

Villanova University Senate  
Friday, September 13, 2008

I am Boots Cassel, professor of Computing Sciences, and chair of the Faculty Congress.

#### Faculty Congress

As in all kinds of governance, there is a reason to have multiple points of view. The faculty see a university in a way that is somewhat blind to some concerns, and it needs to be balanced by other perspectives. However, the faculty are daily at the heart of what a university is about – about the creation and dissemination of knowledge. It is the job of the faculty congress to keep those aspects of the university clearly involved in the many decisions that must be made to keep the organization working. There is no question that basic issues related to budgets, legal issues, student activities outside their academic role, building and maintaining our spaces, and a host of other issues are critical to the mission of the university. It is easy for faculty members to forget about those issues until something happens that impacts them directly. We appreciate the importance of these other roles, and are glad for the breadth of input to the Senate and to the other offices of the University. We will focus on the things that most directly impact the faculty and our ability to play our role.

The Faculty Congress includes The Committee on Faculty (which also reports directly to the Senate), the Academic Policy Committee, a committee on Salary, Benefits and Terms of Employment, and a committee on Elections and Credentials. We represent every part of the university faculty.

Among the issues before us at the present time, mostly within one or more of the committees:

- The role of the Full Time Non Tenure Track Faculty
- Parental Leave policy
- Retirement policy
- Appointment and Review policies for Department Chairs
- Review policies for College Deans
- The Faculty Handbook (including the speaker's policy)
- The Structure and use of CATs and the larger issue of meaningful evaluation of teaching
- The realistic implementation of true interdisciplinary scholarship and learning
- The role of faculty in university strategic planning
- Implications of any change in the nature of the classification of Villanova university (from Masters to Doctoral)
- The implications of class size
- Faculty representation in light of changes in university departments
- Documenting the structure and traditions of the Faculty Congress

Several of these issues are continuations from work begun in previous sessions and we expect them to be concluded successfully in the near future.

In addition, we hope to be able to work with the Senate to co-sponsor a forum on an issue of importance to the university from time to time. We will be glad to discuss appropriate topics and to collaborate on arrangements for something of interest to our communities.

We also stand ready to give attention to any issue that is primarily the responsibility of the faculty or which impacts faculty roles. We serve as partners in the worthy cause of making Villanova a world class place of scholarship and learning.