**Reception with the President**

**Wednesday, August 27, 2025**

**5:00 – 6:30 P.M.**

**President’s Residence**

**1000 Gregory Street**

**Normal, Illinois**

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**Academic Senate Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, August 27, 2025**

**7:00 P.M. (hard stop at 8:30 P.M.)**

**OLD MAIN ROOM, BONE STUDENT CENTER**

***Call to Order***

Chairperson Bonnell called the meeting to order.

***Roll Call***

Secretary Nikolaou called the roll and declared quorum.

***Public Comment: All speakers must sign in with the Senate Secretary prior to the start of the meeting.***

None.

***Presentation:***

[***Athletics FY23-24 Budget Review***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/AcademicSenate/ER89JcjnRB5NvRkhLfowOcEBS1vxRBOAETD-E2R-eCfG5A?e=mXSIUZ)

***Jeri Beggs, Director of Athletics***

Jeri Beggs: Thank you all for having us. Joining me is Allison Thornley. She is our Senior Associate Athletic Director for Internal Operations, which essentially means she runs our business office. If you ask me too hard of a question, I am going to turn to her and see if she can answer it. As she mentioned, this is a pretty old budget. This budget would have been created in the spring of 2023 to start in July of 2023. Neither one of us was in these positions when that happened. I am happy to go over that budget, I do want to point out a few things to you in it. I am hoping you will allow me to spend a few minutes of my allotted time discussing what is going on in college athletics here and nationwide, because there are a lot of changes happening.

I am guessing some of you are college athletics fans and some of you aren’t. You may or may not know what is going on nationwide. It is a really turbulent time in college athletics, lots of changes happening over the past 5 years including a transfer portal, immediate eligibility, and this summer a House Settlement. If you have heard of the House Settlement, that is actually 3 different lawsuits that were settled in May of this year. It was all related to money that was coming to the system and student athletes were not receiving any of that money. This was basically the FBS programs, the large schools, who were receiving millions, if not billions, of dollars in TV money. Think Big 10 Network, SEC network. The lawsuit was seeking back-damages for those student athletes. It ended up being settled for $2.8 billion dollars and a part of that is being paid by the NCAA. That is where we come in. They have decided that each school at the Division I level must pay a portion of that lawsuit. Our portion is half a million dollars a year for 10 years, which is a lot of money to us. It may not be a lot of money to a Big 10 school, but it is a lot of money to ISU Redbird Athletics.

What is frustrating to us about that amount is that we didn’t receive any of that TV money. Last year, our football TV contracts totaled $20,000. We weren’t getting the millions that these other programs were getting, and our student athletes will not receive any of the back-damages; they are not eligible for them. FBS football, men’s basketball, women’s basketball are really the only ones who are going to receive any of that money. It feels a little hypocritical of them to ask us to pay for it, but essentially it boiled down to: if you want to be a Division I institution, you are going to pay. When I say, “pay” it is actually a reduction in funding. Instead of getting $1.8 million dollars from the NCAA in funding, we will now be getting approximately $1.3 in funding. It was not optional. There were some questions out there when we talked about opting in, where people said, “Why would you opt in if you are going to lose a half a million dollars?” The half a million dollars was not the optional part. That was not the opting in part, we were going to lose that regardless of what we did.

I tell you all of this because we are also participating in the budget cuts that the University has. You all probably are hearing about those. They are happening in your departments and in your areas. We are also participating- a little over $100,000 this year. In my mind, we have about a $600,000 hole to fill moving forward. We had meetings today with coaches to explain to them why we are going to cut their operating budgets and why we are going to cut their financial aid budgets. As you might imagine, those are not fun meetings. It is the only way we have to fill this hole that we have, other than we are doing everything we possibly can to raise revenue. We had a really good fundraising year last year, $6 million dollars, which was almost double the year before. We had ticket increases across our 4 ticketed sports last year and this year, and we are going to continue to look for other ways to raise revenue in order to support ourselves. All of that to give you an idea of what we are doing to try to be good stewards of the money that you entrust to us and also to strategically invest in some of our sports.

A few other things that it means to opt in, just so you understand the House Settlement. One of the things that happens is we go from scholarship limits to roster caps. I will give you an example: baseball has 11.7 scholarship limit. Now we will have 34 positions, that is the roster cap. Technically, if we could afford it, we could give them all full rides. We at Illinois State cannot afford that. There will be some schools in Division I who will pick and choose some sports, and they will add a lot of money into those sports in order to compete and to be good. We are going in the other direction and are cutting back on some of our funding. We will be down about 10% in terms of total student-athlete numbers when we transition completely into roster caps. The other thing it allows us to do is to bring NIL in-house. Name, Image, and Likeness became law in the State of Illinois 4 years ago in July. That basically means that student-athletes have the right to monetize their name, image, and likeness. Think about autographs, merchandise, those kinds of things. All the different states created policies, but the NCAA adopted all of that and have been allowing student-athletes to earn that money for the last 4 years. It couldn’t be done through the University until this summer.

