

Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting (Emergency Meeting)

Date: May 6, 2020 (4 pm – 6 pm)

Room: Online virtual meeting via Zoom

Present (17): Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch, David Crombecque, Melissa Daniels-Rauterkus, Gerald “Jerry” Davison, Antonio Elefano, Shannon Gibson, David Ginsburg, Devin Griffiths (*president*), Yuka Kumagai, Sri Narayan, Jessica Parr, Andrea Parra, Michael Petitti, Gioia Polidori (*vice president*), Alisa Sánchez, An-Min Wu (*current secretary*), Emily Zeamer.

Absent (2): Bob Girandola, Joe Palacios

Guests (9): Douglas Becker (POIR, Incoming DFC member), Jasmine Bryant (Chemistry, Incoming DFC member), Julia Chamberlin (French and Italian, Incoming DFC member), Monalisa Chatterjee (Environmental Studies, Incoming DFC member), Jim Clements (Writing Program, Incoming DFC member), Tracie Mayfield (Anthropology, Incoming DFC member), Stephanie Payne (Writing Program, Incoming DFC member), Matthew Pratt (Chemistry, Incoming DFC member), John Vidale (Earth Science, Incoming DFC member)

Arrival, approval of April. minutes

- 13 of the 2019-2020 DFC members vote to approve, zero oppose, and 2 abstain.

Introduction of new members

Devin welcomes the incoming Council members to join the last DFC meeting of the academic year 2019-2020.

Updates

- Updates from Leadership meetings

Devin reported the weekly meeting with Dean Stott in regard to employment and budgeting this fall. Dean Miller and the University as a whole plan to keep everyone employed, with the priority on faculty. Also we have admitted more students and have more deposits than last year. This is a good news for faculty need especially in Dornsife.

As to big picture on the budget, it is not a good news: The university is expecting 400 millions shortfall this year, including profit lost due to COVID-19, staff salary continues even for those not working remotely, refund for students, loss on sports events and sales, and others. The administration said this can be made back in three years. As a week ago, Dean was asked for planning three budget cut scenarios; this means a more centralized budget cut and less school-level flexibility. **Devin** also thought this meant that the University Senate becomes very important in the upcoming years to stay strong. Also we should advocate Dean Stott to be involved in central decision.

The central administration has policies but the school-level policies are different. Dornsife has been very careful for not telling what the fall semester looks like till now. Based on the conversations we had with others, students are likely to come back to campus to certain degree; it might be a hybrid condition. Faculty should have some flexibility in the school. **Devin** asked members to pay attention on large classes as well as how teaching is shifted within departments.

Jerry asked if anyone brought up in these meetings about the heavy load on budget created by the Tyndall scandal. **Devin** responded that in the past DFC meeting we had some talk about the Senate meeting discussion on staffing strategies in Engemann in the past DFC meeting. Indeed we cannot lose track on what's going on; at the same time we are in such big crisis (COVID) so it is appropriate for everyone to shift the focus. **Devin** also emphasized that faculty are the centrality to the university - our relationships to our students is the core and cannot be shut down. **Stephanie** introduced herself as the new member and expressed her agreement with Jerry on not losing sight of the core issues, and said this is the opportunity for us in Dornsife to look at the disparity and for faculty to demonstrate that we are the core of the University.

David C. described his observations on the meeting with Provost yesterday – The tuition is a big chunk (2 billion dollars) of budget and the big source (48%) of this revenue comes from Dornsife. Additionally, it is expected the healthcare to come back (3-4 million dollars) as things open up.

Discussion of what we can do for faculty during COVID-19

- *Tech support for online teaching*

Emily said that CET online teaching webinars were excellent; while not everyone can take it, CET staff is taking questions and can help review syllabus and everything else. However, **Andrea** said some colleagues of her joined CET had a totally different perspective; we need more specialized trainings. **David C.** talked about his CET training experience – currently about 6 weeks already – and said it is not really

technical. It is about CET ways of having good reasons on pedagogical and teaching, and not specifically about online teaching. It is still interesting, but not necessarily meeting the outcomes they try to achieve (i.e. online teaching).

