

Executive Summary

I (John Martin) attended the regular University of Illinois Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting in Chicago on July 19, 2011 as the UIS faculty observer.

This meeting was light by comparison with others that I have attended in recent memory. There were presentations by the UIC School of Public Health, and the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy in the second half of the day. The Board seems to have shifted most of the consideration of agenda items into committee work, leaving the Board Meeting open for broader presentations meant to educate the BOT and/or publically showcase and aspect of the University.

The only agenda item of direct consequence to our campus was the granting of tenure and promotion to several members of our faculty (Item #8).

The day before that meeting (July 18) was a scheduled retreat. Both Peter Boltuc and Jorge Villegas were active participants in the retreat. I was present as an observer and not party to all the discussions and proceedings. My account covers the public portion so I refer questions about the break-out sessions to Jorge and Peter. There is no video or audio recording of the proceedings on that day.

While VP Knorr's report on economic indicators often gives a detailed picture of the state of the University, I should also report that at this meeting, observers were given: one bottle of water, no pencil, no pad of paper, and no lunch.

Retreat July 18th

The BOT retreat on Wednesday, July 18th started at 10:00 am. The agenda for the retreat is posted here:

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2018,%202012--Retreat/000%20jul%20Retreat%20Schedule.pdf>

Due to a late train I arrived at 10:45 pm in the middle of presentations by each of the campuses. A copy of the UIUC, UIC and UIS presentations are here:

- <http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2018,%202012--Retreat/presentation-1-UIUC-Visioning-Future-Excellence-at-Illinois.pdf>
- <http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2018,%202012--Retreat/presentation-2-UIC-Advancing-Access-and-Excellance.pdf>
- <http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2018,%202012--Retreat/presentation-3-UIS-Promising-Priorties.pdf>

The UIS presentation had an overall theme of growth with priorities in growing enrollment, recruiting a talented diverse faculty and staff, and improving the facilities.

After the campus presentations at 11:15 am, President Easter said that he had been meeting with the chancellors together on a monthly basis and that they were working to coordinate their efforts. His comments were followed by a presentation from the three chancellors (led by our own Chancellor Koch) about how the campuses had been collaborating:

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2018,%202012--Retreat/presentation-4-Collaborations-Present-and-Potention-Chancellors.pdf>

The areas of emphasis in the collaboration presentation were sharing resources to recruit students, ensuring diversity, and reaching beyond Illinois.

There was a twenty-minute break at 11:25 am. When the retreat resumed a panel of retired university presidents were introduced. The panel included: James Duderstadt (President Emeritus, University of Michigan), Larry Falkner (President Emeritus, University of Texas), and William DeLauder (President Emeritus, Delaware State University). Each started by making a five to fifteen minute presentation

My impressions of these panelists may be helpful in interpreting their comments. Duderstadt has a self-indulgent philosophy of the university without much consideration for anything but research-one priorities. He had a clear and forceful opinion with talking points and stayed “on message.” Faulkner was calm, collected, and has found success as a thoughtful listener with an inclusive philosophy. DeLauder’ first concern was how students are served by the institution. He had a unique approach and perspective among the panel of three. All three focused heavily on the other two campuses paying little attention to the Springfield campus. I had the impression this segment was to work out Urbana’s and Chicago’s relationship and Springfield was along for the ride.

Duderstadt talked about a report from the National Academies that he had recently helped author: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13396

He focused exclusively on the Urbana and Chicago campuses and made no mention of Springfield. He heavily advocated a model where Chicago would become an independent research-one university. He minced no words about being against the idea of “one university.”

Faulkner read written remarks but had a more casual and less imposing manner than Duderstadt. He related that the key to his success as a leader had been his willingness to listen to everyone and gather consensus before making decisions. He said that “One has no choice but to rely on the judgment of the people on the ground” and that the University is too complex to be managed centrally. He laid out eight guiding principles for a successful university:

1. The Trustees are responsible for the mission.
2. Integrity in governance from top to bottom.
3. Everyone must act in the institution’s best interest.
4. Faculty are undisputedly in full control of academics.
5. Administration must have faith in governance.
6. There must be flexibility to act (or react) in a timely manner.
7. Listening is important. Hear out arguments from all stakeholders before making decisions.
8. Elements that cannot act in a timely fashion should be replaced (that includes both faculty and administration).

DeLauder focused mainly on the issues of access for students and “the need to create, admit, and graduate a more diverse student population.” He said that the purpose of a university was to serve all, not a privileged few. He maintained that standardized test scores should not be misused in the application process and criticized university leadership that “chases” university rankings.

