



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY CONGRESS

Academic Year 2020-2021

March 18, 2021
3:30 pm to 5:00 pm
via Zoom

MINUTES

Present: Ani Ural, Aronte Bennett, Benjamin Scheick, Bridget Wadzuk, Debra Shearer, Gerald Beyer, Gregory Hoskins, James Peyton Jones (Vice Chair), Jennifer Altamuro, Jennifer Ross, Jeremy Kees, Joe Betz, John Sedunov, John-Paul Spiro, Kamran Javadizadeh, Kathryn Haymaker, Melissa Hodges, Paul Bernhardt, Peter Busch, Rabih Moussawi, Rachel Skrlac Lo, Rebecca Winer, Rory Kramer, Ruth Gordon, Shannon Hamlin, Sherry Burrell, Stephen Liedtka, Tom Way (Chair), Travis Foster

Absent: Eugene McCarraher, Ilia Delio, Jared Paul, Javad Siah, Lisa Sewell, Meredith MacKenzie-Greenle, Metin Duran, Paul Steege, Samantha Chapman, Stephanie Katz Linkmeyer, Sue Metzger, Tina Agustiady, Wenqing Xu

Invited guest: Jacques Linder, Doctoral Student Council

Housekeeping

- Welcome
- Approval of minutes from Feb. 25, 2020 (Approved: 24 yes, 0 no, 4 abstain)
- Resolution in support of Villanova front line workers passed unanimously, posted on web site, dissemination is underway.

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) - official letter with approved recommendations was sent to Provost
2. Adjunct Faculty Representatives (Tina Agustiady, Shannon Hamlin)
3. CNT/FTNTT Faculty Representatives (Sue Metzger, J-P Spiro) – JohnPaul noted that CNT/FTNTT faculty face unique problems dealing with the pandemic, including feeling like they cannot volunteer for remote teaching, lack of materials, and lack of clarity from dept. chairs for applying for promotion.
4. Election and Credentials Committee (Q Chung, Jennifer Palenchar, Qi Wang, Bob Styer [advisory])
5. Research Policy Committee (RPC; James Peyton Jones, chair) – James reported that the RPC has been dealing with the gift card policy and financial conflict of interest policy.

6. Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee (FRRC; Metin Duran, chair) – James reported that the course buy-out policy changes have mostly been accepted; one that is outstanding is that savings from course buyout goes to dean of college instead of the PI. Discussions are ongoing.
7. Retired faculty members (Joe Betz) – A report from the retired faculty rep was given.

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

1. Academic Policy Committee (Bridget Wadzuk, chair) Jennifer Altamuro – Jenn reported that APC received feedback about the working break. In addition there is an APC subcommittee working on revising the academic integrity policy. This effort started out of a CLAS ad hoc committee. The revisions will be shared with FC if approved by APC.
2. Intellectual Property Policy Board (James Peyton-Jones) – James reported that the IPP has an upcoming meeting on March 30.

Old Business

1. CLAS Forum with Dean - report and follow-up from any in attendance on Feb. 26
 - a. There was a question about the Dean's comment on revising or adding a covid statement to departmental guidelines for tenure/promotion: what should revisions or additions look like? It was suggested that we bring this question to FRRC.
 - b. One member noted that relying on department statements is a complicated issue for faculty in dysfunctional departments who look to their college for help.
 - c. One member asked: how binding are departmental guidelines? There is nothing about this in the handbook. It would be useful to have written clarification on how guidelines function in deliberations at College/University level. How much weight is put on departmental guidelines at the College/University level?
 - d. It was noted that FRRC implemented changes recently to limit the input of deans at the college/University level.
2. Sexual assault forum - faculty reaction, debrief from faculty who attended, forum being planned for faculty (Rory Kramer) – Is there a forum scheduled for faculty? Not at this time. Those who saw or heard about the student forum pointed out that it was a one-way communication (webinar-style), with many speakers representing the University and limited student voices. No changes were proposed or addressed at the forum for students; survivors were not centered in the responses to certain questions. It was noted that FC should press for a dialogic format for a faculty forum that is interactive, with just Ryan Rost and Fr. Donohue. The request has been made but Tom will follow up.

