

Meeting of the Villanova University Academic Policy Committee

Wednesday, September 21, 2011
Radnor/St. David's Room (Connelly Center), 12:30 pm

MINUTES

Present: Louise Russo (chair), Lesley Perry, Dennis Kuhn, Ed Kresch, Bob Styer, Paul Pasles, Sridhar Santhanam, Fayette Veverka, Craig Wheeland, Adele Lindenmeyr, Lowell Gustafson, Joyce Willens, Gerard Jones, Gabrielle Bruno, Elizabeth Heurich, Kathleen Carden, Megan Copel

Not in Attendance: Farid Zamani (sabbatical leave), Christopher Haas, Mary Ann Cantrell, Mike Pagano, Wayne Bremser, Mark Sullivan (sabbatical leave), Letizia Modena, Susan Mackey-Kallis (fellowship leave), Ellie Garbade, Chiji Akoma

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 pm.

- I. The first order of business was to vote on the on the election of Louise Russo as chair of the committee. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.
- II. New undergraduate student members were welcomed. The chair is awaiting confirmation of new graduate student members. Membership should be complete by the October meeting.
- III. The chair asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes from the meeting on April 11. The minutes were approved.
- IV. The chair updated the committee on the status of the final week of classes assignment policy. The revisionary language for the faculty handbook drafted by the APC was discussed by the COF and the proposed changes were approved at the April 1, 2011 meeting. Subsequently, the faculty handbook was edited to include the revised language and, Craig Wheeland generated a short list of FAQ's which was also added to address common areas of confusion. Adele Lindenmeyr requested that edits to the FAQ's which were added to the handbook be made to specify that the questions apply only to undergraduate not graduate level courses. The committee discussed the COF actions pertaining to the language change in the policy as put forth by the APC. There was some discussion as to the expectation of COF for further consideration of policy after the language had been approved at their meeting on April 1st. The chair contacted Seth Whidden, COF chair, to clarify their position on the policy edits and expectations for further consideration. The following is an excerpt from the COF meeting minutes, April 1, 2011 regarding discussion of the final week of classes assignment policy as provided by Seth:

Substantial discussion ensued, quite a bit focusing on pedagogy that is variable, with many exceptions to current policy, and variations. There was general

consensus that the proposed modifications made the Handbook more flexible, and has less impact on Academic Freedom. There was considerable discussion on these many exceptions. The proposals were approved with the recommendation to have APC further modify the policy incorporating some aspect of allowing “regularly scheduled” course exercises to also occur.

The committee will continue to discuss this policy at the next meeting.

V. Paul Pasles provided a brief update on the status of the CATS data analysis. The central purpose of this project was explained for the benefit of new student members who then made inquiries as to the general use of CATS data by the University. Various committee members provided information as to the importance of CATS scores in faculty tenure/promotion/merit pay/contract renewal decisions and how faculty are evaluated on an annual or triannual basis. Student members provided insight on student attitude to the CATS and a lack of understanding as to their importance for faculty evaluation. Discussion ensued on the following general topics:

- i. addition of enhanced language in the CATS questionnaire preamble to better explain the general purpose of the assessment and how the data will be used for faculty performance analysis
- ii. open classroom discussion of the purpose of CATS assessment by the faculty instructor prior to administration of the questionnaire and how that may help improve student attitude or possibly influence student score selection
- iii. how the administration will use the CATS analysis data: to change the CATS vehicle itself, to provide qualitative guidelines to departments about how to view CATS data when making decisions about performance, and to change how the CATS evaluations are administered

Discussion of these topics will continue through the fall semester as the CATS analysis project moves forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Louise Russo

Members of APC: Louise Russo (chair), Wayne Bremser, Fayette Veverka, Robert Styer, Adele Lindenmeyr, Christopher Haas, Mark Sullivan, Mary Ann Cantrell, Louise Fitzpatrick (represented by Lesley Perry), Joyce S. Willens, Mike Pagano, Paul Pasles, Chiji Akoma, Kail Ellis (represented by Craig Wheeland), Jean Ann Linney (represented by Lowell Gustafson), Gary Gabriele (represented by Gerard Jones), Kevin Clark (represented by Dennis Kuhn), Letizia Modena, Susan Mackey-Kallis, Farid Zamani, Ed Kresch, Sridhar Santhanam, Elizabeth Heurich, Kathleen Carden, Gabrielle Bruno, Megan Copel, Ellie Garbade, Matthew Pagano, Marisa Fetterman (non-voting member)