



VILLANOVA INSTITUTE FOR  
TEACHING AND LEARNING



# VITAL Annual Report 2017-2018



## OVERVIEW

St. Augustine and his thoughts on education inspire and guide our approach to pedagogy at Villanova. The University seal depicts a heart overlaying a book: How might this image reflect your thinking about your role as an educator? How might this image guide your work as a teacher-scholar? How might students perceive our roles as educators? What expectations might the students bring to their education both in and out-of-class?

The image of a heart overlaying a book made me think about my own teaching approach as faculty: what I believe to be a core competency for my students and how I approach supporting faculty in their pedagogical roles as director of VITAL. I discovered that the centrality of reflection resonated with St. Augustine's work. Reflective practice constitutes a core competency for my students as future faculty and evidence-based, reflective practice guides how I approach my instructional development work with faculty.

## VITAL and Villanova's Mission

Under the auspices of the Office of the Provost, the Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning (VITAL) was established in 1998. VITAL provides and coordinates services and programs for faculty members from all disciplines in their roles as teacher-scholars. These services and programs are developed in response to faculty members' interests. VITAL partners with departments and University offices to support students' learning needs. VITAL serves as a clearing house for research and materials on teaching, learning, assessment, and academic career development.

Pedagogical distinction and scholarly research constitute the heart of Villanova's academic community. Our students are well served when faculty offer them opportunities to critically analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and meaningfully reflect on the diverse facets of their curricular and extracurricular experiences at Villanova. Faculty assist students' in this academic and personal growth by providing an academically stimulating, personalized, application and service-based learning environment that is grounded in their respective discipline. VITAL, as a university-wide office, holds a key role, in furthering discussion of teaching and learning issues beyond the disciplines and connecting faculty with pertinent campus expertise.

The core goal of all VITAL services is to facilitate dialogue and interaction among faculty with common curricular and/or pedagogical interests. Such venues allow for cross-disciplinary learning about teaching, spark pedagogical innovation, lead to interdisciplinary, team-teaching and ground the conversations in commitment to engaged student learning. VITAL works to ensure that services are aligned with Villanova's mission, academic priorities, interests and needs of the academic community: e.g., University and Colleges' strategic plans, formal feedback data, and conversations with the faculty advisory board. We welcome your suggestions and program ideas; please stop by the VITAL office at 106 Vasey Hall or send e-mail to: [vitalinfo@villanova.edu](mailto:vitalinfo@villanova.edu).

This Annual Report details the services and programs that VITAL provided to the Villanova academic community to support high quality learning environments during the 2017-2018 academic year.



Dr. Gabriele Bauer, Director  
Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning  
Villanova University

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

VITAL provides orientation programs and services to support both full-time and part-time faculty who are newly-appointed to their teaching roles at Villanova.

### New Faculty Program (full-time faculty)

The two-part program is offered prior to the fall semester and during January. It is designed to support faculty new to Villanova and/or teaching in the higher education setting, help ease the transition into the teaching position, answer questions, and familiarize them with Villanova's mission, culture, policies, and instructional resources.

In this interactive setting, faculty engage with colleagues from other disciplines, discuss and reflect on teaching practices that foster student learning.

The campus-wide program was held on August 16-17, 2017; it comprised 43 participants and 28 presenters from various campus offices, such as Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Office of the Vice President for Student Life, Center for Faith and Learning, Learning Support Services Office, University Counseling Center, Falvey Memorial Library, Villanova Writing Center, UNIT/Center for Instructional Technologies (CIT), and Human Resources. Participants indicated that they felt well prepared for their faculty role.

New Faculty Program Part II took place on January 11, 2018; it was designed to help new faculty reflect on their instructional experiences at Villanova, share their successes, challenges, and questions with colleagues in a supportive forum and prepare for the spring semester. The program is practice-based and discussion-oriented. 34 participants and 19 presenters discussed topics ranging from student learning and teaching at Villanova, legal issues and policies pertaining to faculty's role, inclusive excellence, and syllabus refinement. Participants perceived the program overall very helpful.

### New Part-Time Faculty Program

The program occurs every August and January in the week prior to the beginning of classes. It is designed to support part-time faculty members in their instructional role, discuss learning-centered teaching practices, and familiarize them with instructional policies and resources. The orientation provides a collegial forum for discussion and questions. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the program was offered on August 17, 2017 and January 11, 2018. A total of 36 faculty (28 in Fall and 8 in Spring) participated.

