

Meeting of the Villanova University Academic Policy Committee

Thursday, January 30, 2014
Mendel Science Center, room 103, 12:30 pm

MINUTES

Present: Louise Russo (chair), Paul Pasles, Bob Styer, Wenhong Luo, Lesley Perry, Paul Hanouna, Craig Wheeland, Mark Doorley, Randy Weinstein, Jutta Seibert, Joyce Willens, Daniel Wright, JeanAnn Linney, Brian Gallagher, Catherine Warrick

Not in Attendance: Jerusha Conner (NIA), Mary Ann Cantrell, Ken Kroos, Adele Lindenmeyr (NIA), Fayette Veverka, Kelly Welch (NIA), Wayne Bremser, Susan Mackey-Kallis (NIA), Sridhar Santhanam, Jillian Amara, Lourdes Carrera-Ortiz, Laura Boisclair, Erin Connor, Patrick Tempera, Elizabeth Carbone, Caitlyn Sell, Joseph Brady

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am

Minutes from the October 22 meeting were discussed; minor and major edits were suggested. Formal approval was deferred to the February meeting. Minutes from the December meeting have not yet been finalized.

- I. The chair provided the committee with an update on the work of the Task Force on eLearning which will be chaired by Al Ortega, Associate VP for Research and Graduate Programs. This information was solicited by the chair as a follow-up to ongoing APC discussions related to online learning. Membership for this Task Force has not yet been finalized but should be in place by the end of February. A copy of the communication from the Associate VP is attached as an addendum.
- ii. The Chair welcomed Tom Smith, the Anne Quinn Welsh Director of the Honors Program, as an invited speaker. Tom provided an extensive presentation on the Honors program and recent changes/initiatives that have been enacted to enhance interest in and quality of the academic experience for Honors students. Tom provided a summary handout to guide the discussion which has been attached to the minutes as an addendum. The following items were points of discussion by the committee:
 - a) Recent changes in the process by which Honors program candidates are selected from the pool of Early Action or Regular Admission students
 - b) Changes recently instituted including the decision to transition to an Honors degree rather than a major, the establishment of an Honors minor, inclusion of an Oral Exam option in lieu of a thesis for some areas of study, new Engineering courses (math sequence), new VSB

course sequence, Honors dormitory housing for freshmen, and Sophomore Honors housing on West campus

- c) Development of special programs/curricular elements for Honors including a 6 year fast-track B.A./J.D. degree program (initially exclusive to Honors as a pilot), a Faculty Fellows program to bring full-time faculty into Honors as dedicated instructors/mentors, Summer program for team-teaching that provides a stipend for faculty to develop team taught cross-college courses, a summer camp for incoming freshmen, the Global Scholars Program that includes full semester study abroad experiences thematically tied to the focus of the program
- d) Other programs/initiatives on the horizon include a revamped senior thesis process to enhance academic rigor, new business minor for incoming arts students, establishment of common interdisciplinary course sequences for incoming freshmen, a freshman leadership program (with Student Life), development of curriculum pathways or co-majors that provide students with depth in related areas that will provide a professional edge when they enter the workplace (examples include Business and Society joining VSB and Arts majors, Science, Technology, and Society joining Engineering and Science majors)
- e) Challenges that may limit the scope and creativity of the Honors Program
 1. Reporting structure: how to strategize for Honors programming across all colleges when resource allocation and administrative oversight comes from the College of Arts and Sciences
 2. Honors is an underutilized but high potential resource – it is a highlight academic program that can be used more effectively for recruitment of high achieving applicants in all Colleges and should be valued as a major element that supports the University’ Strategic Imperatives #1, 2, and 4 specifically but are all Colleges interested in Honors curriculum development?
 3. Quality space availability and utilization – the dedicated area in Garey Hall has been well used but provides little in the way of classroom space to boost academic offerings and diversification of teaching methodologies
- f) Would there be a benefit to adoption of an Honors College model? Some institutions have well established Honors Colleges, others have University Programs. In a College format, the Honors Director/Dean reports directly to the Provost/VPAA and resources are strategically budgeted out of the general University funds as dedicated to Honors. Such a format may provide opportunities for Honors curriculum innovation across all Colleges. However, it may mandate that every College commit resources specifically to Honors to support programming, faculty, technology, space utilization and development. Such a commitment would reflect the desire of each College to include Honors options as an important admissions recruitment tool and curriculum innovation development laboratory to drive creativity within their academic discipline(s). However, similar innovation could also be achieved with an Honors Program model provided that the Honors Program Director is a direct report to the VPAA (and budgetary obligations are pulled from the general pool rather than exclusively from the College of Arts and Sciences).

Though discussion of these topics was extended and robust, no resolutions were proposed by the time the meeting was adjourned. Further discussion of APC contributions to Honors initiatives will be undertaken at the next APC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm

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 Daniel Wright), Catherine Warrick, Susan Mackey-Kallis, Mark Doorley, Sridhar Santhanam, Kenneth Kroos, Aaron Moore, Jutta Seibert, Lourdes Carrera-Ortiz, Joseph Brady, Laura Boisclair, Erin Connor, Patrick Tempera, Elizabeth Carbone, Caitlyn Sell, Brian Gallagher

Honors Program Update

Charges in Fall 2010

- Admissions Process/Student recruitment
- Credentials/Senior Thesis
- Honors as a University-wide Program
- Focus on student life/Leadership opportunities
- Focus on distinctiveness: create innovative curriculum with an international orientation that would give gifted prospective students a reason to attend Villanova.
 - How was Honors responding to the central, intrinsic problem of higher education?

How We Responded

- Changes to Admissions and Recruiting Process¹
- Distinctive Learning Cohorts
 - Global Scholars
 - PPE
 - Global Humanities
 - Good, True, Beautiful Sequence
 - Interdisc (Great Books Program)
- Curriculum Changes
- Changes in Student Life
- Increased presence of full-time faculty
- Worked to Foster Stronger Relationships with VSB, Engineering, Nursing
- Alumni Outreach

Current Initiatives:

- Global Scholars: Public Health
- Honors curriculum for VSB students
- Undergraduate research initiative
- Summer program for team-teaching
- Explore new recruiting strategies.

¹ Admissions stats for high achieving applicants (SAT \geq 1390; GPA \geq 3.75):

Fall 2013	366 enrolled	3074 applicants
Fall 2012	320 enrolled	2778 applicants
Fall 2011	382 enrolled	2729 applicants
Fall 2010	272 enrolled	2419 applicants

Honors in Ideal World:

- Create a series of named **pathways** that students across the University can engage over four years that unite their need for specialized skills with a humanistic education.
 - Create unique curriculum, programming and **credentials (co-majors?)** around these initiatives.
- Possible examples:
 - Business, Person, and Society (VSB and possibly Arts students)
 - Science, Technology, and Society (Engineering and Science students)
 - Global Health/Health Care Policy (pre-Health students)
 - Business Leadership in the Liberal Arts (Arts Students)
- Continue to use Honors in innovative ways to bolster liberal arts applicants

Ongoing Challenges

- Reporting Structure
- Strategic Priorities
- Staffing courses

Challenges and Opportunities of the Honors College Model

Opportunities

- Recruitment
- New reporting structure
- Align Honors more intentionally with University Strategic Plan
- Bring us in line with other institutions
- Development opportunities
- A home for interdisciplinary teaching initiatives?
- Increasing size of program aids in recruiting high achieving students

Challenges

- What do we want to accomplish? What resources are we willing to commit?