



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY SENATE & FACULTY CONGRESS  
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE  
2010-2011

**Report to the University Senate  
April 15, 2011**

APC's main focus this year has been the analysis of trends and variables in aggregate data that may correlate with student evaluations of faculty on the CATS.

This project was a continuation of some preliminary discussion in APC during the last academic year, under the leadership of the previous chair, Julie Klien, in which, together with Dr. Carol Weiss, Director of VITAL, APC examined the CATS and classroom observation practices.

This project also evolved from ongoing questions regarding the potential impact of such instructor variables as gender and age; student variables such as GPA and final grade in a course, and course variables such as class size and class type on students' evaluation of courses. This work, under the advisement of APC, has been conducted primarily through an APC subcommittee, chaired by Mike Pagano. The sub committee has been working with OPIR to develop the research design and research questions. Members of OPIR, including Jim Trainor, Nurit Friedman and Paul Bonfanti, continue to analyze the data and provided a preliminary report at the April 11<sup>th</sup> APC meeting. It is expected that this work will continue over the summer and into the next academic year. Once the data analysis is complete it is expected that APC, working with the V..P.A.A.'s office, will determine the best way to disseminate results and will potentially recommend additional guidelines, based upon the findings, regarding how to use CATS data as just one part of an overall assessment of faculty teaching.

APC also carried over another project from the previous year: regarding the issue of end-of-semester assignments as a matter of overall academic policy. In recent years, APC has examined the possibility of expanding the reading period for final exams, the prevalence of parties on the evening prior to the current reading day, and, in response to student concerns, the workload in last week of classes. Last year, VPAA Jack Johannes banned certain assignments in the last week of classes.

This year APC again examined the possibility of adding a second reading day to the end of each semester. After extensive discussion and consultation with Student Life, members of the Academic Calendar Committee, the V.P.A.A.'s office and student leaders it was determined that given a myriad of constraints it was not possible to add a second reading day. This led to further examination of the new policy regarding the last week of class/final exam policy. It was felt by many members of APC that the current policy was somewhat unclear regarding what assignments were and were not permissible during the last week of class and that potential exemptions to the policy were not adequately addressed. The committee also took up the policy with the realization that it provided a de facto second reading day by minimizing the likelihood of instructors assigning a major assignment due the last day of class and thus it was important to make sure that this policy was both clear and workable in order to preserve this defacto "reading" day. To this end the committee developed a number of revisions to the policy, most significantly making clear the needed exceptions for graduate classes (The Graduate Dean of Arts and Sciences, Adele Lindenmeyr sits on APC) and an exemption for final oral presentations on the last day of class (crucial for classes that meet only once per week). The policy was sent to the Committee on Faculty where it was approved but with some suggestions for further changes in the language, which are still part of on-going discussions in COF.

As part of our regular duties, APC also monitored and approved Calendar Committee drafts and subsequent final versions of the academic calendars for AY 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

APC also hosted a presentation for faculty by Frank Henninger, Director, University Shop, on the new on line textbook ordering system, Verba, to be implemented next academic year. This presentation was prompted, in part, by APC's examination of the enforcement and implications of the new federal law regarding deadlines for the ordering of textbooks for classes.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Committee for their collegiality and hard work. The combination of faculty, administrators, and students is very productive and I was honored to work with such a great team of campus leaders.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Mackey-Kallis  
Chair

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, Louise Fitzpatrick (represented by Lesley Perry), Joyce S. Willens, Mike Pagano, Greg Slesman, 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 Zamani, Ed Kresch, Sridhar Santhanam