*The program was excellent. Learning about who our students are, how they like to learn and some of the challenges they face was very helpful in preparing for the first weeks of class.*

*The program was informative and a nice way to get to know Villanova and the services offered for both faculty and students.*

*The discussion of Villanova's Augustinian mission and principles of Augustinian pedagogy was insightful.*

*I enjoyed the discussion I had with fellow faculty during the First-Generation Student and the Augustinian Pedagogy sessions.*

*Meeting other new faculty was extremely beneficial. The VITAL staff was very helpful and good at facilitating.*

-- Participants' Feedback



## **VITAL Mentor Program**

In Fall 2017 VITAL has piloted a Faculty Mentor Program by inviting experienced full-time faculty to provide collegial mentoring support for newly-appointed faculty. Twenty (20) faculty from FCN, CLAS, and VSB provided support and guidance to acculturate new faculty to the campus and aid their professional development, with each mentor supporting 2-3 new faculty. [Link](#) to VITAL Faculty Mentor program.

## **TEACHING SERVICES**

VITAL provides a range of services that support high-quality learning and teaching at Villanova; these services are developed in response to faculty members' interests and suggestions. In addition, VITAL partners with departments and University offices to offer instructional and/or academic career development programs and co-host sessions.

### **Instructional Consultations**

VITAL offers one-on-one, confidential consultations to support faculty in their teaching to enhance student learning, ranging from traditional face-to-face teaching, technology-enhanced instruction to hybrid and online instruction. The consultations may be accompanied by syllabus consultation, classroom observations, instructional document reviews, online course design, instructor self-assessment, and student feedback data. In the 2017-2018 academic year, 120 faculty members across the campus and at all career stages took advantage of the service. In addition, the Director and Associate Director met individually with all new full-time faculty members to provide specific pedagogical follow-up to the New Faculty Program.

### **Student Early Term Feedback for Course Enhancement**

The early-term (weeks 4-6) student feedback process is formative in nature (for improvement purposes) and designed to give faculty a sense of how students are experiencing the learning environment. The process opens up a dialogue about the learning process between students and faculty and affirms student responsibility in this process.

### **Workshop Sessions**

In the 2017-2018 academic year, VITAL offered instructional workshops in collaboration with CIT and School of Nursing. Two campus-wide workshops offered with UNIT/CIT discussed the use of Yellowdig in asynchronous online classes and Zoom in synchronous class meetings with an overall attendance of 14 individuals. A workshop was offered for the College of Nursing with a focus on strategies for online teaching, and the session was attended by 30 nursing faculty.

### **Faculty Forums on Student Learning Assessment**

Faculty members, representing all colleges, participated in the collegial forums on October 20, 2017, with a focus on faculty practices regarding student learning outcomes assessment at the course and/or programmatic levels. Faculty hosted table conversations focused on specific means of student learning assessment. They demonstrated particular assessment tools and described the rationale, implementation, and utilization for obtaining meaningful, actionable results. The forum's goal is to expand the collection of practice-based assessment methods and engage in faculty-driven assessment leadership. Twenty-six (26) faculty members participated in the forum.

### **Teaching and Learning Strategies (TLS) at Villanova Program**

Partnering with UNIT/CIT, VITAL continued to host the campus-wide TLS program on May 16, 2018. The event aims to provide a collegial forum for faculty to share, discuss, and/or model a range of teaching and learning

approaches that they have found successful in helping their students learn in different settings. One hundred and twenty (120) participants, along with 36 presenters, who facilitated 18 concurrent sessions, and 4 posters, explored various student-centered teaching approaches including applying cognitive science in teaching, interactive tools for instructions, active learning activities, the flipped classroom, and creating engaging video lectures.

This year's keynote speaker, Dr. Terry Doyle, Professor Emeritus at Ferris State University, delivered a keynote on Helping Students Understand How the Research on Learning Supports a Learner Centered Approach to Teaching. With a response rate of 64%, 83% of the responses indicated that the overall sessions were extremely and very informative.

*The program was well organized, the food/reception and accommodations were very good and everyone that attended seemed to enjoy the material very much.*

*The keynote helped me to understand a lot about how students learn and I hope to incorporate some of those lessons into my teaching.*

*I learned the most about the philosophy of teaching, especially on active learning concepts and the meaning of being a teacher. I feel more motivated and encouraged in my role as a teacher.*

*Useful approaches and activities that deal with the reality of who students are today. Timely!*

*More encouragement, incentive, and models for how to lecture less, and actively engage students more.*

-- Participants' Feedback

### **Taking Your Course Online (TYCO)**

This is a six-week asynchronously online seminar with weekly synchronous session. The seminar has been designed to prepare faculty to teach online with a focus on students' active learning experiences. Faculty engage in discussions of aligning learning goals with online activities, assessment practices, and the corresponding technological tools. TYCO was offered respectively in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, with a total of 13 faculty participating. Dr. Stefan Perun, Public Administration and Dr. Valentina DeNardis, Classical Studies co-facilitated the seminar in respective semesters.

