



Faculty Advisory Council Illinois Board of Higher Education

MINUTES

21 November 2025 Meeting Agenda

SIU-Carbondale
1263 Lincoln Dr.
Carbondale, IL 62901
Student Service Building, Room 150/160

FAC members/alternates attending and their institutions

In person:

Patrick Crawford
Stacy Kosier
Dan Hrozencik
Marie Donovan
Nicole Zeller
Allison Douglas
Jill Gebke
Andy Howard
Greg Ferrence
Mike Phillips
Cynthia Boyce
Lara Hernandez Corkrey
Jason Edgar
Brooke Johnson
Tiffany Puckett
Paul Bialek
James Marshall
Kristine Burgess
Sarah Garber
Lichang Wang
Sue Wiediger
Tyrone Forman
Tena Helton
Gay Miller
Jennifer McKenzie

Augustana College
Carl Sandburg College
Chicago State University
DePaul University
Eastern Illinois University
Elgin Community College
IBHE Assistant Director of Academic Affairs
Illinois Institute of Technology
Illinois State University
Illinois Valley Community College (at-large)
Lincoln Trail College (at-large)
Moraine Valley Community College
Morton College
Northeastern Illinois University
Northern Illinois University
Oakton Community College
Rockford University
Rosalind Franklin University
Rosalind Franklin University
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville
University of Illinois-Chicago
University of Illinois- Springfield
University of Illinois- Urbana Champaign
Western Illinois University

Absent:

Daniel J. Coles
Mary Laundry

Aurora University
Adler University

Patricia Saleeby	Bradley University
Shawn Schumacher	DeVry University
Irene Jacobson	Eastern Illinois University
Shaalein Lopez	Governors State University
Jack Haines	Joliet Junior College
Matt Landrus	Lake Land College
Jessica McDonald	Olney Central College
J. Matthew Ward	Quincy University
Mary Ellen Schiller	Roosevelt University
John Cooksey	Truman College (resigned)
Amy Carr	Western Illinois University

9:00 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** Call to order and Introductions.

9:02 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** provided reminders about upcoming meetings and noted that several special guests—including the IBHE Chair—will be speaking with the FAC. He asked caucus groups to prepare and submit questions in advance to ensure stronger, more substantive responses during those sessions.

Filling in for Vice Chair **Jack Haines (Joliet Junior College)**, he reviewed plans for the next meeting and distributed a hard-copy poll.

He then shared updates from the recent IBHE Board meeting (attended by Jack Haines) on recent legislative activity, including the state budget that allocated 1% but withheld an additional 2% in reserves. Board Chair Pranav Kothari reported that, despite federal-level challenges facing education, Illinois higher education enrollment has increased for the fourth consecutive year. Dual-credit enrollment is likewise up, with a reported increase of 9%.

Tiffany Puckett (NIU) requested clarification that the figure was actually **9.3%**, and Dan confirmed that number.

9:11 **Secretary Jason Edgar (Morton College)** noted minor corrections to the minutes and membership list, including verifying that the new institution in attendance is Augustana, not “Augustus.” He also invited members who prefer to have their initials used in place of their full names in the minutes to contact him privately via email.

9:15 **Legislative Liaison Mike Phillips (IVCC)** provided an update on the veto session, noting that the education-related bills moved forward without hesitation. He also described a retirement bill he is working on that includes language concerning annuities and SURS. **Tyrone Forman (UIC)** requested an update on funding bills and Mike reported that while representatives remain publicly neutral, they have indicated off the record that the bill carries significant costs. **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** asked about the status of any outreach or commercial efforts aimed at encouraging Illinois students to stay in-state, and Mike responded that no such initiatives are underway.

9:24 **Jill Gebke (IBHE)** confirmed the results of the Early Attendance reports across the state, highlighting gains in overall enrollment and dual-credit participation. She noted that African American enrollment increased, though the state experienced a 5.2% decline in international

students. Retention rates also improved, providing a positive snapshot of current trends. Growth was observed across undergraduate sectors, including public, private, and community colleges, while credential programs increased by 1%–3%. Jill then discussed new job opportunities at IBHE, noting that she and several others will be transitioning into new positions. **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** shared information from the IPEDS website, commenting on areas where data collection may be subject to skepticism.

