

## Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (May 8, 2019)

- Date: May 8, 2019
- Room: Irani Hall, Rm. 321
- Present (18): Brian Bernards; Iva Bozovic; Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch; David Crombecque; Gerald Davison; Shannon Gibson; Bob Girandola; Devin Griffiths (*vice-president*); Assal Habibi; Yuka Kumagai; P.T. McNiff (*secretary*); Sri Narayan; Joe Palacios; Jessica Parr; Dan Pecchenino (*president*); Michael Petitti; Sergio Sanudo-Wilhelmy; An-Min Wu
- Absent (1): Jessica Cantiello
- Guests: (8): Melissa Daniels-Rauterkus (English, Incoming DFC member); Antonio Elefano (Writing Program, Incoming DFC member); David Ginsberg (Environmental Studies, Incoming DFC member); Andrea Parra (Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Incoming DFC member); Gioia Polidori (Biological Sciences, Incoming DFC member); Alisa Sanchez (Writing Program, Incoming DFC member); Atia Sattar (Writing Program, Working Group on University Culture); Emily Zeamer (Anthropology, Incoming DFC member)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

**Dan** welcomes the incoming Council members and leads the room in a round of introductions. He thanks outgoing, returning, and incoming members for stepping up to run and serve on the Council.

### **Campus Climate Survey**

**Atia** gives a presentation on the work of the Working Group on University Culture and its upcoming university-wide Campus Climate Survey. This working group evolved from the Task Force for Workplace Standards and Employee Wellness, and aims to identify and address widespread cultural concerns and resulting issues, aiming to develop actionable responses. The group recognizes skepticism around the top-down approach that both created and responded to many of these problems, and hopes to cultivate a bottom-up movement to address the trauma and pain the members of the USC community have experienced. The working group has developed a multi-year plan to reach out to different constituencies across the university to see what challenges they face, how things can be improved, and what will make them feel heard. As a step on this journey to create long-term and systemic change, a campus climate survey will be distributed in the fall. The responses will be anonymous, and whatever the results are will be published in full for the whole community to see. **Atia** asks for Council members or other faculty to

contact her if they have questions or input, and offers to speak in future meetings at the departmental or Dornsife-wide level. **Dan** thanks her for visiting, and notes that the DFC should be a part of this conversation.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the DFC**

**Dan** and **Devin** lead a discussion aimed at the incoming members about the role of the DFC within faculty governance and the responsibilities of Council members. The responsibilities reviewed included attending monthly meetings and serving on the Academic Senate or a DFC caucus. The dynamic between the DFC and the wider Dornsife faculty as well as department chairs is discussed. **Devin** notes that we are advocates for all Dornsife faculty, which means doing so to the college administration, within departments in Dornsife, and also at the Senate/university level. They break down the regular meetings with Dean Miller as well as the increased access the Executive Officers have had in having standing meetings with Deans. The inclusion of the President and Vice-President at the regular meetings of the Dean's Leadership Council is announced. Council members discuss that it would be beneficial for Dean Miller to announce this to the faculty, and also talk about how the DFC more clearly enumerating to the wider faculty what work they do in the monthly meetings would help.

The role of DFC members serving as Dornsife representatives on the Academic Senate is delved into further. The benefits of having conversations with central administration figures such as the President and the Provost are noted, focusing on the opportunity to get statements and information out in the open and on the record. Finally, there is a review of work that has been done in getting information from central administration figures, collaborating with other Faculty Council presidents, and generating new policies within Dornsife through the work of DFC caucuses.

A question is raised by a Council member about whether and when calls go out for faculty input regarding the Council's meeting with the Dean. The need for more advertising is noted, and leads to an examination of the importance of two-way communications – reaching out to fellow faculty in home departments as well as ones in the same division is crucial. **Dan** reminds people to share the roster of Council members and Senators from the DFC website, and to reiterate to colleagues that both Council and Senate meetings are open if they would like to be part of the work of governance.

### **Updates on DFC Caucuses**

**P.T.** discusses the work of the Election Caucus, starting by recognizing the quality and energy of the newly elected members of the Council. The primary goals for next year are a continued need to try to increase the number of candidates on the ballot, and to address diversity and representation issues. While this includes race, ethnicity, and gender, it also includes the disparity between the percentage of

tenured and TT faculty in Dornsife and the membership of the Council. **Dan** and **P.T.** recognize the work of **An-Min** on the caucus to help ensure the smooth running of the election.

Continuing his time holding the floor, **P.T.** also gives updates on the work of the Part-Time Faculty Affairs Caucus, sharing that the long-awaited survey has been distributed. The caucus aims to analyze the data over the summer and figure out how to move forward on the resulting policy needs and approaches in the coming year. He ends with a request that Council members consider serving on this caucus next year, despite no part-time faculty being members of the DFC.

