



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY CONGRESS

Academic Year 2020-2021

April 15, 2021  
3:30 pm to 5:00 pm  
via Zoom

MINUTES

**Present:** Aronte Bennett, Benjamin Scheick, Bridget Wadzuk, Gerald Beyer, Gregory Hoskins, James Peyton Jones (Vice Chair), Jennifer Altamuro, Jennifer Ross, Joe Betz, John Sedunov, John-Paul Spiro, Kamran Javadizadeh, Kathryn Haymaker, Melissa Hodges, Metin Duran, Paul Bernhardt, Paul Steege, Rabih Moussawi, Rebecca Winer, Rory Kramer, Ruth Gordon, Sherry Burrell, Stephanie Katz Linkmeyer, Stephen Liedtka, Sue Metzger, Tom Way (Chair)

**Absent:** Ani Ural, Debra Shearer, Eugene McCarraher, Ilia Delio, Jared Paul, Javad Siah, Jeremy Kees, Lisa Sewell, Meredith MacKenzie-Greenle, Peter Busch, Rachel Skrlac Lo, Samantha Chapman, Shannon Hamlin, Tina Agustiady, Travis Foster, Wenqing Xu

**Invited guests:** Jacques Linder and Yue Jennifer Wang, Doctoral Student Council

**Housekeeping**

- Minutes from the faculty congress meeting on Mar. 18, 2021 were approved – (Approved: 20 yes, 0 no, 4 abstain)
- University Council meeting to be held Wed., Apr. 21, 2021
- Faculty sexual assault forum, promised to be in the works, pending update from Ryan Rost – in campus currents/chat
- Reminder to keep items raised at Faculty Congress meetings focused on faculty matters

**Standing Committee Reports** (*reports submitted in advance; please see appendix; this time set aside for elevated issues and/or questions*)

1. Awards Committee (Andrew Scott [chair, external member], Sherry Burrell) - award announcement planned for commencement, details tba
2. Adjunct Faculty Representatives (Tina Agustiady, Shannon Hamlin)
3. CNT/FTNTT Faculty Representatives (Sue Metzger, J-P Spiro)
4. Election and Credentials Committee (Q Chung, Jennifer Palenchar, Qi Wang, Bob Styer [advisory])
5. Research Policy Committee (RPC; James Peyton Jones, chair) – brief update in Appendix A
6. Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee (FRRC; Metin Duran, chair)

- Metin reported that proposed changes to Rank and Tenure Guidelines regarding the issue of involvement of deans in the process are an active agenda for FRRC. FRRC has made suggested changes, including the Dean's role regarding presentation of cases to the committee. James added that there are also discussions of trying to make it easier to attract high quality candidates to VU and the process of moving to workflow.
  - Another active agenda item for FRRC is a proposal to include a process of faculty grievance in compliance-related issues.
7. Retired faculty members (Joe Betz)

### **Committees with Faculty Representation** *(time set aside for questions about reports received)*

1. Academic Policy Committee (Bridget Wadzuk, chair)
  - Bridget reported that Stef Katz is chairing the CATS subcommittee; Lisa Sewell working on academic integrity statement – statement coming in next few weeks
2. Intellectual Property Policy Board (James Peyton-Jones)
  - James shared that there has not been progress regarding the Intellectual Property Policy. A meeting was canceled due to personal reasons. The IPP is an important issue as online parts of delivery are increasing; digital scholarship is increasing; IP in that context is very important, and we need to keep working on it.

### **Old Business**

1. Brief recap of Middle States meeting with visiting team chair on Thurs., April 8, 2021
  - a. In the discussion about the meeting between faculty and the visiting team chair there was an overall sense of disappointment in the small amount of time spent on discussion about actual issues. It was noted that the Middle States report was created through the hard work of members of the community and took an enormous amount of time, but this meeting did not allow for serious engagement with the visiting team. It was observed that the meeting was not focused on listening to faculty; faculty got to speak for about 5 minutes total. One member described the meeting as distressing, noting that while the visiting team chair indicated that the application for accreditation would go fine, the reduction of serious intellectual queries to a handful of platitudes was grim. Several members asked: what can faculty congress do at this point? In response to that question, one member suggested two points from the meeting that FC could follow up on:
    - i. The ways we (mis)treat our graduate students compared to our peer institutions
    - ii. The proportion of our students who are not Pell eligible as a view of Villanova's approach to diversity and inclusion.
2. Doctoral Study Healthcare - discuss and vote to approve as statement of support and/or online petition (Greg Hoskins, Jacques Linder and Yue Jennifer Wang, Doctoral Student Council) (Appendix B)
  - a. Greg first noted that there is a petition being circulated for signatures in addition to the FC resolution. He noted that doctoral students have been talking with master's students recently; the resolution contains the phrase "grad students financially dependent on the University" to distinguish graduate students who work for Villanova and are financially dependent on Villanova, which includes some master's students as well as doctoral students. The petition in support of graduate student healthcare that is circulating is here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bi3RrqbIx3Jc3YpmYP9QV4YLJjd22IDo9M2mK Wm-UYY/edit?usp=sharing> [Note: signature collection closed 4/19/21]
  - b. Jacques added that the DSC members would appreciate having more faculty signatures on the petition, including members of FC as well as constituents. He requested that members of FC have this conversation with their colleagues.

