

Minutes of the Dornsife College Faculty Council Meeting

December 2, 2015

3:00-5:00 pm

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

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

2. Academic Senate 11/11 meeting summary: Council members provided a summary of the November Academic Senate meeting. Highlights included:

--VSP has been removed from faculty's automatic health benefits in order to avoid the "Cadillac tax" imposed by ACA on individuals. USC now requires faculty to purchase VSP separately.

--Provost Quick visited the Senate in order to continue dialogue on campus climate issues. He reiterated the importance of faculty and student input on how to improve diversity and inclusion and access and opportunity at USC. To this end, he aims to create a Provost's Diversity Task Force consisting of faculty, staff, and students and to host a series of open forums with the Trojan community.

--Ginger Clark opened a discussion on faculty titles and whether the (Teaching) and (Research) designations for RTPC faculty should be removed for the sake of equality.

3. University faculty titles: Vice President Chisum continued the discussion from the November Senate meeting on faculty titles, recommending the following:

--The removal of the Lecturer track (Lecturer, Senior, Master) for those faculty whose terminal degree isn't in the field in which the Lecturer is teaching;

--The removal of the Teaching or Research parentheses among RTPC faculty.

--The Council agreed that such designations create unnecessary distinctions and should be eliminated. Vice President Chisum plans to draft a resolution on this matter and send it to Ginger Clark.

4. Dornsife College Constitution Changes: 88% of Dornsife faculty voted in favor of the DFC Constitution changes. The Constitution will be updated and posted to the DFC website soon.

5. DFC Caucus updates: Caucus co-chairs summarized their progress this semester.

--The Curriculum Caucus met with Dean Lamy to discuss student retention issues in Dornsife. According to Dean Lamy, political science has lost students because they are attracted to the Philosophy and Law program; IR also has faced diminished enrollments due to students complaining about too many lower-division requirements. Economics is doing well, though there are concerns with the quality of the teaching and teaching evaluations. Dean Lamy recommended the possibility of establishing "teaching

chairs” to reward exceptional teaching by granting course releases and setting up mentoring programs to students in each department. In addition, he recommended more Dornsife involvement in micro-seminars to encourage students to enroll in the school. Council members agreed that more clarification on the prospect of “teaching chairs” needs to occur before Curriculum can draft a resolution to present to the Dean.

--NTT will meet in January and draft a resolution on a few major concerns (professional development grants, sabbaticals, etc.) pending the outcome of the Union vote.

--Research has not met yet due to changes in the Dean’s office, but members plan to convene in January.

--Faculty Affairs also has not met yet, but caucus members are concerned about computer funding for tenure-track and tenured faculty; teaching evaluations; and sabbatical. Currently, members are working on advancing a resolution on USC's sabbatical policy.

6. Greek rush deferment: Concern was raised among some council members about student government's lack of involvement in the decision to defer Greek rush to the spring. USG was not informed of the Academic Senate’s approval of rush deferment, and this has created some resentment among students. USG Senate recently voted against the measure, but the change will stand.

7. Computer support fund: President Ruddell created workflow documentation in order to streamline the process of requesting computers. RTPC faculty must request a new computer from the Business Office; once the request is approved, the faculty member should send an email to DTS. DFC needs to meet with Interim Dean Byrd in person in order to guarantee funding for tenure-track and tenured faculty.

8. Topics to advance in Spring: The following issues were raised for next semester:

--Salary: Base pay for each rank of RTPC faculty should be based on national averages listed in *The Chronicle*. DFC cannot advocate for this before the outcome of the Union election, however; NLRB rules prevent it.

--Unionization: Ginger Clark’s email about the gains USC has made in faculty governance seems to imply that these gains will “disappear” if unionization occurs.

--Equity in Languages: Coordinators and directors in each of the language departments should rotate in the interest of fairness to all.

The next DFC meeting will be held on February 3.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Farida Habeeb
Secretary, Dornsife Faculty Council