

SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025, 3:10 PM
232 ENGLISH BUILDING AND ZOOM
MINUTES

Present: Chair Angela Lyons, Vice-Chair Shawn Gilmore, David Dalpiaz, Hunter Farnham, David Forsyth, Patrick Holt, Yvette Johnson-Walker (Zoom), Joanne Kaczmarek, Anjali Kumar, Eric Kurt, Ralph Mathisen (Zoom), Gay Miller (Zoom), Nolan Miller, James Quisenberry, Charles Roseman, Chaya Sandler, Peter Silhan, John Weible, Jessica Williams
Ex officio: Charles Isbell (Chancellor), Rurik Tywoniw (Presiding Officer of the Senate)

Guests: William Bernhard (Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs), John Coleman (Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs), Gio Guerra-Peréz (Zoom) (Interim Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion), Brendan Harley (Chair, Senate Committee on Research Policy), Aimee Heeter (Vice Chancellor for Finance), Stephanie Henry (Communications Associate, Strategic Communications and Marketing), Robin Kaler (Associate Chancellor for Strategic Communications and Marketing), Chris Schmitz (Chair, Senate Council on Student Conduct Expectations and Accountability), Rashmi Tenneti (Director of Analytics and Alignment, Strategic Communications and Marketing), Allison Vance (Deputy Associate Chancellor Director of Messaging, Strategic Communications and Marketing), Patrick Wade (Director of Executive Communications and Issues Management, Strategic Communications and Marketing)

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) was called to order at 3:12 pm with Chair Lyons presiding.

2. APPROVAL OF REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Remote participation was approved by unanimous consent.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No requests received.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 19, 2025 meeting and the June 16, 2025 meeting were approved as distributed.

5. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair Lyons welcomed new and returning committee members and invited each member to introduce themselves. Lyons also thanked those that attended the Shared Governance Leadership Retreat that was held on August 20, 2025. The retreat was productive and feedback regarding the retreat was positive. The intention is to hold the retreat annually.

Chair Lyons shared the following additional remarks.

- The success of the retreat was due to everyone's positive engagement. Lyons expressed appreciation of the service and commitment to keep work moving forward efficiently.
- Lyons emphasized that her role is one of service to the Senate and its committees and plans to focus on supporting the service and leadership roles in the Senate.
- Lyons acknowledged the challenges ahead and stressed the importance of trust, collaboration, and shared commitment to the University's mission of providing high quality, affordable education.
- Lyons noted the proposed formation of the Ninth Senate Review Commission and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Honorary Degree Awards Process and emphasized the need for members' assistance in carrying out this important work.
- Lyons encouraged members to carry forward the positive momentum of the retreat, adopting an optimistic yet realistic approach in the work ahead.

Chair Lyons emphasized the importance of communicating with kindness and acknowledged that, at times, slowing down may be necessary to ensure work is done well, despite the pressure to move quickly. She encouraged strengthening engagement with one another, as well as with *ex officio* and administrative members. Lyons ended her remarks by highlighting the value of shared governance as one of the University's greatest strengths.

6. CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS

Chancellor Isbell thanked the SEC for the opportunity to attend and noted that he has officially been in the role for less than a month. He highlighted the start of the new academic year, including welcoming a very large incoming class, participating in convocation and Quad Day events, and leading his first "I-L-L" chant with international students.

Chancellor Isbell shared his long-standing connection to the campus through previous work with the high-performance computing group on hurricane modeling, and he shared that his regard for the University has only grown over the past decade. He praised the campus as a community of thoughtful people and expressed his commitment to working closely with the Senate.

He emphasized the importance of shared governance to the University's success, connecting it to the academic mission and the University's responsibility to the state, the nation, and the world. He noted that the University impacts not only those on campus, but also many who may never set foot at Illinois. Finally, Chancellor Isbell underscored the importance of planning for the future, acknowledged the challenges ahead, and emphasized the need for collaboration in addressing them.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a) **SC.26.03, Establish the Ninth Senate Review Commission**

Chair Lyons noted the draft document was shared prior to the meeting and added that it is important to elect people to the committee that have some Senate knowledge and/or experience. Lyons pointed out that the proposal tasks the SEC with nominating two faculty members for the position of chair and with creating a list of potential priority areas that the Commission should address.