- c. Jennifer expressed her appreciation. She noted that some faculty have been hesitant to sign for various reasons; FC support in the form of the resolution and dissemination of the petition might encourage other faculty to sign. It was noted that adding master's students is an increase in the request, but they could not be left out. The DSC has been using Notre Dame's health insurance policy as a model and they include all grad students financially dependent on the University. It was noted that the organizers review signatures before posting, so your name may not show up right away.
- d. There was a discussion about the language in the resolution to bring it more into alignment with the petition. A revision was suggested for the FC resolution and accepted by the group. (Appendix B contains the original proposal and the edited version that went up for vote.)
- e. Faculty congress approved of the statement by a unanimous vote.  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bi3RrqbIx3Jc3YpmYP9QV4YLJjd22IDo9M2mKWm-UYy/edit>  
[https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/facultycongress/resolutions/grad\\_healthcare\\_resolution.html](https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/facultycongress/resolutions/grad_healthcare_resolution.html)

### New Business

1. Pandemic Lessons Learned Task Force - FC was asked to recommend faculty (two) by Fr. Peter and Craig Wheeland, in progress –
  - a. Alice Dailey and Angela DiBenedetto have been nominated
  - b. One of the items for the upcoming University Council meeting is to press on the makeup of the committee; Tom and James may request to get one more faculty member.
  - c. There was a question about how this relates to the VISIBLE project. The purpose of this task force seems to be determining what would be useful to retain regarding online teaching and online services during COVID-19 times. It is not addressing the elements of the VISIBLE team's report on faculty problems to the VU pandemic response. Tom added that this task force is trying to extract the wisdom to be gained regarding teaching. One member noted that they would be disturbed if this is a new body with decision-making power not accountable to faculty. Another person pointed out that this came up indirectly at the Middle States meeting; there are calls for faculty contribute to the University, while denying them any routes to make meaningful contributions; this task force seems like it could have a similar issue.
2. Recruitment of interim FC leadership - one-year, interim Vice Chair and FRRC Chair
3. Open discussion
  - a. Question: will vaccination be mandated for students next year? Bridget said that is an upcoming policy committee discussion.
  - a. James pointed out that we need to build on the general protocol in this coming year by expanding faculty leadership to other university standing committees, for example the budget committee. He added that the University Council meeting has not happened since Jan 2020, and is an ineffective committee – what can we do to make it more effective? One idea is to put it in the decision-making pipeline. Decisions coming before Board of Trustees should come to University Council first to express opinion. There was an overall sense of support for this idea from those present.
  - b. **Sexual Violence Prevention and Response at Villanova, Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 3:30 pm - 4:30pm** Question: What happened to the format that we asked for? It is required to list questions when filling out the registration; it seems to be a webinar format, not a dialogue. How did it become this? Tom and James will raise the issue with Ryan Rost or at the University Council meeting.

- c. Another point of discussion was that students are exhausted; some faculty are liaising with the counseling center, coaching, CASA, etc., on behalf of students, which is exhausting itself. There needs to be more support for faculty to help their students. We need to be heard about where the cracks are in the structure and what the solutions might be to fix them. There has also been no acknowledgement of the faculty input to financial status of the University.
- d. There was concern about the notion that everything will be back to normal in the Fall. If 40% of the campus community is not vaccinated, following the trend in the general population, how can things be back to normal? Do we need to be proactive about these kinds of issues before the semester ends?
- e. Meeting adjourned at 5pm.