Jasmine talked about bubbling up technology suggestions to the admin, including centralized licensing and technological training she heard USC used to have funding for the latter but was suspended. This is also the opportunity for USC to upgrade the systems; Blackboard is not industry standard, and exam proctoring at zoom is not recommended. If the University wants to provide quality online classroom, we need to up the game. **Devin** said that the University has been talking about move away from Blackboard. And we can have some conversations with DTS and ITS.

- *Teaching loads & Maymester*

Jessica pointed out that the administration should keep in mind that many of the faculty with young children may not be able to return to campus. **Emily** expressed our need to know the guideline and schedule more specifically (e.g. how to do, whether we can reschedule or can offer the classes asynchronously or not). **Devin** reaffirmed that Dean Stott was trying to push faculty flexibility; this included not meeting full time synchronously, keeping the classes asynchronously if needed, but we cannot meet outside the scheduled time.

Jim said that the flexibility has been given as far as parenting goes, but no talk has been on how to schedule classes; we don't have the insights how things are like if we look after your child 8 hours a day. To have these things spelled out will help us to know that it won't come back to bite us. **Alisa** expressed the hope for Dean to send a note emphasizing the guideline and suggestions on this some time in the summer.

Tracie agreed that we need something in writing but that can also be used against us. **Marianna** said each department has different culture and therefore the clear communication from the dean is very important. **Devin** said that he will ask Stott to provide clear writing to the public.

- *Online teaching evaluation*

Shannon noted some consideration needed for potential judgement on teaching on campus or from home in the evaluation and promotion process.

- *Salary and Promotion considerations*

Devin said it is disappointing that there is no merit increase this year as we fought hard and got this (before COVID-19). The promotion funding is not changed, however, and the administration encourages people going on promotion. To protect

promotion, the University might have other payroll cut; but it is not clear how they can balance payroll and requirements.

- OCAP changes

Devin said one thing we charged this year was to look closely on OCAP. It looks like that the office is going away or will be merged into HR. The admin might want to have someone in HR to prevent abusive power use.

Elections & awards

- Announcement of service awards

Jessica described that to new members that this year we inaugurated the DFC service awards and we kept the criteria broad to try to give one TT/T and one RTPC. A total of four candidates were nominated including one receiving nominations 5 times. Two awardees were chosen. This year a group of us selected the awards – One is M. Mercedes Fages Agudo, a Senior Lecturer in Department of Latin American and Iberian Culture. She was nominated by five people and has done a lot of service outside the community with a huge number of students involved. We also selected Professor William Falman in Classics and Comparative Literature; he's done a huge amount of service. It is a good time to thank him for what he has done. **Jessica** stressed that the other two people are by no means not deserving, and suggested to rollover the nominations for consideration next year.

Jessica said that we still want to invite the award winners to the annual dinner and present the awards in person; we will send the monetary prizes as quickly as possible. **David C.** asked what will happen to the DFC budget. **Gioia** said the question was sent to Daniel last week and he sent it to Terence; they made notes but not sure what will happen in the fall. **Devin:** As of April, we still have 6,000 left. **An-Min** said it is not clear if DFC money is still available under the current circumstance. **Andrea** said that one of her colleagues have been having issues to get refund from the cancelled trip; can DFC consider to support that? **Devin** said he'll follow up with the account and have the conversations for the use. **Emily** noted that plan for spending DFC funds should be clear; 6000 will not go far.

Marianna asked about the process and criteria of the service awards, such as whether we consider only services inside campus or not. **Devin** said that the award process was discussed in previous meetings and criteria was approved; **Devin** also thank all the members in the selection committee.

- *Statements by candidates for Senate, Secretary, and VP Positions*

Devin turned the focus to the election and invited everyone who stood up for election on VP, Secretary, and Senate representatives to speak. The voting will be done via email later. VP 2020-2021 position is also president-elect; secretary runs meeting minutes and election. Besides President, VP and Secretary serve on the University Senate as Dornsife representatives, three Senators positions and two Senate Alternates will be elected.

