The USC February meeting in Chicago was very useful for its members to learn more about some of the major issues that UIC is facing such as its campus challenges, the situation of the Illinois Medical District Commission, and more importantly the future of the Hospital and Health Sciences System.

I. Chair: Dr. Nicolas Burbules

After a review of the general rules of the University of Illinois, it was found that they contain a series of rules on archiving of materials that would be impossible to follow in this digital age. According to the rules:

SECTION 4. UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
(b) Records produced or received by any agency or employee of the University in the transaction of university business become university property. For the purposes of this paragraph, records shall be defined as including all documents, correspondence, accounts, files, manuscripts, publications, photographs, tapes, drawings, or other material bearing upon the activities and functions of the University or its officers and employees.

No university records shall be discarded or destroyed except upon the prior approval of the archivist pursuant to the finding and recommendation by the administrative unit involved that such records have no further administrative value. The archivist shall withhold the approval of any such action until satisfied that the records involved have no value for other administrative offices and that they need not be retained for legal reasons, as determined by appropriate officers. Where appropriate, the archivist may arrange for the transfer of records to the University Archives as an alternative to destruction”.

Members of USC and UIUC Senate will investigate how these rules are currently applied.

The Chair informed of the letter sent by the OVPAA charging the Chancellors of each campus to develop strategic plans to guide resource allocation over the next three years. The deadline for the submission of the campus plan was discussed, June 30, 2013, and deemed ambitious.

II. VPAA: Dr. Christophe Pierre

Dr. Pierre explained that the UA review continues. Activities include interviews of UA personnel and meetings of the steering committee. Although the process is ongoing and on schedule the review is causing anxiety among UA employees.

The charge letters to the Chancellors of the three campuses were meant to start a strategic planning exercise with very specific outcomes, financial issues, and time frame. Each plan will be a campus centric exercise designed to determine goals to be achieved and how to obtain them. More than a purely strategic plan, the objective is to come up with tactics that are based on our economic reality. Although the University of Illinois is currently in a good financial situation the outlook is pretty grim: state funding will continue decreasing, tuition will grow modestly, and the enrollment at UIC and UIS is flattening.

III. UIC Chancellor: Dr. Paula Allen-Meares

The brief presentation by the Chancellor of UIC focused in the goals and plans of UIC. After an intense listening and learning tour, Dr. Allen-Meares, the faculty, and staff developed the following set of overarching goals:

1. Focus on our academic excellence, student access and student success
2. Emphasize transformative impact and the social good
3. Grow our translational, entrepreneurial and engaged research and discovery enterprise to include many approaches to knowing
4. Foster diversity and a global perspective
5. Honor and partner with Chicago and the State to enhance the human condition of its citizens
6. Innovate within to build greater efficiencies and future strengths

Other issues mentioned by the Chancellor were the need to rebrand UIC, foster the entrepreneurial spirit in the campus, develop a clear business plan, and focus on innovation. The members of USC watched a video prepared by Nancy Sullivan, Director of the Office of Technology Management. The video presented some of the most promising research projects by UIC faculty. It was a very impressive demonstration of the faculty’s innovation efforts. (I was unable to find the video online but the website from OTM contains some information on the projects presented in the video (http://otm.uic.edu/)

UIC Senate will sponsor a talk by Larry Faulkner on April, 17th. Dr. Faulkner’s presentation will focus on shared governance.

IV. VPHA: Joe "Skip" Garcia
The meeting with Dr. Garcia focused on his presentation of a detailed and very didactic explanation of the current status and future plans of the University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System. The situation of UI Health is complicated but the most important issues are the following:
- Rankings of UIC College of Medicine and the Hospital are relatively low.
- The morale of members of the CoM and the hospital are relatively low.
- The key player in UI Health is UIC Hospital. A unit going through a very challenging situation:
  - The primary service area of UIC hospital is extremely competitive since in a very small geographic area there are two other major hospitals: Rush University Medical Center and John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County.
  - The hospital receives a large share of state support but it has less than a 3% operating margin. Low margins do not allow for reinvestment to improve infrastructure.
  - The payer mix of the hospital relies mostly on Medicaid and Medicare. Only a small percentage is private insurance.
  - The culture of the hospital didn’t foster accountability. There were no measurement of the hospital operation, hence there was no control nor accountability.
  - The hospital did not engage the community as much as it should. This created a lot of confusion among the target audience.
- Some of the plans that address these challenges were discussed:
  - The strategic focus now is to provide “high quality, cost effective healthcare for the people of the State of Illinois and delivering personalized medicine in pursuit of the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities”.
  - The main goal of Dr. Garcia and his team is to improve UI Health in order to be efficient, accountable, and competitive in the managed care market.
  - The administrators of the hospital are working in improving the accountability of all departments through measurement of processes and outcomes as well as improving the communication between departments.
  - The health system started a communication campaign using a new brand: University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System.

V. Associate Vice Chancellor of External Affairs and President of the Illinois Medical District Commission: Jennifer Woodward
The IMDC is one of the largest US medical districts. In its 500+ acres, the IMDC counts with four hospitals (Rush University Medical Center, John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County, University of Illinois Medical Center, and Jesse Brown VA Medical Center), two universities with ten health science graduate schools (UIC and Rush), an incubator for biotech firms and start-ups (CTP) and other local clinics and organizations.

The IMDC is developing a strategic plan that is evidence as well as stakeholder-based in order to have buy in from all the diverse members of the district. The main aspiration of IMDC is to become:

“a leader in patient care and medical research utilizing our diversity and unique assets while driving economic growth”

The initial areas of collaboration are:

- Infrastructure and development
- Community health
- Translational research
- Clinical data

Probably the most important take away of this meeting is that IMDC aspires to be a neutral ground for cooperation between hospitals.

VI. Old Business

Due to the length of all the previous sessions the members of the USC were able to discuss only two issues:

A. UIS Resolution 42-13: Creation of a Minor in Liberty Studies

In a collegial but intense discussion, the members of USC weighed this resolution and pondered the need for action. After the members of UIS explained the robust, and intense, shared governance process that this proposal was subjected to, USC decided that no further action was required. However, members were concerned with the information available in different websites and blogs that misrepresent UIS curricular offerings in liberty studies.

B. OT-295: Resolution on campus jurisdiction over the Statutes and the General Rules.

This resolution’s objective is to clearly present the stance of USC on the need to protect the provisions of the Statutes and General Rules from being unilaterally changed by campuses that are or will be collective bargaining. Some members of the Conference questioned if there was a real need to present a resolution that in the best of circumstances stated the obvious or at worst seemed like an attack on collective bargaining. Other members of the Conference believed that it was needed to present a message that warns of the threats to shared governance and even the existence of the Senates Conference if each campus makes collective bargaining agreements that require the modification of the University’s Statutes and General Rules. After an intense discussion, this resolution passed.

Submitted by Jorge Villegas