

MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
JANUARY 14, 2026

This meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois was held in the Isadore and Sadie Dorin Forum, Rooms D, E, and F, 725 West Roosevelt Road, Chicago, Illinois, on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, beginning at 3:17 p.m.

Trustee Tami Craig Schilling, chair of the committee, convened the meeting and asked the secretary to call the roll. The following committee members were present: Ms. J. Carolyn Blackwell; Ms. Tami Craig Schilling; Mr. Joseph Gutman;¹ Dr. Bryan S. Traubert; Ms. Ariana A. Mizan, voting student trustee, Urbana; Mr. Quinn S. Basta, student trustee, Chicago; Mr. Joe Humphrey,¹ student trustee, Springfield. Mr. Ramón Cepeda, Ms. Sarah C. Phalen, and Mr. Jesse H. Ruiz attended as guests.

Also present were Mr. Howard S. Engle, treasurer; President Timothy L. Killeen; Dr. Nicholas P. Jones, executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs; Dr. Charles L. Isbell Jr., chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System; Dr. Marie Lynn Miranda, chancellor, University of Illinois Chicago, and vice president, University of Illinois System; Dr. Janet L. Gooch, chancellor, University of Illinois Springfield, and vice president, University of

¹ Mr. Gutman and Mr. Humphrey attended via remote videoconference.

Illinois System; Dr. Paul N. Ellinger, comptroller (and vice president/chief financial officer); Dr. Joseph T. Walsh Jr., vice president for economic development and innovation; Ms. Adrienne Nazon, vice president of external relations and communications; Mr. Scott E. Rice, University counsel; and Dr. Jeffrey A. Stein, secretary of the Board of Trustees and of the University.

Ms. Craig Schilling welcomed everyone to the meeting. She acknowledged the efforts of all the people who make the University of Illinois a success and remarked on the impact of the work of the Board of Trustees. She asked if there were questions or corrections regarding the minutes of the committee meeting held November 12, 2025. There were none. On motion of Ms. Mizan, seconded by Dr. Traubert, the minutes were approved. There were no “nay” votes.

REVIEW OF RECOMMENDED BOARD ITEMS
FOR THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS ON JANUARY 15, 2026

Ms. Craig Schilling asked specific individuals in attendance to provide presentations and report on the items that will appear on the Board’s agenda at its meeting on January 15, 2026. All proposed agenda items discussed at the meeting are on file with the secretary.

Appointments to the Faculty, Administrative/Professional Staff,
and Intercollegiate Athletic Staff

Ms. Craig Schilling asked Dr. Stein to comment on the item recommending appointments to the faculty, administrative/professional staff, and intercollegiate athletic staff (materials on file with the secretary). Dr. Stein explained that the appointments of faculty,

administrative and professional staff, and intercollegiate athletic staff recommended in this item have been thoroughly vetted and reviewed at the appropriate levels within the college, department, or unit, and he encouraged committee members to contact him with any questions.

Approve Tuition Rates, Academic Year 2026-2027;
Approve Student Fees for Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield, Academic Year 2026-2027;
and Approve Rate Changes for University-Operated Housing Facilities,
Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield, Academic Year 2026-2027

Ms. Craig Schilling asked Dr. Jones to give a presentation on recommendations to approve tuition rates, student fees, and rate changes for university-operated housing facilities for Academic Year 2026-2027 (materials on file with the secretary). He referred to the consultative process leading to these recommendations and thanked partners at the three universities for their hard work, noting their commitment to affordability for their students. Dr. Jones said three factors were paramount to these recommendations: providing access for Illinois students, keeping education affordable, and ensuring quality of education. He referred to the guaranteed four-year tuition rate, and he shared that the annual base tuition at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign has only increased \$956 from 2015 through 2029. Dr. Jones said the annual base tuition increased by \$840 at the University of Illinois Chicago and \$435 at the University of Illinois Springfield for the same period. He emphasized that these increases are significantly lower than the rate of inflation. Dr. Jones referred to the goal of protecting access, affordability, academic quality, and competitiveness, and he commented on the impact of inflation. He stated that the proposed increase in the base tuition rate for new resident undergraduates for

Academic Year 2026-2027 would be 2 percent at Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield. He listed ranges of tuition for certain programs and said that the tuition increase would apply only to new students.