Senate

Devin asked those running for Senate representatives to give brief candidate statements. (**Jerry**:) I've been attending the Senate meetings this year; everyone should know that I can be very expressive at time, has no fear to speak up, and has no interest in running for senior admin positions; I raised up the OCAP issues. (**David C.**:) I'm an RTPC faculty in Mathematical Department and currently a Senate representative for Dornsife. I enjoyed the ride but particularly I've been the observer and now I'm ready to be more actively involved. (**Marianna**:) I am a faculty in Latin America and Iberian Culture. First I want to thank those who voted me for DFC; I've been involved in caucuses in the last two years. I have come to learn that statistics, experiences, and wisdom play successful roles for people. I especially honor that Jerry speaks up for issues. We, the RTPC faculty, do not seem not a group of interests, and we need to raise the awareness and enforce equity for our RTPC colleagues, especially for our contributions to students. I will be thrilled to work again with Jerry and others. (**Tracie**:) I'm new to DFC but I think that's an asset for me to come in fresh. My background is finance and I'm aware the terms that legal advised the admin to use. My superpower is to talk between different departments; I can communicate between different institutional languages.

(**Alisa**:) Next year is my second year on DFC; I've learned so much last year and I'd like to continue and join Senate to do the work we set out to do. I'm very involved with DEI on campus and I will always carry that as my lens. I will also keep that as the priority; I can do balancing care of crisis and working on our core values while not losing sight at the same time. (**Douglas**:) Thank you for the opportunity to serve and to listen to on DFC. I'm interested in serving on the Senate. I've been in USC for a few years and have seen many changes and sometimes not followed through within governance. I am a great mentor to the new faculty and I'm currently on Part-Time Caucus. In this crisis, no one is asking us what books we are publishing; the society is asking us how we teach the children. Therefore, I want to see USC to focus on teaching and we are assets and more – we are a part of it. (**Jim**:) I joined DFC because I have been the liaison between child centers and HR. We managed to change contractors and have a full-time position to support that in HR. We have other extending services to graduate students. I learned a lot from that on how the University functions and especially how HR functions. I think I can bring that to the Senate. I also have particular interests, which are to properly look at our mental health

services. Because we have more personal interactions with students, we Dornsife faculty has more insights than other schools have.

Secretary

Alisa self-nominated herself to be the next DFC Secretary. Added to what she has stated in the candidate statement for the Senate, **Alisa** said that she admired jobs An-Min and P.T. have done, and will try to follow that and be organized to follow up with people.

Vice President

Devin mentioned that starting from next year, DFC President will get one course release because our admin has recognized the importance of the role. **Emily** stood for the VP position. (**Emily:**) I want to put myself in front because Gioia, the incoming president, has provided us such a team that makes me want to support her and put things of concerns in DFC forward. If I have an agenda here, it is to encourage the University to look for the solutions within the University. I think many people try to do things better and the University should not look outside but what we have been doing. I see our role is to listen to what people say, to get more insights on how the University functions, how the system is structured, and how stuff gets done, so we can do things better. Unfortunately the Senate holds only an advisory role; we should certainly expect it to be an administrative role.

Caucus year-end reports

- *DEI Caucus*

Alisa and **Tracie** shared the report draft. **Alisa** said that for students issues the DEI Caucus was focused on students without housing. In terms of faculty, the Caucus focused on ensuring the DEI contents to be available on web to guide hiring. The website is a resource hub. The Caucus will continue to work on issues regarding to hiring freeze and other issues. One thing to work is to have reading groups or speaker series to build faculty the DEI literacy. The Caucus also think to emphasize the importance of having DEI in the department bylaws as they are the basic principles of equity. **Tracie** added that this year the Caucus emphasized on the question to ask ‘Are we focused on the right questions?’ The Caucus look at hiring but not yet for the people who are leaving. The Caucus also recognized that the importance of not only working with the administration but also with the students.