Collectives were the way it was usually handled. A group of people got together and donated money- boosters, fans, businesses in the community, in order to help the student-athletes with name, image, and likeness and then that allowed them to be competitive. Many people are not fans of Name, Image, and Likeness. Many of our biggest donors and biggest fans don’t like it. If we want to be competitive, especially in men’s and women’s basketball and football, we have to offer some kind of Name, Image, and Likeness to our student-athletes. The House Settlement actually allows us to bring that in-house. For the big schools, there is a salary cap or “revenue share” as they call it of $20.5 million dollars that they have to stay under. That is actually going to be hard for them. Not an issue for us, not relevant. Our collective paid out less than half a million dollars last year. We are nowhere in the range of an FBS school in that category.

That is what is going on in college athletics. It is happening very quickly. Lots of change, lots of movement. Student athletes are transferring at higher and higher rates because there is always somebody out there with money offering them an opportunity to go someplace else. We do everything we can to try to hang on to our good student-athletes, to try to keep our teams together, but I wanted to give you a little background on what is going on in college athletics.

Senator Seifert: Can you explain what you mean by bringing the NIL in-house?

Jeri Beggs: Before, the collective had to be outside of the University. We could have no part in it at all. Now they are allowing us to bring it in-house and different schools are doing it in different ways. Some through the foundations, some through other means, but we can now have NIL agreements with student-athletes.

My understanding is that you have seen these materials. They are divided into 3 different categories because that is that way that we are funded through student fees. There is an operating budget, a stadium and field house, which is every other building except for the arena, and then there is one that is technically still called Redbird Arena- we now call that building CEFCU. Those three budgets are in front of you, and again, this is a really old budget. Similar to what you have probably heard about the University’s budget, Allison and I have a goal of doing a better job of budgeting based upon revenue and actual expenses, not just a historic budget where we kind of put the same numbers in over and over. There have been a lot of changes since this FY24 budget.

A couple of things I want to point out to you because they might not be automatically understandable to you in terms of titles, I want to point out “guarantee income” and “guarantee expense.” Those are words that maybe not all of you are familiar with. We earn money when another school pays us to come play them. This weekend we will be traveling to Oklahoma to play a football game against a really good, #18 in the nation, FBS football team. The chances that we are going to win that game are not great, but they are going to pay us $600,000 to come out there. The reason the number is really low in FY23, is we did not have a guarantee game that year. We don’t like that; we want a guarantee game every year. We need the money. Our student-athletes and fans really enjoy the venue and the opportunity. Our goal is that no one gets hurt in these games. That year there was one scheduled; somebody asked to move it back. I think we are already scheduled through 2030 or 2031; we schedule these way in advance. When they asked us to move, we were never able to fill for that year. Last year we went to Iowa, this year we are going to Oklahoma, and then we have games scheduled every year. We get paid to go to some games, and then we turn around and pay for other games, mostly in men’s basketball, a little women’s basketball, and football. We pay to have people come to us. The reason you want home games is pretty obvious, I think. First of all, you have a greater chance of winning, and also you sell tickets and concessions, you are trying to build a home schedule. That was one of things I wanted to point out to you.

The other thing I wanted to point out to you is financial aid. This is what I would call the cash portion of financial aid. It doesn’t include tuition waivers. It includes things like housing and food. We had 93 student-athletes living in our Redbird housing here on campus. I think we are the biggest family on campus. We do pay full fare for that. We do pay for housing and food. That financial aid number is that, it is the cash amounts that we pay for financial aid. The rest of them are probably pretty self-explanatory in terms of what they represent. Income fund is general revenue fund. Are there any questions about any of them?

Chairperson Bonnell: How does the OSF Healthcare athletics training center fit into the budget?

Jeri Beggs: It is actually shown on the stadium and field house budget. It says at the bottom, IPF bond, so that is the payment to that. It is a 10-year loan, almost like a mortgage that we are paying off year by year.

Chairperson Bonnell: Everything is so expensive when you think about inflation. When we look at these budgets you have to try to predict how that is happening. Maybe this question isn’t fair because I am looking into the future, how do you accommodate what is happening now? These are old numbers. How do you take into account inflation and electricity, all those things?

Jeri Beggs: The same way the University does. We are always assessing and looking at what our expenses actually ended up being and making adjustments for the next year. Asking our coaches, we don’t raise their budgets every year, to find better ways to do things. Maybe they take one less trip. Just accommodating that throughout their activities.

Senator Schleider: I have a question about the Tailgating Policy and how that is going to affect your budget. I know a lot of people are trying to get rid of their passes just because of the change in ending at the start of the game. Do you see that affecting the budget?

Jeri Beggs: We have offered a few refunds, but those have been for games that were sold out already; those parking spots will just go back out into the marketplace, and we believe we will sell them again. The Tailgating Policy was obviously a safety issue. We want our fans to come in and watch the games and support our student-athletes and our band and cheerleaders. It was also a review of what our peers were doing, and we had one of the more generous tailgating policies in terms of the number of hours. There has been a lot of talk on social media, but the actual reaction in terms of people asking for refunds has been relatively low.

Senator Hillard: Since we plan on bringing NIL in-house, what model will we follow from different universities? Will that help us boost our TV ratings since you said they were at $20,000 last year?

