



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY CONGRESS

Academic Year 2024-2025

February 26, 2025

1:30 to 3 pm

via Zoom: <https://villanova.zoom.us/j/3688604725?omn=91939463860>

AGENDA

FC members present: Tina Agustiady, Jennifer Altamuro, Theodore Arapis, Farshid Baghai, Rishtee Batra, Paul Bernhardt, Glenn Bracey, Angela DiBenedetto, Raul Diego Rivera Hernandez, Joseph Drury (vice-chair), Gregory Hoskins, Kamran Javadizadeh, Stephanie Katz Linkmeyer, Michelle M. Kelly, Christopher Kilby, Amanda Knecht, Rory Kramer, Bo Li, Daniel Mark, Michelle McKay, Sergey Nersesov, Max Osborn, Jared Paul, Jennifer Ross, Andrew Scott, Rachel Skrlac Lo, Monica Sywak, Raisa Velthuis, Ryan Weldzius

Housekeeping

- Welcome!

Brenner Fissell (Law) has been added to the Faculty Congress Executive Committee.

Over the last two weeks, FC leadership has had multiple meetings with various administrators, including Fr. Peter and members of the Provost's office; conversations tended to current problems in higher ed.

- Approval of minutes from January 2025 meeting

Minutes unanimously approved.

- Announcements

Faculty are encouraged to complete clearances needed for certain CPS course/programs.

Special Presentation

- Meghan Petsko and Erin Spina, Office of the Registrar

Overview of mission, function, and activities of Registrar's office.

Questions arose about final grades due date and the tight timeline for the submission of class schedules for the upcoming semesters. The Registrar's Office is hopeful that the latter will be eased by introduction of new software system.

Addition: *Faculty also raised concerns about the way the Cabrini and Villanova campus courses would be highlighted on the schedule. There needs to be more significant alerts to ensure students cannot expect to move back and forth between campuses for single courses.*

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

1. Awards Committee (Stacey Havlik)

Poll will be sent to FC members to vote on award winners for 2024-2025.

2. Adjunct Faculty Representatives (Tina Agustiady)
3. CNT/FTNTT Faculty Representatives (Rishtee Batra)

Discussion of benefits for CNT faculty, including emeritus status and phased retirement.

4. Election and Credentials Committee (Bob Styer)
5. Research Policy Committee (RPC; Lucy Chen, chair)
6. Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee (FRRC; Michelle Kelly, chair)
7. Retired faculty members (Angela DiBenedetto)

There is a plan to survey faculty about emeritus status and other issues, including ongoing privileges (e.g., ongoing tech support).

Committees with Faculty Representation *(reports submitted in advance; please see Appendix B; this time set aside for elevated issues and/or questions)*

1. Academic Policy Committee (Greg Hoskins)
2. Athletic Advisory Committee (Daniel Mark)
3. Budget Committee (Raisa Velthuis)
4. Mission and Social Justice Committee (Gwendolyn Morris)
5. Student Life Committee (Rishtee Batra)

New Business

- Update on CPS meeting (Jared Paul, Tina Agustiady)

Jared and Tina reported having a positive meeting with Dean Palus. Clarity was gained around staffing issues and adjunct pay. Faculty and staff are reminded that they can take CPS courses.

- VSB discussion (Jared Paul, Rishtee Batra, Christopher Kilby)

Faculty in CLAS expressed concern about non-reciprocal agreement for students taking classes across colleges, both with regard to limited reciprocity for CLAS students and lack of staffing resources for affected CLAS departments.

- AI Task Force update (Joe Drury)

Randy and Crystal to hold meeting with faculty – precirculated presentation followed by Q&A – Tuesday, March 18, 3.30pm.

- Open discussion: what effects are the actions of the current presidential administration having on your work at Villanova?

Faculty expressed concerns about protections for international students on campus and a desire for more transparency on the University's plans from University leadership. FC will try to set up meetings for faculty with Fr. Peter and the Provost's office.