9:38 **Lichang Wang (SIU-Carbondale)** introduced the speaker.

Dr. Costas Tsatsoulis, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, “Moving SIUC from an R2 school to an R1.”

The speaker discussed research classifications and reporting cycles, noting that research activity is measured on three-year cycles across all U.S. institutions. He explained that an R2 institution requires a minimum of \$5 million in research expenditures and the graduation of at least 20 doctoral students, according to IPEDS. The R1 designation sets a higher threshold, requiring 50 million dollars in annual research spending and at least 70 doctoral graduates. He highlighted that SIUC has met these criteria and achieved R1 status, emphasizing that faculty at the university are conducting cutting-edge research and providing students with enhanced opportunities. He noted that research grants can also support professional development. The speaker explained that engaging students in research improves graduation rates, as it encourages active participation and prevents student isolation. He also shared that prospective students often choose SIUC because of its R1 status, illustrating the impact of the designation on recruitment. Additionally, he discussed a statewide initiative, “R1 for Everyone,” aimed at increasing funding for all Illinois schools wanting to make that transition from R2 to R1. He also highlighted programs such as Pell Grants, which expand access for minority students, noting that SIUC is one of only 20 schools nationwide to combine R1 status with accessibility initiatives such as Pell Grant eligibility.

9:47 **Sarah Garber (Rosalind Franklin)** asked the Vice Chancellor what the institution plans to do in light of recent cuts to federal research loans and funding, and how these changes will affect SIUC. The Vice Chancellor responded that the state is involved in several lawsuits against the current federal administration regarding these issues; however, as a VC, he is prohibited from lobbying. He added that the most he can do is ensure that lobbyists and state officials are fully informed about the impacts of these funding cuts.

9:51 **Marie Donovan (DePaul University)** asked which other institutions are included among the 20 accessible R1 universities, and he provided the list, noting that UIC is among them. She then asked about the advantages of being an accessible R1 institution. He explained that such institutions attract students who benefit from Pell Grants and similar supports, enabling them to graduate and significantly change the trajectory of their lives and their families’ futures.

10:04 **Andy Howard (Illinois Institute of Technology)** asked how the Vice Chancellor supports researchers to ensure they can thrive. The Vice Chancellor responded that support is built on sustaining and expanding existing success. He noted that researchers may request facility upgrades, new or improved infrastructure, reimbursements, and various forms of resource

redistribution, both pre- and post-award. He also acknowledged that withheld federal funds and staffing shortages have had a noticeable impact.

- 10:11 **Greg Ferrence (ISU)** asked about a State of Illinois program from the early 2000s that provided stipends to support researchers and inquired whether there might be an opportunity for the state to reinstate or match such stipends. The Vice Chancellor described similar programs and their varying effectiveness but emphasized that he would like to see the state match federal research funding—for example, if the federal government contributes 15%, the State of Illinois would also contribute 15%.
- 10:16 **Sue Wiediger (SIU-Edwardsville)** asked how Carbondale is addressing challenges associated with its rural location. The Vice Chancellor responded that the university relies on its local population and the staff it brings in, emphasizing that Carbondale is a welcoming and diverse community. He added that he is not concerned about the rural setting, as the institution's strong academic quality continues to define and sustain its success.

Casual Break

- 10:34 **Chair Dan (CSU)** reconvened the meeting and asked for a motion to approve the minutes, **Tyrone Forman (UIC)** motioned, and **Sarah Garber (Rosalind Franklin)** seconded, with unanimous consent with the exception of Gay Miller who abstained.
- 10:35 **Nicole Zeller (EIU)** reported on a recent swatting incident at her institution and emphasized the need for all campuses to review their communication protocols in light of the seriousness of such events. **Andy Howard (IIT)** agreed and described steps his institution has taken to improve emergency communication. **Greg Ferrence (ISU)** recounted an active-shooter swatting incident that revealed significant communication failures, and **Cynthia Boyce (Lincoln Trail College)** shared a similar experience involving a false alarm on her campus that also exposed clear breakdowns in communication.

