

Villanova University Faculty Congress

Academic Year 2016-2018

FACULTY CONGRESS MEETING

January 26, 2017

**Present**: Aronté Bennett, Sheryl Bowen, Joseph Betz, Jerusha Conner, Alice Dailey, Rick Eckstein, David Fiorenza, Marylu Hill, Stephanie Katz, Christopher Kilby, Rory Kramer, Michael Levitan, Eric Lomazoff, Peggy Lyons, Mike McGoldrick, James Peyton-Jones, Alan Pichanick, Salvatore Poeta, Jennifer Ross, Catherine Warrick, Kelly Welch, Dennis Wykoff.

**Absent:**, Danai Chasaki, Sohail Chaudhry (NIA), Gordon Coonfield, Mirela Damian (NIA), Angela DiBenedetto, Jennifer Dixon (NIA), Diane Ellis, Ruth Gordon, Shelly Howton, Jeremy Kees, Joseph Micucci, Elizabeth Petit de Mangé, Michael Posner (NIA), Rees Rankin, Quinetta Roberson, Joseph Schick (NIA), Mark Wilson (NIA), Rosalind Wynne, Tina Yang (NIA).

**Other Guests:** Shawn Proctor (University Staff Council)

The meeting convened at 9:00 AM in Rm. 300, Saint Augustine Center.

**Housekeeping**

1. Jerusha Conner welcomed Shawn Proctor from University Staff Council.
2. Minutes from the November 21, 2016 meeting were reviewed. After a minor typographical correction, the minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Systematizing representation sign-up: In order to share FC information with all departments via department meetings, all FC members are asked to sign up via [this google doc](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ewycwqf6a3QJf3nFCk_DsGRvRYRe0mpVQMB0vL6dybc/edit?usp=sharing) to liaise with their home department and one other department if possible.

The question was raised as to what sorts of things FC members should relay to their departments. Jerusha suggested that members report briefly on what FC is doing, and ask whether there are department concerns to raise with FC.

1. Jerusha reminded the FC members to send feedback to Randy Weinstein, the Associate Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning, regarding his vision statement: <http://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/provost/teaching-learning/AVPTL/Vision.html>

**Discussion of Standing Committee Reports:**

In an effort to better focus the discussion of the FC, members are now asked to read the committee reports (appended to the agenda) rather than spending time in the FC meeting reviewing all of the committee reports. Members are asked to identify issues from within the report that need to be elevated to full discussion.

At this point, Jerusha asked if there are issues to raise for further discussion from the standing committees or whether there was any new business to report or add.

Christopher Kilby (Chair, APC) stated that with the demise of Faculty Senate, APC and other committees have been asked to rewrite their protocols. Since APC will now be a free-standing committee (and no longer formally connected to FC), its authority has to be re-defined according to the new structure. A short discussion ensued concerning a possible fragmentation caused by multiple protocols, and it was suggested that once the other committees have completed their draft protocols, the faculty representatives should meet to share the drafts.

On-Line Cats: There was a short conversation regarding the pilot of on-line CATS this past fall. The response rate was approximately the same as the paper version, but there has been no comparative analysis of the data received. The current plan is to move to all on-line CATS for spring 2017, but that may be open to discussion based upon the results of the pending comparative analysis. Several questions were raised, including how faculty will receive the feedback from the CATS (written or electronic) and whether students will be encouraged to submit the CATS by bringing their computers to the classroom. It was noted that for now, paper summaries will continue to be provided. In addition, students will still be encouraged to bring their computers to the classroom, since response rates are generally lower if done outside of class.

Committee on Research: Jerusha shared with the FC the committee membership of a new committee for faculty research across the University. This committee is headed up by Amanda Grannas, Associate Vice Provost for Research, and it serves as the Faculty Scholar Advisory Team. Concerns were raised about the under-representation of Arts on the committee, with an emphasis on qualitative research. It was also noted that there is no intersection with the College of Engineering Ph.D. committee. A suggestion was made to create a research policy committee within the FC or APC. Jerusha suggested that the conversation should begin with Amanda Grannas before moving to the creation of another committee.

**New Business:**

1. AAUP membership. It was suggested by the FCEC that some of the budget for FC go to sponsoring two membership in AAUP. The FC voted unanimously to support the FC Chair and Vice-Chair (or their designees) to be members of AAUP.

2. There was a short discussion of benefits priorities for faculty, based on concerns about the erosion of benefits for healthcare, retirement, and tuition remission/exchange. FC members are asked to serve as liaisons with their departments to gather a list of priorities regarding benefit concerns. These concerns will be discussed within FC and brought to the attention of the University Benefits Committee.

3. Jerusha introduced a group of student leaders – Madiah Grant, MK Smith, Brendan Carchidi, and Patrick Flynn—who were eager to meet with FC in their efforts to press for greater commitments to diversity and inclusion at the college and university levels. The students shared their experiences and goals, particularly in pressing for the implementation of diversity plans.

The students prefaced their presentation by noting that they were not claiming expertise beyond sharing their own student experience, and particularly the disconnect on issues of diversity between students and faculty/staff. They noted that as a result of their efforts, the CLAS has begun an internal review of College and department diversity plans that includes implementation rather than just the statement of goals. The students were also encouraged by recent developments like the creation of a gender-neutral bathroom in Saint Augustine Center, and they hope to see continuing progress on issues like these.

The students encouraged a broad definition of diversity. To this end, they urge the University to consider a more inclusive and holistic curriculum that challenges rather than re-enforces a Euro-centric and Christo-centric view. They noted that the new Dean of VSB was very receptive to their concerns and, while VSB does not have a diversity requirement, the College was reviewing how to implement one, along with workshops on diversity in the workplace.

The students discussed the challenges of recognizing the resources we have and utilizing them for wider cultural awareness. They urged the FC to pay attention to course offerings, especially the need for a diverse array of course offerings (for example, there is no course on Islam currently available in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies). They recognized that there are challenges in terms of offering courses that get low enrollments, but they urged the faculty to think creatively about how to overcome these obstacles.

The discussion explored ways FC could address the student concerns. It was noted that faculty do not support the administrative and financial decisions to not run courses with too few students that would address diversity issues. It was also noted that taking on new course preparations takes away from research time. Therefore faculty need a reduction in course load to address the diversity issue. Other suggestions included making diversity a part of courses that already exist. This has worked very successfully within the nursing curriculum. It was noted that diversity should not be limited to one or two class sessions, but instead should receive more attention on a full-time basis. It was suggested that the University needs to set priorities for research grants, courses, recruitment, and scholarships. APC might prove helpful with these issues.

It was raised as a possibility to have a specific faculty member or administrator who has interest or expertise in diversity issues to work with Terry Nance and Brighid Dwyer. The question was raised whether there would be money or course reduction for this, if the university prioritizes this. Jerusha suggested turning to the funds from VITAL, such as a mini-grant. In addition, it was suggested that this could be combined with responses to Randy Weinstein’s vision statement.

Jerusha thanked the students for sharing their concerns and urged faculty members to continue thinking about these issues.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Submitted by Marylu Hill, Faculty Congress Secretary

February 19, 2017