

Villanova University Faculty Congress

Academic Year 2016-2018

FACULTY CONGRESS MEETING

November 21, 2016

**Present**: Aronte Bennett, Joseph Betz, Sohail Chaudhry, Jerusha Conner, Alice Dailey, Mirela Damian, Rick Eckstein, Ruth Gordon, Marylu Hill, Shelly Howton, Stephanie Katz, Jeremy Kees, Christopher Kilby, Michael Levitan, Eric Lomazoff, Joseph Micucci, Elizabeth Petit de Mangé, James Peyton-Jones, Salvatore Poeta, Michael Posner, Jennifer Ross, Joseph Schick, Catherine Warrick, Kelly Welch, Dennis Wykoff, Rosalind Wynne.

**Absent:** Sheryl Bowen, Danai Chasaki, Gordon Coonfield (sabbatical), Angela DiBenedetto, Jennifer Dixon (NIA), Diane Ellis, David Fiorenza (NIA), Rory Kramer, Peggy Lyons, Mike McGoldrick, Alan Pichanick, Rees Rankin, Quinetta Roberson (NIA), Mark Wilson, Tina Yang (NIA).

**Other Guests:** Michele Pistone (Law School), University Staff Council (Emily Irving and Judy Mulrow)

The meeting convened at 1:00 PM in Rm. 300, Saint Augustine Center.

**Housekeeping**

1. Jerusha Conner introduced the invited guests from University Staff Council, as well as a Nursing Education student who was invited to observe by Jennifer Ross.
2. Minutes from the October 20, 2016 meeting were reviewed. It was noted that several changes had already been made in the minutes, including naming of representatives, added graphics, one additional report, and an update on Varsity Athletes registration. No other changes were requested. After the motion to approve, the minutes were approved with one abstention.
3. Library budget update: FC has received assurances from Fr. President and the Provost that the concerns about the Library budget will be resolved. A question was raised whether FC could re-approach the Provost if faculty concerns are not met, and Jerusha noted that yes, FC will continue to monitor the situation.
4. Systematizing representation sign-up: All FC members have been asked to share FC information with their respective departments via department meetings in order to consistently reach all constituencies. All FC members are asked to sign up via [this google doc](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ewycwqf6a3QJf3nFCk_DsGRvRYRe0mpVQMB0vL6dybc/edit?usp=sharing) to liaise with their home department and one other department if possible.

**Discussion of Standing Committee Reports:**

In an effort to better focus the discussion of the FC, members are now asked to read the committee reports (appended to the agenda) rather than spending time in the FC meeting reviewing all of the committee reports. Members are asked to identify issues from within the report that need to be elevated to full discussion.

At this point, Jerusha asked if there are issues to raise for further discussion from the standing committees or whether there was any new business to report or add.

Joe Betz, the retired faculty representative, had three things to report:

* Fr. Joe Mostardi and Campus Ministry are helping to re-settle refugees and committing Villanova’s resources to supporting this initiative;
* FC members may be interested in looking at Richard Rorty’s 1998 book with its prediction of strong men like Trump;
* FC members looking towards retirement may be interested in meeting with an advisor regarding TIAA CREF; Joe can suggest an advisor.

Finally, Joe asked whether trigger warnings and safe spaces are issues currently at Villanova? His concern is that it sounds like an abridgment of free speech. Michael Levitan responded that these can help prepare students to deal with problems. Jerusha suggested this concern was worth passing on to VITAL.

Alice Dailey (chair, FRRC) announced the creation of a sub-committee that will explore possible options for a promotion ladder for FTNTT faculty. Mark Wilson is the chair of the committee. This committee needs one tenured faculty member; nominations (including self-nominations) should be sent to alice.dailey@villanova.edu.

Michael Posner reported concerning on-line CATS; emails have gone out regarding the process for on-line CATS, and questions have been coming in. Please contact Michael Posner at michael.posner@villanova.edu with questions.

Finally, the FC unanimously approved the changes to the FC Constitution and By-Laws reflecting that the University Senate no longer exists.