10:45 Working Groups

Lunch

12:30 Caucus Meetings

- 1:30 **Lichang Wang (SIUC)** introduced **Chancellor Austin Lane**. “Welcome. About SIU” Chancellor Lane began by noting that he is not fond of formal biographies and instead asked everyone to briefly reintroduce themselves, which we did. He expressed his appreciation for community colleges and the vital role their transfer programs play.
- 1:33 He discussed the budget impasse during the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on both the university and the state, noting that SIU rebounded largely due to the service and dedication of numerous academic professionals. He highlighted ongoing efforts to increase enrollment and expand recruitment beyond Illinois.
- 1:41 **Chancellor Lane** also reported a 23% increase in online enrollment, emphasizing a growing focus on non-traditional students. He reiterated the institution's transition from an R2 to an

R1 university and the benefits that change has brought. Finally, he spoke about the Saluki Step Ahead program, designed to strengthen pathways between community colleges and SIUC.

- 1:46 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** A question was raised about SIUC's out-of-state marketing efforts and whether those materials highlight the full range of student support available in Illinois. **Chancellor Lane** provided several examples of current marketing strategies that emphasize student support services—including DEI initiatives—and noted a recent billboard campaign in Houston, Texas. He also addressed recruitment geography, emphasizing that SIUC is located far from Chicago and is geographically closer to Arkansas, Texas, and Tennessee, which informs their outreach strategy.
- 1:55 **Tiffany Puckett (NIU)** noted that some partner community colleges are located out of state. **Chancellor Lane** confirmed that the Saluki Step Ahead program serves both in-state and out-of-state community colleges.
- 2:12 **Tyrone Forman (UIC)** posed a two-part question regarding funding and maintaining SIUC's strong enrollment of Black students. **Chancellor Lane** responded that SIUC's programs are designed to benefit all students and that the university has not had to significantly revise its DEI language

Working Group Reports

- 2:15 **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**- nothing to report.
- 2:16 **Early College- Alison Douglas (ECC)** reported that they prepared questions for the IBHE reps to answer and also updates to the Dual Credit Quality Act.
- 2:19 **Equity- Tyrone Foreman (UIC)** reported on ideas on how to make students thrive with equity initiatives.
- 2:20 **Faculty and Student Mental Health-Sue Wiediger (SIUE)** said that the group reviewed the survey questions with some new working group members and ended with nothing new to report.
- 2:21 **Technology- Greg Ferrence (ISU)** discussed how literacy connects to AI and that Faculty are looking at it at a granular level when it should be looked at more broadly. **Andy Howard (IIT)** added conversation about digital literacy and digital natives spanned several topics, including the degree to which students' incoming digital literacy fails to match up to the faculty members' expectations
- 2:24 **Student Needs: Cynthia Boyce (Lincoln Trail)** discussed what eight different basic needs are, and each member of the caucus is going to come up with those definitions. The group discussed reasons why these are student needs.
- 2:26 **Private Schools Caucus- Andy Howard (IIT)** talked about the questions that they are going to ask the IBHE and ICCB. For example, the group is going to ask a question about the Community College Bachelor's Degree and how that would affect the current system.

- 2:32 **Public Institutions Caucus-** Brooke Johnson (NEIU) discussed how dual credit is cutting from below, meaning, students coming to the college with a large number of credits. The group also formulated questions for the IBHE. They discussed programs like 90 credit degree programs that don't end with certification or accreditation.
- 2:34 **Two-Year Caucus-** Cynthia Boyce (Lincoln Trail) began by talking about John Cooksey from Truman College resigning. The group also talked about IVCC and EICC hosting in the next calendar and some other community college locations to host. She ended by talking about the questions prepared for the IBHE.
- 2:37 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU,** sought a motion to adjourn. **Marie Donovan (DePaul University)** made a motion to adjourn, **Gay Miller (UIUC)** with the second, unanimous consent. See you on Zoom!

