



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY CONGRESS

Academic Year 2020-2021

September 11, 2020  
1:30 pm to 3:00 pm  
via Zoom

Present: Aronte Bennett, Benjamin Scheick, Gerald Beyer, Gregory Hoskins, James Peyton Jones, Jared Paul, Jennifer Altamuro, Jennifer Ross, Jeremy Kees, Joe Betz, J-P Spiro, Kathryn Haymaker, Melissa Hodges, Meredith MacKenzie Greenle, Metin Duran, Paul Steege, Peter Busch, Rabih Moussawi, Rebecca Winer, Rory Kramer, Ruth Gordon, Shannon Hamlin, Sherry Burrell, Stephanie Katz Linkmeyer, Stephen Liedtka, Sue Metzger, Tina Agustiyady, Tom Way, Travis Foster, Wenqing Xu

Absent: Ani Ural (NIA), Bridget Wadzuk (NIA), Debra Shearer (NIA), Eugene McCarraher, Gerald Beyer (NIA), Iliia Delio (NIA), Javad Siah, John Sedunov (NIA), Kamran Javadizadeh (NIA), Lisa Sewell (NIA), Paul Bernhardt (NIA), Rachel Skrlac Lo (NIA), Samantha Chapman

AGENDA

**Housekeeping**

- Minutes from May 11, 2020 were approved unanimously by those in attendance
- Faculty Ombuds Meg Willoughby reminder, be sure to mention to colleagues

**Executive Committee Nominations & Voting**

1. Description of positions and nominations submitted and accepted:
  - Secretary** - Katie Haymaker (nominee)
  - Treasurer** - Travis Foster (nominee)
  - CNT** - J-P Spiro (nominee)
  - Adjunct** - Tina Agustiyady (nominee), Shannon Hamlin (nominee)
  - At-large** - Rory Kramer (nominee)
2. Motion to approve all non-contested positions passed. A vote by Zoom poll resulted in the selection of Shannon Hamlin as the Adjunct Representative in the Executive Committee
3. The new FC Executive Committee members are:
  - Secretary** - Katie Haymaker
  - Treasurer** - Travis Foster
  - CNT** - J-P Spiro
  - Adjunct** - Shannon Hamlin

**At-large** - Rory Kramer**Standing Committee Reports** (*reports submitted in advance; please see appendix; this time set aside for elevated issues and/or questions*)

1. Awards Committee (Andrew Scott [chair, external member], need 2 additional members)
  - Andrew Scott is not a current member of FC, but was appointed chair of this committee. The committee need two additional members. Please email Tom Way if you are interested.
2. Adjunct Faculty Representatives (Tina Agustiady, Shannon Hamlin)
3. CNT/FTNTT Faculty Representatives (Sue Metzger, J-P Spiro)
4. Election and Credentials Committee (Q Chung, Qi Wang, Bob Styers [advisory])
5. Research Policy Committee (RPC; James Peyton Jones, chair)
  - The committee is looking for new members: 1 from CLAS in social sciences; 1 member from Nursing, and 2 at-large positions; members do not need to be FC representatives
  - Recent discussions include intellectual property policy that FRRC was looking at and a discussion of the pay schedule for grad students
6. Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee (FRRC; Metin Duran, chair)
  - Had first meeting to discuss sexual misconduct policy changes with Craig Wheeland and Ryan Rost; when they finalize the policy, another meeting of FRRC will be held to vote on approval
  - Next agenda item for the committee: Intellectual Property Policy
7. Retired faculty members (Joe Betz)

**Committees with Faculty Representation** (*time set aside for questions about reports received*)

1. Academic Policy Committee (Bridget Wadzuk, chair)
  - Rebecca Winer: APC has had meetings to discuss class on Labor day; spacing between classes; reorganizing subcommittees

**Old Business**

1. Recap of May thru August, summary of Faculty Congress activities
  - a. Tom Way presented a document of FC Activities May to Sept. (attached as an appendix)
  - b. Next Town Hall with Provost will happen soon – the date is TBD as of this meeting

**New Business**

1. Faculty Town Hall with Provost and Vice Provost, planning in progress
  - a. One Issue: the quick deadline for teaching accommodations for spring
2. A Proposal for Modified R&T Submission Protocols for the 2020-21 R&T Cycle (FC and VISIBLE) (see Appendix A and Appendix B)
  - a. James Peyton Jones: This is a short-notice item – a decision would essentially need to be made by Friday, 9/18 because of a meeting with Provost and faculty seeking promotion. Members of the VISIBLE project on campus (led by Amanda Grannas) noted that there is a growing literature that women have been disproportionately impacted by the consequences of covid. For example some faculty have spent their summers to prepare new modalities for teaching in fall, possibly at the expense of their promotion dossiers. One option is to stop clock by a year, but that delays promotion and salary increase. There may be people who don't want to take that option but still need more time. Other institutions (e.g. the IRS) have delayed submission deadlines; the VISIBLE proposal is a

delay in the timetable promotion. The question is whether FC recommends that the provost consider the proposal.

