

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting

Date: November 6, 2019

Room: Irani Hall, Room 321

Present (16): Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch, David Crombecque, Gerald “Jerry” Davison, Antonio Elefano, Shannon Gibson, Bob Girandola, Devin Griffiths (*president*), Yuka Kumagai, Sri Narayan, Jessica Parr, Andrea Parra, Michael Petitti, Gioia Polidori (*vice president*), Alisa Sánchez, An-Min Wu (*secretary*), Emily Zeamer.

Absent (3): Melissa Daniels-Rauterkus, David Ginsburg, Joe Palacios.

October Meeting minutes approval (with amendment of Dornsife Job Fair to Dornsife Major & Minor Fair fair)

- 15 of the DFC present vote to approve them, zero oppose, and one abstain

Updates

- Update on Senate Resolution (Puliafito Investigation 19/20-02)

Devin reported that President Folt changed the travel plan to join the Senate Meeting (Oct. 23) for the Senate Resolution (that demands a Puliafito investigation report, originally proposed by Devin). During the meeting, President Folt claimed that she could not generate the report as 1) she did not have contacts of people who were involved, 2) no report was generated from the previous investigation. The new 18-month email removal policy makes making the report more difficult. Folt thinks this resolution asking for a big report which will cost time and money, but faculty actually look for answers that explain the past problems in order to move things forward. Faculty members, especially those in Keck school, still feel impacted on this unresolved issue. It was determined that Senate Executive Board will revise the Resoluion and bring it back to the next meeting. Devin has asked the Board to run by him on the revision.

Gioia added that no written report was ever drafted from the previous investigation. The interest from the top seems to have been USC reputation. **Shannon** asked who gave the promise on the report? **Jessica** said that Rick Caruso promised. **Devin:** No report was done as this would become a part of disclosure.

Jerry: It is intentional to not write the report. But in any case we should ask. **Jerry** would like to know who got fired from the central admin as he suspected some people are still around. This is not too much of asking from the faculty. It is in our best interest for those who harm this university to not be here. **Devin** agreed that it is Folt’s responsibility **Jessica** emphasized that faculty is not asking for a re-

investigation or a full-on report. **Gioia** suggests that it might not be necessary to understand exactly what happened but it would be good to have more transparency regarding the root causes of these issues and what can be done to prevent them from happening in the future

Shannon: The new email policy to prevent access beyond 18 months now seem bizzare. **Devin:** The policy came from IT. We are not sure about motive but it is definitely been used. **Alisa:** But conversations between people above some levels should be archived. **Antonio:** There is no way for a law firm conducting a case without reports. Somewhere there will be a paper. **Devin** concluded that we should take this opportunity to make sure the process is set-up. Devin will keep DFC in loop on the progress.

- Change of Dornsife Undergrad Experience

David C provided updates on Dornsife Undergraduate Experience:

1. The GE sequence implementation for freshman experience starts next Fall (2020).
2. A list of 2-unit ‘Dornsife Toolkit’ courses (e.g. Financial Literary) also start in Fall 2020. Currently there are 5 to 6 courses but the list continues to evolve.
3. A longer-term project is to create a center for Economics and career (similar as ‘Career center’), it is in the making.
4. Departments will be a total of 5-6 clustered (in process) so students are allowed to not choose a major when getting the admission. When students apply, they can a) identify majors as usual or b) choose not to identify majors and instead to answer key questions for cognitive selections. This optional clustering is a more coherence solution than simply not having majors during admission. DFC should encourage all DUS to be involved in this process.

Gioia received emails about several departmental chairs (4) not being supportive about RTPC promotion -- Some appears to apply TT standards, and some limits quota to go up per year. **Gioia** has brought this to Dean Stott’s attention. While chairs might be concerned about the workload (writing chair letters), Dean Stott confirmed there should be no quota for individual department per year to go up for promotion and sent out an email to all chairs to clarify this (before the Mentoring Panel). He strongly encourages all qualified faculty to go for promotion. **Andrea:** Unfortunately it is already late for any of the faculty facing above barriers to ask for promotion this year, especially concerning about getting full support from their chairs next year.

David C.: In the Mathematics Department, it is the committee to make the recommendation, not the chair. In any case, we need to make sure the decision (from the chairs and/or the committee) is due to the merit, not due to the other concerns. Some written regulations should happen. **Devin** then charged the RTPC Caucus to figure out this policy associated with the mentoring part of the agenda. **Jessica** responded that the language needs to be clear so it’s not used by faculty to only meet

certain criteria. **David C.:** The actual criteria should be kept the same. **Marianna** concurred that whether faculty fulfills the requirements or not should be clear.

