

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

September 27, 2010

Devon Room 3:00 pm

Present: Susan Mackey-Kallis (chair), Bryan Kerns, Lowell Gustafson, Fayette Veverka, Robert Styer, Adele Lindenmeyr, Christopher Haas, Mark Sullivan, Lindsay Waters, Mary Ann Cantrell, Lesley Perry, Joyce S. Willens, Mike Pagano, Greg Sleasman, Nicholas Tumolo, Damien Germino, Paul Pasles, Chiji Akoma, Carol A. Weiss, Letizia Modena, Diepiriye Anga, Craig Wheeland, Louise Russo, Farid Samani, Ed Kresch

The meeting began at 3 pm. The chair welcomed new and returning members as well as our guest, Carol A. Weiss, Director of VITAL. After a brief introduction of all members and a review of the APC charge and organizational chart, future meetings dates for the semester were confirmed: Oct 25, 3-4:30 Devon Room and Nov 15, 3-4:30 Devon Room.

The chair introduced the first item of business, a discussion of Villanova's student teaching evaluation instrument, the CATS.

Craig Wheeland, Associate V.P.A.A. discussed the study of the aggregate CATS data that he had proposed in 2008 and that had been presented to the APC at their November 2008 meeting, (please see attached handout (also sent to the APC committee member in advance of the meeting)). Some of the general issues he discussed was how the CATS were being used in the faculty evaluation process, the question of consistency in use across departments and colleges, and some earlier discussion at APC regarding the need to analyze the aggregate CATS data to in order to "identify course, teacher and grade variables explaining the variation among students responses to the four questions used in Rank and Tenure applications: Q 23 I found this course intellectually stimulating, Q 26 I learned a great deal in this course, Q28 Rate overall quality of instruction and Q 29 Rate overall value of this course" (taken from the "CATS Study 2010 Proposal (revised version from 2008)" see attached)

Carol Weiss noted that these questions are "high inference" questions requiring students to render more inferential assessments of course and faculty quality than questions 8 through 21, which are more concrete teaching assessment questions such as "organizes and plans course effectively."

Craig Wheeland noted that Nurit Friedman and Paul Bonfonti from OPIR might be enlisted to help design and run the assessment of the aggregate CATS data. They have also been alerted to this possible request coming from APC.

Discussion ensued about the need for a faculty subcommittee in order to design the framework for the data analysis.

Discussion ensued about not only the need to assess the aggregate CATS data but to possibly address how the CATS data is being used in faculty evaluation. The chair noted that the Faculty Congress has been exploring the possibility of putting together an "Administrative Handbook," similar to the "Faculty Handbook" in that it would provide

guidelines to chairs and program heads on a number of issues and expectations for administrators. She mentioned that perhaps more explicitly guidelines for how to use the CATS in faculty evaluation could be included in such a handbook.

Carol Weiss noted that faculty looking at their CATS scores alone does not improve teaching, what improves teaching is faculty, working with peers and/or chairs to examine CATS data and developing together a mentoring plan to improve teaching.

The chair noted that peer or chair classroom observations, which can be helpful from a developmental perspective for junior faculty, may not be as candidly helpful as they might be given the realization that they are included as an evaluative measure in faculty Rank and Tenure documents.

Lesley Perry, Associate Dean of Nursing, discussed the successes of some of the faculty evaluation procedures that they have in place in the College of Nursing.

It was decided, as our initial step, to form a faculty subcommittee of APC to work with Craig Wheeland and Carol Weiss in order to formulate a framework for the analysis of aggregate CATS data. The committee consists of Julie Klein, Mike Pagano, Paul Pasles, Chiji Akoma and Fayette Veverka.

The chair asked that the committee be prepared to report out on the initial work of the subcommittee at our October 25th APC meeting.

The committee then discussed a number of items brought to APC's attention by Ed Kresch.

Agenda item V. a. Student Waiver Status: accessibility issue for faculty: After discussion of the issue of how to know if students have signed the waiver enabling us to speak with their parents, the committee concurred that student's disclosure of waiver status could not be noted on the class list as long as students had access to this list through their Novasis accounts. Adele Lindenmeyr and others noted that this information is already in Novasis on student CAPP reports. Faculty were urged to check the "My Nova" tab, which would have this information about students. No further action from APC was taken on this issue at this time.

Agenda item V. c.: the new federal law regarding the requirement that faculty inform the bookstore of all textbooks for courses in the next semester by a specific date early in the current semester. For example, for spring 2011 all orders must be received in the bookstore by October 1st. This law was designed, in part, to help students make informed decision about course load, textbook costs, financial aid needs for upcoming semesters, etc.

Ed Kresch asked, can a faculty member change a textbook after the submission date?

Lesley Perry noted that colleges are now being audited in terms of compliance with this law.

A number of questions emerged regarding such issues as: Under what conditions, if any, can faculty members change textbooks once the order has been submitted to the bookstore?---If an edition goes out of print? If a new edition is released in the interim? If the faculty

member, for whatever reason, changes his/her mind? Can they add or delete a textbook? If a faculty member fails to submit a textbook order by the specific federal date who is considered out of compliance? The faculty member? The department? The college? The University?

It was decided to address these questions to Villanova's University Counsel's office. The chair will follow up on this and be prepared to report out at the next APC meeting regarding this issue.

Agenda item V.b. Limits on the number of graduate courses an undergraduate can take: The chair noted that a policy was already passed and put into place regarding this issue, approved by the Deans 3/10/10 and amended by the V.P.A.A. 4/8/10. The chair read the policy for the committee and noted that it is currently linked to the V.P.A.A. website under policies. Ed Kresch raised a question about the use of the word "may" in paragraph 3 of the policy which states "Up to nine hours or nine credits of graduate courses taken by undergraduates may double count—both for the bachelor's degree and the master's degree . . ." Ed Kresch wondered whether this meant that the decision was at the discretion of the student? The chair of the department? The graduate program director? The chair agreed to check for clarification re: the meaning of "may" count."

V.d. Issue of class size: has the number been increasing over the years? Ed Kresch noted that he felt that the number of students in his classes had been increasing over the years and wondered about a policy regarding this.

The chair noted that in her department each class had a specific limit and the limit varied based upon the nature of the course, for example, senior seminar, media production class etc., but that these limits were both department and college based.

It was determined that the issue of class size was an issue for department or college discussion and thus not the purview of the APC. Ed Kresch was urged to take this issue up with his department and/or college.

The chair noted the addition of an agenda item requested by Harshil Patel regarding adding a Reading Day to Final Exam Period. Since Harshil was unable to attend today's meeting due to a class conflict and due to limited time to discuss this issue it was decided to discuss it at the October APC meeting.

The chair urged committee members to submit additional suggested agenda items to her for inclusion in our October meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:25.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Mackey-Kallis

Members of APC: Susan Mackey-Kallis (chair), Wayne Bremser, Bryan Kerns, Amy Patel, Harshil Patel, Fayette Veverka, Robert Styer, Adele Lindenmeyr, Christopher Haas, Mark Sullivan, Lindsay Waters, Mary Ann Cantrell, Lesley Perry, Louise Fitzpatrick (represented by Lesley Perry), Joyce S. Willens, Mike Pagano, Greg Sleasman, Nicholas Tumolo, Damien Germino, Paul Pasles, Chiji Akoma, Kail Ellis (represented by Craig Wheeland), James Danko (represented by Kevin D. Clark), John Doody (represented by Lowell Gustafson), Gary Gabriele (represented by Gerard Jones), Letizia Modena, Diepiriye Anga, Louise Russo, Farid Samani, Ed Kresch, Sridhar Santhanam