

MINUTES¹
UNIVERSITY SENATES CONFERENCE

DATE: Wednesday, August 26, 2015

PLACE: President's House, Urbana

PRESENT: Boltuc, Burbules (Chair), De Groote, Erricolo, Francis, Graber, Jackson, Johnson, Kalita, LaDu, Maher, Miller, Mohammadian, Novak, Rao, Villegas (Vice Chair), Vincent, Weech, Wheeler

ABSENT: Deberry-Spence

GUESTS: Timothy Killeen, Jami Painter, Maureen Parks, Christophe Pierre

Professor Nicholas Burbules, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

I. Remarks from the USC Chair

Professor Burbules thanked President Killeen for hosting the meeting at the President's House. He then welcomed the new Senates Conference members.

II. Meeting with President Killeen and Vice President Pierre

President Killeen commented that the strategic planning process is underway. There were a lot of good ideas and concepts generated at the planning retreat. He hoped that the Conference would engage in the strategic planning process. In order to create a shared vision, he wants to hear many diverse voices in the engagement piece. The strategic plan should be a modern, fresh, and exciting vision to share with the students so they feel ownership, pride, and connection to the University. Some of the issues to consider are how the campuses interact, the relationship with the state, what it means to be a land-grant institution in the 21st century, how and where to grow enrollment, access, completion, and civic engagement. The President said that it is time for the University to move forward and recommit to its path of being an engine of scholarship and research and a beacon for excellence and integrity that is meaningful at the state and national levels. The President commented that there are many good stories to tell. He discussed the recent agreement between UIC and the City Colleges of Chicago to guarantee UIC admission to the Star Scholars earning a B average or better. UA is providing scholarship money. UIC members mentioned that there is a long history of the accomplishments of the campus being ignored by the press. President Killeen responded that he would increase efforts to correct this.

There was a discussion concerning the various aspects of enrollment growth. President Killeen said that the University should continue its practices of enrolling students coming from abroad, but should not displace talented Illinois students. Many Illinois students go

¹Subject to approval at the University Senates Conference meeting of September 21, 2015

out of state for college due to various reasons, but often due to access and financial reasons. He also commented that the University needs to provide access and reconnect to the communities where regional economies are suffering. Enrolling more African-American students is critical. It was mentioned that UIC has been designated as a Latino serving institution. The President pointed out that the University has capacity at the upper levels to receive transfer students and should provide a better pathway for community college students. The group discussed ways to increase enrollment through online and blended learning. However, if enrollment increases, it was stressed that excellence should not be compromised. The importance of keeping students in Illinois and keeping U of I students connected to the University after graduation was also discussed. While there is not a lack of spectacular ideas, it was pointed out that the lack of resources often keeps these ideas from coming to fruition.

Vice President Pierre commented that the University needs to raise revenues and be more efficient. The state provides a lot of funding when direct payments to healthcare and the pension system are taken into consideration. The University should also look at activities it can no longer afford to do and invest in priorities. The President said that administration needs to work more efficiently in ways that could free up time for the faculty.

President Killeen was asked to comment on two of the vice president positions – Research and Health Affairs. He responded that there will be a review of all senior management in UA. The President noted that not all recommendations have been implemented from the previous UA review. There may be additional adjustments. The group briefly discussed the composition of the medical college transition team.

Professor Burbules commented that President Killeen had already provided important ideas about thinking of the University as a system. He said that a role of USC is to work towards the good of all three campuses and added that the system topic would be discussed at the group's retreat next month. President Killeen commented that the strategic planning process is a good place to discuss the topic as well. He added that a leadership voice for education is needed in Illinois; for all of education, not just higher education. The group discussed the importance of being competitive with research funding, being at the table of national organizations and societies, and being involved in interdisciplinary research.

President Killeen said that the University needs to address problems and then move on. He closed by saying that the role of USC is important and encouraged the Conference members to engage in the strategic planning process.

III. Summary of the USC Executive Committee meeting on August 17, Professor Jorge Villegas, USC Vice Chair

The Senates Conference went into executive session at 1:15pm to discuss personnel issues. The executive session ended at 2:45pm.

IV. Meeting with Maureen Parks and Jami Painter

Professor Burbules commented that the University is establishing a policy to have background checks for new hires, including faculty. The draft policy has been revised from the one USC saw in December when Maureen and Jami met with the group and is scheduled to go to the Board of Trustees on September 10. Each campus will develop its own implementation process. While the Board will approve the overarching framework, it will not approve the details set at the campus level.

Ms. Parks said that the input provided by USC at the December meeting was very helpful. There has been feedback throughout the process from faculty and other employee groups, as well as advice from internal legal counsel and external legal counsel. If the Board approves the policy, background checks will begin as early as October 5. She commented that background checks have been done for years for certain employee groups; for example those in security sensitive positions, those working with minors, those in direct patient care, those who have access to large amounts of cash, and administrators. The new policy is an expansion of what is already being done. Ms. Parks clarified that the University policy will apply to all three campuses, but the campuses can develop their own implementation processes within the policy guidelines.