Jeri Beggs: NIL shouldn’t change our TV ratings other than winning. Winning helps everything, it helps sell tickets, sponsorships, it adds to donor funds. It won’t really have any impact on TV ratings other than if you can build a winning team. Then you are going to increase TV ratings. There are 364 Division I schools. Over 300 of them opted in to this model where they are bringing NIL in-house. This is happening across the country. People are funding it different ways. Imagine an FBS school like Illinois where last year they earned like $75 million from just their TV contract. They will be using that funding. We are using donor funds, support from our fans, booster, and donors. Other schools are using TV money that they are getting. A lot of those programs are actually still cutting positions and scholarships, looking for ways to come up with $20.5 million dollars to spend on revenue share. It is not that they had it sitting in the bank either, they are making cuts in order to fund $20.5 million. They are doing that to be competitive. If they don’t do it and Ohio State does, how are we going to compete?

Senator McHale: I wonder how much it costs for a Toyota First Down? Is that under sponsorships?

Jeri Beggs: Yes, sponsorships. Redbird Sports Property is what we call our Learfield third party that comes in and sells sponsorships. That would be under sponsorships. Those numbers are up and those numbers will continue to go up especially if we can win.

Senator Seifert: What is the source of the income funds?

Jeri Beggs: That is general revenue.

Senator Seifert: Does that come from the university budget as a whole?

Jeri Beggs: Yes.

Senator Figeuroa: You said only 90-some students get paid to live on campus and eat here?

Jeri Beggs: We had 93 student-athletes living on campus last year. Some of them were probably being paid the full-ride scholarships, others partial, some of them might even have just been walk-ons who were paying their own way. Out of our 400-some student-athletes, 93 of them lived on campus.

Senator Figeuroa: Sorry, I misheard that.

Jeri Beggs: As you all know, probably mostly Freshman.

Senator Meyers: I have a question on the spreadsheet. The first tab, Athletic Ops, the FY24 income fund is 2497, the second tab Athletic Ops 1 column shows it as 1885. Which was correct for FY24?

Jeri Beggs: Good catch, neither of us noticed that. We think it is the 1885. We can check on that. The $1,885,000 sounds right to me. We will follow-up on that.

***Approval of the Academic Senate minutes of*** [***4-23-2025***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/AcademicSenate/Academic%20Senate%20Sharepoint/ExecFCE/Exec%2025-26/2025.08.18%20Exec/Linked%20Documents/ab%20Academic%20Senate%20Minutes%202025.04.23.docx?d=w9f870e07c6dd42f7929ccdb0ca1ae4a5&csf=1&web=1&e=bp7Aev) ***and*** [***5-7-2025***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/AcademicSenate/Academic%20Senate%20Sharepoint/ExecFCE/Exec%2025-26/2025.08.18%20Exec/Linked%20Documents/ab%20Academic%20Senate%20Minutes%202025.05.07.docx?d=we36e0740043a49be89723e9b9788136e&csf=1&web=1&e=KRzzmA)

Motion by Senator McHale.

Second by Senator Trader.

Unanimous approval.

Motion by Senator Figeuroa.

Second by Senator Chavez.

Unanimous approval.

***Chairperson’s Remarks***

Chairperson Bonnell: Thank you, President Tarhule, for a fantastic meal and great conversation. The table I was at had the best conversation; I really appreciate what we are doing when we have a chance to meet before our first Senate meeting. Thank you for opening up your home to us. I learned about other people’s pets, cats and dogs and I heard a really good joke from President Tarhule that I know I am going to remember. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves.

Welcome to the first meeting of the fall semester. When you think about the fall semester, I have to mention congratulations to the Dean of Students Office and all involved in a successful 2-day Festival ISU. What a great experience. The quad is always stunning, but it really shines when you have fantastic weather and so much activity from the campus community learning about RSOs, organizations, and campus departments. There are so many ways to get involved in and around campus. Congratulations to everyone who was involved with that.

Speaking of involvement, thank you to all for your important service on the Academic Senate. It is the primary governing body that recommends educational policy for the University, and it advises the President on its implementation. The long-term goal for Senate is to conduct serious, thoughtful analysis of the issues in the academic arena broadly conceived in a timely fashion. That comes from our Senate Bylaws section B. We have 15 meetings, counting this one, to accomplish the good thoughtful work. This year our work is really cut out for us. Before I talk more about that, I want to talk about a few logistics.

If you are unable to attend Senate, please contact the Senate Office and let us know. The second item is, when you would like to speak wait until you are called so I can call your name and then if you could speak into the microphone. That is so everyone in the room can hear you and then also when we transcribe these into minutes so we know who is speaking and what you are saying. If you have any questions for administrators, when they are covering their areas, if you are asking questions they haven’t addressed in their remarks, please send those ahead to them giving them 48 hours. That is just a curtesy we do; that way it gives them time to prepare. The last item is: you should all have a parking pass. If you don’t, come and see me. We have some extra ones, and that allows you to park in the Bone lot. If you don’t, come and find me and I will give you one of those.

