

APPROVED

JUL 20 2011

Michele M. Thompson

MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

JUNE 8, 2011

This meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee was held in Rooms 218/219, Student Residence Hall, 818 South Wolcott Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, on Wednesday, June 8, 2011, beginning at 3:20 p.m. Trustee Karen Hasara, chair of the committee, welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked the clerk to call the roll. The following committee members were present: Ms. Karen Hasara, Ms. Patricia Brown Holmes, Dr. Timothy N. Koritz, and Mr. Lawrence Oliver. Mr. Ricardo Estrada was absent. Mr. Daniel Soso, voting student trustee from the Urbana campus, was present. The following nonvoting student trustees were also present: Ms. Roshina Khan, Chicago campus; and Mr. Charles Olivier, Springfield campus.

The following University officers were also in attendance: President Michael J. Hogan; Dr. Mrinalini C. Rao, vice president for academic affairs; Dr. Lawrence B. Schook, interim vice president for research; Mr. Thomas R. Bearrows, University counsel; Dr. Michele M. Thompson, secretary of the Board of Trustees and of the University. Attached is a listing of other staff members in attendance at this meeting.

Ms. Hasara asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the committee meeting that was held on March 22, 2011. On motion of Dr. Koritz, seconded by Mr. Oliver, these minutes were approved unanimously.

REVIEW OF RECOMMENDED BOARD ITEMS

Next, Ms. Hasara provided a brief overview of the items within the purview of the committee that were on the agenda for the Board of Trustees meeting the following day, and indicated that information regarding these items had been sent to committee members in advance of this meeting. President Hogan and Dr. Rao briefly discussed the approval process for sabbatical leaves and the timing of decisions related to tenure, and Ms. Khan inquired about the prerequisite of junior level status for the proposed Bachelor of Arts degree in public health at Chicago. Dr. Rao provided some explanation and details about this program and said she would convey Ms. Khan's concerns. There were no additional questions or objections expressed regarding these items.

REVIEW OF STATE PENSION ISSUES

Ms. Hasara asked Dr. Robert F. Rich, director of the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, and Dr. J. Fred Giertz, professor emeritus of economics, Urbana, and a faculty member in the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, to report on recent State pension issues. Dr. Rich reported that recent legislative actions related to State pensions were not passed during the last legislative session, and said that this issue is likely to be revisited by legislators in the future. He told committee members that Illinois has the largest unfunded pension liability in the country, and he provided an overview of the legal and constitutional issues regarding pension reform for new and existing State employees. He discussed other possible changes, including taxing pension benefits, increasing the cost of health insurance, and altering cost of living increases for retirees, as well as increasing the age of eligibility for retirement.

Dr. Giertz also commented on the pension deficit, which he said has resulted from the State's lack of payments, and described some possible solutions to remedy the deficit. He discussed the ramifications of taxing pension benefits, and explained that this type of legislation is a political issue because it would impact all residents of Illinois and would not be restricted to State employees. He referred to Senate Bill 512, which he said would have encouraged employees to leave the University or pursue alternatives outside of the current traditional pension system, and President Hogan commented on the hardship this would have placed on the University. Ms. Hasara commended those at the State University Retirement System (SURS) offices for encouraging current employees not to act with haste during these uncertain times, and Dr. Rich and Dr. Giertz described the timeline that the changes imposed by Senate Bill 512 would have likely followed if it had passed, noting that hearings may have delayed its effective date of July 1, 2012.

Committee members then discussed pension legislation that was passed last year and affects employees hired after January 1, 2011. Dr. W. Randall Kangas, associate vice president for planning and budgeting, provided additional details about these changes and stated that its effect on the University's ability to attract new faculty and staff is not yet clear, due partially to the low number of positions available since January. He said that a survey is currently being developed with the human resources office to investigate the impact of these changes on the hiring of new faculty and staff, and said that continued analysis is underway. Dr. Rao added that the effects of recent pension reform on hiring will become clearer in the coming months as new faculty and staff are hired.

PLANS FOR ENHANCING RESEARCH ACTIVITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Ms. Hasara then asked Dr. Schook to provide a presentation (material on file with the clerk) on research activity at the University. Dr. Schook thanked his colleagues for their assistance in preparing this presentation, and stated that he would also provide a presentation to the full Board at its retreat in July 2011. He began his presentation with an overview of the history, responsibilities, and goals of the office of the vice president for research, and he introduced the following presenters, who he said are exemplars of creativity and innovation at the University: Dr. Barbara Fiese, professor of human development and family studies, Urbana; Dr. Howard Ozer, professor of hematology/oncology and interim director of the Cancer Center, Chicago; Dr. Rohit Bhargava, assistant professor of bioengineering, Urbana; Dr. Amelia Bartholomew, professor of surgery and chief of translational research, Chicago; and Dr. Paul J. A. Kenis, professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, Urbana.