### **Teaching Well Online**

This discussion group is created to offer a forum for faculty who are interested in teaching online to discuss concrete approaches to online course design, instruction, assessment, and share examples. The group meets twice a semester and the meetings were attended by a total of 13 faculty.

### **Food for Thought**

The lunch discussions provide faculty with a forum for networking and exchanging ideas on different aspects of students' learning and innovative teaching approaches with colleagues across campus; there are no structured presentations or "experts." The discussions occur monthly each semester, and they are offered on two different days to accommodate faculty's teaching schedule. In 2017-2018 we discussed the following topics:

- Students' Pre-Class Work
- Student Entitlement
- Helping Students Manage Their Anxieties
- Faculty Academic Career-Life Integration
- The Last Class: Making It Count



## INSTRUCTIONAL GRANT PROGRAM AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

VITAL encourages faculty across all career stages to participate in instructional professional development opportunities. Currently VITAL offers the following opportunities: (1) instructional minigrant program; (2) Faculty Associate program; (3) Lilly Teaching Conference Travel Fellowship program; and (4) scholarly (evidence-based) teaching.

### Instructional Minigrant Program

This one-year instructional grant program supports individual faculty, departmental, college, interdisciplinary, or inter-institutional faculty teams to proactively enrich, refine, or re-design learning environments that best address disciplinary contexts, students' needs, and/or pedagogical institutional commitments and priorities. Specifically, the grant program assists full-time faculty members to foster advances in undergraduate and graduate teaching and learning at Villanova, to implement the teaching-learning sections of the University's and Colleges' strategic plans, and to explore the use of new instructional approaches. Proposals underwent peer-review and 11 grants were awarded. The following faculty members/faculty teams received grants in 2017-2018:

- Dr. Paul Bernhardt, *Mathematics and Statistics, CLAS*
- Dr. Metin Duran, and Dr. Wenqing Xu, *Civil and Environmental Engineering, COE*
- Dr. Stacey Havlik, *Education and Counseling, CLAS*
- Dr. Bonnie Henderson, *Geography and the Environment, CLAS*
- Dr. Zuyi Huang, *Civil and Environmental Engineering, COE*
- Dr. Mary Kelly, *Economics, VSB*
- Emily Minbiole and Dr. Scott Kassel, *Chemistry, CLAS*
- Dr. Eric Musselman, *Civil and Environmental Engineering, COE*
- Dr. Tracy Oliver, and Dr. Bing Bing Qi, *College of Nursing*
- Dr. Cristina Percoco, and Dr. Kristen Turpin, *Romance Languages and Literatures, CLAS*
- Dr. Stephen Strader, *Geography and the Environment, CLAS*

### Faculty Associate Program

This program is designed to provide the opportunity and the time for tenured faculty members to pursue a special interest related to teaching and/or students' learning. Faculty Associates spend a semester working with VITAL on a project of their choice that must have the potential to enrich teaching and learning at Villanova and thus strengthen Villanova's academic community. VITAL was honored to collaborate with Dr. Valentina DeNardis, Classical Studies, during 2017-2018.

Dr. DeNardis provided instructional resources for faculty on the use of Office 365 programs based on research-based practices and offered consultations with faculty. Dr. DeNardis is also working on providing instructional resources regarding the use of the Office 365 Suite on VITAL website.

### Lilly Teaching Conference Travel Fellowship

The Fellowship sponsors full-time faculty members at Villanova University to participate in the Lilly Conference, Bethesda, MD. Five (5) faculty and 2 doctoral candidates attended this regional conference to refine their instructional skills, deepen their knowledge of students' learning and broaden their repertoire of instructional approaches. The conference is well aligned with Villanova faculty's commitment to outstanding teaching and

increased scholarship as it models scholarly teaching in the discipline, and provides a network of innovative faculty colleagues across East Coast institutions. The conference was held June 1-4, 2017, with 7 participating Fellows including:

- Dr. Benjamin Baker, *Romance Languages and Literatures, CLAS*
- Guanglei Chen, *Mechanical Engineering, COE*
- Dr. Laura Getz, *Psychology, CLAS*
- Dr. Emily Minbiolo, *Chemistry, CLAS*
- Dr. Kevin Minbiolo, *Chemistry, CLAS*
- Dr. Kabindra Shakya, *Geography and the Environment, CLAS*
- Qiuyun Wang, *Mechanical Engineering, COE*



### Professional Development: Scholarly (Evidence-Based) Teaching

VITAL invited faculty to attend a regional teaching conference at Temple University on January 10, 2018 and sponsored 10 faculty members. They shared their conference experience by offering a session at the TLS program.

