

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE**  
(Final; Information)

UC.13.02 Report on the September 18, 2012 meeting of the University Senates Conference held at the University of Illinois Chicago campus.

The Conference membership list for 2012-13 can be found here:

<http://www.usc.uillinois.edu/membership.cfm>

The agenda for this meeting can be found here:

<http://www.usc.uillinois.edu/Documents/AGN-0918-12.pdf>

The Conference was joined by President Robert Easter, Vice-President of Academic Affairs Christophe Pierre, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees Christopher Kennedy. Dr. Donald Langenberg, Chancellor Emeritus of University of Illinois-Chicago, joined the Conference for lunch.

The meeting was convened at 10:00 AM.

**I. REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT, and MEETING WITH PRESIDENT EASTER AND VICE-PRESIDENT PIERRE**

The Conference discussed three major topics with the President and with Vice-President Pierre: 1) reviews of academic programs; 2) budgetary matters; and 3) the establishment of advisory committees for each of the Vice-Presidents.

1) Reviews of academic programs:

President Easter indicated that the Board is interested in how the campuses carry out reviews of academic programs. Vice-President Pierre is working on the development of a set of guidelines for assessments and reviews of academic programs, to be done by the academic units themselves. In terms of methodology, the review will draw as much as possible on data that are already available, such as that found in the Division of Management Information (<http://www.dmi.illinois.edu/>).

Vice-President Pierre requested the Conference members' thoughts about potential "indicators" of program success, and a substantial and thoughtful discussion followed. Conference members agreed that a) program reviews should take into consideration not only objective data, such as average time to degree or numbers of students enrolled in programs, but also information that would help to sketch a profile of the unit's general climate; b) reviews should be carried out as "close to the ground" as possible and assessed by the colleges rather than by more distant administrative units; c) the structure of the general review must reflect the wide variation from unit to unit in terms of a unit's contributions to the University and how success is gauged within a specific discipline or profession.

2) Budgetary issues:

President Easter and Vice President Pierre commented that the University must prepare for the drop-off in federal funding that could take effect in January 2013, if the proposed across-the-board cuts known as “sequestration” are enacted. [See the Budget Control Act of 2011, available here: [http://rules.house.gov/Media/file/PDF\\_112\\_1/Floor\\_Text/DEBT\\_016\\_xml.pdf](http://rules.house.gov/Media/file/PDF_112_1/Floor_Text/DEBT_016_xml.pdf).]

They are particularly interested in examining the budgets of University-level administrative offices this year, with an eye to whether the most efficient use is being made of funds allocated to UA. Dr. William Adams, former Chief Financial Officer of UI-Urbana, will aid in this examination for a period of some months.

### 3) Establishing advisory committees for each of the Vice-Presidents:

Dr. Larry Schook, Vice-President of Research, has convened his faculty advisory committee; and Vice-President Pierre is in the process of forming one for his office as well. Conference members expressed a consensus that it would be desirable to form a similar faculty committee to advise Dr. Skip García, Vice-President of Health Affairs, and discussed the potential advantages and challenges of doing so for Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer Walter Knorr. The Conference agreed that the membership of these committees may feature some overlap with the membership of USC, but should not be drawn exclusively or even largely from the Conference.

## **II. LUNCH GUEST, DR. DONALD LANGENBERG, CHANCELLOR EMERITUS OF UI-CHICAGO:**

Joined also by Drs. Easter and Pierre, the Conference members enjoyed a conversation with Dr. Langenberg on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Chicago campus. Dr. Langenberg, who was the first chancellor of UIC, reflected on the many changes that have occurred in the University and in public higher education nationally since 1982. He also shared his thoughts about online education and other important forces that are likely to shape the functions, processes, and demographics of public universities in this nation over the next three decades.

## **III. CONVERSATION WITH MR. CHRISTOPHER KENNEDY, CHAIRMAN, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Chairman Kennedy offered to join the Conference when he learned, the day before, that we were meeting in Chicago, and we were happy to have him with us for a half-hour or so after lunch. Among other topics, we discussed the Board’s interest in continuing to monitor the efficiency of the University’s operations in all respects, along the lines of the evaluations carried out by our campus under the Stewarding Excellence at Illinois initiative. Chairman Kennedy expressed concern about the gradual decrease in the percentage of tenure-track faculty members at our campuses, in particular as it affects faculty/student ratios. He also emphasized the need for an assertive recruitment program in order to attract the best students to our campuses.

## **IV. BUSINESS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

1. The Conference approved a Resolution of congratulations to the UIC campus on its thirtieth anniversary, and asked Prof. Donald Chambers, UIC, to read it on our behalf at a formal event in honor of the occasion that evening.

2. The USC Executive Committee was charged with specifying topics to be discussed during the annual USC Retreat, to be held in Urbana and at Allerton on Oct. 15-16. It was suggested that these

topics might draw on comments made at today's meeting by President Easter, Vice-President Pierre, and Chairman Kennedy, referenced above; as well as issues discussed by the Board of Trustees at its July 18 Retreat. (Materials on the July BOT Retreat are available at <http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/board-retreat-20120718/>.)

3. Appointments of USC members to the four new USC committees were approved. (The Conference had voted at the August meeting to establish four committees whose charges would parallel those of the four committees of the Board of Trustees; see the agenda packet for the Sept. 10, 2012 meeting for a report on that meeting.)

The committee membership is as follows:

*Academic Affairs and Research Committee:* Profs. Carol Leff and Matthew Wheeler, Urbana; Prof. Lynn Fisher, UIS; Profs. Donald Chambers and Shahrbanoo Fadavi, UIC

*Finance, Budget, and Benefits Committee:* Profs. Mary Mallory, Roy Campbell, and George Francis, Urbana; Prof. Peter Boltuc, UIS; Profs. Benet Deberry Spence (replacing Prof. Philip Patston on USC) and Danilo Errico, UIC

*Hospital and Health Affairs Committee:* Profs. Leslie Strubel and Kim Graber, Urbana; Prof. Jorge Villegas, UIS; Profs. Donald Chambers and Geula Gibori, UIC

*Statutes, Governance, and Ethics Committee:* Profs. Ken Anderson and Joyce Tolliver, Urbana; Profs. Timothy Shanahan and Kouros Mohammadian, UIC; Prof. Lynn Fisher, UIS

Conference members agreed that each committee member would email USC Secretary Connie Sailor with nominations for chair of the committee (s) on which they serve. The Secretary would then organize any resulting elections.

4. Conference members discussed the format of this year's regular USC address to the Board, which is included on the agenda of every Board meeting. The consensus was that several members would participate in representing the USC. A small committee (Prof. Leslie Strubel, Urbana; Prof. Don Chambers, UIC, and Prof. Lynn Fisher, UIS) was selected to suggest topics for these presentations.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Joyce Tolliver, USC Liaison