Jerry: Since chairs report to the Dean, the Deans should make this policy clear for chairs to follow. Faculty (chairs) would not want to mess up, as in the contract Dean can dismiss a chair. **Emily:** What is the point in merit review? To mentor the faculty to do better! **Devin:** This is a good example that RTPC/PT (Caucuses) should make mentoring/merit review/promotion recommendations together (c.f. TT is a separate process) **Sri** added that chairs should not weigh in until the Committee passed comments. **Devin:** So maybe the first thing is to know what department does not have a clear committee setup.

Gioia raised another process question: How do merit review narratives translate into scores? **Devin** thinks individual departments should decide what spread they want to have, but charge the caucuses on these agenda.

New Business

- RTPC Sabbatical/Leave

Emily mentioned an RTPC faculty requested the sabbatical, but did not receive it. **Jessica** explained that the discussion did not get as far as we wanted last year; and the difficulty of the RTPC sabbatical is the funding source (c.f. TT's grants fund and support a university wide TT sabattical). Now the starting point for RTPC faculty is course release. **Gioia** said that course release for RTPC is more feasible.

Shannon said that RTPC leave of absence is relevant to promotion from Associate to full Professor, which requires pedagogical publication or course design, yet it is not supported. **Gioia** said that the problem would also be the difficulty to replace RTPC teaching load. **Devin** asked the RTPC Caucus that works on this issue to be clear on the language.

Updates from Caucuses and Task Forces

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Caucus

Alisa (Co-chair with Tracie Maryfield) reported that DEI Caucus met once and will meet again before the end of the semester. This year, the caucus report will be focused on three areas:

1. Faculty liaison – clarify the role with structure in writing.
2. Cluster hiring.
3. Exit interview – So we get credential for USC hiring and also understand faculty composition and with more transparency. Devin added that Beacon Project

student (Annenberg School of Communication) is looking into this issue right now.

In addition, the DEI Caucus plans to look into student housing and food scarcity – to follow through the resources – and faculty housing. **Emily** expressed two related concerns: First, the stigmatism relating to support student food with food pantry. Programs should be more creative, such as co-op living with the access to kitchens. Second, the honors housing seems to create a tiered system among students. **Devin** wondered where we can take on for this issue and asked Emily to look at Senate structure to find out where to start.

- Part-Time Caucus

Jessica (Co-chair with Joe Palacios) reported that the Caucus has met once. One topic that came up is mentoring, but we need to make sure that we have structure for mentoring PT. **Devin** said that Dean Stott has mentioned that PT would be paid for services, time to get mentored as well as mentoring people.

The PT survey released late last academic year was not received well (13 responses) so the Caucus will recirculate the survey at the end of this year. **Jessica** also mentioned that it might help to put together a list of PT responsibility and rights for Chairs, and a one-page resource for all faculty. But it was not clear whether PT Caucus will take on these tasks.

Promotion and teaching load also came up during the discussion. **Jessica** knows that PT is eligible but not sure how many PT faculty have gone for promotion and the success rate of it. **David C.** asked what ‘promotion for PT’ means. Most are hired as a lecturer. **An-Min** said there is a PT Associate Professor (Practice) in Spatial Sciences Institute. **Gioia** mentioned that some PT lecturers are here for a long time but don’t know they can go up for promotion. As to teaching load, PT Caucus would like to know how many PT are over 50% and how many are actually PT but teach a full-time load. **Jessica** worries that Dornsife might have issues in releasing the emails (An-Min has since obtained the list).

Last, **Yuka** asked whether the University still enforce the rule from us teaching in other universities? **Jessica** said that as long as it is not the same course it should be okay; this is also to prevent dept to hire someone on course basis. Provost office wants PT to be true Adjunct.

- RTPC Caucus

Gioia (Co-chair with Gale Vierma and Jessica Parr) reported that the RTPC Caucus met once and have three chairs now. Gioia organized the first RTPC mentoring panel (open for all divisions); panelists included Dean Stott, John Holland, Kat Reynolds. The recording will be posted on the DFC website. The caucus will also look into sabbatical/course release this year.

- Tenured Track Caucus

Devin reported the first caucus meeting to be on this upcoming Friday. Thomas Bertolini is the chair. The caucus will carry on the last year's work and expand alongside the interlocking recommendations with other caucuses.

- Salary and Merit Taskforce

Devin (Co-chair with Sergio Sañudo-Wilhelmy) reported that the caucus has met once and deviated responsibilities in terms of salary benchmarking and supports. The key piece here is to find out what Dean Miller needs and when to make recommendations about merit (increase and retaining) pool. The caucus will also work on salary floors and plan to get most chairs on board before making recommendations. Sergio and TJ McCarthy (Price School) are working on salary benchmarking for outside university (UCLA) with the goal to analyze salaries for two large departments from each division between USC and UCLA, to establish floors, to encourage merit pools and identify any problems in specific ranks or departments.