Minutes respectfully submitted by *Secretary Jason Edgar, Morton College*

Submitted Items: IBHE Report on Public University Enrollment (Gebke, Jill)

IBHE Report on Public University Enrollment:

Overall Enrollment Growth: Total enrollment increased by 2.3% (+4,214 students) to 189,791 – the highest number since 2015. This growth was driven entirely by undergraduates, as graduate/professional enrollment saw a slight decline.

- **Strong Undergraduate Increase:** The undergraduate population grew by 3.8% (+4,859 students). This growth was seen across all student types, including a 6.8% increase in first-time, full-time freshmen, a 6.5% increase in new full-time transfers, and a significant 18.1% jump in dual credit/dually enrolled students.
- **Significant Gains for Underrepresented Students:** Enrollment for African American and Latino students saw large increases. Total African American enrollment grew by 9.7% (+2,039 students), and total Latino enrollment grew by 8.3% (+2,491 students).
- **Drop in International Graduate Students:** While undergraduate international enrollment grew by 3.0%, this was overshadowed by a large 14.1% decrease in graduate/professional international students (-2,178 students). This led to an overall 6.5% decline in total international student enrollment.
- **Retention Rate Improvement:** The overall fall-to-fall retention rate for freshmen improved, rising to 82.7%. Retention gaps for underrepresented students narrowed; the gap between African American (65.1%) and White (87.5%) students closed by 3.0 percentage points, and the gap between Latino (80.0%) and White students closed by 4.0 percentage points.

i. National Student Clearinghouse:

Preliminary fall 2025 enrollment data show **total postsecondary enrollment increasing 2 percent over previous fall**. Undergraduate enrollment is increasing by 2.4 percent with all sectors seeing growth (+4.0% for CCs, +1.9% for public 4-year, and +0.9% for private nonprofit 4-year).

- Graduate enrollment has remained steady this fall, increasing by just 0.1 percent.
- Of all undergraduate and graduate credential programs, enrollment in undergraduate certificates programs is seeing the largest growth this fall (+6.6%), continuing strong gains from last year. Enrollment in other credential programs is also increasing modestly this fall (+3.1% for associate, +1.2% for bachelor's, +1.1% for doctoral). The exception is master's programs, which are the only credential type experiencing a decline (-0.6%).
- Undergraduate enrollment is growing across all age groups. This fall, the number of 18-year-old students is up 3.2 percent. Adult students who are 25 or older are also continuing to see gains (+3.3% for ages 25 to 29 and +2.7% for 30 or older).
- Hispanic, Black, and Multiracial students (both undergraduate and graduate) are continuing to see enrollment growth this fall. Undergraduate White students, on the other hand, are seeing declines (-3.7%).

- Overall international student enrollment has declined only 1 percent since fall 2024, new enrollment has declined 17 percent, according to fall 2025 snapshot data in the [annual Open Doors report](#), published Monday by the Institute for International Education.

Following up on Valerie's presentation on staffing. IBHE is charged with several laws regarding in the area of student support including:

- Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act [Illinois General Assembly - Public Act 102-0083](#)
- Benefits Navigators [Illinois General Assembly - Public Act 102-1045](#)
- Mental Health Early Action on Campus [Illinois General Assembly - -](#)
- Undocumented Student Liaisons [Illinois General Assembly - Public Act 102-0475](#)
- Veteran Coordinators [Illinois General Assembly - Public Act 102-0295](#)

In light of those, we have filled the following the support:

- Dr. Patricia (Trish) Aumann – Managing Director of Academic Strategy and Programs
- Dr. Leslie Daugherty - Managing Director of Talent and Workforce Development
- Lori Ohnesorge - Senior Associate Director of Healthcare Programs
- Jeremy Kingery - Senior Associate Director of Student Access and Success
- Lauryn Lucas and Hannah Church - Student Success Specialists
- Jill Gebke – Director of Student Success Strategy