Dr. Jones then discussed student fees and assessments, which he said are determined on a cost-recovery basis and are reviewed and endorsed by committees that include students as members. He said the proposed increase for undergraduate fees would be 2.0 percent at Urbana, 1.9 percent at Chicago, and 6.8 percent at Springfield. Dr. Jones said health insurance rates and the transportation fee at Chicago would be recommended at a later date, usually at the March Board meeting.

Dr. Jones reported on recommended room and board rates for undergraduate housing, which reflected proposed increases of 5 percent at Urbana, 5 percent at Chicago, and 3.5 percent at Springfield. He emphasized the impact of inflation and said the rates discussed are similar to those at peer institutions. Ms. Craig Schilling added that a more in-depth presentation on proposed tuition rates, student fees, and rate changes for university-operated housing facilities would be provided to the full Board at its meeting the following day.

Ms. Phalen inquired about the increase of 4 percent for non-resident students, and Dr. Jones stated that the increase for non-resident students has been slightly higher in the past but has been similar to this proposed increase. Mr. Gutman asked for a comparison to peer institutions, and Dr. Jones said that data would be included in the presentation to the Board the following day. Mr. Ruiz highlighted the percentage of students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign who pay no tuition and fees, and

Dr. Miranda added that the UIC Aspire program covers tuition and fees for 52 percent of its students. Ms. Mizan inquired about meal plans, and discussion followed regarding meal plan options and food insecurity. President Killeen commended the Board for its commitment to affordability. Mr. Basta inquired about tuition rates for international students, and President Killeen commented on the impact of tuition paid by international students. Mr. Cepeda remarked on the progress that has been made on affordability over the past 10 years, particularly when compared to peer institutions.

Ms. Craig Schilling referred to the State's investment in the University and remarked on the importance of decisions regarding tuition rates. She asked the chancellors to share the Board's appreciation with the faculty and staff at their universities who are working to maintain affordability.

Establish the Bachelor of Arts in Immersive & Interactive Theatre,
College of Fine and Applied Arts, Urbana

Next, Ms. Craig Schilling asked Dr. John Coleman, executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, to share information regarding recommendations to establish three degrees in the College of Fine and Applied Arts, beginning with the recommendation to establish the Bachelor of Arts in Immersive & Interactive Theatre. Dr. Coleman said the proposed degree would integrate theater, performance, and game design and addresses growing demand for transdisciplinary training. He said students will develop versatile skills in interactive storytelling, design thinking, and audience engagement that apply broadly across fast-growing creative and commercial sectors, such as experimental marketing, themed

entertainment, video game design, and more. He said enrollment would be projected to grow from five students in Year 1 to 60 students in Year 5.

Establish the Bachelor of Arts in Hip Hop Culture and the Arts,
College of Fine and Applied Arts, Urbana

Dr. Coleman then discussed the recommendation to establish the Bachelor of Arts in Hip Hop Culture and the Arts and said this proposed interdisciplinary program would study creative work, as well as a history of hip-hop culture and contemporary scholarship of its ongoing evolution. He said the proposed program would include coursework from the School of Music, African American studies, media and cinema studies, social work, East Asian languages and cultures, gender and women's studies, history, and Latina/Latino studies. He said that the proposed degree program represents a part of the legacy of Dr. William Patterson, who co-founded and co-directed the Hip Hop Innovation Center at the university. Dr. Coleman said that graduates from this program will be positioned for careers across creative, cultural, and educational sectors, including music and media production, performance, choreography, visual and community arts, arts administration, and cultural entrepreneurship. He said projected enrollment in this program for Year 1 is 15 students and 100 students in Year 5 at full implementation.

Establish the Bachelor of Arts in Fine and Applied Arts,
College of Fine and Applied Arts, Urbana

Dr. Coleman provided information regarding the recommendation to establish the Bachelor of Arts in Fine and Applied Arts and said it would be designed for students with

prior college credit to provide flexible online pathways to degree completion. He said this would be the third degree-completion program at the university. He stated that graduates will be prepared for careers designated by the Illinois Department of Employment Security as growth areas in fields such as art and design and arts management. He said projected enrollment in Year 1 is five students, and 50 in Year 5 at full implementation. Dr. Coleman noted that for all three proposed programs, enrollment and program performance would be monitored using standard institutional metrics, including retention and graduation rates, as well as post-graduation employment or graduate school placement.

