UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
Senate Executive Committee
Minutes
July 25, 2016

Present: Chair Gay Miller, Nicholas Burbules, Bettina Francis, Prasanta Kalita, Calvin Lear, William Maher, Anita Mixon, Kathryn Oberdeck, Matthew Wheeler

Absent: Vice-Chair Kim Graber, Abbas Aminmansour, Michael Bohlmann, John Hart, Sam LeRoy, David O’Brien, Michael Sandretto

Guests: Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost Edward Feser, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Policies Abbas Benmamoun, Associate Provost for Faculty Development Bill Bernhard, Dean of the Graduate College Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko, Associate Chancellor for Public Affairs Robin Kaler, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Renee Romano

Media: Daily Illini – Claire Hettinger, News-Gazette – Julie Wurth

A regular meeting of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) was called to order at 3:13 pm on Monday, July 25, 2016 in 232 English Building, with Chair Miller presiding.

1. Introductions
   Introductions were made by non-members.

2. Approval of Minutes
   The minutes from June 13, 2016 were approved as distributed.

3. Chair’s Remarks
   Chair Miller reported on her attendance at the Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting and retreat on July 20 and 21. At the Retreat, President Killeen recommended continuing a tuition freeze. Killeen considered the tuition freeze as follow-through on providing accessible and affordable education.

   Walter Knorr, Chief Financial Officer, presented information on the University budget situation. The FY2017 appropriation was a lump sum of $349.2 million to be distributed to the University by December 2016. A stop gap appropriation of $180 million was also distributed to the University on June 22.

   Continued increases in health care costs put spending at approximately $20,000 per employee. Miller gave her opinion that the estimate seemed high and noted a data source was not cited.

   The Urbana Campus student trustee, Collin Schumock, will be a voting member of the BOT in the fall.

   Miller thanked SEC members that were able to attend a breakfast with the new Chancellor Robert Jones. Miller enjoyed the informal breakfast discussion with no set agenda, no business to conduct, and looks forward to working with Jones.

   Miller spoke with Jennifer Creasy (Director of State Relations, Office of Governmental Relations) regarding the distribution of the Senate budget resolution passed at the April 4, 2016 Senate meeting. Creasy recommended sending the resolution to the entire general assembly. Senate Clerk Roether has now sent the resolution to the entire IL General Assembly. Miller received a thank you response from State Representative David Harriss.

   In response to the E-Week request for faculty advisors to the Student Sustainability Committee, Miller contacted current and future chairs of the Senate Committee on Campus Operations, Nancy O’Brien and Gary Kling. Kling recommended Bruce Branham, a professor of horticulture, and Director of Allerton Park and the Student Sustainable Farm. Branham gave his willingness to serve.
4. Chancellor’s Remarks
Feser announced that dean vacancies in the College of Applied Health Sciences (AHS) and College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES) have been filled.

Feser noted that the budget crisis is not preventing the campus from attracting good faculty. Especially distinguished senior faculty have been hired in the colleges of Business, AHS, Engineering and elsewhere. Feser provided more information on the budget situation in agenda item 5.B.

Feser anticipates negotiations with a College of Medicine Dean finalist soon. Burbules expressed concern over the perceived secrecy in the COM Dean search. Feser replied that a higher level of confidentiality is the norm in the medical school deanship searches, as compared to other deanships, so there was a greater need for discretion and confidentiality in ours. Feser noted that there have been a number of productive conversations with Carle on how to handle searches, and that Carle did not dictate the manner in which the search was conducted; it was a joint decision of the university and Carle based on advice received from the search consultant, norms in medical dean searches, and preferences of our candidate pool. The lack of a public campus visit and interview will not be a trend in future searches for other deanships.

5. New Business
A. AAUP Censure Update
Feser announced that the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) did not remove the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from the censure list. The AAUP was swayed by the prospect of changes to the University Statutes regarding delegation of hiring authority from the BOT to President to Chancellor.

A number of changes have been made this year in response to the censure. The campus, UA and BOT processes for hiring have been improved to correct timing problems, the Salaita case has been settled, and the university and System formally restated our commitment to academic freedom. Provost’s Communication #3, Appointments of Faculty, Specialized Faculty, and Academic Professionals, has been revised. Consultations are expected at all levels in the hiring process. The off-cycle promotion and tenure review process has been improved. Feser noted that this situation allowed the Urbana campus the opportunity to educate and to help the BOT understand the hiring process on this campus. The Board has signaled that it wishes to help facilitate hiring more efficiently. The Board is not involved intimately in the hiring process. This year begins with the new hiring processes. Everything AAUP asked the campus to do as a condition for censure removal was accomplished. Feser indicated the changes will serve the campus well regardless of AAUP’s decision regarding censure in the future.