- b. Appendix A also suggests adding a required section to dossier where the candidate documents impacts of covid, or states that there were none. The intention would be to destigmatize the real impacts that people have suffered.
  - c. There was a lengthy discussion of both aspects of the VISIBLE documents: the dossier requirement and the timeline extension. Concerns about the proposal included the fact that candidates were already told that the deadline would not be pushed back. They may have already incorporated covid effects into their dossier where it fits naturally, and whether the delayed timeline would delay promotion raises. The consensus was that it would not delay the actual raise due to promotion since that normally become effective in late August or September. Other concerns included the consequence of finding out a negative promotion result in August, which would make entering the job market very difficult. On the other hand, it was commented that the net benefit of a delay of 2 months might greatly outweigh the drawbacks, if it allows more people to create better quality dossiers and therefore increases their chances of promotion. Caution was advised on adding a mandatory section to the dossiers, as departments might incorporate feedback on that portion that does not support the intended equitable assessment. There was consensus that clear instructions would need to accompany any mandatory covid-impacts section. After the discussion we voted by Zoom poll on the following questions:
    - i. Are you in favor of a separate covid section in the dossier? 62% Yes; 38% No
    - ii. Are you in favor of a delay? 24% No ; 67% Yes 2-month ; 10% Yes 3-month
  - d. An additional note was added that there are really two issues: the current cohort and cohorts that come after. The VISIBLE proposal might not help people now to have a mandatory covid section. **FRRC should discuss the idea of a dossier addendum for later cohorts that go up.**
3. Recap of FC leadership meeting (Wed 9/09/20) with Provost, Vice Provost, and VP Financial Affairs (Pat, Craig, and Neil)
    - a. Email to all faculty on a number of issues went out 9/16/20. There are financial details that are “confidential”, but the email contains an update for faculty at large. The financial affairs office has run scenarios regarding fall and spring financial outcomes.
  4. Awards Committee, need 2 or more volunteers
  5. Faculty Congress Constitution and Bylaws updates needed this semester, call for volunteers
    - a. Bob Styer will take first pass at Bylaws, given his experience with Faculty Senate; volunteers are welcome.
  6. Communication ideas: online forum for faculty (Blackboard discussion, other platform?), updates to FC web site, Faculty Congress office hours (e.g., some Thursdays 4-5?)
    - a. We are open to ideas for a faculty-wide communication forum: Blackboard or some other? If you have thoughts let Tom Way know.
    - b. Faculty congress office hours for those who can't make meetings or other faculty who want to visit and share feedback.
  7. Open discussion of current issues, including COVID-19 impact (spring 2021 accommodations, faculty reps on committees, health, financial, salary, research, academics, students off vs. on campus, closure threshold, etc.)

2 minutes left.

A member of FC expressed concern about denial of medical and other accommodations; they were also concerned that whoever is making those decisions does not have the medical expertise necessary. It was emphasized that FC must strenuously pursue letting faculty make the decision on how they deliver their classes. **FRRC will follow up on these concerns with Craig Wheeland.**

It was also pointed out that a lack of transparency between faculty and administration is the root problem. Townhalls over the summer showed that talking to faculty helps administrators to do their jobs, but that level of communication has not been maintained. For example, committees closed without FC knowing. There is a lack of trust because of how the administration has handled aspects of this covid response, specifically in treating faculty as labor instead of shared governance.

Another member added that there have been some successes. The issue of faculty representation and shared governance is something that FC has been pushing. This includes establishing a set of best practice and protocols for faculty governance. Examples include: having chairs of existing committee be faculty to ensure committees are meeting and maintaining faculty input. Transparency on budgetary issues remains an issue. An example of FC success is that the original plan for fall included no testing, and now baseline testing and random testing are being enacted.

Final comments included that the closure threshold is an example of the lack of transparency (no closure threshold has been given). When faculty don't have information, we make assumptions. The closure threshold is a piece of information that should be shared with faculty.

## Reminders

### *Upcoming Congress events:*

#### Fall 2020 Faculty Congress general meetings (Zoom)

- Friday, September 11, 2020, 1:30-3:00
- Thursday October 8, 3:30-5:00
- Wednesday November 4, 12:30-2:00
- Monday December 7, 10:00-11:30

#### Fall 2020 Faculty Congress office hours (Zoom)

- tbd: possibly some Thursdays, 4-5 pm

#### Spring 2021 Faculty Congress general meetings (Zoom)

- tbd

#### 2020-21 Faculty Fridays, 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Presidents' Lounge, Connelly Center)

- Canceled till further notice

APPENDIX A: Draft email proposing rank and tenure modifications addressing COVID impact

**A Proposal for Modified R&T Submission Protocols for the 2020-21 R&T Cycle.**

Faculty Congress, in partnership with the NSF-sponsored VISIBLE project, recommends several immediate but temporary changes to the Tenure and Promotion dossier preparation and submission process in order to more equitably consider all faculty and take into account differential impacts of the disruptions we have all experienced this year.