To share the work of the Curriculum Caucus, **David C.** discusses the survey sent to undergraduate students, which included questions about mentoring drafted by the caucus. Some of the results include the top four things students seek mentoring for (career paths, success in undergrad courses, making the most of undergrad experience, and applying for internships), that the highest percentage of students (66%) sought mentoring from professors, that older students are more likely to seek and desire mentoring, and that relatively small percentages looked for mentoring from career pathways and the career center. **Iva** points out the benefit of the written comments on the survey and the transparency of Dean Stott's office in sharing them with the caucus. She then discusses the roadblocks to students engaging with experiential learning, which include the time commitment, the cost, and delays in finding out about the opportunities. She says the third one can definitely be improved; **Dan** notes that, as part of the Dornsife Signature Undergraduate Experience, the administration wants to make cost issues more equitable. **Iva** says that the students who do experiential learning find them more valuable than the average student. Departments also need to think about how the work can be made more rewarding and incentivized on their end, both for the students and the faculty. A discussion follows of two-unit courses as a way to expand experiential learning options.

**Assal** talks about the work of the RTPC-Research Faculty Affairs Caucus, whose work was put on hold in favor of the Provost/Senate Task Force on Research-Track Faculty, which she served on. She discussed the shared report issued by the task force, which included recommendations for rolling contracts for Research-track faculty which provide a minimum of two-year security to those members. The recommendations have gone to Elizabeth Graddy's office to see how they will be implemented. In the meantime, the caucus plans to meet with John Holland and Dean Stott to begin devising Dornsife policies and guidelines in advance of those adopted by the university as a whole.

**Gioia** speaks on the work done by the RTPC-Teaching Faculty Affairs Caucus, which focused on two main projects this year. The first was improving the faculty mentoring structure for these faculty. Due to work of the caucus, Dean Stott has implemented a policy that all incoming RTPC-Teaching faculty will have a mentor assigned to them. The caucus also scheduled events to help develop opportunities

for informal mentoring, which were well attended. The second project was to help fund faculty members, whether TT or RTPC, who want to work on curriculum innovation by developing new courses, researching new pedagogical practices, etc. The goal is to establish summer support for such work.

The conversation shifts to discussing potential funding from the Dornsife Signature Undergraduate Experience, leading into questions about Faculty Development Funds. **Dan** reiterates that he has been told the funding pool was restored to the previous levels (before the cuts that occurred this year), but reminds everyone that the maximum amount was never guaranteed to faculty members. He notes that the DFC should work with Dean Stott to push the business office to raise the funding of that pool to ensure more people an access the development funds they need. Council members discuss and agree that the rules need to be clearer and the funding more consistent.

**Brian** reports on the work of the Tenure Track Faculty Affairs Caucus, which wanted to build momentum by crafting a position paper to present to the Dean. Their main focus was on service responsibilities, including questions around what distributions are expected, how quality of service is assessed, and what incentives there are for rendering quality service. Related to this, they tackled questions of TT and RTPC relations, including exploring opportunities for RTPC faculty to transition to TT positions. The caucus also discussed efforts to diversify the TT faculty body, as faculty from under-represented demographics frequently find themselves carrying a larger service burden. Finding ways to reward, rather than punish, such work is a priority. The caucus also issued some recommendations aimed at increasing TT participation on the DFC by asking the Dean to more directly incentivize the work, especially for the Council President.

On behalf of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Caucus, **Alisa** points to the updated report that has been shared with the Council, featuring revisions based on input from caucus and Council members. The report focuses on faculty recruitment, hiring, and retention, as well as exploring student issues from a faculty perspective. The report makes ten concrete recommendations on the faculty hiring issue, as well as highlighting some possible courses of action to deal with student concerns. All of the ideas the report discusses are ones that USC has committed to on paper or has enacted in the past, with the report providing actionable ways to make them a reality.

### **Votes on Caucus Recommendations**

**Dan** clarifies that caucus reports are shared with the Dornsife faculty via the DFC website without any further action by the Council; recommendations to be presented to the Dean, however, are voted on by Council members.

**Dan** submits the Tenure Track Caucus Dean's Memo for Council approval. Per a discussion between **Dan** and **Brian**, it is submitted amended, removing a section

regarding RTPC to TT transition. **Devin** motions to approve; **P.T.** seconds. 17 members present vote to approve, with zero nays and zero abstentions.

**Dan** then submits the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Caucus Final Recommendations for Council approval. **Brian** motions to approve; **Devin** seconds. 16 members present vote to approve, with zero nays and one abstention.

### **Updates on Academic Senate Meetings**

**Dan** shifts to sharing updates about the April meeting of the Academic Senate. The meeting included passing a resolution supporting a ban on faculty being in an intimate relationship with students under their supervision. In addition, the meeting featured introductions of the candidates for the Senate executive board positions, as well as a discussion of changes to the drug formulary plan of the USC PPO health plan.

In the successive Senate meeting in May, the winners of the executive board election were announced, including **Dan**, who will serve as Administrative Vice President of the Academic Senate for the next two years. The meeting also featured discussion of minor changes to the Faculty Handbook as well as reports issued by the Senate committees.