Eliminate the Master of Science in Teaching of Biological Science,
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College, Urbana

Dr. Coleman then reported on the recommendation to eliminate the Master of Science in Teaching of Biological Science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College at Urbana due to sustained low enrollment, stating that no students have enrolled in recent years. He said the one remaining enrolled student would be allowed to complete the program. Dr. Coleman added that Master of Education in Secondary Education program in the College of Education has content area courses in biology and provides an alternative option for prospective students who are interested in teaching biological science.

Ms. Craig Schilling asked if there were questions about these items for Dr. Coleman, and Ms. Mizan expressed appreciation for investment in arts innovation.

Eliminate the School of Art and Art History; Reorganize the Department of Art; and Reorganize and Consolidate the Department of Art History and the Program in Museum and Exhibition Studies, College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, Chicago

Ms. Craig Schilling then asked Dr. Karen J. Colley, vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, University of Illinois Chicago, to discuss the recommendations to eliminate the School of Art and Art History, reorganize the Department of Art, and reorganize and consolidate the Department of Art History and the program in Museum and Exhibition Studies, all in the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, Chicago. Dr. Colley stated that the three proposals were interrelated, and that the recommendation would eliminate the School of Art and Art History and reorganize the units within that school to consolidate the Department of Art History and the program in Museum and Exhibition Studies as the Department of Art History and Museum Exhibition Studies. She said these recommendations would also reorganize the Department of Art as a School of Art. Dr. Colley discussed the benefits of these proposed changes, which she said would be cost-neutral, would preserve all academic programs, and would not affect student progress. She said these changes were being proposed after an extensive process that included feedback from faculty, staff, students, and two external consultants.

Award Honorary Degree, Springfield

Ms. Craig Schilling asked Dr. Gooch to discuss the recommendation to award an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters to Mr. W. Robert Felker, a distinguished alumnus and longtime supporter of UIS. Dr. Gooch referred to Mr. Felker's distinguished experience in the financial futures industry, stating that he founded First Chicago Futures,

which later became part of J. P. Morgan Futures Inc. She said Mr. Felker and his wife have been dedicated advocates for higher education in Illinois, engaging in many volunteer and philanthropic efforts with a significant focus on endowed scholarships. She shared additional information about Mr. Felker's support for the university, as well as his professional achievements, both of which she said would leave a lasting impact on the financial industry and the University of Illinois community.

Eliminate the Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy,
College of Public Affairs and Education, Springfield

Next, Ms. Craig Schilling asked Dr. Brandon Schwab, vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, University of Illinois Springfield, to report on the recommendation to eliminate the Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy in the College of Public Affairs and Education at Springfield. Dr. Schwab stated that the program has had low enrollment since it began, and he said that less than three degree completions occur each year. He told the committee that the lack of interest mirrors national trends.

Revise and Rename the Master of Arts in Communication,
College of Public Affairs and Education, Springfield

Dr. Schwab discussed the recommendation to rename the Master of Arts in Communication in the College of Public Affairs and Education at Springfield as the Master of Arts in Communication and Digital Media. He said the name change better reflects the revised curriculum and focus of the program, which he said will transition to an online program to appeal to a broader range of students. Dr. Schwab described several

revisions, including a reduction in the number of credit hours, streamlining required courses, and requiring comprehensive exams in lieu of a thesis or project to complete the degree. He noted that an accelerated joint degree program between the existing Bachelor of Arts in Communication and the revised Master of Arts degree is being created to allow students to complete both degrees in less time and with reduced financial burden.

Rename the Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Security,
College of Health, Science, and Technology, Springfield

Dr. Schwab then discussed the recommendation to rename the Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Security in the College of Health, Science, and Technology at Springfield as the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity and said the program is currently aligned with the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity (NCAE-C) designation sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which uses the term “cybersecurity” in its curriculum. Dr. Schwab added that this change makes the degree more recognizable and builds upon the DHS designation as a center of academic excellence in cybersecurity.

