

University Senates Conference

26-27 September 2005

Abstract

The University Senates Conference met in retreat at Allerton House Conference Center on the evening of 26 September and all day on 27 September 2005. This is the report of the meeting.

1 Monday Evening

Members and guests gathered for a reception and dinner on Monday evening. Guests were President B. Joseph White, Vice President Chester Gardner, Chancellor Richard Herman, Senator Richard Winkel, Representative Naomi Jakobsson, and Representative William Black.

The conversations at the various tables were wide ranging.

After dinner and leave taking, the members gathered to consider a modest agenda at an informal meeting.

1. **Review of USC policies: USC Confidentiality Guidelines and USC Guidelines for Observers to Board of Trustees Meetings.** These policies were distributed to new members. A short discussion took place concerning the guests invited to the morning of the meeting of the Board breakfast with certain members of the Board of Trustees. It was agreed that the chairs of the senate executive committees and the chair of USC together with the official observers from USC and the campuses would be invited to attend these breakfasts.
2. **Review of the Strategic Plan for the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.** The Vice President for Academic Affairs Chet Gardner was scheduled to present a draft of the strategic plan for his office to USC at its formal meeting on

Tuesday. Members of USC discussed some of the proposals and their implications. It was feared by some that the plan suggested that the UI should copy the University of Phoenix model. Many questions were to be asked of Gardner the next day.

3. **Domestic Partner Benefits (evaluate equality of benefits for same-sex domestic partners and revisit benefits for opposite-sex domestic partners).** The University does now offer health benefits to same sex partners of employees. However the level of benefits is not equal to benefits offered to married partners of employees. Also the University does not offer health benefits to opposite sex domestic partners of employees. The USC discussed the status of resolutions from all senates concerning these matters and decided to request anew that all domestic partners of employees be offered health benefits that are equal or equivalent to those available to married partners. It was felt that there was no need to ask the separate senates to renew their resolutions on this matter.
4. **Strategic Communication and Marketing of the University.** Anecdotal evidence suggests that the University has not done a good job marketing itself and that there is a need for substantial improvement in this area.
5. **Review of the University Strategic Planning Framework.** Members of USC affirmed the request that USC members have the opportunity to review and comment on the final draft of the Framework before it is officially released.

2 Tuesday

The formal meeting of USC began at 9:00 AM. Before President White and Vice President Gardner arrived at 10:00 AM, several business matters were discussed: the minutes were approved, classification of the UIUC 19 Sept 2005 actions were approved, future meeting dates were approved, committee appointments were approved, management team members were approved, and a discussion about changing the terms of members of USC from 01 Sept each year to the beginning of the fall term each year was held.

At 10:00 AM President White and Vice President Gardner arrived. Since this part of the meeting is in executive session, information cannot be reported. But Gardner was given lots of suggestions for changes to his strategic plan.

After lunch, members returned to the open meeting at which a number of items were considered.

1. OT-218. Proposed Guidelines for Multi-Institutional Degrees.

2. OT-157. Chief Illiniwek.
3. OT-220. USC Retreat 2005. Comments about the retreat and suggestions for future retreats were heard.
4. OT-185. Senate Resolutions on Benefits for Domestic Partners. The Conference decided to refer this issue to the USC Budget and Benefits Committee.
5. ST-47. Proposed Revisions to the Statutes, Articles IX and X, to provide optional multi-year contracts, and related dismissal procedures, for certain academic staff. The 2004-05 USC Statutes Committee (Professor Finnerty, Chair) discussed the documents passed by the senates (enclosed).
6. OT-191. Severe Sanctions Less Than Dismissal – Follow-up and Senate Procedures. Implementation Passed UIUC Senate 4/28/03. Implementation Passed UIS Senate 10/24/03. Implementation Passed UIC 4/15/05.
7. OT-213. Five-Year Review of the Position of Vice President for Technology and Economic Development. These reviews will take place in the near future.
8. OT-123. Discussion of University Senates Conference guests. Discussion of possible guests to invite to future meetings was held.
9. Campus Updates. Members updated the Conference on campus matters.
10. OT-142. Update on the Management Teams: Academic Affairs; Business Administration and Human Resources; External Relations; Governmental Relations; Technology and Economic Development; and University Technology. Reports of meetings were delivered.
11. Report of Observer of Board of Trustees Meeting: A report on the meeting was delivered.
12. Review of Pending Items on the Agenda Addendum. Items on the standing agenda were discussed.

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USC Representative to UIUC Senate Executive Committee

30 September 2005