Specifically, we recommend two temporary measures:

a. **A 2- or 3-month delay to the required submission deadline for R&T Dossier submission**

The disruption due to COVID has had a significant effect on faculty ‘productivity’ for both professional and personal reasons. Labs have been closed, paper and book reviews delayed, and faculty have had to prepare new teaching modalities at short notice, often without compensation over the summer. Child and elder care responsibilities have also increased sharply, together with the challenges of trying to continue professional work in the home.

These needs have already been recognized by allowing faculty to delay their R&T submissions by a year. However, such accommodations cannot address the cumulative impact (financial and professional) of a year’s delay in promotion. This proposal aims to support faculty who do not want to delay by a year, but who will otherwise be disadvantaged by the evident disruptions they have experienced, and who would benefit from additional dossier preparation time.

Other deadlines (including the IRS no less!) have been delayed by 3-months, and a similar delay seems appropriate in this case. The challenge is primarily logistic, but as the attached schedule suggests, it can be overcome if the University is willing to adapt sufficiently to support its faculty, particularly those in traditionally disadvantaged groups.

b. **A new required section documenting any impacts that COVID may have had on the dossier.**

In order to equitably assess faculty it is important to have an understanding of the particular circumstances impacting their work. While it is always an option for faculty to volunteer such background information, such entries are all too easily perceived as an excuse or weakness. The aim of this proposal is to reduce the stigma associated with highlighting these very real factors by making this a required section for all faculty. Those not impacted can simply so state, but the insertion of a specific section provides explicit support and recognition to those faculty who have had to shoulder significant and otherwise unexpected burdens.

## APPENDIX B: Potential updated deadlines for R&amp;T submission under two scenarios

<b>Process Timetable</b>	<b>Current Deadline</b>	<b>Proposed 2-month delay</b>	<b>Proposed 3-month delay</b>
Candidates for tenure are notified to begin preparing their application dossiers and appendices. Deans also notified	Mid-April preceding year of rank and tenure process.	same	same
Candidates for promotion notify chair, dean, and Provost by:	April 1 preceding year of rank and tenure process.	same	same
Candidates assemble their dossiers, obtaining relevant data from their chairs in a timely fashion.	Summer - fall	Summer – fall – winter (to include Dec)	Summer – fall – winter (to include Jan)
Department Rank and Tenure Committees and Candidates identify outside scholars for the reviewing process by:	Mid May	same	same
Department chairs send letters to external scholars by:	Mid-summer; no later than September 1	same	same
The Provost notifies OPIR, which sends CATS Historical Records for candidates to department chairs for distribution to candidates	September	same	same
The Provost meets with candidates and chairs to review policy and guidelines	September	same	same
Candidates submit files and appendices to their chairs by:	Friday of first full week of November	Friday of first full week of January	Friday of first full week of February
Chairs append external review letters to dossier and forward applications to department committees by:	Friday of second full week of November	Friday of second full week of January	Friday of second full week of February
Departmental committees review the materials and prepare their reports.	November – December	January – February	February – March
Department committees forward files to department chairs by:	December 18 or nearest work day	February 18 or nearest work day	March 18 or nearest work day

<b>Process Timetable</b>	<b>Current Deadline</b>	<b>Proposed 2-month delay</b>	<b>Proposed 3-month delay</b>
Department chair provides a pdf of the edited version of committee report to the faculty candidate to review for factual or procedural errors	Within 2-3 business days of receipt of the committee report	Within 2-3 business days of receipt of the committee report	Within 2-3 business days of receipt of the committee report
The chairs add their evaluations and forward the dossiers to the college deans by:	January 4 or nearest work day	March 4 or nearest work day	April 4 or nearest work day
The deans make the files available to the members of the College Rank and Tenure Committees. Deans add fall term CATS reports to dossier as soon as they are available.	Within 2-3 days of receipt of files from departments	Within 2-3 days of receipt of files from departments	Within 2-3 days of receipt of files from departments
College Rank & Tenure Committees review the materials and prepare their reports	January - February	March - April	April - May
College committees return the files and their reports to deans by:	February 22 or nearest work day	April 22 or nearest work day	May 22 or nearest work day
The deans provide their own evaluations. The complete files then are sent to the Provost by:	March 11 or nearest work day	May 11 or nearest work day	June 11 or nearest work day
The Provost duplicates files and distributes them to University Rank and Tenure Committee by:	March 14 or nearest work day	May 14 or nearest work day	June 14 or nearest work day
University Rank and Tenure Committee Meeting	First week of May	First week of July	First week of August