- Dr. Benjamin Baker, *Romance Languages & Literature, CLAS*
- Dr. Sarah Faggioli, *Romance Languages & Literature, CLAS*
- Dr. Meredith Bergey, *Sociology & Criminology, CLAS*
- Ian Maley, *Philosophy, CLAS*
- Dr. Helene Moriarty, *M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing*
- Dr. Jennifer Ross, *M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing*
- Anne Schneider, *M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing*
- Dr. Elizabeth Pantesco, *Psychology, CLAS*
- Dr. Rebecca Rivard, *Biology, CLAS*
- Dr. Patrick Kirby, *Mechanical Engineering, COE*



### INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

VITAL's website provides direct access to news, events, programs, services, and resources. Our Instructional Resources offer a comprehensive collection of informative, evidence-based online instructional resources.

#### Monday Morning Mentor

VITAL has co-sponsored (with Falvey Library) a subscription to Monday Morning Mentor, a weekly 20-minute teaching program that is available 24/7 and explores a relevant teaching topic with new practices each week. Faculty embraced this program, and 54 faculty received "certificates of completion" to recognize their commitment to ongoing professional development.

#### Instructional Videos and Seminars

VITAL provides instructional videos and documented online seminars that address critical issues facing higher education. The seminars feature leading educators delivering content-rich presentations and the seminar recordings are available on VITAL's website. [Link](#) to Instructional Videos.

## PARTICIPATION IN VITAL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

<b>Orientation and Continued Instructional Support</b>	Total Number of Participants
New Faculty Program (full-time faculty)	43
New Adjunct Faculty Program	36
VITAL Faculty Mentor Program	20 mentors + 43 mentees
Meetings with Departments/Academic Programs	14
 <b>Teaching Services</b>	
Instructional Consultations	120
Monday Morning Mentor	54
Graduate Student Development	8
Faculty Forums on Student Learning Assessment	26
Teaching and Learning Strategies at Villanova	120
Taking Your Course Online	13
Food for Thought	30
Sessions by Faculty Associate (in person/online)	20
 <b>Instructional Grant Program and Professional Development</b>	
Minigrant Program	18
Faculty Associate Program	1
Lilly Teaching Conference Travel Fellowship	7
Professional Development: Teaching Conference Participation	10
<b>TOTAL (includes duplicates)</b>	<b>540</b>

## PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

### Partnership with University Offices (co-sponsor and/or co-facilitate programs)

Center for Faith and Learning  
 Learning Support Services  
 UNIT/Center for Instructional Technologies  
 Office of the Provost  
 Office of the General Counsel  
 Office of Diversity and Inclusion  
 Falvey Memorial Library  
 CASA-Affordable Materials Project (AMP)



## University Service

Committee on Outcomes Assessment  
Committee, AHP  
UNIT Faculty Advisory Committee  
D2L Extended Evaluation Project Team

## Conference Presentations

Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching, Bethesda, MD

## Professional Service

Journal of Faculty Development  
International Journal of Education, Culture, and Society  
Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching, Bethesda, MD  
Professional & Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education Conference  
POD Network, Core Committee (Board of Directors) Member  
Tri-State Teaching and Learning Consortium

## Advisory Role

VIISTA program

## VITAL STAFF

*Gabriele Bauer*, Ph.D., Director, offers teaching, learning, and faculty development programs, services, and resources to faculty consistent with Villanova University's mission and academic strategic plan.

*Andy-Guoqiang Cui*, Ph.D., Associate Director for eLearning Pedagogy. Andy joined VITAL in August 2017, and he lends pedagogical support to online and blended teaching and learning as well as teaching with technologies.

*Ramona Kuczewski*, Senior Administrative Assistant, provides general support for all VITAL programs.

*Blair Bernstein*, VITAL Student Intern, provides program support.

## VITAL Faculty Advisory Board

The Faculty Advisory Board Members are appointed to a three-year term, and they represent departments in each of the Colleges. The faculty serve in an advisory capacity to VITAL on issues of learning, teaching, career advancement, and institutional initiatives. They also serve as informal liaison to their respective departments and Colleges. The Board provides valuable feedback, input, and suggestions that help refine VITAL services, programs, and resources. The VITAL Faculty Advisory Board meets once during the academic year.

Authored by Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning (VITAL), 106 Vasey Hall, Villanova University, Villanova, PA 19085. 2018.

[vitalinfo@villanova.edu](mailto:vitalinfo@villanova.edu)

<https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/provost/vital.html>