### **Updates on Other Meetings**

**Dan** notes that there have been a series of information sessions organized to discuss the new RTPC promotion guidelines. He says these have gone well, with attendees asking thoughtful and relevant questions for the most part.

**Dan** and **Devin** discuss a meeting they had with Mark Todd, the Vice Provost for Academic Operations, in order to discuss Dornsife's taxes to central administration within the revenue-centered management system. The discussion brought some illumination to why it looks like Dornsife is taxed differently from other schools: while the overall rates are standardized across the university, Dornsife's income relies on sources that, on the whole, are taxed at a higher rate. Undergraduate tuition is a main component of Dornsife's revenue; that tuition is taxed at a higher rate to help fund financial aid efforts. In addition, undergraduate numbers are also taxed higher for facilities costs. Having fewer Masters and online programs, Dornsife relies heavily on this undergraduate tuition; with recent decisions to cap the increase of that tuition and to stem the further expansion of the undergraduate class size, there is little room for that revenue stream to grow. **Dan** and **Devin** agree that the conversation was a good one to have started with Vice Provost Todd, as it helps put the DFC in a position to help the Dean request a larger subvention from the Provost's office. A discussion follows about the potential for growth of Masters programs, with council members raising the concerns that faculty may think (or even may already think) that expanding such programs because of the improved revenue stream is just treating them like a "cash cow," without concern for their

competitiveness or quality levels. The recent revelations of the problems in the Masters and online programs in the School of Social Work are noted as cautionary tales.

**Dan** notes that he and **Devin** will also be meeting with Executive Vice Provost (and soon-to-be Interim Provost) Elizabeth Graddy in the near future to discuss the salary pools issue and university rules surrounding them. They reiterate the benefits of establishing relationships with these positions in order to better understand how the university works and to improve the DFC's ability to lobby for change. **Emily** notes that it would be helpful to more widely share the updates of these meetings, to document the knowledge gained from them, and publicize them to the faculty. **Devin** talks about potentially discussing finance issues like this in a faculty-wide forum in the fall.

### **Executive Officers and Senator Candidates**

**P.T.**, **Devin**, and **Dan** speak respectively on the Executive Officer positions of Secretary, Vice President, and President. **Dan** then calls for self-nominations to run for these positions; **Gioia** and **David C.** volunteer to run for Vice President. **An-Min** is the sole person to put herself forward to run for Secretary. **Dan** then calls for self-nominations for the three Senator positions; **Gioia**, **David C.**, **Shannon**, **Antonio**, and **Jessica P.** (in absentia) submit their names to run for the positions. **Bob** put himself forward after the meeting.

Due to time constraints, **Dan** asked each candidate to submit a brief written candidate statement to **P.T.**, who will assemble and distribute the ballot in the coming days.

### **Agenda Items for Next Year**

**Devin** thanks everyone for running for the DFC, as well as those who stepped forward for the leadership positions. He then thanks and acknowledges the work of **Dan** and **P.T.** in the Executive Officer positions this year.

**Devin** speaks to the role of DFC as representatives of and also advocates for the Dornsife faculty. He notes the four things that make faculty governance strong are representation, advocacy, advising, and oversight. There has been positive change in terms of governance recently, but much more work needs to be done; luckily, there is a lot of energy exists to continue improving the strength of faculty governance. Along with that, the administration has pivoted and wants to listen more to the faculty. A primary goal in the upcoming year is to push for instituting structural changes to make sure things do not revert back to the way they were, and that faculty governance is baked into the cake of how the university and the college are run. A second objective is to make it clearer to important stakeholders (the faculty, chairs, and administration) what the DFC does and how we can represent, advocate, advise, and oversee on various issues. Finally, he plans to focus on addressing the

salary pool issue, which is both a pressing need and something that should unite the faculty across all lines. He requests continued feedback from all members, including outgoing ones.

**Dan** notes that the term for the current members of the Council does not end until June 30<sup>th</sup>, and that they may be asked to participate in a discussion and vote regarding a resolution on the salary pool issue before their term is up.

### **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings**

**P.T.** submits the minutes of the March 6 DFC meeting for discussion and approval; they are submitted with an amendment to remove an unclear word from page 2.

**Assal** motions to approve the amended minutes; **David C.** seconds. 16 of the members present vote to approve them, with zero nays and one abstention.

**P.T.** submits the minutes of the April 3 DFC meeting for discussion and approval.

**Gerald** motions to approve; **David C.** seconds. 15 of the members present vote to approve them, with zero nays and two abstentions.

### **Approval of Bylaw Amendments**

The proposed Amendments to the Bylaws of the Faculty Council Regarding Clarity and Precision, having been distributed by **P.T.** to the Council in writing during the April 3 meeting, are submitted for a vote. Without any objections, the proposed amendments are offered in one motion by the Executive Officers (no second required). 17 members present vote to approve them, with zero nays and zero abstentions.

The meeting is adjourned at 5:03pm

Respectfully submitted,

P.T. McNiff, Secretary

The Dornsife Faculty Council