**New Business:**

1. Current events on campus: Letter about a sanctuary campus

The sanctuary campus representative, Michele Pistone (Law School) shared with the FC information concerning how Villanova might proceed to become a sanctuary campus for undocumented students (deferred action for childhood arrivals under the Dreamers Act). She noted that the term “sanctuary” is not defined by the law; thus there is breadth in interpretation. This fact allows Villanova to ask what it means for the university in terms of its Catholic and Augustinian mission.

From the legal standpoint, the people who sanctuary might apply to are: immigrants and other people who don’t feel safe. Michele noted that this includes undocumented students who are protected by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Act. The Act defers action on their removal from the country; they are given work authorization but not status.

The concern is that the Executive Branch of the government will immediately target these students, and the question for the University is how to protect them. Other questions to ask would include whether Radnor Police is enforcing immigration laws, and whether the University would respond by releasing information or permitting law enforcement on campus.

Questions were raised concerning how many undocumented students might be in the Villanova population, whether the University Chapel could be used as a site of sanctuary, whether the University could lose federal funding if it identified as a sanctuary campus, and whether the Philadelphia Archdiocese would forbid the University to use institutional space to harbor undocumented students, as they did during the 1980s sanctuary movement for Salvadorean refugees. Clarification was requested regarding the difference between students born here to undocumented parents and students brought to the United States as young children.

Fr. Art Purcaro, O.S.A., Assistant Vice President for Mission and Ministry, is leading the initiative to move towards sanctuary status; anyone who is interested in joining the conversation, please email him at arthur.purcaro@villanova.edu.

2. Current events on campus (continued)

The second part of the discussion centered more generally on recent events including the student accosted by other students in the SEPTA tunnel and a student verbally insulting a professor. Questions of protocol were addressed, including how incidents are reported on campus, how the community is informed, and legal issues once incidents are under investigation. Catherine Warrick, as a member of the police oversight committee, noted that there are multiple ways incidents might be reported. The most common ways are 1) reported to campus police and shared with oversight committee (although it was noted that the protocol for sharing with the wider community was not clear); 2) Ethics Point – which then funnels the report to the appropriate channel (HR for staff; Dean of Students for student reports; and the Vice-Provost for faculty reports); 3) informal reports shared between faculty, staff, etc. Catherine further noted that the police department has to report arrests and “use of force” incidents to the oversight committee; minor infractions are not reported to the committee.

FRRC asked the Provost to share information with the university community about university policies concerning belligerent students and free speech within the classroom (and the Provost agreed to send this information). It was noted that the rules governing student behavior appear in the student handbook, but not the faculty handbook, and it was suggested that this be remedied. It was also suggested that human resources information should be available for faculty who find themselves facing belligerent students. Several FC members expressed concern about faculty and student safety, and how faculty should respond in similar situations. There was discussion about first amendment rights, and it was noted that at a private institution like Villanova, first amendment rights do not pertain in the classroom. The conversation concluded with a lengthy discussion of whether policies concerning student behavior, codes of conduct, and reporting procedures should be revisited by FC.

3. Process of appointing members to committees (Jeremy Kees)

Jeremy Kees, the Faculty Athletic Representative, raised a question regarding the process of appointing members to committees, and the possibility of terms limits. He noted that some committees do not get a lot of volunteers, but if there are multiple volunteers for a given committee, he suggested that there should be a more frequent turn-over of faculty representatives rather than just re-appointing the same people for multiple terms. His suggestion was enforcing term limits for certain committees and re-visiting the appointment procedures.

In the short discussion that ensued, it was noted that the current policy is to solicit volunteers from multiple sources, including Campus Currents; once names are received, FCEC meets and rank-orders the names. It was also noted that there needs to be a balance on any given committee between new people with fresh ideas and experienced members with institutional memory. It was not clear how much more the process could be democratized. Jeremy added that his concern is that the perception is that certain faculty monopolize certain committees. The conversation concluded with the suggestion that FC should encourage people to volunteer to ensure greater turn-over.

Meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Submitted by Marylu Hill, Faculty Congress Secretary

January 22, 2016

APPENDIX