**Meeting of the Villanova University**

**Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee**

Wednesday, August 31, 1:30-3:00, Mendel 103

Minutes

Present: Aronte Bennett, Sohail Chaudhry, Alice Dailey (Chair), Mirela Damian, Diane Ellis, Rory Kramer, James Peyton-Jones, Catherine Warrick, Mark Wilson, Rosalind Wynne

Not in Attendance: Angela DiBenedetto, Ruth Gordon, Quinetta Roberson (sabbatical), Jennifer Ross

The meeting was called to order at 1:30. Our principal item of business was to develop the committee’s agenda for the year. Having conferred with Faculty Congress (FC) officers, the outgoing FRRC Chair, the current chair of the APC, and Dr. Craig Wheeland (Vice Provost of Academics), the Chair proposed the following agenda items for the year, each of which was discussed by the committee:

1. The Provost has observed that the current protocol for selecting academic deans, outlined in the Faculty Handbook (Section 27), tends to result in appointments by faculty and department chairs that are not diverse. He has requested that FRRC address this lack of diversity through revision of the protocol.

The committee resolved to include this matter in our fall agenda, beginning with close examination of the current protocol, discussion with faculty constituents and department chairs about how the protocol is being carried out, and consideration of non-codified ways to address the lack of inclusion on dean selection committees.

1. The procedure for faculty grievances outlined in the Faculty Handbook (Section 43) is out of date. It states that a member of the committee is to be appointed by the University Senate, which no longer exists. The procedure therefore must be updated.
2. The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences has suggested that the Faculty Handbook could be clearer about the process for selecting department chairs (Section 29.D). The committee will solicit input from deans to begin revising this procedure.
3. The Middle States reaccreditation report has revived an issue that has long been debated by FC and FRRC but has never been resolved: whether full-time, non-tenure track (FTNTT) faculty should be extended voting rights for the selection of department chairs. Arguments against extending the vote have historically aimed to protect FTNTT faculty who may feel themselves in a patronage relationship with their department chairs. This concern may be out of date, given that most FTNTT faculty are now on 3-year or, less often, 5-year contracts. The committee agreed that this is an issue worth pursuing and that the Chair will gather the relevant reports from past committees who have studied this question to understand their findings more fully.
4. FC was contacted over the summer by several faculty members who were concerned about their summer teaching salaries. Apparently faculty taught at Villanova this summer without contracts, and many were notified within only a few days of beginning their summer sessions that their enrollments did not warrant payment of the full summer salary stipulated by the Faculty Handbook (Section 68). These faculty members were offered the option to cancel their courses or teach at a prorated salary. The FC President and Vice President and FRRC Chair met in July with the Dean of the College of Professional Studies, Dr. Debora Tyksinski, to discuss this matter. She agreed that it had been handled poorly and declared her intent to convene a committee of faculty and administrators from across colleges to develop a uniform policy for handling summer teaching contracts, course cancellations, and salary. We pressed for those faculty members teaching on a prorated salary to be paid the full amount as described by the Faculty Handbook and were subsequently assured that this would be done. At the start of this semester, however, some summer teachers had still not been paid the outstanding salary. FC continues to follow up on this matter to be sure that everyone has been paid. FC will work with the Dean’s committee on summer teaching (which will include the FRRC Chair) to develop policy ensuring that timely contracts be issued for summer teaching at the salary stipulated by the Faculty Handbook. As the work of this committee develops in conversation with FRRC, FRRC will codify contract policy in the Faculty Handbook as appropriate.
5. It has been brought to the FRRC’s attention that the required orientation for new faculty takes place prior to the start date of faculty contracts, i.e., prior to August 22. New faculty are thus attending orientation without pay or benefits, an arrangement that is exploitative, that creates legal liability for the university, and that sends a negative message to new members of our faculty community.

The committee had a robust conversation about this matter, and several potential policy ideas were discussed, most having to do with the broader problem of depending on new faculty to do extensive preparation to teach their first courses at Villanova but not compensating them for this work.

We agreed that we should include all six of these issues as part of our agenda this year, in addition to two additional matters suggested by members the committee:

1. FRRC should be actively involved in the ongoing development of faculty research policy. To this end, we agreed that it might be useful to invite the Associate and Assistant Vice Provosts for Research, Amanda Grannas and Kel Wieder, to one of our meetings to discuss research needs, funding, and initiatives.
2. FRRC should work toward proposing a promotion/advancement ladder for FTNTT faculty similar to the advancement model in place for tenure-track faculty.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00.

Members of the FRRC: Aronte Bennett, Sohail Chaudhry, Alice Dailey (Chair), Mirela Damian, Angela DiBenedetto, Diane Ellis, Ruth Gordon, Rory Kramer, James Peyton-Jones, Quinetta Roberson, Jennifer Ross, Catherine Warrick, Mark Wilson, Rosalind Wynne