New Business

1. Childcare Assistance Proposal - discuss and vote to support (Appendix A)
 - a. Katie reported that the proposal in Appendix A was unanimously approved by University Staff Council last week, although the age range in the proposal has been since slightly modified to better accommodate children with special needs. One member asked how this relates to the childcare support item in the financial update email sent by Tom Way to faculty on 3/10/21. James replied that he and Tom raised the issue earlier with financial representatives, knowing that this proposal was coming up for a vote and thought it could be raised then. They still seek the support of an FC vote. Another member asked about the criteria for determining the 'peer institutions' comparison. It was noted that the comparison was focused on existing programs for childcare assistance; several of the institutions are in the same geographic area and therefore form a reasonable comparison group for childcare costs.
 - b. The vote to support the proposal was passed. (24 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain)

- c. The existing emergency care support fund was also briefly discussed; questions were raised about the restrictions on the application and ways to successfully apply for this funding. This is an ongoing concern for those who want to make use of this fund.
2. Update on doctoral student healthcare - discuss, potential relevance of CARES Act, next steps (Greg Hoskins and Jacques Linder, co-founder of the Doctoral Student Council) –
 - a. Greg first addressed why this issue is appropriate to bring to FC: recall that many of our doctoral grad students are equivalent to our most precarious faculty. Hardships are conveyed in the survey they gathered (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kYv5KAKvcGOV7BISYm-Elz3ksbQ7dbNDU3furpYKLRg/edit?usp=sharing>). Members of the DSC are also talking with master's students, who are in some cases in an even more precarious situation. There is a moonlighting policy that forbids seeking outside employment for any full-time graduate assistants. The PhD and Master's students are beginning to coordinate, but that is an ongoing process.
 - b. Jacques provided an update on the labor situation of current doctoral students at Villanova. Many doctoral students are performing labor in-person in labs, classrooms, and doing research alongside faculty, but do not have material support from VU around healthcare specifically. Jacques noted that the DSC brings students together in different ways: social as well as workshops to help navigate government resources for healthcare and financial needs. They have also circulated invitations for these events to adjunct faculty. Members of the taskforce on sustainability council have been talking with master's students who are forgoing care, and considering ways they can work together. The goal of the DSC is to obtain a full comprehensive health insurance package subsidized through the University. There will be a petition to the administration to develop a comprehensive plan for all grad students. Around April 17 is their timeline. The petition will be sent around in early April, or FC can draft a letter to support our graduate students.
 - c. The floor was opened to discussion. Some of the discussion centered on the reported \$24 million University surplus from this fiscal year. It was noted that one member would be willing to forgo the restoration of 2020 retirement benefits in order to guarantee grad student healthcare access. There was some discussion around the CARES Act and whether temporary funds could be used to open the door to a more permanent program. Jacques said that the DSC has not focused on that approach since the CARES money is not permanent. Instead they are hoping to gain support from FC and the Deans on the basis of the strategic plan goal to *retain and recruit top students*. Others noted that there is also a case to be made for a livable wage (including healthcare) from the Catholic tradition of supporting human rights. Moreover, peer institutions offer better support on this issue. One policy for comparison is Notre Dame's, which is available here: https://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/407238/grad_health_subsidy_policy.pdf. Tom asked: what would help most from FC? Jacques said that from the DSC side, they would be looking for general support for a petition in April. It would be helpful if FC could assist in asking for faculty support and/or a letter of support from FC itself. Greg will work on drafting a proposal for the April meeting of FC.
3. Faculty Statement Against Anti-Asian Hate - discuss and vote to approve, next steps (Appendix B) (Steve Leidtka) – In the phrase starting “We pledge to educate ourselves about these issues” it was suggested to remove the judgement framing since we should not judge any group. Tom and Steve implemented that change. The revised statement was put up for a vote and passed unanimously (23 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain). The Appendix contained the revised version.
4. Recruitment of interim FC leadership - one-year, interim Vice Chair and FRRC Chair – due to sabbaticals
5. 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

