Meeting of the Villanova University
Academic Policy Committee

Wednesday, November 14, 2018
11:00 - 12:00 Noon
Fedigan Room (SAC 400)

Present: Melissa Bradley, Sarah-Vaughan Brakman, Sherry Burrell, Matt Clarkin, Scott Dressler, Stacey Havlik, Marylu Hill, Zuyi (Jacky) Huang, Stephanie Katz, Christopher Kilby (chair), Rory Kramer, Adele Lindenmeyr, Eric Lomazoff, Wen Mao, Stephen Napier, Lesley Perry, Javad Siah, Ani Ural, Andrea Welker, Craig Wheeland; Jill Baren (ACE Fellow)

Absent: Kathy Byrnes (NIA), Christine Kelleher Palus (NIA), Elizabeth Petit de Mange (NIA), Michael Posner (NIA), Amanda Rappa (alternate), Tianxia (Tina) Yang (NIA)

Administrative Items

1) Scott Dressler volunteered to take minutes.

2) Minutes from 10/10/2018 approved with no negative votes and one abstention.

3) Craig Wheeland introduced Dr. Jill Baron, an ACE fellow from Penn who sat in on the meeting to observe as part of her higher education professional development studies.

Sub-Committee Reports & Discussion

4) Academic Advising
Christopher Kilby (chair) distributed the subcommittee's recommendations to APC (attached). Craig Wheeland indicated that items 3 (two faculty members added to oversight committee) and 4 (data access) have been addressed. Craig will reach out to Kevin Grubb (Executive Director, University Career Center; Assistant Vice Provost, Professional Development) to arrange for him to speak to APC.

Matt Clarkin and Stephanie Katz shared their experience with CliftonStrengths. These were are generally positive, but each has doubts about its use as a self-awareness tool for relatively young college students. Wen Mao noted that VSB Clay Center counselors like using the CliftonStrengths results when advising students. APC will return to this issue after hearing from Kevin Grubb.

5) Academic Programs Outside of Colleges
Jacky Zuyi (chair) reported minor changes to draft charge, as well as plans to learn from peer schools (BC, Notre Dame, and Georgetown) regarding their current policies, as well as certificate requirements. Christopher Kilby noted that a former colleague now at Suffolk University reported that the largest problem arising from cross-college programs there were due to budgetary issues and accounting for faculty time. For graduate programs at Villanova, this should not be an issue because "tuition follows the student."

Craig Wheeland suggested contacting Tom Smith (Director of Honors), Randy Weinstein (Interim Dean of Engineering; Associate Vice Provost for Teaching &

Learning) who was involved in developing VIA), and Ed Dougherty (Director of Engineering Entrepreneurship Minor). Others suggested contacting Christine Palus (Dean of CPS), who has experience with programs using courses from different colleges, but taught individually. Given differences in definitions of a cross-college program, APC recommended the subcommittee get concrete examples as it pursues its goal to provide a framework and policy for new as well as existing programs.

6) Add/Drop

Matt Clarkin (chair) reported the committee has completed its draft charge and reached out to various student councils and peer universities. One current proposal being considered is an asymmetric Add/Drop period, e.g., a 5 school-day add period and a 7 school-day drop period. A number of APC members pointed out the complexity of the issue. Given different registration times (for athletes, seniors, etc.), an asymmetric policy could further disadvantage students with later registration times, e.g., if people routinely register for more classes than they plan to take and then drop courses after the add deadline. One proffered solution was a 'late add' period where adding requires the instructor's signature.

The discussion turned to what peer schools do and whether late drops are common or infrequent. Some schools have a shopping period, which would be a radical departure from Villanova's current approach. Adele Lindenmeyr pointed out that working out a new system will require a substantial amount of work and that it is best to be certain the problems with current system are more than just an annoyance.

7) Student Course Load

Rory Kramer (chair) reported the committee has completed its draft charge and is in process of obtaining information regarding course load requirements at peer institutions. The subcommittee still needs data on double and triple majors; Adele Lindenmeyr offered to share these data for CLAS, noting that the percent graduating with multiple majors is not that high.

The subcommittee has discussed a number of ideas. These include:

A) College-specific requirements to accommodate constraints from CON and COE;

B) Switch from a credit-hour plus course-credit system to a course-credit system only.

Regarding the number of students with double and triple majors and with multiple minors, any analysis will have to consider differences between the number students attempt and the number of actual majors/minors awarded. APC members had different opinions on whether the current system works well. Some felt the current system allows students to explore different possibilities in their attempt to complete multiple majors/minors and, as such, appears unrestrictive. If they want credentialing (pursuing several majors, minors, and certificates that they believe will help their careers after graduation), why should the university put up obstacles to this? Others felt that credentialing undermines a liberal arts education by fostering a pre-professional approach to education and by crowding out electives that might be enriching but do not help complete the requirements for a credential.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM.

Recommendations from the Academic Advising Subcommittee of the APC
November 14, 2018

The committee met on 10/29/2018. Melissa Bradley, Christopher Kilby (chair), Wen Mao, Christine Kelleher Palus, and Ani Ural attended the meeting.

The committee discussed its charge and the university's adoption of the CliftonStrengths Assessment.[1] John Kurtz (Professor, Psychology) attended as an invited expert as this overlaps with his area of research (personality assessment). John informed the committee that CliftonStrengths is neither widely used nor widely studied in his field and that a number of free assessments are available that are widely used and have been widely studied.

The committee has several recommendations:
1) Career advising does impact students' academic choices. In the future, substantial proposed changes in advising that impact more than one college should be brought to APC at an early stage in their development. This applies to both academic and career/professional advising.
2) Development and assessment of advising approaches should involve relevant experts from Villanova's faculty, e.g., from the Psychology and/or Education & Counseling departments.
3) Two faculty members should be added to the oversight committee for CliftonStrengths.
4) Among other tasks, the oversight committee should gather feedback from students and determine what happens to student data outside Villanova (i.e., what Gallup does with the data; who has access and how is it used).

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[1] Developed by Donald Clifton, whose firm Select Research, Inc. acquired Gallup in 1988. CliftonStrengths is a product of Gallup, Inc., whose CEO Jim Clifton is the grandson of Donald Clifton.