

## Minutes of the Dornsife College Faculty Council Meeting

April 1, 2015

3:00-5:00 pm

**Present:** Eric Webb (President), Darren Ruddell (Vice President), Jeff Chisum (Secretary), Giorgio Coricelli, Ann Crigler, Lowell Stott, Gerald Davison, Erin Moore, Farida Habeeb, Brian Rathbun, Ed McCann, Wiebke Ziebis

**1. A Meeting with Dean Steve Kay:** The council was visited by Dornsife Dean Steve Kay, who chatted with the members for roughly an hour and a half. Some highlights of his visit include the following:

--The Dean noted that, over the past 1 ½ years, he has been having chats with departmental chairs about morale-related issues, but feels that he can garner additional information by talking with the Faculty Council. Issues of concern raised by Council members included: getting out-of-date computers replaced; issues that arise post-tenure; and teaching load.

--Dean Kay was asked about the Faculty Development Grant memo that was drafted by the Faculty Affairs Caucus. He noted that the key question is: "How to fund it?" He went on to say that in 2014, there were 123 eligible applications from TT faculty for the grants, with 24 people being awarded the larger, \$3500 amount, and 99 people receiving \$2500. The total dollar amount awarded to NTT was less than 1/6 of the TT total.

--The Dean asked the Council whether the Development Grant award system for NTT faculty should be the same as it is for TT faculty, and there was widespread agreement among the councilmembers that it should be, and that NTT faculty have similar professional development needs. Dean Kay agreed to change the policy and said that he would begin to consider ways to fund the new system.

--Several points/questions were raised pertaining to the budget, and the Dean commented in various ways about aspects of the College that require managerial finesse. For instance, he noted that at any given time, 50% of the TT faculty is on leave. He also pointed out that the budget faces constraints due to the administration's aggressive approach towards faculty outreach, hiring, and retention.

--Two crucial challenges to the budget are: erosion of tuition dollars, and "taxes" imposed by the Provost's Office. With respect to the former, Kay said that there is a problem with "Undecided" majors migrating out of Dornsife, and also that the College has been losing majors who are juniors and seniors, and that there needs to be a better effort in "marketing" of the College's majors. He added that the Marshall School of Business currently has 25% of the University's undergraduate majors. There is apparently a study underway that is meant to explore the reasons why students are exiting the college (i.e., what are the students' principal complaints about Dornsife courses?), along with discussions about ways to improve course design and to incentivize participation in the College's majors and the GE program.

--The Dean spent some time discussing the UCAR process, and followed up a bit on the inquiry that was made to him via the Curricular Affairs Caucus's memo from earlier in the school year. He cited programs like Philosophy, ASE, and Chemistry as departments that had done

particularly well. He also pointed to the Narrative Studies program as creative means of attracting students to the English Department. He noted a couple of departments that were presently facing difficulties with their graduate students, and he also briefly discussed a case where the UCAR report did not seem to square with what both the departmental faculty and the students were saying.

--Finally, the Dean agreed to meet with the Faculty Council twice per semester starting in the 2015-2016 school year.

**2. Discussion of the Election:** There was a brief discussion on the forthcoming election of new members to the Faculty Council. President Webb indicated that there is a need to recruit more candidates from the Natural Sciences and Humanities. A couple potential candidates were suggested by members of the Council.

**3. Review of the Meeting with the Dean:** Council Members spent a few minutes assessing the conversation with the Dean: summarizing some of the key points, and reflecting on what was said.

**4. Revisions to the Faculty Handbook:** There was a very brief summary of the last meeting of the Academic Senate, but more specifically, the discussion centered on revisions to Chapter 6 of the Faculty Handbook, which deals with Work Environment, Sexual Harassment, Title IX Cases, and other issues. Some concerns were raised about the ways the cases are handled: i.e., is the entire process overseen by only one (USC-appointed) person? Or, instead, are the cases handled by multiple people—including outside investigators who would be less likely to be burned by a conflict of interest?

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Chisum  
Secretary, Dornsife Faculty Council