The University Senates Conference had come up with three questions to ask the panel through President Easter. The exact wording of those questions was not provided so I will paraphrase.

The first question for the panel was along the lines of, “How can we create a better University of three separate parts?” Duderstadt said we need a system, not “one university.” Faulkner emphasized that

each part of the university needs to understand their role and how they fit into the mission of the university. He said that all elements need to cooperate to meet the challenges of new media in their own way. DeLauder stated that we need to be one university that serves the state using the unique aspects and missions of each campus.

The second question was along the lines of, "What is the best way for the three campuses to maintain balance and build strength?" Faulkner commented that there is a lot of experience doing this at U of I and that experience needs to be tapped. Duderstadt said the parts should not be forced together and invoked the Committee for Institutional Cooperation (CIC) model of cooperating rather than competing. DeLauder said that good communication starts with the chancellors and faculty governance.

The third question centered around, "How can the University counter the impact of the bad financial situation and improve faculty morale?" Falkner took a parental tone and reassured us that all universities are facing this. He implored us to focus on our own mission and accomplishments and position ourselves well to deal with whatever may come. Duderstadt said the situation is dire and that higher education has never been more important or more at risk. He implored that we need to be self-conscious about how we appear to the public. DeLauder said that universities need to control cost, but also need some help from state budgets.

At 1pm the retreat broke for lunch and break-out sessions with a promise to return in 90 minutes. The break-out sessions included trustees, deans, administrators, and faculty from the University Senates Conference. I was not included in a break-out session so I have nothing to report from them.

At 2:40 the retreat reconvened to hear reports from each of the break out sessions. The groups had each been asked to discuss general impressions about the panel's presentations and the issues that the panel raised. Peter Boltuc and Jorge Villegas (who participated in panels) are better equipped to report on this. For the most part the groups repeated points that the panelists had raised and, at least as an observer in the peanut gallery, I felt that no clear over-arching theme developed across groups.

At 3:25 the Chair thanked everyone for participating and adjourned the retreat.

Meeting July 19th

The video for the July 19 BOT meeting can be found here and I have indexed the events by the time code on that video:

<http://uishelix2.uis.edu/vod/vod/2012/BOT071912.html>

The meeting was called to order with role taken at 8:04 am. All the trustees were present except: Holmes, Montgomery, and Governor Quinn. I was the only observer present. The Chair said that Montgomery was suppose to be present and that Holmes was in court this morning. The Chair also noted that Oliver and Estrada would need to leave later in the afternoon.

Next the Board moved into executive session for employment matters, pending litigation, and collective negotiating matters (02:05 on video). Based on the scuttle-butt outside the room and those who walked in and out it is suspected that the Board dealt with (among other issues) labor negotiations on the Chicago campus and student security matters on the Urbana campus.

At 10:15 am the meeting resumed (02:33 on video) with the singing of the state song by Denise Yates. At 10:20 am (06:25 on video) Tr. Hasara introduced and inducted the new student trustees. Jon Tienken will continue representing UIS and will be the student trustee with the official vote this year. Ken Thomas will continue as the student trustee from Chicago. David Pileski will be the student trustee from Urbana. Each student trustee is assigned a mentor (Tienken – Estrada; Pileski – Oliver; and Thomas – Koritz). The Chair noted that the practice of mentoring new trustees was recommended as a best practice by the Governance and Ethics committee.

At 10:30 am President Easter made introductions (17:35 on video) then delivered some comments on the state of the University (17:45). Highlights from Easter's comments:

- There had been an unusually large number of retirements from the University this year (550 in the month of July 2012 versus 91 in the same month 2009). 1107 have applied to retire as of July, up 50% from last year.
- The University is expecting a 6.17% reduction in state funding. As part of dealing with declining state funding, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will work with faculty and academic deans come up with a periodic program review to be in place by the end of the 2012-13 academic year.
- Strong enrollments are expected for freshman (Springfield ~ 250, Chicago ~ 3500, Urbana > 7000).
- Access Illinois (student aid fundraising initiative) has raised \$42 million since July 2011.

Chancellor Allen-Meares briefly welcomed the BOT to Chicago (26:00 on video). She introduced Dr Brian Kay, Head of Bio Sciences at Chicago and UIC liason to the Chicago Biomedical Consortium

(<http://chicagobiomedicalconsortium.org>)

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2019,%202012--Meeting/presentation-1-Chicago-Biomedical-Consortium.pdf>

The Chair thanked Dr Kay for explaining how the CBC is a valuable economic asset.

At 10:43 am Tr. McMillan reported from the Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee (40:05 on the video). The Chair asked if the University picked KPMG as a fund manager. VP for Finance, Walter Knorr said that the state picked them for us.

