Meeting of the Villanova University
Academic Policy Committee

Friday, January 27, 2017
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM
Fedigan Room, SAC 400

Minutes

In Attendance:
Sherry Bowen, Danai Chasaki, Gordon Coonfield, Jennifer Dixon, Marylu Hill, Shelly Howton, Christopher Kilby (chair), Eric Lomazoff, Krupa Patel, Elizabeth Petit de Mange, Michael Posner, Joseph Schick, Andrea Welker, Craig Wheeland, Daniel Wright, Dennis Wykoff.

Absent:
DeVon Jackson (NIA), Sandra Kearney, Brian King, Adele Lindenmeyr, Peggy Lyons (NIA), Christine Palus (NIA), Lesley Perry (NIA), Rees Rankin, Eriny Tawfik (NIA), Tina Yang (NIA). [NIA=Notified in Advance]

Administrative Items

1) Gordon Coonfield volunteered to take notes for the meeting minutes.

2) The committee approved the December 13, 2016 minutes.

3) The chair encouraged subcommittees that are largely done with their work—UCC, Honors, maybe Online CATS—to forward draft recommendations. The full committee will then comment on/suggest edits to these statements electronically so that APC can approve the recommendations at its February meeting and begin work on new topics.

Potential new topics—either for subcommittees or for APC as a whole—were discussed. These include: how to improve the academic experience of students, especially our high achieving students (and particularly in their first year); promoting diversity and inclusion in academic programs and instruction; and a number of topics identified at the start of the academic year (priority registration for varsity athletes, a framework for cross-college majors and programs, developing policy on the formation of new institutes within the university [following up on a current initiative by the college deans], the WX deadline, establishing a lower limit on the percent of classes taught by tenure track and tenured faculty, impact of R3 status on research standards for tenure and promotion and on teaching, and adding a belligerent student policy to the Faculty Handbook).[1]   The chair will send an email to APC members to

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[1] On Impact of R3 Status: Craig Wheeland reported consultant-lead strategic planning process will be forthcoming in the next academic year. It will include numerous opportunities for faculty involvement, both directly and through APC/Faculty Congress. Christopher Kilby asked that APC be involved early to advise on the direction of this process. On Belligerent Student Policy:

solict their interest in these various topics and a few will be selected to round out the year's work.[2]

Old Business

4) Reports of Subcommittee Chairs (as needed) & subsequent discussion.

- Academic Integrity Violation Procedures (AIVP). Andrea Welker (chair). Craig Wheeland reported that he had posted information on academic integrity to *Campus Currents* and provided links to the Faculty Handbook on academic integrity per the subcommittee's decision. He also posted information on academic integrity to the WildCat Newswire. Craig volunteered to send an email to department chairs to prompt their faculty to respond to the AIVP online survey. Eric Lomazoff will report on faculty feedback from that survey at the next APC meeting.
- Online CATS (OCATS). Michael Posner (chair). APC members discussed the importance of assessing the Online CATS pilot results before proceeding to full implementation. This assessment should go beyond the response rate to consider also whether the responses themselves differ from paper CATS and, ideally, soliciting feedback from the faculty and students involved. One additional concern was whether response rates would drop over time once students with experience with paper CATS graduate. Michael Posner planned to follow up with Jim Trainer and OPIR on these points and report back.
- Honors Program (HP). Dennis Wykoff (chair) has inquired about data available and is waiting to hear back. A draft recommendation is expected soon.

5) New protocol for APC

A draft protocol incorporating the various suggestions from the last APC meeting was circulated in advance. After a few friendly editing amendments were accepted, Christopher Kilby turned the committee's attention to the question of whether the protocol should specify that the chair must be a tenured faculty member or instead that the chair must be a full time faculty member with the rank of Associate Professor or higher. The discussion centered on whether the tenure requirement was important to insure APC's independence or, instead, would needlessly rule out highly qualified candidates; no clear consensus emerged. Christopher indicated that an upcoming meeting organized by Faculty Congress leadership will bring together faculty on each of the newly constituted University committees to discuss the process of drafting protocols with an eye toward some degree of uniformity in the selection and role of faculty. Barring significant developments arising from this meeting, Christopher will circulate two versions of the draft APC protocol, one specifying a tenured chair and one specifying a full time faculty member with the rank of Associate Professor or higher. Barring objections, an anonymous electronic vote will be held to select between the two versions. If, instead, there are significant developments arising from the FC-sponsored meeting or other objections arise, APC will discussion this further at its next meeting.

Christopher Kilby indicated that FRRC would take the lead on the belligerent student policy since FRRC is in charge of the Faculty Handbook but suggested that Eric Lomazoff join the FRRC effort.
[2] One other topic—the content of letters to instructors from the Office of Disability Services (ODS)—has since been address by the Board of Assistant and Associate Deans.

New Business:

6) Discuss "Vision for Teaching & Learning"
APC discussed Associate Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning Randy Weinstein's "Vision for Teaching & Learning." A number of issues emerged. First, the cross-college portion of the statement (to explore and launch cross-college programs) raised concerns. Some members stated that policy needs to be in place for APC and faculty review before the launch of such programs, both to insure quality and to recognize that, because only a limited number of such programs are sustainable, approval of one program may prevent the subsequent approval of another program. Second, the vision statement did not discuss research, either student research or the role of faculty researchers. Third, APC members discussed whether faculty publications on teaching and learning should be counted research (scholarly) activity for the purposes of tenure and promotion. Fourth, members noted the absence of any emphasis critical thinking and reasoning together with a strong career orientation rather than a discussion of the value of a liberal arts education. Fifth, while the statement mentions diversity and inclusion, little mention of these issues is found in the language focused on the classroom experience. Sixth, APC members were concerning how faculty will actually be supported in pursing the goals articulated in the statement. Finally, the point was made that the emphasis on data-driven practice requires some sort of baseline description of the current state classroom practice. APC members agreed to invite Dr. Weinstein to a future APC meeting to discuss these issues.

7) Diversity / Inclusion Initiatives
APC members agreed to invite the student organizers of the initiatives on inclusion and diversity to an APC meeting to better understand the issues and discuss how APC might play a role with regards to academic policy. Craig Wheeland suggested a useful role for APC is to compile a list of the various initiatives across the colleges.

8) Follow-up on Faculty Congress course load discussion
After discussing a proposal to create a University-wide limit to the number of credits required for graduation (and higher standards for overload approval), the committee determined this might be a college-specific rather than a university-wide issue. This topic will be referred back to the Faculty Congress to wait further development.

The meeting adjourned at 11:02 AM.

Drafted from Gordon Coonfield's notes. Thank you for volunteering!