

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
Senate Executive Committee
(Final; Action)

SC.15.04 Resolution in Support of the Council of Illinois University Senates
“Statement of Concern”

WHEREAS the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and the Urbana-Champaign Senate in 2011 and 2012 have affirmed and reaffirmed support for the main concerns of the Council of Academic Professionals (CAP), most recently in SC 13.06, which cited (1) the imminent risk of losing the exemption authority of the campus and (2) the trend toward classifying AP (academic professional) positions as civil service, and

WHEREAS the Merit Board of the State Universities Civil Service System (SUCSS), which is composed of trustees from the state’s public universities, voted overwhelmingly on January 30, 2013 to preserve the exemption authority, and

WHEREAS the SUCSS Executive Director and staff have continued to engage in a pattern of adversarial audit activities and changes in methodology designed to achieve by audit findings what they could not obtain in an open and transparent vote of its Merit Board, and

WHEREAS the 2013 SUCSS audit of the Urbana campus alleged that more than 90% of the AP positions audited were improperly exempted and should have been civil service, a finding that is not credible, and

WHEREAS SUCSS officials have penalized the Urbana campus by imposing two nearly simultaneous audits, the 2015 biennial audit and a second special audit of every single academic professional hire made from July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014, a burdensome and punitive action, and

WHEREAS the SUCSS Executive Director has engaged in a pattern of contending that quietly adopted changes to its procedures manual override its own governing policies, as well as its 1998 agreement with the state’s universities that granted campuses the exemption authority, and

WHEREAS it is reasonably foreseeable that adversarial audit findings and such procedural changes will be used to sanction the Urbana campus with the removal of its exemption authority, with implications for other state universities, and

WHEREAS SUCSS officials have engaged in a pattern of lack of transparency and apparent violations of the Open Meetings Act, including requiring those who attend meetings to disclose their names and employers, and seating restrictions impeding public observation of its meetings;

WHEREAS the three CAP officers who spoke in public hearings all had positions targeted by the audit, and that the odds of this occurring randomly are a fraction of a percent, and

WHEREAS the Council of Illinois University Senates (CIUS), a body composed of representatives of the state's public universities, met on September 15, 2014, and subsequently adopted a "Statement of Concern" about these issues, and

WHEREAS the CIUS agreed that member schools would take the "Statement of Concern" back to their own Senate Executive Committees and/or Senates for consideration and endorsement, and

WHEREAS, the Senate Executive Committee unanimously endorsed the CIUS Statement of Concern on October 6, 2014, and

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Senate affirm its support of the CIUS Statement of Concern, which follows:

STATEMENT OF CONCERN

The Council of Illinois University Senates is gravely concerned about the actions of the Executive Director and staff of the State Universities Civil Service System (SUCSS) toward reclassifying principal administrative/academic professional positions within universities, as well as their adversarial audit activities and the threat thereof, without adequate and widespread consultation, including with the Presidents, Chancellors, Faculty leadership, and Human Resource Directors of the respective campuses. These actions strike us as both arbitrary and capricious, and lacking in the transparency we expect from our public bodies.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution, along with the CIUS Statement of Concern, be distributed to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, the SUCSS Merit Board, the authorized representatives of the CIUS, the University Senates Conference, President Robert Easter, the chancellors of all three campuses, the Council of Academic Deans, the University Professional Personnel Advisory Committee, and the Council of Academic Professionals.

SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Roy Campbell, Chair	Melissa Madsen
Kim Graber, Vice-Chair	William Maher
Abbas Aminmansour	Mary Mallory
Nicholas Burbules	Gay Miller
John Hart	David O'Brien
Matthew Hill	Michael Sandretto
Prasanta Kalita	Kevin Seymour
Calvin Lear	Joyce Tolliver