Burbules expressed concern that the local AAUP chapter may have negatively affected the vote to remove the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from the censure list. Burbules noted that BOT hiring delegation was not a condition set by the AAUP. Feser stated that Interim Chancellor Wilson was in conversations with the national AAUP office, and as much as anything, that office indicated incomplete communication between the local and the national AAUP chapters may have influenced the unanticipated outcome. Feser added that it is not unheard of, but it is very unusual, for a Board to delegate hiring authority to a campus and that the national office of AAUP understands this.

Lear asked if the Board has plans to move forward on any of the proposed Statutes changes that have been sent through from the three Senates and USC. Burbules, responding as the Chair of the University Senates Conference (USC), noted the proposed changes to the Statutes have been sent to Vice President Christophe Pierre by President Killeen. Burbules has asked that the majority of the proposed changes that with no foreseen issues be sent to the Board. Recommendations were made to the Office of the Vice President that any sections with possible issues be reworked, and that the proposed/revised language go back through the three Senates. The proposed changes are currently being held at the University Administration (UA) level. With VP Pierre’s announced departure, Burbules is hopeful to get some changes processed before Pierre has left.
B. Budget Situation Update

Feser announced that the Campus Budget Advisory Task Force (CBATF) has posted a final report and it is available on the Office of the Provost website. The report provides a good overview of the budget model. The report discusses good criteria and then an approach to revising the budgeting system and model. A steering committee is being put together to help guide the budget reform effort the Feser announced in the spring. A big component is that better accounting is needed.

The budgeting process is working well between the Office of the Provost and the colleges, but sometimes does not align with how colleges direct resources to units. Until the budgeting processes are better aligned, the campus cannot work to its strategic potential.

The University has begun another fiscal year, FY2017, without a state budget. In FY 2016, the campus predicted general revenue funding and planned accordingly by making reductions across campus and reducing spending by approximately $49 million, a share of which was offset by revenue growth from tuition.

If the two stopgap budgets that the legislators approved are considered FY16 funds, then the budget forecast was accurate. If the most recent stopgap budget is considered part of the FY17 budget, then there is about $140 million shortfall for FY16. Deans have been asked to hold back some funds in case there is a need to recover cash to cover the FY16 shortfall.

Feser anticipates additional GRF for FY16 and FY17, as the legislature’s current cuts are draconian. Current projections for FY17 are roughly 70 percent of the FY15 GRF. This represents additional reductions, which are significant.

The campus advanced MAP (Monetary Award Program) funding to students last academic year. MAP funding was advanced so students were protected from the impasse in Springfield. The same will be done this academic year. It is good for the campus and essential to the socioeconomic, racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. Feser believes that the legislature will do the right thing and again eventually fund the MAP program.

The campus will focus on an 8-10 year planning horizon as the budget process is reformed. The bigger challenge is the state’s lack capacity to properly support higher education, given the pension backlog, political impasse, and serious need for tax reform. Deans, department heads, and the faculty as a whole are being encouraged to create new programs to generate income in order to reduce reliance on state support, provided those programs are also academically important and distinctive. We need to continue to innovate and create, but also know that curriculum reform is needed to improve on the ability to meet student demand in various fields.

Feser noted that an important part of aligning the college and unit budgeting is about providing better information. Colleges need to focus on educating their units about how unit level decisions affect the college’s financial bottom line. For example, a unit’s decision not to offer a given course, may reduce revenues significantly, particularly in smaller colleges. Alignment is more about everyone having a common set of information and understanding about how revenues are generated, allocated and expended.

C. Revised Provost Communication #9

Benmamoun gave a presentation on updates and modification to Provost Communication #9. Every year Provosts Communications are reviewed, feedback is gathered, and revisions are made. This year, given the input, we decided to make changes. Some changes are substantive and some are clarifications.

Areas of change include effort budget, ballot options for promotion and tenure voting, purpose of internal evaluation, independence of internal evaluation, external letters: number and peer institutions, evaluation of future potential, and early promotion.
Effort Budget. Benmamoun stated that the three primary missions of the University are teaching, research, and service and public engagement. Wheeler noted that service and public engagement are not the same. The weight of each area should reflect the position of the individual being evaluated.

Ballot Options. Ballot options have changed by requiring a vote in favor or against recommending promotion. Abstentions are no longer a ballot option. Recusals are reported separately on the dossier.

