experience at USC. Suggestions were made to increase GE representation from Dornsife and to build curriculum bridges between residence halls and courses from the Writing Program and Thematic Option, especially as the University Village becomes operational in 2017.

--The NTT Affairs caucus brought up several issues that it would like to address this year, including whether NTT professional development grants can be used for conferences that are not related to pedagogy; the availability of Sabbatical for NTT in promoted ranks; the dearth of offices for NTT faculty to hold meetings with students; and pay disparities between part-time and full-time faculty. In response to the question of Sabbatical, Vice President Chisum pointed out that promoted NTT can apply for the highly competitive Advancing Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences award, funded by the Provost's office.

--Faculty Affairs has not met formally, but its top priority is securing a \$1500 grant, renewable every three years, for the purchase of computers and teaching-related technology from Interim Dean Byrd.

--The Research caucus has not met yet.

4. Dornsife Dean transition: The council decided not to invite Dean Kay to attend a DFC meeting before he departs.

5. Topics to discuss with Interim Dean Byrd on November 4: The council identified two main priorities to address with Interim Dean Byrd: professional development grants for both TT and NTT faculty, and access to funds for the purchase of computers and other technology used in the classroom.

6. Proposed changes to the Dornsife College Constitution: Vice President Chisum once again raised the possibility of two changes to the constitution: 1) granting part-time NTT faculty voting and participation rights on the council; 2) the removal of the “non-divisional” category. A short discussion followed:

--Fears were raised that, due to such changes, the council will become a forum for NTT faculty and will therefore lose its bargaining power with the administration, who might view the change as even more reason to deny contingent faculty's unionization efforts. Moreover, such changes may dissuade TT faculty from joining DFC.

--Several members of the council responded that DFC is a voluntary and advisory body that holds weight with the administration, regardless of its individual composition, and that NTT should not be held responsible for whether or not TT faculty volunteer for DFC.

Vice President Chisum's proposal was put to a vote. In favor: 13. Opposed: 1.

The council approved the measure. In order to ratify the changes, all Dornsife faculty must now vote to approve the new constitution.

7. Topics for DFC to address in 2015-2016: The council elected to table this discussion for the November meeting.

8. Other business: President Ruddell informed the council that Provost Quick and Ginger Clark have made it a priority to meet with DFC this year. In addition, Provost Quick promised that the top candidates for Dean of Dornsife will be engaged with the council in some way.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Farida Habeeb
Secretary, Dornsife Faculty Council