One of our primary responsibilities is to maintain policies and documents through a review cycle in a system where the internal committees review and then propose changes following communication with appropriate stakeholders. Tonight, we will be reviewing proposed revisions to the Athletics Council Bylaws. This is an information item. This is our chance to ask questions about the proposed changes prior to a motion for approval as an action item at a future meeting. Outside of the review cycle, we respond to outside factors such as newly enacted federal and state laws and regulations by updating our polices. Tonight, we have policy 7.1.1 covering Significant Interest Disclosure. 7.1.1 will see further review from the Senate through that review process I just mentioned through the Faculty Affairs Committee. We will see that again. We are going to just update one specific section tonight and then later on in the year we will see that come through again.

In addition, this year we also have the important role of aligning policies, bylaws, and even the university’s constitution with the UFISU Collective Bargaining Agreement, or the CBA and the CBA’s companion documents such as the University Workload document. Similarly, the Faculty Caucus will discuss proposals from the University Review Committee to align our ASPT document, or the periwinkle book, with sections of the CBA. The policies that the Academic Senate works on will shape actions of the university community members in the future. This is important work and Illinois State University’s tradition of shared governance gives students, faculty, and staff a significant say in our university policies. Thank you for your involvement in Senate.

My last comment is, much of what we do and how we do it is authorized by Senate Bylaws, the Constitution, and the Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU. The MOU is slim, it is only 108 words. It became effective in 1999 after it what signed by the Senate chair, the university President, and the Board of Trustees chair. It created a shared understanding of the three bodies working together constructively. That Board of Trustees chair was William Sulaski. He served as the first Board of Trustees chair and was an inaugural member of the Board of Trustees. He passed away Tuesday, August 12 this year. I didn’t have the honor of knowing him, but by all accounts, he was just a really good, decent human being. He was committed to Illinois State University and the community. Through the MOU language --that he helped to craft more than 25 years ago -- it is still relevant. We can hope that the policies we work on through thoughtful analysis may be relevant that far into the future. I am really looking forward to working with everyone on those through this year.

***Student Body President’s Remarks***

Senator Montoya: I am glad to see everybody here tonight. Some of us enjoyed a great dinner. I did enjoy talking about pets and the age-old question of what you wanted to be when you were a kid.

I will keep this brief. Last week we had our first General Assembly meeting. It is always so inspiring to see so many new face s eager to serve and represent our students. I am truly looking forward to working with each of them this year. I also want to officially welcome off-campus senator Shourek who was appointed during our retreat. We are excited to have him on our team. As always, don’t hesitate to reach out if you have any ideas or initiatives you would like Student Government to look at or take on. We are here to listen and act on behalf of the student body. Thank you.

***Administrators' Remarks***

* ***President Aondover Tarhule***

Senator Tarhule: I want to welcome everyone to a new semester. I hope you have lots of luck and lots of fun during this semester. I want to thank everyone for move-in week. Those of you, if there are any freshman or if you remember your freshman year, you know that this is a big activity to orchestrate. There are lots of people especially in the Student Affairs area who work on move-in things. LJ, we are very appreciative for the work they do because it sets the tone for many students and their families about the ISU experience. We are very delighted for the leadership that worked on that.

Festival ISU was a great event. The joke she gives me credit for I learned yesterday on the quad at Festival ISU. I enjoyed meeting the students and learning all the things that they do. I always learn something new. There are some organizations that I had no idea our students are engaged in. It is always fun to see so many students and the energy. To me I think that is what makes university life very exciting.

One reminder, there will be a State of the University address on September 25th, so mark your calendars. It is at 2PM and this year we are going to have it in the Brown Ballroom.

I am delighted to be back in the classroom. I started teaching my honors class. I have 2 lectures down, only about 14 to go. We can do that standing on our head, so I am very delighted about that. Second, we are going to play Oklahoma this weekend. I was disappointed to hear you say our chances of winning are not good. As many of you know, I was a professor at the University of Oklahoma for 18 years. I have got some friendly wagers with a few friends of mine. It looks like somebody is costing me a bottle of beer if we don’t win. I am looking forward to going down with the team and back to my old school. I told them we will beat Oklahoma like an old rug. I hope that you let the coach know that we should win, but it is going to be a lot of fun.

I thank everyone, I thank you for what you do. Dinner was very pleasant, and I look forward to working with all of you for what I think is going to be a great term.

Senator Barrowclough: What is the joke? I think it needs to be said.

Senator Tarhule: I will catch you outside.

Senator Barrowclough: I tried, people.

Chairperson Bonnell: It was a joke that you can remember; it’s short.

* ***Provost Ani Yazedjian***

Senator Yazedjian: Welcome back to the fall semester. It has really been great to see the energy on campus. I enjoyed participating in move-in and breaking a sweat helping people get to their rooms. We are pleased to see continued steady enrollment at Illinois State. This growth is based on the efforts of many different people across campus and grounded in strategic and incremental adjustments over the last several years. We continue to see the strong enrollment in both new and returning students. I would like to give a shoutout to a group of people who will probably go unrecognized by name, but they helped a group of students get registered for classes. There were about 20 staff people a couple of weeks leading up to the school year who worked individually with students who had housing contracts but hadn’t registered for classes, and they worked with each of those students to look at their unique situations and help them get through whatever barriers they were facing and get them enrolled for classes. I am hopeful that we are going to be over 82% retention, and it is that kind of effort that is going to allow us to get to that point as an institution. I am excited to see what the 10th day numbers are going to show. We are excited to welcome our first cohort of students in the College of Engineering, but also our first cohort of students in Sports Communication, Data Science, and really the first full year of the new School of Creative Technologies. When I joined the first group of engineering students on the first day of class, it really was very touching for me in a way that was unexpected, but it was because that program and other new programs allow us to serve new students who otherwise would not have chosen ISU. When we continue to develop new programs, we are able to serve not only students and their families, but we are able to meet the needs of employers in the State of Illinois and serve the State in general. The numbers of returning students and our continued retention rate is really a fulfillment of a promise we make to students when we accept them into the Redbird community.

On the faculty side, it was announced this summer that we have the second cohort of Advancing Research and Creative Scholarship Program. This is a program that was started when the President was Provost. It is a cohort of interdisciplinary projects. We used Provost Office funds to support these projects. They are dealing with interdisciplinary projects looking at nanopatterning of memory devices, maternal and neonatal health disparities, rural illicit drug crises, and ceramics across engineering, art, and enterprise. If you have any specific questions about that, ask AVP McLauchlan. This second cohort is going to build on the success of the first cohort where we have already started to see external funding and scholarly publications as a result of that work.

Another thing I would like to point out to the students in the room and the faculty is that this summer Illinois State University was named as one of only 27 institutions nationwide to be both an R2 research university and an Opportunity College and University designation, which is really exciting because it recognizes that we are both fostering research among our faculty but also supporting student success. We are only one of 5 universities in the Midwest to receive both of these recognitions.

I would like to focus on the opportunity part to explain a little bit of what that is. This designation was in part measured on student access which is measured by the enrollment of Pell Grant recipients and students from underrepresented groups compared to similar populations in the area. For the students, it also looks at earnings for undergraduate students 8 years post-enrollment compared to similar populations in the area, compared to those who might have a high school degree or higher credential, and the median earnings of Illinois State graduates was $57,276 dollars, which is nearly $20,000 dollars more than the comparison earnings.

What this means is that we are providing students with both opportunities to pursue a post-secondary degree, but a degree that is a degree of value to them. We are very excited about that. I mention that because none of these things could be done without our faculty and staff and the work of our students. Our people are our greatest asset, and I am grateful for the work that everybody in this room has done and will do this year as we have a busy Senate year. It is going to be a busy year, but I am confident that we are up for the challenge, and I look forward to working together with all of you to get some work done.

Senator Schmeiser: You said it was one of 5 universities in the Midwest, correct?

Senator Yazedjian: Who got both of those designations.

Senator Schmeiser: Nationwide do we know how many?

Senator Yazedjian: Nationwide it is 27 who are R2 and the Opportunity Colleges and Universities. There are different ones for R1. This is through the Carnegie Classification of Institutions and it is really exciting and something I think we should be proud of.

Senator Kidwaro: What is the enrollment numbers in College of Engineering?

Senator Yazedjian: I’m not supposed to get ahead of the 10th day census numbers, don’t publish this anywhere, but our goal was about 130 to 150 students, and I think we are going to be at about 169 or 170. Super exciting, but don’t quote me on it until after 10th day.

* ***Vice President for Student Affairs Levester Johnson***

Senator Johnson: I want to join the accolades and words of thanks provided earlier for everyone’s assistance with move-in. I am going to provide some detailed numbers not only for move-in but some of the engagement activities that have taken place on campus as well. We feel that our new students are at a higher level of engagement, and we think maybe that is because these students did not go through the pandemic like some of our previous students had. It is an extremely exciting time to be on campus right now. Thanks for all of the volunteers, and that would be a lot of folks within this room. We had over 450 volunteers from various departments from all over campus and university housing staff helping folks move into our residential environments. There were about 370 2-hour shifts covered resulting in about 758 hours covered. That is fantastic. Volunteers are crucial to our welcoming of the over 6700 students and guests to campus, ensuring that they feel welcomed and supported on campus. Thank you for everything that you did to welcome our new students and their families to campus. As a side note, I know Senator Craig had a little encounter at Wal-Mart during move-in where going through the aisles he engaged with a father of a student and they were so impressed with our move-in process, and this person had kids at other institutions, that we wanted to pass on his business card and it turns out that this individual is one of the executives with Culvers. You need to pass that card onto us at Student Affairs because we could use some assistance and support next year. It would be nice to have some good custard. We received a lot of positive feedback from families as well. Thanks for all your volunteering and assistance.

The volunteering opportunities aren’t over. Faculty and staff are invited to participate in University Housing Services annual student outreach program called House Calls. Some of you undergraduate students might remember this. From Monday, September 16 through Thursday September 19, volunteers will have the opportunity to connect with students living in on-campus housing by going door-to-door to ask students how they are adjusting to campus life, answer any questions about campus living, and connecting them to resources on campus. House Calls are just one way that we continue to demonstrate individualized attention here at ISU, one of our hallmarks, and genuine care for our students. Some information should be coming out email message-wise for faculty and staff to be able to sign up for that.