Purpose of a Unit’s Evaluation of Research. Language clarifications were made to this section. The Executive Officers (EO’s) should discuss standard language in evaluations. Burbules stated that standard language may not work for all categories.

Independence of Internal Evaluation. The internal evaluation should not be looking at external letters. The evaluation should be within the unit. Benmamoun advised against the internal evaluators seeing the external evaluations.

Number of Letters. An increase was made to the number of required letters from four to five. Recently a small number of letters have been submitted and then more needed to be requested.

Evaluation of Future Potential. The evaluation should include an assessment of future teaching and service roles. Service roles were added.

Early Promotion. Language clarifications were made to this section. Early promotion should be done in a judicious manner. The likelihood of success should be very high. There are a number of risks to the candidate and these risks should be seriously considered before proceeding. Early promotions should be very rare. If the candidate is up for early promotion and does not review well, especially externally, it could negatively affect the faculty member’s reputation and future promotion potential.

D. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Changes Related to Overtime – Campus Implications

Benmamoun asked Staff Human Resources Deputy Director Robbie Witt to speak about the FLSA changes related to overtime. Witt stated that the change in the Act increased the threshold requirement to pay overtime, from $23,660 per year to $47,476 per year. There are a large number of employees that will no longer meet the salary threshold and will now be eligible for overtime.

Witt stated that a large number of academic professionals (AP) that are currently exempt will no longer meet threshold. Civil service, postdoctoral scholars (postdocs), graduate students, and several other personnel categories will be affected. Units have been asked to review individual employee duties and consider a possible salary increase. Some positions have seasonal overtime or require a large amount of travel. Central HR is not making these decisions, units are asked to decide the best choice for each unit.

Many duties performed outside of normal work hours such as working on emails, making phone calls, or reading papers, may now fall into the area where the employee is now required to be paid overtime. Deans are asked, if possible, to make salaries to be over the threshold at the time of hiring or at least take the new requirements into consideration.

The new rules must be implemented in the pay period where December 1, 2016 falls. Units need to determine if funds are available to pay over time. The most important thing is training and disseminating information to hiring units. Academic Human Resources Director Deborah Stone is also very involved in discussions surrounding the implications of the changes to the Act.

Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko, Dean of the Graduate College, is also involved because the Graduate College is responsible for postdoc scholars. Postdoctoral fellows have no employment status and are not subject to the changes to the FLSA. The majority of postdocs are employee postdoctoral research associates and are subject to FLSA. About 70% of the 600 postdocs are paid below the new threshold. We are looking at what our peer institutions are doing and taking into consideration a number of strategies. The majority of postdocs are paid on grants so the PI (principal investigator) needs to be engaged as
soon as possible. Many institutions are moving to a new floor for new hires, but that does not help meet the December 1 deadline with current postdocs. Chodzko-Zajko was confident that we will be compliant by the December 1 deadline. We need to make sure we remain competitive with our peers. Chodzko-Zajko noted that new hires might be paid above the threshold, and current postdocs might get paid overtime. Chodzko-Zajko noted that NIH (National Institutes of Health) has already indicated that the postdoctoral stipend levels for FY17 will be increased to exceed the FLSA level.

Vice Chancellor Renee Romano reported that she is responsible for about 1200 employees that will be affected by the increased threshold. For example, residence hall directors do not meet the threshold. Room and board is considered part of their compensation, but room and board does not count towards meeting the threshold. Housing cannot afford to increase residence hall director pay enough to meet the threshold.

Witt stated that the last increase to the overtime threshold made in 2004 was in no way as large as the current increase. This is an unprecedented increase. Benmamoun added that there will be another increase in three years. Witt estimated that in three years the threshold will most likely be set around $51,000.

E. **Nominations to the International Strategy Advisory Committee**

Feser noted that with the new Chancellor coming on board, campus will use IIP’s (Illinois International Programs) standing advisory committee to help advise in the development of our international strategy, rather than set up a new task force or additional committee. Vice Provost for International Affairs and Global Strategies Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela is finalizing the committee membership and charge for the new year.

6. **Announcements/Verbal Reports for Information**

There was a short discussion about affordable student housing. Lear asked if there has been any effort to track where students live and how much rent they pay in light of all of the new and pricey apartment buildings that have been recently constructed in the campus area. Romano noted those particular data are not currently tracked. Romano added that they are looking at the homeless student issues or students with unstable housing. The students are not sleeping on the street, but are sleeping on a friend’s couch.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 pm.

Jenny Roether
Clerk of the Senate