At 10:51 am Tr. Strobel reported from the Governance, Personnel, and Ethics Committee (43:04 on video). The committee reviewed and recommended items 1 to 13 on the agenda for the meeting.

At 10:52 am Tr. Kortiz reported from the University Healthcare System Committee (44:20 on video). Among other items he publically thanked John Dinardo because he is stepping down at CEO of the hospital.

At 11:00 am the Board moved to consider the agenda and vote (46:42 on video). In the Voice Vote all were in favor and none against. In the Roll Call Vote all were in favor with the exception of abstentions from Tr. Montgomery on items 22 and 23.

Of direct interest to our campus was item 8: Promotions in Academic Rank and Change in Tenure, 2012-2013. In that Peter Boltuc, Beverly Bunch, and Don Morris were promoted to Full Professor. Deborah Anthony, Donna Bussell, Hua Chen, Lan Dong, Richard Gilman-Opalsky, Bill Kline, Marc, Klingshirn, Elizabeth Kosmetatou, Chung-wei Lee, John Martin, Tung Nguyen, Karen Pressley, Dennis Ruez, Stephen Schnebly, Nathan Steele and Missy Thibodeaux-Thompson were promoted to Associate

Professor on indefinite tenure.

At 11:05 am Prof Don Chambers delivered an unusually detailed annual report for the University Senate's conference (52:15 on video):

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2019,%202012--Meeting/r-jul-University-Senates-Conference.pdf>

The Board thanked Chambers for his service.

At 11:24 the Board heard a presentation from the UIC School of Public Health from its Dean, Paul Brandt-Rauf (70:50 on video):

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2019,%202012--Meeting/presentation-2-UIC-School-of-PublicHealth.pdf>

At 11:42 am the Board broke for an executive session over lunch.

The meeting resumed at 1:07 pm (93:26 on video) with a playing of Purcell's Trumpet Voluntary by Hia Toa Huang of the Chicago Theater and Music department.

At 1:10 pm the Board heard a presentation from Prof. Beth Richie of the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy (95:06 on video).

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2019,%202012--Meeting/presentation-3-Institute-of-Research-on-Race-and-Public-Policy.pdf>

Many of the faculty who had been observing the meeting were not in the room after the lunch break. Most of them returned about five to ten minutes into this presentation.

The Board had many questions for Dr Richie (beginning at 113:36 on video). The Chair stated that UIC admits a more diverse class than it enrolls and asked what could be done to improve that statistic. Richie was clear that the high financial incentives other schools might offer these students can be countered with opportunity and environment. She suggested that UIC could better communicate the kinds of support programs and environment it provides for students of color as well as how UIC contributes to the community. The Chair stated that it was important for UIC to be engaged in solving Chicago's violent crime problems. Richie and Tr. Montgomery agreed. Richie pointed out that her institute is about research that leads to solutions and applications. Tr. Oliver asked why a desire to end violence does not lead to a cessation of violence. Richie replied that to date incarceration has been the predominate tool used to stem violence but it is ineffective. In Chicago incarceration has gone up without changing the rate of violent crime. The Chair voiced appreciation for what he has learned from speakers at Board meetings and asked about something he had heard about the pro-social aspect of gangs. Richie explained that some studies have shown that gangs can have positive social elements and provide support in a community. The impact of gangs is not entirely negative. Tr. Montgomery said he was reminded of the positive social aspects of the Black Panthers versus their radical splinter groups. Richie agreed that was a good example. The Chair thanked Richie for the illuminating conversation.

At 1:40 pm (126:23 on video) Vice President for Finance, Walter Knorr, gave the report on financial indicators for the University:

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/July%2019,%202012--Meeting/presentation-4-Financial-Indicators.pdf>

He started by announcing that his presentation today was intended to set the stage for the "budget" BOT meeting in September. About 15 minutes into the presentation Tr. Oliver left the room.

At the end of the presentation Tr. McMillian asked for a clarification of what causes the payments on

Behalf to keep increasing in slide 3. Knorr explained that the blue bar representing the healthcare costs has been increasing at a rate that drives the overall increase. The Chair asked if there was an update on savings from the Administrative Resource Restructuring (ARR) report. Knorr stated he will have that in September.

At 2pm (145:15 on video) the Board heard public comments from William O'Neil, a professor of Bioengineering with 47 years of service at UIC. He was a little vague but referred to "progress reports" that he had sent to the Board. He seemed upset with the UIC administration and blamed the lack of a cancer center at UIC on "exploitation" by the Urbana campus.

At 2:07pm the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
John C. Martin
August 7, 2012