## Reminders

### *Upcoming Congress events:*

#### Fall 2020 Faculty Congress general meetings (Zoom)

- ~~Friday, September 11, 2020, 1:30-3:00~~
- ~~Thursday October 8, 3:30-5:00~~
- ~~Wednesday November 4, 12:30-2:00 canceled~~
- ~~Monday December 7, 10:00-11:30~~

#### Spring 2021 Faculty Congress office hours (Zoom)

- selected Thursdays, 4-5 pm

#### Spring 2021 Faculty Congress general meetings (Zoom)

- ~~Thursday, February 18, 2021 3:30-5 (postponed to 2/25/21)~~
- ~~Thursday, February 25, 2021 3:30-5~~
- ~~Thursday, March 18, 2021 3:30-5~~
- ~~Thursday, April 15, 2021 3:30-5~~
- Thursday, May 13, 2021 3:30-5

#### 2020-21 Faculty Fridays, 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Presidents' Lounge, Connelly Center)

- Canceled till further notice

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Committee Reports & Updates**

#### **Research Policy Committee (RPC)**

RPC met on 4/6/21 to review the status on various initiatives. RPC had provided feedback on the new Gift Card Policy (which affects particularly social science researchers) and the Controller's Office is considering the suggestions made, particularly with respect to the threshold above which identifiable tax documentation records must be obtained. Likewise feedback on the Financial Conflicts of Interest (FCOI) policy is currently being considered by the FCOI Committee.

Leaders of the RPC Working Group on IRB met on 4/5/21 with Kaitlin Gottuso (ORP) and members of the IRB to discuss a report and recommendations that the Working Group had submitted. Some recommendations (such as a new closure policy or accepting that external collaborators will no longer be required to have Villanova CITI training) have already been adopted. Others are still being discussed and may or may not be adopted. Overall, there was a new openness to ideas / suggestions for improving existing policies.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **UPDATED VERSION, APPROVED BY VOTE**

#### **Resolution in Support of Graduate Student Efforts to Secure Affordable, Comprehensive Healthcare Coverage**

WHEREAS the Faculty Congress takes as a matter of interest the well-being of Villanova students, including the well-being of its graduate students financially dependent on the University; and Faculty Congress responds to the call integral to Catholic Social Thought to explicitly attend to needs of the most vulnerable within our community;

WHEREAS the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the graduate students financially dependent on the University – who continue to teach courses, to serve as teaching interns and teaching assistants, to work in labs, and to strive to complete their programs of study – has exacerbated the short-term and the long-term precarity of their financial and health situation;

WHEREAS graduate students financially dependent on the University are prohibited from seeking outside employment to supplement their finances during the academic year as a condition of their assistantships;

WHEREAS the University recognizes, as stated in the “Rooted. Restless.” Strategic Plan, that “increasing support” for our graduate students will “advance our research mission, build our community and strengthen our national stature”;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY’S FACULTY CONGRESS:

- Unanimously supports the efforts of the graduate students financially dependent on the University to secure more comprehensive and affordable healthcare for themselves.
- Calls on Villanova to provide fully subsidized health insurance to graduate students who are financially dependent upon the University.

*The Faculty Congress of Villanova University  
April 15, 2021*

### **ORIGINAL VERSION**

#### **Resolution in Support of Graduate Student Efforts to Secure Affordable, Comprehensive Healthcare Coverage**

WHEREAS the Faculty Congress takes as a matter of interest the well-being of Villanova students, including the well-being of its graduate students financially dependent on the University; and Faculty Congress responds to the call integral to Catholic Social Thought to explicitly attend to needs of the most vulnerable within our community;

WHEREAS the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the graduate students financially dependent on the University – who continue to teach courses, to serve as teaching interns and teaching assistants, to work in labs, and to strive to complete their programs of study – has exacerbated the short-term and the long-term precarity of their financial and health situation;

WHEREAS graduate students financially dependent on the University are prohibited from seeking outside employment to supplement their finances during the academic year as a condition of their assistantships;

WHEREAS the University recognizes, as stated in the “Rooted. Restless.” Strategic Plan, that “increasing support” for our graduate students will “advance our research mission, build our community and strengthen our national stature”;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY’S FACULTY CONGRESS:

Supports the efforts of the graduate students financially dependent on the University to secure more comprehensive and affordable healthcare for themselves.

Urges the University to allocate a portion of any 2020/21 operating budget towards a permanent increase in the healthcare subsidy for graduate students financially dependent on the University.