Rename the Master of Science in Data Analytics,
College of Health, Science, and Technology, Springfield

Lastly, Dr. Schwab discussed the recommendation to rename the Master of Science in Data Analytics in the College of Health, Science, and Technology at Springfield as the Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence. He gave some background on the program and said the field of data analytics has evolved and rebranded itself, with data analytics a

component of the broader domain of artificial intelligence (AI). Dr. Schwab stated that the AI landscape has shifted from traditional analytics to advanced areas such as machine learning, deep learning, and natural language processing, and he said that employers and prospective students now identify more strongly with AI as the central discipline. He said this change will enhance recognition of the degree by both prospective students and employers.

There were no objections to these items being forwarded to the full Board for approval.

PRESENTATION

University of Illinois Extension

Ms. Craig Schilling asked Dr. Isbell to introduce the presentation on the University of Illinois Extension. Dr. Isbell stated that Extension is at the core of the work of a land-grant university and is a successful public engagement endeavor. He commented on the creation of networks and connections between the university and residents, nonprofits, local government, and small businesses, noting that Extension makes more than one million direct contacts each year that often become long-term relationships based on trust. Dr. Isbell commented on the benefits of Extension to the residents of Illinois and said university research and education benefit from the perspectives gained through Extension. Dr. Isbell introduced Dr. Germán Bollero, dean of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Dr. Matthew Vann, associate dean and director of Illinois Extension and outreach in the

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Dr. Bollero discussed the land-grant mission and said that faculty in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) are dedicated to teaching, research, and Extension. He gave a brief history of Extension, highlighting the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, which created a national cooperative extension service with land-grant colleges and universities, and he shared information about the Illinois Farmers' Institute. He listed the priorities of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which supports Extension activities through the Farm Bill, and he highlighted Extension educational outreach programs. Dr. Bollero said the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) was impacted by federal funding cuts, which resulted in the termination of 220 employees. He referred to ongoing commitment to nutrition and health and said that alternatives to SNAP-Ed are being considered. Dr. Bollero shared information regarding funding and gave examples of outreach and the ways in which Extension shares expertise with the community. He highlighted the Find Food IL community food map and efforts to address food insecurity. Dr. Bollero also commented on partnerships that have been established throughout Illinois.

Dr. Vann referenced the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 and the core mission of Extension, and he highlighted the Find Food IL community food map as an example of the impact Extension has on local communities. He said the recent delay in SNAP payments to SNAP recipients led to a 4,000 percent increase in traffic to the site, and he

told the committee that this is an example of the impact Extension can have within communities across Illinois. Dr. Vann discussed Extension service to both rural and urban communities in all 102 Illinois counties, stating that the 4-H is Extension's marquee program. He said the current budget is \$60.9 million, which will be reduced by \$20.0 million due to federal cuts to SNAP-Ed funding. Dr. Vann said the results of a 2019 economic assessment showed a 10-to-1 return on investment and that the annual impact to Illinois is estimated to be \$603.3 million. Dr. Vann presented strategic priorities and reported on budget and funding, and he shared areas of success and opportunity. He remarked on the impact of the loss of SNAP-Ed funding and highlighted a mission to bridge the urban and rural divide in Illinois.

Dr. Bollero and Dr. Vann concluded their presentation and asked if trustees had questions. Mr. Ruiz inquired about the difference between 4-H and FFA, and Dr. Venn explained that FFA is outside the scope of Extension. Discussion followed regarding the focus and age range of those involved with FFA. Ms. Craig Schilling thanked Dr. Bollero and Dr. Vann for the presentation, and she remarked on the impact of Extension its effect on the trajectory of children's lives. Ms. Phalen stated that Extension often provides the first opportunity for interaction with the University of Illinois System.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no business presented under this aegis.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Craig Schilling asked if there was any new business to discuss, and there was none. She announced that the next meeting of this committee is scheduled for March 18, 2026, in Springfield.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Ms. Craig Schilling requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. On motion of Ms. Blackwell, seconded by Mr. Basta, the meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m. There were no “nay” votes.

Respectfully submitted,

JEFFREY A. STEIN
Secretary

TAMI CRAIG SCHILLING
Chair

EILEEN B. CABLE
Special Assistant to the Secretary