A list of concerns, suggestions, and questions voiced by USC members follows:

- Campuses will be tied to the University policy in their implementation process
- Faculty should be involved in the review process when there is a “hit”
- Discourage use of “may” in second paragraph of the second section. Suggest “shall” or “will” so that there is not a choice, which could be viewed as discriminatory
- Concerns with reliability of company doing the background checks; concern with there being mistakes
- Unintentional consequences; there should be an ongoing collection of data to see if the background check policy has an effect on things such as discouraging certain groups from applying
- The language of being able to revoke a conditional offer might make it look like the Board has more freedom to reject recommendations
- Concern that the added length of time to the search process might make the University less competitive
- Criminal record and history – discourage use of “and history”
- Concerns with removal of box (both pro and con) – Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
- Last sentence of second paragraph in second section is too long; add colon after “limited to”
- Should hosted international students who work in labs be background checked?

Professor Burbules thanked Ms. Parks and Ms. Painter for joining the meeting.

Conference members expressed concern that the final document would not be reviewed by the senates before going to the Board. Professors Maher and Miller drafted a statement on

the University Policy on Background Checks. After full discussion by the Conference, the statement was approved unanimously with no abstentions. The statement, to be sent to the President, reads:

The University Senates Conference has examined in detail the latest written policy document on background checks. USC had substantial discussion about the consequences of implementing this policy. USC found serious concerns even though there had been extensive attorney review of the document. USC believes that the policy draft raises issues that must be discussed by the senates. Therefore to ensure understanding and review of the policy, USC recommends delay of its implementation until there can be a thorough review by the senates.

V. Approval of University Senates Conference Minutes of June 25, 2015

The minutes were approved as written.

VI. Classification of Senate Minutes

There were no senate minutes to classify.

Explanation of File Numbers

ST - University of Illinois *Statutes*

GR - *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*

NC - Nominating Committee

OT - All other items

VII. Old Business – Action Items

None.

VIII. New Business

1. Designation of Observer of Board of Trustees Meeting:

Thursday, September 10, 2015

Urbana

Gay Miller

USC Report

Nicholas Burbules

2. OT-325. USC 2015 Retreat.

Professor Burbules suggested that the USC Executive Committee work on developing an agenda for the retreat. He expected that most topics would be related to strategic planning topics. He welcomed suggestions from USC members.

IX. Old Business – Information and Discussion Items

3. OT-324. Policy on Criminal Background Checks.

This item was discussed with Maureen Parks and Jami Painter earlier in the meeting.

4. ST-72. Revisions to the *Statutes*, Article X, Section 2 (Academic Freedom). Passed UIUC Senate 12/6/10. Passed UIC Senate 9/22/11. Passed UIS Senate 12/14/12. Transmitted to the President 1/18/13. Revised language approved by USC 3/18/14. Transmitted to Senates 3/21/14. Passed UIUC Senate 11/17/14. Passed UIC Senate as amended 1/29/15. Passed UIS Senate 4/10/15. Transmitted to President 5/12/15.

No new information.

5. ST-77/GR-46. Revisions to the *Statutes* and *General Rules* – Edits and Updates. Received from the Board of Trustees Governance, Personnel, and Ethics Committee 10/6/14. *Statutes*: Transmitted to Senates 10/10/14. Passed UIC Senate 12/3/14. Passed UIS Senate 1/23/15. Passed UIUC Senate 5/4/15. *General Rules* transmitted to the President 12/22/14. *General Rules* (Intellectual Property) transmitted to Senates 1/26/15. Passed UIS Senate 3/6/15. Passed UIC Senate 4/23/15. Passed UIUC Senate 5/4/15. *Statutes* and *General Rules* (Intellectual Property) transmitted to the President 5/29/15.

No new information.

6. ST-79. Proposed revisions to the *Statutes*, Article II, Section 2.b, and Article XIII, Section 8 – to authorize the University Senates Conference to initiate revisions to the *Statutes*. Approved by USC 1/17/13. Transmitted to Senates 4/5/13. Revised language approved by USC 6/18/13. Transmitted to Senates 6/21/13. Passed UIC senate 9/26/13. Alternate language passed UIUC Senate 11/18/13. Transmitted to Senates 11/26/13. Passed UIS Senate 2/21/14. Passed UIC Senate 4/24/14. Transmitted to the President 6/11/14.

No new information.

7. OT-223. Annual Review of the Vice Presidents.

No new information.

8. OT-304. Open Access to Research Articles. Transmitted to Senates 10/21/14.

No new information.

9. OT-307. President's Executive Leadership Program.

No new information.

10. OT-310. Recommendation for New Policy Language Related to Classified Research at the University of Illinois. Transmitted to Senates 6/25/14. Passed UIS Senate 9/12/14. Withdrawn UIC Senate 1/29/15.

No new information.

11. OT-320. Salary increments and campus budgeting priorities.

No new information.

12. OT-323. USC Statement on Budget Planning and Reform. Transmitted to President Easter, President-elect Killeen, and Chairman McMillan 4/27/15.

No new information.

13. OT-123. University Senates Conference Guests.

No new information.

14. Campus Updates.

There were no campus updates.

15. Reports from USC Committee Chairs:

Academic Affairs and Research Committee
Finance, Budget and Benefits Committee
Hospital and Health Affairs Committee
Statutes and Governance Committee

Gay Miller
Roy Campbell
Jorge Villegas
Nicholas Burbules

There were no reports.

16. OT-142. Updates on External Committees: Enrollment Management Policy Council (Leff); UI Labs Task Force (Chambers); Vice President for Academic Affairs Faculty Advisory Committee (Chambers, Mohammadian, Tolliver, Villegas); Vice President for Academic Affairs UA Budget Review Advisory Committee (Mohammadian, Villegas, Wheeler); Vice President for Research Faculty Advisory Committee (Boltuc, Chambers, Villegas, Wheeler).

There were no updates.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.