Meeting of the Villanova University
Academic Policy Committee

Tuesday, December 4, 2012
Mendel Science Center, room 103, 9:00 am

MINUTES

Present: Louise Russo (chair), JeanAnn Linney, Lesley Perry, Bob Styer, Mark Doorley, Craig Wheeland, Dennis Kuhn, Randy Weinstein, Adele Lindenmeyr, Joyce Willens, Mary Ann Cantrell, Wenhong Luo, Catherine Warrick, Kelly Welch, Sridhar Santhanam, Jutta Seibert, Jack Chong, Chris Marroletti

Not in Attendance: Paul Pasles, Wayne Bremser (NIA), Ali Yousaf, Caroline Kemp, Aaron Moore, Paul Hanouna, Christine Alizzi, Fayette Veverka, Susan Mackey-Kallis, Edwin Goff, Ken Kroos

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

 I. Minutes from the meeting on November 12, 2012 were reviewed and approved.

II. The chair welcomed Bob Stokes to the meeting as an invited guest to share information regarding the recent work of the Distance Learning Task Force which was charged by Fr. Ellis to review the current state of online education and to develop a strategic plan for eLearning at Villanova. Dr. Stokes provided a comprehensive review of the history of online education including summer courses and the fully online degree programs in Public Administration (Master's level) and Human Resource Development. The following are summary points of that overview:
   a. The Task Force arose from Middle States feedback in which the reviewers indicated that the university should take an institutional approach to develop a strategic plan; an idea that was echoed by the Board of Trustees
   b. Fr. Ellis appointed membership on the Task Force to include faculty participation across Colleges and tasked them with development of an eLearning brand; the focus was broad and not course-based
   c. The Task Force reviewed online course offerings across the university and a summary spreadsheet with that content (including historical context) was shared with APC membership for discussion
   d. Availability of MOOCs (Massive Online Open Courses) through the Coursera program was discussed as to the potential for credit assessment at Villanova
   e. Much of the focus of the Task Force was on graduate programs including those that could develop as fully online for degree completion; the Task Force placed little focus on undergraduate online education initiatives
   f. The Task Force agreed that there is a pressing need to establish an institutional vision for online education and that the university should strategically place itself within that realm in light of an increasing adult student population seeking advanced educational opportunities and to increase access for underserved populations
   g. Issues that are to be further investigated include
      1. What programs could be made available online (demand areas vs. new niche areas)?
      2. How would the availability of online programs affect on-campus programs?

3. What decision should be made as to renewal of the contract the university hold at present with the third party agent that currently produces much of the online course content for the MPA and HR programs?
4. Should the university create a Center for eLearning that would take over the work of lecture capture for the fully online programs and serve as the oversight office for assessment of the quality of eLearning courses and programs (across College)?

III. Membership discussed the content of the Task Force report with the following being some of the major topics that were addressed:
   a. Is there a plan to include undergraduate education initiatives in the eLearning strategy; are we missing an opportunity to enhance course offerings and improve access for full time and part-time students by developing more online course? While APC members generally agreed that it is not in accord with the Villanova mission for there to be fully online undergraduate degree programs, we should be open to the development of more online courses developed by Villanova faculty as well as the possibility of being part of a Semester Online program where several schools work as collaborative partners to provide a collection of courses (thematic) for students at other schools as a way to diversify learning experience
   b. How will the work of the Task Force move forward? Dr. Stokes indicated that the present trajectory was to take the Task Force report to the Graduate Dean's Council which will then be the driving force behind strategic initiatives for online programs at the graduate level.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am

Respectfully submitted,
Louise Russo

Members of APC: Louise Russo (chair), Wayne Bremser, Fayette Veverka, Robert Styer, Adele Lindenmeyr, Edwin Goff, Kelly Welch, Mary Ann Cantrell, Louise Fitzpatrick (represented by Lesley Perry), Joyce S. Willens, Wenhong Luo, Paul Pasles, Paul Hanouna, Kail Ellis (represented by Craig Wheeland), Jean Ann Linney, Gary Gabriele (represented by Randy Weinstein), Patrick Maggitti (represented by Dennis Kuhn), Catherine Warrick, Susan Mackey-Kallis, Mark Doorley, Sridhar Santhanam, Kenneth Kroos, Aaron Moore, Jutta Seibert, Jack Chong, Christine Alizzi, Caroline Kemp, Daniel Troiano, Christopher Marroletti (non-voting member), Ali Yousef, Sophie Kagan (ex officio non-voting member