

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (May 2 2018)

- Date: May 2, 2018
- Room: Irani Hall, Rm. 321
- Present (22): Brian Bernards; Iva Bozovic; Rebecca Broyer; Jessica Cantiello; Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch; David Crombecque; Shannon Gibson; Bob Girandola; Devin Griffiths; Assal Habibi; Michael Hadjidaniel; Yuka Kumagai; P.T. McNiff (*secretary*); Joe Palacios; Jessica Parr; Dan Pecchenino (*vice-president*); Geraldine Peters; Michael Petitti; Gioia Polidori; Carolina Sitnisky-Cole; Trisha Tucker (*president*); Emily Zeamer
- Absent (4): Robert Chernoff; Antonio Idini; Sergio Sanudo-Wilhelmy; An-Min Wu
- Guests (4): Amy Cannon (co-chair, Research, Policies, and Documentation Caucus); Stephen Mackey (Vice Dean for Administration and Finance); Amber Miller (Dean of USC Dornsife); Andrew Stott (College Dean of Undergraduate Education)

Introductions and Discussion of Faculty Governance Structure

Incoming, continuing, and outgoing members of the DFC introduce themselves around the room.

Trisha and **Dan** lead a discussion on the shared model of faculty governance between Dornsife and USC. Issues that can be dealt with exclusively at the Dornsife (or “state”) level are handled through the DFC; university-wide (or “federal”) ones are taken up by the Academic Senate. In addition, the Council monitors and assesses that Dornsife is implementing University-wide policies. Dornsife has six seats in the Academic Senate: the three executive board members and three at-large members (plus Senate alternates). The election for these positions will occur after this meeting by all current council members.

Trisha then outlines the responsibility of DFC members, which includes attending the monthly meetings and either serving on the Senate or on one of the DFC caucuses. These caucuses stem from priorities established by the council and finalized within the caucuses themselves, and can end up being both proactive and reactive when it comes to issues affecting Dornsife faculty. The caucuses submit end-of-year reports on the work they’ve done.

The current executive board outlines the responsibilities of the positions. **P.T.** discusses the Secretary’s duties of recording the minutes, running the elections, serving in the Senate, and taking part in Executive Board meetings and projects. **Trisha** breaks down the role of the Vice President, which centers on having a year-

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (May 2 2018)

in-training apprentice term before becoming President the following year (as well as Senate and Executive Board participation). **Dan**, after leading a round of applause for Trisha's work this year, speaks about how the President sets the agenda for the DFC and engages in conversations around the college and university on the body's behalf.

Dialogue with Dornsife Deans

Vice-Dean Stephen Mackey, Dean Amber Miller, and Dean Andrew Stott join the meeting. **Trisha** welcomes them, and they introduce themselves for the benefit of the new members present.

Trisha asks about the Deans' response to the proposal from the DFC's Research, Policies, and Documentation Caucus concerning mentoring for RTPC faculty. **Amber** notes that faculty development directors for TT faculty report to the divisional deans, but that RTPC equivalents would report to Dean Stott. **Andrew** agrees that mentoring is important to the process and wants it in place; policies are being worked on as a pilot for something similar to the positions suggested by the proposal. His office is negotiating with a distinguished member of community who has mentored in the past, who would help with the assembling of dossiers, but also preparing for the ladder and what people need to get in place to go forward. Members of the council ask follow up questions, which include whether this pilot program will be within one department or spread throughout Dornsife; the answer is that it will aim to target some specific bottlenecks in the process that create issues. In response to further questions, **Andrew** clarifies that this is focused currently on just teaching track faculty and that it will not cover all faculty on that track as this is a pilot program, but expansion could be considered later. **Andrew** also notes this would be housed in the Dean's office (as opposed to a home department). There is a discussion about whether departments should be required to assign a mentor to RTPC faculty, whether that mentor could or should be TT or RTPC, and issues around who would assign mentors in that situation. **Andrew** says he will aim to synthesize the pilot program with the RPD Caucus' recommendation, which would include guidelines and/or training to help educate people on how to be a successful mentor.

Trisha moves to the issue of shortfalls in funding for Research faculty, referencing a report on that from the RPD Caucus. **Amber** and **Andrew** state they had not seen a copy of that and ask for one to be sent to them. **Geraldine** gives a summary of the report and the relating issues, asking Dornsife to establish some limited financial and facility report for research faculty. The report has four concrete proposals, and would affect 21 research faculty in the college. **Amber** says she will look into this with the divisional deans and Vice-Dean Mackey.

Discussing a policy that is already in place, **Trisha** notes that the updated version of the computer policy is now posted in the professional development funds section. A request is made to have the dean's office send an email out noting the updated

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (May 2 2018)

policy and its location. There is also a request for it to also be placed on the DTS website, since that's where people are most likely to look for it. **Amber** and **Stephen** agree to look into both courses of action.

