

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (November 1, 2017)

Date: Nov 1, 2017

Room: Irani Hall, Rm 321

Present (15): Brian Bernards; Iva Bozovic; Rebecca Broyer; Jessica Cantiello; Robert Chernoff; David Crombecque; Assal Habibi; Michael Hadjidaniel; Antonio Idini (*secretary*); P.T. McNiff; Dan Pecchenino (*vice-president*); Carolina Sitnisky-Cole; Trisha Tucker (*president*); An-Min Wu; Emily Zeamer

Absent (4): Shannon Gibson; Geraldine Peters; Gioia Polidori; Sergio Sanudo-Wilhelmy

Guests (3): Dean Amber Miller; College Dean of Undergraduate Education Andrew Stott; Vice Dean Stephen Mackey

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Announcements and Action Items

Trisha announces that Yaniv Bar-Cohen will visit our December DFC meeting.

Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Trisha submits the minutes of the previous DFC meeting, on Oct. 4, for approval. All 12 members in attendance approve the minutes. (Robert, Michael and Emily arrived after the vote and thus did not vote on the minutes approval.)

Dialogue with Dean Miller, Dean Stott and Vice Dean Mackey

Trisha explains that the issues listed on the agenda came from 1) the members of the Dornsife Faculty Council, and 2) a survey sent to all college faculty. It is encouraging that the survey response rate was higher than last year's.

- a) Implementing the Provost's Teaching Memo in Dornsife

Trisha prefaces by saying that many faculty are truly excited by the emphasis on teaching and rewarding excellence in teaching. Then she asks how Dornsife College will implement the Provost's memo.

Dean Miller answers that the three divisional deans, as well as the deans of graduate and undergraduate studies, will be involved, with the goal of having a clear portfolio. Dean Stott is an expert in undergraduate teaching and we are happy to benefit from his expertise. Meetings will begin in the spring. The basic issues to address will be: 1) our curricula in the future, and 2) defining innovative teaching.

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Dean Stott says that the Provost's memo will be followed to the letter. Transparency will be the key concept. Two main elements to be included are: 1) moving away from *ad hoc* committees for promotion and review, and stabilize the process with a permanent structure; 2) make the evaluation procedure clear and transparent by defining carefully when the job expectations are met and the promotion is granted.

Trisha asks whether the centralizing process described will apply only at the departmental level or higher.

Dean Stott explains that departments will have guidelines that will go to him for approval. He adds that the idea is to have a college level review of guidelines, with a stable committee that has institutional memory about previous cases, instead of *ad hoc* committees that have to start from scratch every time.

Dean Miller adds that a comparable structure is in place for personnel and Tenure-Track reviews.

Dean Stott comments that such a change is warranted in order for TT and RTPC faculty to be treated in a similar fashion.

Dan posits the issue of evaluating dossiers and wonders if the committee would include TT faculty, RTPCs or both.

Dean Stott says it should involve both.

b) RTPC Salary Concerns, Particularly for Longer-Serving Faculty

Trisha comments favorably on the Provost's implementation of the new salary floors, which is encouraging, and asks if there is also a plan to address the issue of salary compression.

Dean Miller explains that Dornsife College is constrained financially. The new salary floors of \$55,000 for next Academic Year and \$60,000 for the following one were achieved through careful budget negotiations. Salary compression will be the next issue to be addressed, also through attempts to free up budgets and negotiation.

Dan says that most faculty seem unaware of the new salary floors and wonders if this information could be better disseminated.

Dean Miller answers that it can be certainly done.

Vice-Dean Mackey says that they have just begun to address the salary compression issue.

Dean Miller adds that the administration is thinking about the best course of action regarding this matter.

Carolina, Trisha and Dan reiterate that more information on salary floors would definitely encourage Dornsife college faculty.

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Dean Miller speculates that the Provost may implement the new salary floors to the whole university. Going back to salary compression, she says that, while the administration looked into those concerns, realized that it also affects staff and Tenure-Track faculty.

Dan asks if the college could also make available the information on multi-year contracts and security of employment.

Dean Miller suggests that we should work on a memo to be sent. She also underscores that department chairs can and do work as advocates by indicating where the most critical salary issues are in their departments and programs. Communicating with the departments each year is essential in order to tackle the most serious situations.

c) Learning from the Recent Problems at Keck

Dean Miller expresses her conviction that Dornsife's culture is better, in general. However, it is quite a challenge to establish a positive culture among 900 faculty members, staff and about 10,000 students.

Dan reports Paula Cannon's point—expressed in the Academic Senate—that a more personalized approach may be more effective than the training video we have to do. The issues at play are better understood during open discussions and individual meetings.

Dean Miller maintains that a good course of action is to investigate where a positive institutional culture is successfully nurtured from the beginning. She also welcomes suggestions on items to be included.