Proposal: 2021 Childcare Assistance Program

Background and goals

Since March 2020, parents working full time at Villanova University have faced the difficult task of caring for their children while also working remotely or on campus. Most schools and childcare programs were shut down from March until August of 2020, and many, including the entire Philadelphia public school system, remain closed. In 2019, the average annual cost for infant care in Pennsylvania was \$11,842 (roughly \$987 per month), whereas care for preschool-aged children averaged \$9,773 (or \$814 per month), according to estimates by the Economic Policy Institute.¹ Because the school day functions as a primary source of childcare for most working parents in the US,² the pandemic has increased demand and reduced supply of care services. The programs that have reopened have increased fees, even as many parents have needed extra paid care to compensate for closed public schools. The financial and health impact of this situation on working parents is dire and has critical equity implications, especially, as has been thoroughly documented, for women employees. While a response to support full-time employees with family obligations at Villanova should consider both short-term and long-term impacts, for now short-term redress remains most pressing. As a community committed to the ideals of *Veritas*, *Unitas*, and *Caritas*, we suggest a measure of support to show our community members that they do not face these challenges alone.

To this end, we propose a program with two goals:

- to provide all full-time Villanova employees who are parents the support to get back on track at work by providing a financial subsidy for childcare;
- to offset the increased care costs that parents have incurred since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which were incurred largely in order to fulfill their work commitments to Villanova University.

Program description

We propose a grant program, that would be open to all full-time permanent faculty and staff, which would allow parents to apply for up to \$3,000 per child to offset childcare expenses incurred and to be incurred in 2021. The 2021 Childcare Assistance Program would provide a financial subsidy for childcare programs (including summer camp), up to \$3000 per child. Children up to age 15 would be eligible for the program, and children with special needs up to age 18 would be eligible. This proposal is intended to supplement the existing childcare assistance options offered by Villanova.

Should the University operating income at the end of Fiscal Year 2020/21 be in excess of that originally budgeted, we also propose that this benefit be implemented retroactively to allow parents who were significantly impacted by childcare costs in 2020 to also apply for relief.

¹ <https://www.epi.org/child-care-costs-in-the-united-states/#/PA>.

² Folbre, N. (Ed.). 2012. *For Love or Money: Care Provision in the United States*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Summary of comparable programs at peer institutions

Institution	Amount of assistance	Timeline	Reference
University of Pennsylvania	Up to \$2,000	2020-2021 Academic year	https://www.hr.upenn.edu/PennHR/wellness-worklife/family-care/childcare-resources-and-support
Northwestern University	Variable, depending on care needs	Applications due January each year	https://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/paying-for-childcare/childcare-fee-assistance.html
Columbia University	Up to \$3,000	Summer 2020	https://humanresources.columbia.edu/childcare-2020
Stanford University	Awards based on income, ranging from \$2,000 to \$24,000	Full-year, or prorated grants for FY21	https://cardinalatwork.stanford.edu/benefits-rewards/worklife/financial-assistance/faculty-child-care-assistance-program
Princeton University	Awards based on income and family size, ranging from \$1,000 to \$8000	Fall 2020	https://hr.princeton.edu/thrive/well-being-resources/employee-child-care-assistance-program-eccap
Swarthmore College	Up to \$3,000	2020	https://www.swarthmore.edu/human-resources/child-care-subsidy-grant-program
New York University	Up to \$1,800	2020-2021 Academic year	https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/workLife/documents/COVID-19%20Child%20Care%20Grant%20FAQs.pdf

APPENDIX B

Villanova Faculty Statement Against Anti-Asian Hate (Approved 3-18-2021)

As the faculty of Villanova University, we are greatly troubled by the increasing displays of violence and hate targeting people of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) descent in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in this country and around the world. All such displays injure our individual and collective souls. Villanova University's recent "Statement on Antiracism" emphasizes that "the work of antiracism is essential to the creation of a living, learning, and working community where all can thrive." We therefore pledge to all students, faculty, and staff of API descent our clear and unmistakable support. We reject anti-Asian racism, indeed all racism, and all forms of xenophobia. We pledge to educate ourselves and to serve as active and visible allies against all forms of hate. We encourage everyone in the Villanova Community to take a stand against the ideologies that perpetuate misguided stereotypes and result in violence against those of API heritage.