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**03/09/2015**

**UC.15.05**  
February 9, 2015

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

**UC.15.05** Report on the December 12, 2014 Meeting of the University Senates Conference at the Chicago Campus

The Conference membership list for 2014-15 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>

The Conference was joined by Vice-President of Academic Affairs Christophe Pierre, Associate Vice-President for Human Resources Maureen Parks, and Assistant Vice-President for Human Resources Jami Painter

Conference members present: Don Chambers (chair), Shar Fadavi (phone), Sandra DeGroote, Kouros Mohammadian, Jorge Villegas, Xiaoqing Li, George Francis, Kim Graber, Nicholas Burbules, Prasanta Kalita, Roy Campbell, Joyce Tolliver, Sally Jackson (phone), Carol Leff (phone), Catherine Vincent (ex officio as chair of UIC senate)

**MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT PIERRE**

Vice President Pierre discussed the transition to the new presidency and the new Board composition. He noted that President-Designate Killeen considers himself a “congenital optimist,” and that he has a steep learning curve, given that our institution is complex, and it is very important that new president understand the workings of University Administration and of the three campuses.

The vice-president told the Conference that Dr. Killeen will be visiting the campuses and the offices of University Administration several times before he takes office officially.

Regarding the budget, Vice President Pierre stated that, in general, the University is in good shape financially, although some areas could be improved, such as fund-raising. His assessment was that in the short term, we will be able to cope with budget reductions. However, we have been asked to model a plan for dealing with a 20% decrease in General Revenue Funds, about \$132 million. At this point, it is not clear how much the budget will have to be cut. The Vice-President also mentioned that there is discussion at the State level of gradually transferring pension costs to the university.

**MEETING WITH ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT PARKS AND ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT PAINTER**

The Conference held an extended discussion with Ms. Parks and Ms. Painter regarding changes to the University’s policies and procedures regarding pre-employment criminal background checks, which will take effect at some point during 2015.

In the context of a nation-wide discussion regarding criminal background checks that was prompted by the recent issues at Penn State, the Office of Human Resources surveyed current practices at peer institutions and concluded that it would be advisable to expand our current practices. Ms. Painter and Ms. Parks co-chair a university working group on background checks.

Currently these policies and procedures are set by each individual campus and by UA for its own employment processes. Currently the University does background checks only for security-sensitive positions; each campus decides which positions are security-sensitive. Each campus also determines for itself how to respond when a background check results in a "positive hit," that is, a conviction of a misdemeanor or felony crime.

The new policy being considered by the Office of Human Resources would involve implementing background checks for all new hires of faculty members, staff members, and residents. In cases of "findings," each case would be handled individually. The Office of Human Resources does not anticipate having to hire new staff to deal with new policy.

The Urbana campus already has a committee that reviews the results of background checks for potential hires in security-sensitive positions. This committee currently meets once a month. The Conference emphasized the importance of faculty members being strongly represented in any committee that would review the results of "positive hits" for potential faculty hires.

#### **BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair remarks: Chair Chambers remarked on the multiple transitions the University is undergoing (a new president, a new UIC chancellor and, eventually, a new provost; new Board composition, and new governor.) He proposed two resolutions, thanking outgoing Board members Chris Kennedy and Pamela Strobel for their service.

Statutes revision process (Nicholas Burbules, Chair, USC Statutes and Governance Committee)

Prof. Burbules reported that the UIC senate has now forwarded its advice on all the proposed revisions to the Statutes. The Urbana senate had only discussed the first two of eight groups of revisions, and it was estimated that the Urbana senate would need at least two more meetings to discuss all the proposed revisions and forward its advice.

In preparation for the Feb. 26, 2015 meeting of the Board, the USC Statutes committee plans to meet on Feb. 13 to process the advice it has received by then, for discussion at USC's next meeting on Feb. 25. That advice will then be reconciled, if necessary, and forwarded to Board. The rest of the senates' advice will be forwarded when the Urbana senate has forwarded all of its advice on all proposed revisions.

USC White Paper: At its fall retreat, the Conference agreed to compose a white paper expressing its view of shared governance at the University level. The Executive Committee will begin drafting the document, with an eye toward including portions of it in the briefing materials for President-Designate Killeen.

Respectfully submitted by Joyce Tolliver, USC Liaison to the Senate