Trisha believes that USC's harassment training has improved in recent years, with less emphasis on how harassment creates liability issues for institutions and more focus on how victims are impacted.

Dan adds that we should work on a statement about the college cultural aspirations.

PT says that there should be more information on where to go if an issue arises; otherwise, the community may suffer from a lack of confidence.

Brian believes that our university should move towards a stronger stance in affirming our institutional culture.

Vice-Dean Mackey reminds everyone that the university has an obligation to protect people. All accusations are taken very seriously, but details about dismissals are not divulged. As a result, the general public only hears one side of the story.

Iva points out that our attitude towards faculty should be similar to what we do with students going through difficult times: we help them find resources.

Dean Miller agrees and points out that we should give faculty the same amount of information about resources that we provide students with. A good idea would be to produce a diagram that clearly indicates who to contact in the dean's office in case of an issue, i.e. who to go to when there is a problem. She also wonders about how effective sending a memo might be. Will people actually read it?

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Brian proposes that a list of useful contacts could also be included at the end of the mandated harassment training.

d) Initiatives to Increase Faculty Diversity

Trisha asks what is being done to increase faculty diversity and inquires if there are any data so far on diversity hiring.

Dean Miller says that we are in the process of hiring a new diversity coordinator. Last year we hired the most diverse faculty contingent in Dornsife history. We matched competitive offers, because if you attract diverse faculty you must be able to offer competitive salaries. Another area to which we should pay close attention is helping undergraduates transition to doctoral programs and eventually to junior faculty. Therefore, the diversity coordinator has to work at the whole picture.

e) Space shortages

- a. Shortage of office space, particularly for RTPC faculty
- b. Shortage of classroom space
- c. Shortage of animal vivarium research space at UPC

Trisha says that the issue of space affects both classrooms and offices.

Dean Miller says that her office is working in conjunction with the interim divisional dean of Humanities, Sherri Velasco, to address the problem of overcrowded RTPC offices. The goal is to have no more than two instructors per office. The situation in Taper Hall is especially serious. Also, a concurrent challenge is the effort to keep all department members located in the same place.

Vice-Dean Mackey adds that Dornsife does not "own" the classrooms and scheduling is done by another office. He says he will look into the vivarium research space issue and follow-up with us.

Dean Stott notes that they are trying to get more departments to take advantage of all available teaching hours to try and ease some of the classroom space shortages.

Discussion

a) Post-Dean-Visit Assessment and Planning

The council members comment favorably on the availability of the deans, the projects to disseminate information more effectively and the plan to provide faculty with a clear chart of where to go in different situations.

b) Reconfiguring DFC Voting Blocs

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The council members voted on the three options [see page 6]. Option 1 receives 7 votes; Option 2 receives 8 votes; Option 3 receives none. Thus, Option 2 is approved.

Reports

Dan reports briefly on the Academic Senate October meeting.

Trisha reminds the DFC that our next meeting will be on Dec. 6.

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The meeting is adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Antonio Idini, Secretary

The Dornsife Faculty Council

Reconfiguring the DFC Voting Blocs

Current DFC Bylaws Language on Voting Blocs

There shall be six Representatives from the Humanities, six from the Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and six from the Social Sciences, plus the President, for 19 total. Three Representatives from each division shall be elected in each even year and three in each odd year. These numbers are subject to future amendment, in accordance with the principle of proportional representation.

Option One

There shall be 18 Representatives, plus the President, for a total of 19. The number of Representatives from the Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences voting blocs shall be determined in accordance with the principle of proportionality. In every even-numbered year the number of faculty in each voting bloc must be determined before the election of new Representatives in the Spring semester in order to ensure proportional representation.

Option Two

There shall be 18 Representatives, plus the President, for a total of 19. The number of Representatives from the Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences voting blocs shall be determined in accordance with the principle of proportionality, but no bloc shall have fewer than 4 members. In every even-numbered year the number of faculty in each voting bloc must be determined before the election of new Representatives in the Spring semester in order to ensure proportional representation.

Option Three

There shall be 18 Representatives, plus the President, for a total of 19. The number of Representatives from the Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences voting blocs shall be determined in accordance with the principle of proportionality, but no bloc shall have fewer than 4 members, and no bloc shall have more than 7. In every even-numbered year the number of faculty in each voting bloc must be determined before the election of new Representatives in the Spring semester in order to ensure proportional representation.

As a reminder, here are the most recent numbers provided by the Dean's office:

Humanities: 361 faculty (41.7%)

Natural Sciences: 319 faculty (36.8%)

Social Sciences: 186 faculty (21.5%)

Each elected DFC representative is 5.6% of our total elected body of 18. To re-apportion representatives based on the principle of proportional representation, you could divide the percentages above by 5.6.

Humanities would get 7.4 reps (round down to 7),

Natural Science would get 6.6 reps (round up to 7), and

Social Science would get 3.8 reps (round up to 4).