Dr. Fiese provided a presentation (materials on file with the clerk) on an Innovation Summit that was held at Urbana in April 2011 that focused on interdisciplinary learning and its integration with research opportunities and included workshops organized around five themes, including: health and wellness; social sciences and humanities; physical, biological sciences, and engineering; fine and applied arts; and institutional structures fostering education. She listed some sample workshops and described the topics discussed during panels and talks throughout the day, and she described next steps and opportunities that were identified at the summit. She told committee members that there was much excitement and energy shown throughout the summit, and said that opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and its integration with research is an area that would attract new faculty members and students.

Next, Dr. Schook asked Dr. Ozer and Dr. Bhargava to provide a presentation on the Cancer Center at Chicago (materials on file with the clerk). Dr. Ozer provided the definition of federally funded National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated cancer centers, which he said rely on great integration of facilities, researchers, physicians, and other individuals. He provided data regarding cancer rates throughout the State and reviewed the mission of the Cancer Center at Chicago, which he said is in an ideal position to address cancer health disparities. He described a transition from a system of independent cancer research communities at each campus at the University to an integrated system with each campus working together, which he said is unique in Illinois and provides an opportunity for differentiation. He then reviewed the statewide vision for the Cancer Center, including the achievement of National Cancer Institute designation in 2013, and he provided an overview of the characteristics of the Cancer Center that are assets in the application for this designation. He emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and coordination, and he showed that the integration of areas of specialty at Urbana and Chicago are advantageous in achieving this designation. He provided examples of existing collaborations and plans for moving forward, and he concluded by stating that the goal is to provide a statewide academic cancer center at the University of Illinois.

President Hogan commended both presentations, stating that these are good examples of enterprise-wide thinking and cross-campus collaboration. Dr. Schook commented on the need for the University to be its own advocate and increase its efforts to communicate its strengths, and he also referred to ongoing collaboration with Dr. Joe G.N. "Skip" Garcia, vice president for health affairs.

Dr. Schook then asked Dr. Bartholomew and Dr. Kenis to begin their presentation on stem cell and regenerative medicine (materials on file with the clerk). Dr. Kenis described the vision of regenerative biology and research in this area and reviewed strengths and resources at Urbana and Chicago that have provided opportunities for collaboration, citing examples of this type of collaborative work. He reported that he and Dr. Bartholomew have offered ongoing workshops involving faculty, students, and members of the medical community to facilitate interdisciplinary research in this area. Dr. Bartholomew provided a brief history of resources and funding and discussed strategic points of development that provide opportunities for further study, including the replacement of soft tissue, advanced kidney technology, replacing heart tissue, and rebuilding neurons, and provided examples of work that is already occurring in these areas. She also described a dual-campus symposia and highlighted the awards that are granted to students at this event, and she concluded with a brief overview of future directions of this initiative. Committee members discussed the presentation and the difficulties that are sometimes encountered in these efforts, and Ms. Hasara thanked all the presenters for providing this information.

Dr. Schook referred to his earlier comments regarding strengths at the University. He mentioned some issues that he and Dr. Garcia are currently investigating and acting upon, and he told the committee that he recently hired a staff member to focus on advocacy and communications, noting that the University has many strengths and stories that should be shared. He also mentioned the efforts of Dr. Gary Khru, the former director of the Cancer Center at Chicago, who passed away earlier this year.

Ms. Hasara stated that she will look forward to future updates, and she also thanked Dr. Rao for her assistance.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no business presented under this aegis.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Hasara thanked the student trustees, who recently graduated, for their service on this committee, and said they are a reminder of why the work of the Board is important. She thanked them for the time she spent with them throughout the year, which was followed by a round of applause. She then announced that the next meeting of this committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 7, 2011, at 3:00 p.m., at the Springfield campus, and stated that an additional meeting in July can be scheduled if needed.

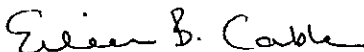
COMMITTEE MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, and on motion of Mr. Oliver, seconded by Mr. Soso, the meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michele M. Thompson
Clerk



Eileen B. Cable

Assistant Clerk



Karen Hasara
Chair