Forsyth shared his experience when he served on the Eighth Senate Review Commission (SR8) and noted that not all committees are as active as others, but there was nothing controversial. Clerk Roether added that SR8 was a vehicle to publicly address concerns in the confidential governance audit report issued by the Office of University Audits. Gilmore stated that a review commission has previously addressed issues that the former commission did not have time to address. The creation of the Senate Committee on Research Policy was a result of SR8.

The student members of SEC suggested that student senators only should vote for student members of the Commission. After other suggested voting combinations and further discussion, SEC decided to adhere to the original drafted language with a minor edit changing the phrases throughout to “At most X from ~~the same~~ any single college or similar division.”

SC.26.03 was approved as amended for submission to the Senate at its September 15, 2025 meeting.

Chair Lyons reminded SEC that at their next meeting on September 8, SEC will nominate two faculty members for the chair position on the Commission and compile a list of proposed priority areas for the Commission to address.

b) **SC.26.04, Establish the Ad Hoc Committee on the Honorary Degree Awards Process**

Chair Lyons noted that this ad hoc committee coincides with the Commission but is proposed as a separate body to avoid the focus of the Commission becoming the honorary degree process. The ad hoc committee should reflect on the current honorary degree award process and devise how the process can be improved.

Forsyth noted that the *Statutes* require the Senate to recommend candidates and made a motion to insert a reference to the *Statutes*, Article II, Section 1.d. “Each Senate shall recommend candidates for honorary degrees...” into the document. The motion was seconded and approved.

SC.26.04 was approved as amended for submission to the Senate at its September 15, 2025 meeting.

c) Seeking Volunteers: Urbana Senate Observer for the Board of Trustees Meetings

The following individuals will serve as the Urbana Senate Observer for the indicated meetings.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer</u>
Thurs	Sept 18, 2025	Urbana	Angie Lyons
Thurs	Nov 13, 2025	Chicago	Chaya Sandler
Thurs	Jan 16, 2026	Chicago	Joanne Kaczmarek
Thurs	Mar 19, 2026	Springfield	Eric Kurt
Thurs	May 21, 2026	Urbana	Angie Lyons

8. UPDATES

a) Future Updates from Chairs of Standing Committees of the Senate

Chair Lyons has made space for chairs of standing committees to share updates on committee work at upcoming SEC meetings. Clerk Roether will send a request for chairs to select a preferred meeting date. Lyons suggested that one chair serving on SEC and one chair not serving on SEC provide an update at each SEC meeting.

Educational Policy (EP) – Chair Miller noted that 40 administrative approvals were submitted for review at the first EP meeting earlier today, along with 17 full proposals. The proposed amendment to the language other than English (LOTE) requirement was submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and is scheduled to appear on their October agenda.

Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF) – Chair Forsyth noted that a minor dispute arose and has been resolved.

b) Administrative Updates

Chair Lyons has also made space for administrators to share updates with the SEC.

Tenneti provided an update on the use of Airtable to manage data for the Office of the Senate. Airtable explicitly states in the Airtable AI Terms and in their security information, customer data is not used to train the generative artificial intelligence models used to provide Airtable AI features.

c) Other

FAC-IBHE – G. Miller reported that Illinois will be the host institution for the upcoming FAC-IBHE (Faculty Advisory Council of the Illinois Board of Higher Education) meeting on September 19, 2025 at the Illini Union. She also provided an overview of agenda topics and encouraged SEC members to attend.

G. Miller noted that an alternate is usually designated in case the FAC-IBHE Representative is unable to attend a meeting. However, no alternate has been designated, and she requested a call for nominees to be sent, so an alternate can be selected.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 pm.

Jenny Roether
Clerk of the Senate