

APPROVED BY SENATE

03/10/2025

CC.25.18

March 10, 2025

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
(Final; Action)

CC.25.18 Student Nominations to the 2025-2026 Athletic Board

BACKGROUND

The Athletic Board is the committee concerned with intercollegiate athletics (varsity sports) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This Board is responsible to the Senate for the intercollegiate athletic program as it relates to the University's academic and educational objectives as defined by the Senate. The Athletic Board serves also as an advisory committee to the Chancellor and the Athletic Director on the financial management, personnel, and other operational aspects of the intercollegiate athletics program in the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Two nominees for membership on the Board shall be elected by the Senate for each student position to be filled from the Senate. The Senate Committee on Committees shall propose nominees; additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Senate. Terms of students ordinarily shall be one year, and students may be appointed to a second one-year term.

NOMINATIONS

The Committee on Committees recommends approval of the following slate of nominees. Submitted statements of interest from nominees are attached.

The following students are nominated to fill two student vacancies, with terms ending 2026. If no additional nominations are made, the nominees below will be forwarded to the Chancellor for selection of two.

Brooke Covas	ACES
Kyle Laird	LAW
Ashley Oliver	ENGR
Dylan Strackman	AHS

Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Whether from the Committee on Committees or from the floor, each nomination shall have the consent of the nominee (*Bylaws* Part B.5).

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
Chaya Sandler, Chair
Kent Choquette
Linda Herrera
Prasanta Kalita

STUDENT STATEMENTS OF INTEREST AND EXPERIENCE

Brooke Covas (ACES)

My background in sports nutrition, research, and leadership positions me as a valuable asset to the Athletic Board. I bridge the gap between athletics and nutrition, working directly with UIUC's sports teams to optimize performance, recovery, and overall well-being. I understand the physical and academic demands placed on athletes and actively contribute to their success through fueling strategies, education, and performance optimization. Beyond direct involvement, I played an integral role in expanding Illini Barbell to over 300 members, creating an inclusive community supporting athletes of all backgrounds. This experience gave me firsthand knowledge of critical skills for advancing Illinois Athletics. Additionally, my research in multiple laboratories enhances my ability to assess policies and advocate for student-athlete welfare initiatives. My dedication to making a lasting impact in the athletic world sets me apart. I am committed to improving student-athlete experience by advocating for policies and initiatives that support their overall well-being.

Kyle Laird (LAW)

Kyle Laird is highly qualified for a position on the board due to his strong analytical skills, understanding of governance, and ability to navigate complex regulations. Kyle has had past experience as president of his fraternity and had prior involvement with his undergraduate's alumni board, demonstrating a strong record of requisite past campus committee work and financial wherewithal. As a law student, Kyle would contribute to the committee through his developed critical analysis skills, to apply to any variety of issues presented to the board. Kyle's strong communication skills will allow him to advocate from the student perspective while cognizant of the institutional priorities. Furthermore, his legal education provides the capacity to think strategically aligns with the University's objectives of prioritizing student-athletes' welfare and promoting success in competition and the classroom. