Minutes of the Dornsife Faculty Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 2, 2022
Time: 2:30 - 4:30 pm (PST)
Location: Zoom meeting

Present (15) Emily Zeamer *(president)*, Jim Clements *(vice-president),* Douglas Becker (*secretary*), Leslie Berntsen, Julia Chamberlin, Goretti Prieto Botana, Bob Girandola, Tracie Mayfield, Andrea Parra, Anastassia Tzoytzoyrakos, John Vidale, Sri Narayan, Matthew Pratt, Monalisa Chatterjee, Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch,

Absent (6) Dana Milstein, Liana Stepanyan, Marie Enright, Leilei Duan, Vahe Peroomian, Sylvain Barbot

Guest (1): Jim Valentine

Emily Zeamer opened the meeting at 2:32 with a quorum call. 13 members were present, constituting a quorum.

Emily Zeamer opened with announcements, and that the executive board is meeting in person with Dean Amber Miller later this week. She then announced that Emily Anderson has requested an advisory committee on accommodations and educational quality. Douglas Becker is serving on the committee and announced it will be called the Educational Continuity and Accommodations Committee. Julia Chamberlin and Leslie Berntsen are also serving on the committee.

Tracie Mayfield raised the issue of the OSAS accommodations of students not being required to take a scantron exam. The issue will be raised with Emily Anderson.

Emily Zeamer then announced the executive board had met with Ginger Clark about the use and construction of the course evaluations. We will address these issues in upcoming meetings

Jim Clements then motioned to approve the minutes from the January 5, 2022 meeting. Tracie Mayfield seconded. The motion passes 12-0-2.

Goretti Prieto Botana then presented the data on the faculty survey. Sri Narayan then discussed the section on the purposes of the faculty review process. There was great diversity in these responses and they were categorized under six headings. These are salary raises, recognizing contributions, Does not achieve raises or recognizes contributions, Unsure of purpose, student enhancement, and formality. The vast majority stated the purpose was primarily raises, recognition, or does not achieve raises or recognition. Monalisa Chatterjee then discussed the feedback given in the merit evaluation process. The respondents approached the issue from the perspective of the evaluation process itself, while others discussed the post-evaluation feedback. There is a fair distribution on positive and negative responses to the merit review processes. Goretti Prieto Botana then illustrated that the most positive outcome was becoming aware of colleagues work. They also reported that learning about the process was a positive experience as

well. One other common theme was rewarding colleagues' work. Then, there was a greater diversity in responses in the least favorite aspects of the evaluation process. Arbitrary responses, inconsistent guidelines, and lack of awareness of guidelines were the most common responses. Then the time investment compared with outcomes and the raise was a common complaint. Anastassia Tzoytzoyrakos then explored the additional comments section of the survey. Half of the respondants offered additional comments. Time consuming and little reward or value were the most common responses. Lack of clarity and transparency were also common. Only 5 respondents indicated the process was useful. Confusion as what was expected of faculty submissions was common. Both junior and senior faculty thought the process was unfair specifically to them.

We then discussed the findings. Douglas Becker raised the concerns that was common that the process is time consuming, and hence the ease of using numerical values for course evaluations makes it easier. Emily Zeamer reinforced the expectation that different departments take different approaches but the survey did not ask departmental affiliation to preserve anonymity of respondents. Andrea Parra reiterated the time commitment to this process and the lack of impact on salary increases. The intention was to promote mentorship but there is a lack of commitment to this mentorship via this process. Emily then raised the question of what we should do with this data. We will send a survey to department chairs in an attempt to understand the process and perhaps develop best practices. Sri Narayan was surprised at how little understanding of the purpose of the merit evaluations, considering how often they have been done. Monalisa Chatterjee stated she was surprised about the rankings themselves and how little consistency across departments. Julia was happily surprised that there was no comments about animus on the committees and the personal attacks that can be found.

Emily Zeamer then moved onto the resolution on merit evaluation and salaries, authored by Jim Clements. Tracie Mayfield stated the need to emphasize the importance of faculty as the assets of the university. Anastassia Tzoytzoyrakos raised the wording of the pay raise as a pay cut and whether that should be amended. Others suggested the argument within that clause is effective. Issues were raised to ensure transparency, clarity and consistency in the process.

Anastassia Tzoytzoyrakos moved to accept the resolution as amended. Leslie Berntsen seconded. By a vote of 15 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, the resolution passed.

Emily Zeamer stated the resolution will be sent to the Dornsife faculty and an urging to sign the AAUP drafted letter on salary increases.

Emily Zeamer then shared with the Council a survey of faculty chairs to determine how departments manage the merit review process. Jim Clement suggested that there should be an explicit question on how course evaluations are used by the department. Anastassia Tzoytzoyrakos raised the issue of how faculty are provided feedback in the process. Julia Chamberlin then raised the issue of mentorship following the evaluation. Several members responded on how to ask the question open-ended to discuss feedback and mentoring as linked. Revisions to the survey, largely based on the wording of the questions, were made.

Emily Zeamer then moved to adjorn the meeting. Jim Clements seconded. Motion passed without opposition.