The President and our Chair also mentioned Festival ISU and I’ll share some specific numbers as relates to that event. Over a 2-day period we had about 277 RSOs, about 64 various departments from throughout campus, 42 organizations from the Center for Civic Engagement for a grand total of 383 tables over the 2-day period. That is absolutely fantastic and if you were out there and you saw this, it was just incredible. Besides the president in his hat walking around giving out pencils, the swag was outstanding. If you didn’t get there you missed out. Thank you for you all and your departments and people participating and engaging in that activity. Speaking of Welcome Week, we had over 3046 unique event attendees during Redbird Life check-ins. Engagement is at an all-time high and we are very excited about that. Students attended everything from the Redbird Rally to You Can Work at ISU which had over 1,055 students attend. That is unbelievable. Work opportunities are another engagement opportunity for our students, so it is great to see people showing up for that.

The last thoughts that I will share are regarding fraternity and sorority life. The Panhellenic organizations during their recruitment period have 448 registered students for sorority recruitment and about 313 bids that went out. That is an increase of 53 women over last year. We changed the process and again engagement is at an all-time high. We are very excited about that.

Chairperson Bonnell: I think that is amazing. Thank you for all your hard work and involvement. It takes a lot of people to get these things done. I will also say I loved the inflatable balloon. It’s just fantastic, thank you.

* ***Vice President for Finance and Planning Glen Nelson***

Senator Nelson: I am very excited to be here and start my first full semester at ISU. I really enjoyed the spring, and I am going to deviate from finance and planning for just a moment. When I interviewed, I was very impressed with the heart of the people here, and you have heard me talk about that in the past. I am going to pile on with what Vice President Johnson the Provost were saying about move-in. I have worked on a number of campuses and a number of systems. This was the smoothest, most efficient move-in operation I have ever participated in or watched. Form putting 5 kids through college, moving them myself, and in my work life, I have never seen an operation as slick as what you what we all did. I think that really kicks off the semester and helps students make their connection on their first day. It has been pretty amazing. LJ took me out today walking around the quad and connecting with students. It was wonderful to see a vibrant campus. Thank you for letting me digress there for a moment. It is very impressive, and I am excited to be here. I am actually really thinking we may have an upset Saturday night, so there is not only just one person at this table who thinks that.

What I want to do is talk about two things. The first is the financial model. I know some of you may be tired of hearing me talk about it. We are not going to go into the model tonight, but I want to let you know that during the summer, some members of the RISE Taskforce were involved in continuing to meet with Grant Thornton as well as my staff and the Provost’s staff. We do have the guts of the model created now and we are in a position that we have been testing it, tweaking it, and we will be making final changes to it with the consultants in the next couple of weeks. Everything is moving according to schedule for the new financial model. I am looking forward to sharing and getting feedback in the coming weeks.

The other thing I would like to talk about is some organizational change that you may be seeing within the Finance and Planning area. There is going to be several job announcements coming out either later this week or next week and some changes we did over the summer. The first thing I would like to let you know is while these are new positions, they are not new budgeted positions. All of the funding for these came from reorganizing within my division and reallocating resources from vacancies we have had to then moving these positions into key areas; we need to strengthen our analytics. The first one I would like to talk about is the Chief Data and Institutional Effectiveness Officer. We have had and operated many of our functions in a decentralized manner at Illinois State University. The decentralized aspect of mining and reporting institutional data across multiple units can result in incomplete data sets and conflicting conclusions.

In 2024 President Tarhule created a data reorganization work group to review the situation and recommend a path to centralization of data mining and recording. The work group did a lot of hard work but did not come up with a consensus for a path forward. A consultant from EAB was brought in to visit with the team members of the work group to review our situation. She ultimately presented a recommendation to centralize these activities and to create a Chief Data Officer position. During the spring semester when I arrived, I then reviewed the situation, reviewed the report, and worked with Cabinet to refine the new role and organizational structure. We have added “institutional effectiveness” to the title not just Chief Data Officer. This new position is a senior leadership position that will be responsible for overseeing governance, management, and utilization of data across the University. The person will ensure that data is leveraged to support institutional effectiveness, student success, academic planning, and operational efficiency. The new role will lead the University Data Analytics Unit and will collaborate with senior leadership, faculty, and staff to align data initiatives with our university’s strategic goals including student success, research advancement, and operational optimization. The position will report to the Vice President of Finance and Planning. The new organization structure will require some reassignment of several existing units to this new unit. The Enterprise Data Analytics team will move from OIT and the PRPA team will move from the budget organization. These movements will not occur until the individual is hired and here.

One of the other aspects that they will be responsible for when they arrive will be to develop and recommend a path forward to coordinate and centralize the assessment functions that are currently reporting to the Provost and the Vice President of Student Affairs. That was also the recommendation of the committee to have that person work with the assessment individuals who were part of the work group. This is a position that you will see posted here within the next week. I wanted to give you background on why that position is out there. It is a new position. We are really hopeful that this will help clear up some of the confusion around data coming from multiple resources at the institution. The other position will be an AVP of Finance and Planning Operations. It is a reconstituted position that was a lower-level position prior to my arrival, and there is a vacancy that came up. This position will help coordinate activities throughout the finance and planning organization. I think that is it for right now, but that position will be advertised as well.