- Advocacy & Oversight Caucus

Jerry (Chair) reported that the caucus met once with a smaller group of people. The caucus is focused on OCAP and has sent out a draft of 3 paragraphs for DFC to understand. The caucus members agreed that the OCAP operating procedure is unfair, without faculty inputs, and is doing damage. In Faculty Handbook, the diagram only give 'Investigative Offices' and results. The Senate Committee Faculty Rights and Responsibility has doubled the business in the past 1.5 years. Concerns include that faculty accused, including those with tenures, cannot appeal before the sanction has determined.

(Jerry continued to report this issue and the discussion about the petition can be seen in the following section)

Discussion of Advocacy & Oversight Petition

(Continued from the Advocacy & Oversight Caucus update above)

At the Senate Committee level, Jerry has met with the Head of OPE and created a workgroup (including OPE, Senate President...etc.) but still been stone-walled for 1.5 years. **Jerry** said that we should be asking why we have hiring a lot of police officers.

Devin said that the Senate asks for sharing the petition in advance. If we go for petition, we need to acknowledge the importance of having offices to make sure faculty/staff are not abusing the power but also help the changes needed and clarify things we want them to address.

Antonio expressed his thought on the end of this investigation procedure being problematic. It is to put people in vulnerable positions; so safeguard to faculty is the right way to go. **Jerry:** Yes we want to be careful. Strategically we want to give people to respond to the problems that they created; not for University to use the staff and faculty consulting center. **Devin:** We need to craft the language as a group. **Alisa** suggests that the tones in the middle of the petition to be revised and framed around the institution values, which make people realize and respect the outcomes – i.e. to say because we care about the office would be more effective. **Shannon** has talked with Laurie Brand (IR) about the lack of due process and seconded that the focus of culture and values Alisa mentioned here. **Emily** agreed and suggested to specify principles for faculty to land on.

Marianna: The objective of the petition here is advisory so we should not be too specific. Lack of due process should be sufficient to stop this office. **Jerry** said that he has repeated asking for reports but never got any information back. The committee (that decide sanctions) is faculty-run, but the Provost makes the decision, which is nowhere near democracy. No one knows about this office. The faculty should be informed if this cannot be stopped.

Devin agreed with Emily that the petition can be prognostic – to state this is what we believe to be true, and demand the offices to state the problems and be diagnostic. **Jerry** suggested to be constructive and ask things to be clear. **Jerry/Devin** both acknowledged that we might create problems but think we shouldn't not do something simply because we will create problems. **Sri** supported a petition and said we should demand actions. **Marianna** asked if we should say '...immediately suspended the office' in the petition and **Devin** asked what if someone is in the middle of the investigation. **Devin** recommended the caucus to revise well and sell this core issue – whether to call for the suspension of OCAP or not, or let them decide.

Jessica explained the reason of the Faculty Handbook being so vague on this process: No one is willing to share information; but also don't want this not present in faculty handbook. We should ASK for SUSPENSION. **Jerry** agreed. This needs immediate actions. But the offices can also use this to say it is in handbook. The issues should be handled by Dean's level or HR within the school (not OPE and other offices). When we say to suspend this process is to say that we cannot rely on OCAP or maybe OPE. **Emily** supported this language and stated the need to the message that this is urgent. **David C** asked how many people have been under investigations. Jerry does not know the answer, but getting contacted by faculty about once a week and more during the summer; also traffic is increasing.

Sri: Since this is not a Dornsife problem, where does this petition go? **Devin** responded that's why he firstly went to Senate but not getting positive responses so he's okay to direct this to the central administration. **Devin** proposed that the statement being revised and bring it back by email; if everyone is comfortable signing off then we will go up. **Jerry** will work with Devin on this, but wants to pass this by Dean Miller if we send this petition to the provost and the president. **Jessica** asked if

we should share it to other councils and ask for buy-in to strengthen our position. **Devin** agreed that this is a good advice, and will share to see if other Councils want to sign on.

Discussion of Events and Budgeting (4:00-4:30)

- **Devin** requested DFC budget information but haven't heard back from Dornsife.
- **Devin** asked whether we could approve the support of \$500 as the last two years for the Undergraduate Writer's Conference in March 2020. **Alisa** described this is for undergraduates across Dornsife to attend. **Antonio** explained that Provost paid for a lot of expenses but not for the keynote speaker, and the current urgency is to secure keynote so needs the DFC support. No objection so the sponsorship of \$500 approved.

Meeting adjourned at 4:26pm

Respectfully,

An-Min Wu