

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

URBANA SENATE OBSERVER

(Final; Information)

SC.20.25 Report on the March 12, 2020 Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois System in Urbana

**Opening Events**

The meeting convened at 8:03am and immediately went into executive session. The normal meeting resumed at 9:51am. Students Connor Stout and Lisa Buhelos from the Lyric Theatre performed the Illinois state song as well as the song "For Good" from the musical Wicked. Their performance was met with a standing ovation.

Chancellor Robert Jones was invited to give the welcoming remarks by Chairman Donald J. Edwards. Chancellor Jones commented first on Urbana's efforts to manage and mitigate COVID-19 impacts. (Note that this meeting took place the day after the announcement of moving to alternative instruction.) He spoke about the critical nature of maintaining operational continuity of the University during this time. He also spoke about the attractiveness of the Research Park for companies like Genective, a company that just moved its headquarters from France to the Research Park. He shared that Urbana had 8 professors named as fellows to the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences and described the Mellon Foundation's grants to the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, both demonstrations of the research excellence at the University. According to the Illinois Success survey of May 2019 graduates, 93% of them had their first job or were in graduate school within 6 months of graduation with an average starting salary of \$63,515. Of those graduates, 75% of them found their destination within Illinois.

President Tim Killeen described that decisions related to COVID-19 were being driven by science and focused on social distancing. He continued his series of "Empowering Excellence" presentations and discussed the \$5 million gift by Chairman Edwards towards the Discovery Partners Institute. The state has also committed \$500 million to a downtown Chicago building as well as buildings around the state. President Killeen described talent development within the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN) that aims to reach 10,000 students, teachers, and other participants. The 15 hubs in the IIN each have their own priorities and local needs that they address. While the effort is by the whole state, the University of Illinois system is the lead. The goal is for a \$19 billion impact on the state over the next ten years. The plans forecast 48,000 new economy jobs over the next 10 years and 9,500 jobs every year by FY29.

CFO Avijit Ghosh shared that the Rebuild Illinois Appropriation provided \$815.1 million for capital projects at the three Universities. Funds were released on February 12, 2020, and have funded Urbana projects such as Altgeld Hall renovations, the Data Science Collaborative remodel of Illini Hall, and Research Park expansion. The Campus Instructional Facility at the corner of Wright and Springfield is the largest expansion of classroom space in many years. Before this capital investment from the state, most projects have been self-funded by the University through bonds, donors, capital reserves, and operating funds.

Professors Aria Razfar and Rob Karr presented from the University Senates Conference on “Enhancing Teaching Across the University of Illinois System.” The Urbana Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning is well ahead of efforts at Chicago and Springfield. They spoke of innovations such as the CS+X majors that combine computer science with other disciplines such as anthropology, advertising, chemistry, and animal sciences. The iMBA program in the Gies College of Business is growing and expanding.

### **Public Comments**

Four students made public comment. While three asked the University to divest from all fossil fuel companies, one student asked the University to invest in bird-safe glass in building construction to reduce the number of bird strikes on buildings.

### **Votes Conducted**

All of the agenda items were approved. These topics were among the noteworthy items and items relevant to Urbana. Details can be found at the Board of Trustees website:

<http://www.trustees.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/March-12-2020/>

- Resolution honoring Chairman Donald J. Edwards for his substantial donation to the University, a first in the history of the Board of Trustees
- Establish the Bachelor of Science in Plant Biotechnology, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, Urbana
- Establish the Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling, College of Education and the Graduate College, Urbana
- Approve Student Health Insurance Rates for Urbana and Chicago Universities, Academic Year 2020-2021
- Revise University of Illinois System Investment Policy Statement
- Rename the Engineering Instructional Facility, Urbana
- Rename the William L. Everitt Laboratory of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Urbana
- Approve Design for Susan and Clint Atkins Baseball Training Center and the Softball Training Center; Approve Name of the Softball Training Center, Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, Urbana

## **Final Items**

President Killeen honored Chairman Edwards as per the resolution that was passed. President Killeen congratulated Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation Ed Seidel on being announced as the next President of the University of Wyoming. President Killeen described policies on faculty-student relationships as well as sexual misconduct background checks that he expected to be ready for approval in May. He shared that the University has raised \$2.5 billion in its current fundraising campaign. He also repeated that all decisions related to COVID-19 pandemic would continue to be science-based.

Chairman Edwards thanked the Chancellors and the Provosts for their pandemic mitigation plans: “With everything facing us, we need the University of Illinois to lead.”

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, in Springfield. The Board will return to Urbana for a retreat on July 22<sup>nd</sup> with a meeting the following day.

Submitted,  
Mike Bohlmann