Chairperson Bonnell: It might be because I am a librarian that when you talk about data and organizing that in a different way, I take interest in that. When you were speaking it is hard, I think visually, when you say these things, I wish I could see. Maybe it is because I am curious, do you have that plotted out already? I wish I could visualize what is happening there organizationally. Do you have that in your brain, or set out in paper?

Senator Nelson: It is probably more in my brain right now. There are various renditions on paper, maybe I can describe it real quick for you. If you can think of the PRPA organization in terms of institutional research, is typically what we call that function at some other universities. That function, while it does analysis to help us internally, a lot of their focus is reporting to IPEDS, being the true source of institutional data as it reports outwardly. That organization will report into this new unit. The Enterprise Data Analytics, or EDA, group that is in OIT, it is oversimplified but think of that group as report writers and data miners. That is where a number of our colleagues would go to get institutional information. That group didn’t necessarily have the same level of understanding of context that the PRPA group did. It would be very easy to get two different answers to the same question. The PRPA organization will have an internal focus and an external focus within this new structure under the Chief Data Officer. The assessment function will be linked to this group, but we are not sure exactly if they will be reporting in to the Chief Data Officer or be a dotted line and still reside both in Student Affairs and the Provost’s Office. That is yet to be determined. Does that give a little more context?

Chairperson Bonnell: Yeah, that does help me out. I will look forward to that; that seems really exciting.

Senator Nelson: We probably won’t see the effects of this until next semester because as you know, our searches take a while. My goal is by the end of the semester to have this person on board and moving forward.

Senator Tarhule: Can I add something to what Glen said? Last year when we were working on the strategic plan, Excellence By Design, I kept asking what would we need to do to raise our retention to 85%? What are the two or three most important factors that, if we could influence, would raise our retention to 85%? That is when I realized that we had 3 different student success predictive models that had been developed by 3 different data units. You are seeing different kinds of data and different kinds of analytics. I said, “This is not helpful.” We need one model that uses all the data that we have to help us figure out what we needed to change so we could get our retention and graduation rates to what we wanted. That is just one example of how the decentralized nature of the data ecosystem was in some way slowing us down in terms of achieving our institutional goals. That is what prompted the idea for one of them. I think this is so much neater, what we are doing now. I think it is going to be so much more helpful, and we are going to be able to go to one place and say, “I want graduation rates to be X%, what should I change to get that?” And I would ask the office to be able to give me that data.

Chairperson Bonnell: That really makes a lot of sense. It will help people to know where to go to. One place to go.

***Information Item***

***From Rick Valentin: Rules Committee***

***Athletics Council Bylaws***

[***Link to current bylaws***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/AcademicSenate/EST17JPHbCtGmIsxmariOD0Blw62zagdBPt77nLyXMPX7A?e=OFFAiv)

[***Link to markup***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/AcademicSenate/EVR8avi4bvpJsAW7MHq4wiIBhYXhOO1EECidpmyKhWDl5Q?e=ukgcZP)

Chairperson Bonnell: Last year the Rules Committee worked through the Athletics Council Bylaws, but it was at the end of the year. That is why last year’s Senate didn’t work through this process. I am thankful now to the Rules Committee. Senator Valentin is going to give an overview of what the changes are and then we will open up to questions.

Senator Valentin: These are revisions to the bylaws of the Athletics Council which is an external committee of the Senate. In general the changes reflect current practices within the University and the verbiage of ISU Athletics, the Missouri Valley Conference, and NCAA. I think that is a good overview.

Senator Rickey: Are there any major changes to any processes within the bylaws?

Senator Valentin: There are some changes, but I wouldn’t say major. If you look through the copy you can see the changes proposed within the document.

Chairperson Bonnell: We have here Leanna Bordner, and you are the Senior Woman Administrator on campus which is a NCAA designation, so I am going to let you offer your comments.

Leanna Bordner: Correct, thank you, Chair Bonnell. Many of our changes and edits are a reflection of changes in the NCAA, changes in the Missouri Valley, there were position titles that are no longer relative to our Athletics Department, so it was really cleaning up some of the language that has changed in our landscape over the last 4 or 5 years. I would say there is truly nothing major that is involved in these edits. My goal is to answer every question tonight so that we have a Toyota First Down by the time we are done.

Senator Nikolaou: I will make just a small one. Under Section 2 A of the last paragraph that was added where it says, “the chairperson is going to receive annually the committee reports, compose it and submit it to the president and chairperson of the Academic Senate.” For consistency, at different parts, it refers that it is going to submit it to the University Policy Committee, not the chair of the Academic Senate. Either it could be the chair or it could be UPC.

Leanna Bordner: Which one do want?

Jeri Beggs: Yes, which is appropriate here?

Senator Nikolaou: I think formally they report to the UPC.

Chairperson Bonnell: Yes, I think to UPC. I have a comment. It is hard to look at this because there is an awful lot of changes, but under “operations” that should be where roman numeral II should be, if that makes sense?

Senator Valentin: Yeah, the term. The roman numeral II should be in front of “Operating Procedures” as opposed to… yeah. That is a Word problem.

