April 5, 2013

Professor Lynn Fisher, Chair
UIS Campus Senate
Dept. of Sociology/Anthropology
MS UHB 3038

Professor Matthew Wheeler, Chair
UIUC Senate Executive Committee
Dept. of Animal Sciences
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Professor Philip Patston, Chair
UIC Senate Executive Committee
Dept. of Oral Medicine and Diagnostic Sciences
Room 558 DENT MC 838

Re: Proposed revisions to the Statutes, Article XIII, Section 8 — to authorize the University Senates Conference to initiate revisions to the Statutes. (USC ST-79/OT-296)

Dear Colleagues:

The University Senate Conference approved the enclosed proposal to revise the Statutes at its meeting on January 17, 2013. The amended language would provide authorization for the University Senates Conference to initiate revisions to the Statutes.

The University Senates Conference has proposed revisions to the Statutes in the past, so there are precedents. On July 10, 2006, this body transmitted to the three senates proposed revisions to the Statutes (ST-67) that eliminated the language concerning term limits for USC membership. The language was approved by all three senates and enacted by the Board of Trustees on May 17, 2007. In academic year 2006, the Conference initiated items (ST-63 and ST-65) that changed the beginning of USC membership terms from September 1 to the beginning of the academic year and changed the title of USC Secretary to USC Vice Chair. Both items were approved by all three senates and enacted by the Board.

Statutory revisions proposed by the Conference have not only been to revise Article II, Section II of the Statutes, which defines the organization and functions of the University Senates Conference. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs occasionally asked the Conference to draft proposed statutory revisions to be transmitted to the senates. Some specific items were: ST-30 — terms of faculty employment (which later became sanctions less than dismissal), ST-35 — changes to include the word "research" in the list of modifiers that cannot be part of a tenure or tenure-track title, ST-37 — to remove the ranks of assistant professor and instructor from the list of ranks that may be accorded indefinite tenure, ST-45 — interruption of the probationary period, ST-47 — to permit multi-year contracts for certain non-tenure-track academic staff not currently eligible for contracts longer than one year.
This recommendation would codify a practice that has been in place. Yet even this proposal in itself does not follow the process outlined in the Statutes.

The Board of Trustees Office is currently engaged in a process of reviewing the Statutes and the General Rules to make editorial revisions. Any revisions will follow the normal approval process. Rather than roll this proposed change into that larger editorial process, the Conference decided at its meeting of March 27 to transmit this item to the senates separately.

Please follow the process of your respective senate to consider this proposed revision to the Statutes and report back.

Sincerely,

Nicholas C. Burbules, Chair
University Senates Conference

Enclosure

cc: Elizabeth Dooley
    Robert Easter
    Susan Kies
    Brian Moore
    Christophe Pierre
    Jenny Roether
    Members, University Senates Conference