Trisha pivots to discussing the new Student Learning Experience Evaluations, with questions about whether chairs and departments will know how to incorporate them into existing frameworks of review and evaluation of faculty. **Amber** responds that she has been aware of these changes at the same time as faculty are hearing about it. The question of how best to handle the changes in faculty evaluation and peer review will be a long-term matter in a school as large as Dornsife. For now, there will be more discussion about this than directives. **Andrew** mentions speaking with Ginger Clark about how to implement teaching review procedures in a way that provides worthwhile feedback without being onerous or busywork. As this is a long term process, **Amber** and **Andrew** emphasize that the merit review policies will not be substantively changed next fall. **Dan** asks if this means that evaluations will be de-emphasized in the process, to take into account the changes and consequences created by the new model. **Amber** replies that departments have to use the evaluations they have. **Andrew** says collaboration in the long-term to figure out how the new models for faculty evaluation will be welcome.

Trisha praises Dean Miller's memo concerning salary issues that she released earlier in the academic year, noting that having numbers and not just philosophy helped clarify things for faculty before asking for an update on the situation. **Stephen** says they do not want to keep repeating information, with **Amber** noting the numbers are sent to chairs every spring. Council members note that the chairs rarely share that information with the faculty. **Amber** suggests sending the info to the Faculty Council as well, which might push the chairs to share more information. Suggestions are made to either have a digital archive of such communications available, or to include the DFC in all communications to the chairs so information is not lost.

In speaking of chairs, **Trisha** wonders if it were possible for the Dean to proactively communicate with departments that faculty service (such as serving on the DFC) is important, and that it should be included in both merit review and also scheduling concerns. **Amber** thinks this is already done, but notes that they can communicate it is important but cannot get involved in a department's scheduling process. **Andrew**, based on his experience in scheduling meetings, thinks it is something that faculty have not brought up enough to be seen as a concern. **Jessica P.** notes that the timing of both the scheduling process and the DFC election keeps people from being able to speak up. **Amber** and **Stephen** say that getting information about DFC requirements out in early January would get that in before the scheduling process begins.

With questions from the floor, DFC members ask about what can be done to improve the culture created by the damage that has been done to the inclusive environment within departments, with strong divides between TT and RTPC. **Amber** speaks to trying to increase transparency and openness as a way to improve

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (May 2 2018)

the culture as a whole. Many steps are being taken by different aspects of the Dornsife administration, and she hopes people can see that. She states that improving mentoring procedures and clarifying review and promotion processes should also help in this specific aspect of the culture. Clarifying the standards and structures of the reviews should help avoid abuses of the system.

The final question concerns updates on the surveys from divisional deans about strategic areas of convergence within Dornsife. **Amber** says that two documents will be produced related to that. One will be inward/faculty-facing, serving as a roadmap for how departments and programs can think about such aspects. The other will be outward/fundraising based, to help generate more resources to fund such programs and activities.

The Deans thank the council for the time and depart.

Executive Board and Senator Candidates

Trisha calls for volunteers to stand as candidates for DFC leadership positions. **Iva, David,** and **Devin** put their names forward for the vice-president position; each give a brief statement about why they want to serve. **P.T.** is the only person to put himself forward for secretary. **Jessica C., David, Shannon, Bob G., Devin, Assal, Joe, and Jessica P.** stand to serve as Senators. **Trisha** will send the ballots out to the full DFC shortly, noting that three Senators (the top three vote-getters) and two alternates (the next two vote-getters) will be elected from that ballot. Votes will be due by the beginning of next week.

Agenda Items for Next Year

Dan leads a discussion about what the council should be thinking about next year. He notes something mentioned earlier: the need for proactive as well as reactive agenda items. Ongoing issues are also noted. He states the need to look at things both big (diversity/inclusion issues, teacher evaluation and promotion, etc) and small (such as clarification of existing policies); his goal is to get a win, whether big or small, for each of the DFC's unique constituencies (tenured, TT, teaching/practice, research, part-time, and students).

Following this, **Assal, Jessica P., Dan, Emily, Marianna, Joe, Michael, P.T., Iva,** and **David** discuss various ideas and proposals, from increasing transparency about mentorship and salary issues to aiming to get a clearer sense of the deans' thinking of key issues. There are questions of how to determine, share, and implement best practices across departments. Related to that is increasing communication from as well as overall presence of the DFC in order to help get information to all faculty members. Members also mention looking at how faculty mentor students to help with the building of Dornsife's "signature undergraduate experience" program, as well as issues around undergraduate research funding and general culture.

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Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Trisha submits the minutes of the previous DFC meeting, on Apr. 4, for approval. 13 members present vote to approve them and 8 abstain.

The meeting is adjourned at 5:06pm

Respectfully submitted,

P.T. McNiff, Secretary

The Dornsife Faculty Council