Chairperson Bonnell: I was betting it was. On page 4, under A. Athletics Council Executive Committee, you deleted #1 which is, “advise the director of Athletics when necessary on the search procedures including the composition of search committee for a major coaching position.” That #1 has been deleted. I looked back at the 2014 version of this, back then, that clause was all the same except that is when they added that section “when necessary.” Back in 2014 it was just straight #1, then in the 2014 edits they added “when necessary,” but now you want to remove the whole thing. Could you talk a little bit about the reasoning behind that?

Leanna Bordner: Yes. In our world today, coaching searches, especially for our priority 1, high profile coaches happen very quickly and many times they are under the radar. Coaches don’t want their names out there and they are very confidential. Again, it is pretty standard operating procedure at the Division I level that that is how major searches are conducted in Athletics departments.

Chairperson Bonnell: That sentence is about major coaching positions, so that is what you are talking about. It seems really basic, when you add the clause “when necessary” it was still pretty fuzzy. You stand by that it doesn’t belong there?

Leanna Bordner: If you think that is important, it is not anything that would keep us from disagreeing.

Jeri Beggs: I will say before becoming the Athletic Director, I have now served on the Athletics Council for 22 years--7am on Wednesday mornings, anybody interested? I was the chair, I was the faculty athletic rep, I don’t know that we ever got called in to a coaching search. If you need to leave it because of the “when necessary,” as Leanna mentioned sometimes these happen in days. It happens very, very quickly in the ticketed men’s basketball, women’s basketball, football world, it happens really quickly because they are all hired at the same time, for example men’s and women’s basketball season is over. It is a really quick shuffle of coaches; it happens so fast.

Leanna Bordner: We have short lists for major coaching positions so that we are prepared to move quickly.

Jeri Beggs: We have to be competitive.

Leanna Bordner: I we have a really good coach, there is a really good chance we could lose them in any given season. We are always ready if that happens. We are following all the other hiring procedures. Background checks, etc. It is all there but it happens really fast.

Chairperson Bonnell: This will go back to Rules and they will discuss this.

***Information/Action Item***

***From Angela Bonnell: Executive Committee***

***Policy 7.1.1 Significant Interest Disclosure***

[***Link to current policy***](https://policy.illinoisstate.edu/fiscal/general/7-1-1/)

[***Link to markup***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/AcademicSenate/EXNPnhAL2C1PkAuRqNmzyX4BzH8K3RNGzJRhbt7AaKNgpw?e=uuItkG)

Chairperson Bonnell: The next item we have is an information and action item, potentially. This is for Policy 7.1.1 Significant Interest Disclosure. This is an information/action item coming straight from the Executive Committee. Some items that the Executive Committee thinks are simple enough or urgent enough, those come straight to the floor. We are suggesting that this could be an information/action item meaning that we could take a motion from the floor to move it from an information to action item if the body so chooses. We will talk a little bit more about that. In this particular case, we need to approve a necessary timely change to Policy 7.1.1 on Significant Interest Disclosure. This change aligns with the federal agency concerns and the terms and conditions we must accept upon accepting the external funding awards. The new terms and conditions became clear in a modification made by the Department of Energy on May 30th 2025 to an award and there is the need for the policy addition to be in place by Monday, September 1st, 2025. That is Monday, which is Labor Day. This change being made inserts a sentence into the policy that says we will follow the usually stricter external guidelines for conflict of interest where applicable.

Motion to move from Information to Action by Senator McHale.

Second by Senator Peterson.

Unanimous approval.

Motion to approve by Chairperson Bonnel.

Senator Nikolaou: I have a small friendly amendment to delete the word “thoughtfully” from the first sentence. Usually, we don’t include that kind of language. Just say, “As set forth herein…”

Associate Vice President for Research Craig McLauchlan: Yes, that is a friendly amendment.

Chairperson Bonnell: Thank you.

Unanimous approval.

***From Angela Bonnell: Executive Committee***

***Appendix II: Faculty Affairs Committee***

[***Link to current bylaws***](https://academicsenate.illinoisstate.edu/about/bylaws/#Appendix-Two)

[***Link to markup***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/AcademicSenate/EcOfgwx77kFJvk_cDEhjpM0BP2nJNkdYJ4ddm0Vvj9Ol2Q?e=4AMVEu)

This item was skipped to be addressed at a future meeting.

***Announcement of Chairperson and Secretary elected for Internal Committees:***

* ***Academic Affairs Committee***

Chair: Senator Nikolaou

Secretary: Senator Sweedler

* ***Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee***

Chair and secretary TBD

* ***Faculty Affairs Committee***

Chair: Senator Blum

Secretary: Senator Henry

* ***Planning and Finance Committee***

Chair: Senator Paolucci

Secretary: Senator Figueroa and Senator Blum

* ***Rules Committee***

Rules Committee: Senator Valentin

Secretary: Senator Jain

* ***University Policy Committee***

Chair: Senator Stewart

Secretary: Senator Trader

***Communications***

None.

***Adjournment***

Motion by Senator McHale.

Second by Senator Figueroa.

Unanimous approval.