- *Part-Time Caucus*

Jessica said there were only two faculty in this Caucus. Jessica raised some issues which are part of DEI problems: No good orientation for new hires, for example. While we are in hiring freeze, we should still work on this issue; if there are more students, more PT will be hired. Other issues raised include: PT faculty are often thought as temporary so no mentoring is involved and colleagues do not make effort;

promotion; making sure that Chairs know what they are responsible and they should be paid if doing services. Jessica is compiling this issues for the next year's Caucus to take over. **Devin** reminded every Caucus to produce reports.

- *RTPC Caucus*

Gioia reported that the Caucus worked on the following issues: First, summer tuition and course release for curricular development (like sabbatical). The Caucus is compiling the information now and plans to submit the recommendations this summer. Second, mentoring proposal. Approaches to take include: 1) to establish a mentoring structure that every faculty, regardless of ranks, should have a mentor, and 2) to establish FDDs: It has been two years since RTPC proposed this Faculty Development Director (FDD) to Dean Stott. We'd like to revise it and propose one FDD for each division. Found Emily Anderson (Professor of English) has a role almost equivalent to an FDD. We're still working on getting inputs from research faculty; generally, research faculty strongly feel they can be better mentored by TT faculty.

- *Tenure Track Caucus*

Devin reported that Dean Stott has agreed to incorporate some merit review recommendations. The Caucus will recommend to combine merit review and mentoring together. Also to include services, which has big impact. The Caucus will work with RTPC Caucus to get the recommendations together in 1-2 weeks.

- *Advocacy and Oversight Caucus*

Jerry reported that the Caucus focused exclusively on OCAP. Things has begun to change by the pressure we put on. Hopeful for the taskforce (Joint Committee to Review Processes and Practices: OCAP) to change the way it is now. Devin reminded that this past year the Caucus produced the letter on the OCAP issue; DFC to bring the letter to other faculty councils to sign on and brought that to the Senate that led to a Senate resolution and now the Provost Taskforce to work on this issue.

- *Salary and Merit Task force*

Devin reported that the Caucus set up a salary analysis to compare between USC and UCLA. Sergio and TJ McCarthy took it to the administration about 1-2 weeks ago. We also pushed the school to agree on 3% salary increase (before COVID) and equitable structure so the salary study was a huge achievement.

Setting Priority for Next Year

Devin budget transparency is still an issue and we need to hold on to that and at the same time educate our faculty how budget works and how it impacts Dornsife. **Gioia** thanked Devin for the work he has done as the President this year; Devin met Dean every day during the spring break.

Gioia asked the Council members on their thoughts for the priority next year. Shannon said that serving on the Council for 4 years has made her feel empowered, not just a role player, and become more engaged in the University; she thanked the Council for this opportunity to serve and encouraged new members to lean in. **David C.** echoed on the budget transparency problem and agreed with Devin the need to work on that. **Gioia** said she has thought about this and will invite some to present the budget. Additionally **Gioia** asked anyone to report if any known salary inversion.

David C. suggested to reinstate the Curriculum Caucus, in order to address issues on teaching modality. Maybe it is a chance to think about the opportunities online education offers and what that mean for Faculty Affairs. This is not just for the crisis but for the longer term (5-10 years). **Emily** agreed and said we should convene to have it as the largest caucus to have, rethink about undergraduate education and have an umbrella perspectives to adapt many changes we face.

Gioia said that salary compression is definitely on the list to work on. **Marianna** added the importance of raising the awareness of RTPC faculty contributions to Dornsife and enforcing equity, not just salary only. **Andrea** said we should focus on mentoring; probably we encourage and identify TT faculty who can and are willing to mentor RTPC because many RTPC are on the Associate Professor level, but there are no mentors and no real guidelines. **Gioia** said some RTPC faculty prefer not to have a TT mentor; but still mentoring should be on our list.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm

Respectfully,

An-Min Wu