Reminders

Upcoming Congress events:

FC leadership meetings with Provost & Vice Provost

(Jared, Joe, Michelle, Greg)

~~October 24, 9:00 am~~

~~December 3, 9:00 am~~

February 20, 9 am

FCEC dinner with President

~~October 23, 6.30pm~~

2024-2025 Faculty Congress general meetings

~~September 23, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm~~

~~October 22, 10:00 am to 11:30 am~~

~~November 25, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm~~

~~January 27, 2025, 10-11:30am~~

February 26, 2025, 1-2:30pm

April 4, 2025, 10:30am-12pm

May 9, 2025, 12-1.30pm (on campus)

2024-2025 Faculty Fridays, 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm (*The Refectory*)

~~August 30, 2024~~

~~September 27, 2024~~

~~October 25, 2024~~

February 28, 2025

March 21, 2025

April 25, 2025

Appendix A: Standing Committee Reports

1. Awards Committee

The FC awards committee has made decisions on the awards and submitted to FC for approval. We will review nominations for the Facultas award in March.

2. Adjunct Faculty Representatives

3. CNT/FTNTT Faculty Representatives

4. Election and Credentials Committee

5. Research Policy Committee

The RPC committee met with Amanda Grannas on February 18 to discuss the policy for Faculty Discretionary Research Accounts (4-indexes). The committee intends to revise the policy in February and send back our revision to Amanda by the end of February.

The RPC committee met with Martha O'Connor from OGC office on February 18 to discuss travel reimbursement, especially travel status, per diems, and coordination among different college/entities within the university. Our next step is to figure out what exists in the university and colleges relating to travel reimbursement policy, and to sort out what RPC can tackle, among various college and university entities, on this issue.

The next RPC meeting is April 23 at 10-11:30am.

6. Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee

Currently FRRC is working on several revisions to the Rank & Tenure Promotion Guidelines and the Faculty Handbook, including:

1. Third year review process: clarifying and reviewing
2. CNT promotion policies: clarifying procedures including term limits for University committees
3. Emeritus promotion: clarifying what is to be submitted
4. Teaching loads: updating the description to reflect the strategic plan.
5. Evaluation of Deans: reviewing procedure at the request of the Provost's office

We are being attentive to the concerns raised by the national climate and will be monitoring how faculty are affected by decisions. As always, please bring any concerns related to faculty rights to Michelle Kelly or any member of FRRC.

7. Retired faculty members

Appendix B: Committees with Faculty Representation

1. Academic Policy Committee

At the first APC meeting of the calendar year, in late January, we heard updates on the transition to Brightspace, and an update on the (bookstore) Vendor selection process.

Brightspace can be accessed by going to brightspace.villanova.edu and the information pages on using Brightspace can be found [here](#).

The committee vetting the proposals to run the bookstore beginning next academic year has completed its work and made its recommendations to Fr. Donohue.

APC is scheduled to meet on Thursday, February 27th to hear from Tim Hoffman an update on the Cabrini expansion plans.

The APC continues to work on the question of whether, and if so how, to update the Personal Day excused absence policy. Recent concerns have been brought to the APC about the parts of the Attendance Policy concerning first-year students and about the excused absence provisions for student-athlete graduate students.

Please contact Greg Hoskins (gregory.hoskins@villanova.edu) if you have thoughts/suggestions about the Personal Day policy, the attendance policy concerning first-year students, and the excused absence provisions for student-athlete graduate students.

2. Athletic Advisory Committee

3. Budget Committee

The budget committee met on February 5, 2025. The Budget Office confidentially shared the proposed FY 2026 operating budget, which balances the needs for capital expenditures, investment in the strategic plan, support for the Cabrini campus, student programming and employee benefits. Unforeseen impacts due to changes in national policies will be addressed as they develop.

4. Mission and Social Justice Committee

The committee discussed: 1) how there has been limited messaging from the university about how to support our immigrant students/staff and how to support our Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; 2) confusion over Fr. Peter's "A Community Grounded in Mission Letter" as well as the non-legally binding "Dear Colleagues" letter; 3) how our mission hasn't changed.

The committee further discussed what recommendations can be made to the office of the president (which is the function of the committee). Examples included a Villanova Town Hall to bring connection between the office and the community and reaching out to other Catholic universities for guidance / support.

5. Student Life Committee