

**Meeting of the Villanova University  
Academic Policy Committee**

Friday, November 11, 2016  
8:30 AM – 9:50 AM  
Fedigan Room, SAC 400

Minutes

In Attendance:

Danai Chasaki, Jennifer Dixon, Marylu Hill, Christopher Kilby (chair), Adele Lindenmeyr, Eric Lomazoff, Christine Palus, Michael Posner, Andrea Welker, Craig Wheeland, Dennis Wykoff, Tina Yang.

Absent:

Sherry Bowen (NIA), Gordon Coonfield (sabbatical), Shelly Howton (NIA), Sandra Kearney (NIA), Brian King (NIA), Peggy Lyons (NIA), Krupa Patel (NIA), Lesley Perry, Rees Rankin, Joseph Schick (NIA), Daniel Wright (NIA). [NIA=Notified in Advance]

Administrative Items

- 1) Michael Posner volunteered to take notes for the meeting minutes.
- 2) The committee approved the amended September 29, 2016 minutes.
- 3) The next APC meeting will be November 29, 4-5:30 PM in the Fedigan Room.

Old Business

- 4) Reports of Subcommittee Chairs and subsequent discussion.
  - Honors Program (HP). Dennis Wykoff (chair) reported on the subcommittee meeting with Honors Program Director, Thomas Smith. The meeting was structured around a set of questions provided to Professor Smith in advance. His answers identified a number of the contributions of the Honors Program to the university as well as laying out the recent history of the program. The subcommittee plans to collect data on the change in yield rates for applicants admitted into the Honors Program before 2010 (when admitted students did not know their Honors Program status) and since then (when students did know their Honors Program status) as one method to quantify the benefits of the Honors Program. APC also discussed the assignment of departmental attributes to Honors courses. Given the divergence between policies reported by Director Smith and experiences recounted to APC members by some department chairs, it was suggested that APC recommend that Honors annually provide an official, written statement of its policies to each departmental chair. This might allow chairs to follow-up with Honors in the event of discrepancies.

APC also discussed the time-consuming nature of thesis advising, noting the need to encourage faculty to report the extent of their honors thesis contributions in performance evaluations.

- Academic Integrity Violation Procedures (AIVP). Andrea Welker (chair) presented a detailed plan for addressing perceived problems with existing practices. The plan is detailed in their 11/1/2016 meeting summary and includes three tasks: review & improve policy; advice on application of policy; and education & outreach. In the next few weeks, the subcommittee will field a faculty survey, draft education/outreach materials for faculty and students, and examine data on past violations. In terms of policy, the subcommittee recommends that faculty submit allegations to the chair and dean simultaneously. During discussion of the subcommittee's work, it was suggested that policy include a deadline (e.g., 2 weeks) for chairs to forward their input to deans and that education/outreach make clear that alternate solutions (e.g., WX) are not consistent with policy.
- Online CATS (OCATS). Michael Posner (chair) reported that subcommittee members are providing Jim Trainer (OPIR) with feedback on a forthcoming faculty email to explain the pilot. APC discussed how to maintain high CATS response rates, e.g., by linking completion of CATS to (early) access to course grades to the extent allowed by the law. Prior Villanova online class experience suggests that continuing to do CATS during class may mitigate response rate problems though there were still concerns that response rates in some classes might result in samples too small to be used in evaluation. Other suggestions included tracking the type of device used (e.g., to see if it impacts the number or length of written comments) so that support for different platforms could be evaluated. Going forward, APC and OPIR might examine data to detect biases introduced (if any) and to consider other innovations once the piloting/debugging period is successfully completed (e.g., limiting questions to the 6 actually used in faculty evaluation, allowing customization, more detailed analytics).
- Undergraduate Core Curriculum (UCC). Marylu Hill (chair) hopes to expand the subcommittee to include Associate Deans from the relevant colleges. She also pointed out that her subcommittee is building on a good deal of previous work, namely two prior reports and the existing the "Freshman Experience" that forms an important part of the de facto University Core Curriculum. At this point, the meeting turned to closely related new business.

#### New Business

##### 5) Diversity and the Core Curriculum

Dean Lindenmeyr shared information from a student letter sent to a number of University officials concerning many dimensions of diversity at the University, including the content of the "core curriculum" and the CATS. The administration is actively engaging with students to understand and address their concerns. The committee members agreed that these issues, concerns, and perspectives are important for our discussions of curricular issues as well as other matters of academic policy (e.g., CATS). One possibility discussed by APC was recommending a university-wide "First Year Experience" instead of a core and addressing diversity via an expanded diversity requirement.

Drafted from Michael Posner's notes. Thank you!