

**SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2025**  
**232 ENGLISH BUILDING AND ZOOM**  
**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chair Jon Hale, Vice-Chair Angela Lyons (Zoom), Maya Crystal, David Dalpiaz, Hunter Farnham, Steve Hall, Yvette Johnson-Walker, Joanne Kaczmarek, Eric Kurt, Nolan Miller, James Quisenberry, Charles Roseman  
*Ex officio:* Robert Jones (Chancellor), H. George Friedman (Presiding Officer of the Senate)

**Absent:** Jeffrey Eric Jenkins, Ralph Mathisen, Gay Miller, Sean Murphy, Chaya Sandler

**Guests:** William Bernhard (Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Office of the Provost), Robin Kaler (Associate Chancellor, Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing), Susan Martinis (Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation), Sharon Reynolds (Associate Provost for Faculty Employee Relations, Office of the Provost), Peter Silhan (Chair, Senate Committee on the Budget), Patrick Wade (Director of Executive Communications and Issues Management, Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing), Josh Whitman (Director of Athletics, Illinois Division of Intercollegiate Athletics)

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) was called to order at 3:10 pm with Chair Hale presiding.

**2. APPROVAL OF REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

Remote participation was approved by unanimous consent.

**3. SC.25.10, Update from the Director of Athletics**

Josh Whitman, Director of Athletics provided the following update on the Illinois Division of Intercollegiate Athletics (DIA).

Whitman began by giving a brief overview of the history of DIA, which women's and men's sports teams are sponsored, and general operating numbers (staff, facilities, and budget). DIA is overseen by two Faculty Athletic Representatives (FARs) appointed by the Chancellor and the Athletic Board. Whitman reports directly to the Chancellor, to the President (through the Chancellor), and ultimately to the Board of Trustees.

Financially, DIA receives no funding from the State of Illinois appropriations or tuition dollars. DIA's staff is comprised of State of Illinois employees. More than \$24 million is generated by DIA and is directed to various University accounts annually. For every \$1.00 spent by DIA, \$0.14 comes directly back to the University.

Whitman shared a financial breakdown shown as a pie chart for expenses and one for revenues. Beginning in fiscal year 2026, DIA will phase out student fee revenues (~\$3.5 million) over the next four fiscal years. The final installment on the loan for the Atkins Baseball Training Center and Martin Softball Training Center will be paid in fiscal year 2027.

Student athletes represent excellence in the classroom. In 2024, Illinois student athletes had a 95% graduation success rate, and have increased for five consecutive years, now ranking third in the Big Ten. Their fall 2024 combined GPA was 3.53, with 79% earning a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and 89 student athletes earning a 4.0 GPA.

Competition achievements in 2024 include:

- Football: Cheez-It Citrus Bowl Champions and 10-win season
- Men's Basketball: Big Ten Tournament Champions & NCAA Tournament Elite Eight appearance
- Women's Basketball: Women's Basketball Invitation Tournament Champions (Inaugural)
- Volleyball: NCAA Tournament appearance
- Baseball: Big Ten Champions (regular season)
- Women's Track & Field: Big Ten Indoor Champions
- Men's Gymnastics: 4x Big Ten Event titles

The House class action settlement is scheduled for approval in April 2025, and payment would begin Summer 2025. Direct revenue-sharing with student athletes, up to a Division I limit. Aggregated revenue items account for 22% totaling ~\$21 million, and all Big Ten institutions are expected to share up to the limit. NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) imposed scholarship limits will be replaced with roster limits. Cash damages will be awarded to current & former student-athletes for lost name/image/likeness (NIL) opportunities. There will be strict monitoring and enforcement of synthetic NIL opportunities.

In answering questions, Whitman provided the following additional information. Whitman attributed recent success to the exceptional leadership working for DIA. Student sections such as Orange Crush that sell-out might be expanded, and if the block-I student section begins to sell-out it may also be expanded. The NCAA imposed roster limits will decrease the number of student athletes but will likely increase the opportunity for scholarships. Fans will have more purchasing options through a new point and click system with more straightforward and upfront fees.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No requests received.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No minutes were approved.

**6. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Chair Hale noted that in these times of uncertainty, it is important for the University to come together. The federal funding freeze was unsettling, and many executive orders are being reviewed by the courts.

**7. CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS**

Chancellor Jones acknowledged the many challenges derived from recent federal directives. Illinois needs to step up and be as thoughtful and strategic as during the pandemic. During the pandemic there was deliberative thought, broad consultation, then action taken to keep the university community safe.

Chancellor Jones commented on what he considers a flawed honorary degree process and the recent failed honorary degree nomination. There cannot be a system that would embarrass someone for recognition they did not ask for. Not all awardees are alumni, and not all are donors. It is critically important that this process is thought about differently and no honorary degrees should be awarded until this process is bettered.

In the Chancellor's 46 years in higher education, this is the most disruptive two weeks from federal directives. The federal government is a critical partner, and many directives have been quite unsettling and disruptive. It is difficult to offer guidance when it is not really known what those directives mean. Illinois must adhere to its values and at the same time must obey the law. It is very disappointing that USAID will be disrupted. Work will continue to clarify what is in law and what is a directive or mandate, and that information will be shared as it becomes available.

About 1.5 hour ago, Robert Jones was announced as the 34<sup>th</sup> president of the University of Washington. Jones will start there on August 31. Jones stated that this was a very difficult decision to make, and serving Illinois has truly the most amazing part of his career.

In response to questions about emergency funding, Jones noted that discussions are underway to hopefully provide bridge funding or emergency funding at the system level depending on how long this situation lasts. Kaler added that a website is available with updates and an email address if there are questions the website does not answer. There is a need to proceed carefully. There are a lot of resources that have existed since 2016 but need to put them all in one place.

**8. OLD BUSINESS**

**a) EP.25.011, Proposal to Rename the Center for Women and Gender in Global Perspectives [Updated New Unit Name: Center for the Study of Global Gender Equity]**

N. Miller reported that upon submission, the Board of Trustees recommended a revision to the proposed name, changing the name from “Center for Global Gender Equity” to “Center for the Study of Global Gender Equity.” The unit and college were supportive of this proposed revised name, so the originally submitted item was removed from the November 14, 2024 Board of Trustees agenda. The revised item, naming the center the “Center for the Study of Global Gender Equity,” was approved by the Board of Trustees on January 23, 2025.

Concern was expressed that the revision was not routed back through the Senate for its advice. This minor change was not seen as controversial. However, it would be of concern if this became regular practice by the Board of Trustees. N. Miller noted that this has never happened before and with no objections from the sponsoring unit, there does not appear to be any obvious violation of policy. It was unusual for the Board to make this request.

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Set the Agenda for the February 10, 2025 Senate Meeting**

SEC members discussed the difference between public comment and questions by senators. Approval of Senate minutes was moved to the Consent Agenda and the Consent Agenda was moved to #4 on the agenda by unanimous consent.

The agenda for the February 10 Senate meeting was set as amended.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 pm.

Jenny Roether  
Clerk of the Senate

**URBANA OBSERVER TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer</u>
Thursday	March 20, 2025	Springfield	TBD
Thursday	May 22, 2025	Urbana	Jon Hale
Wed/Thurs	July 16-17, 2025	Chicago	Chaya Sandler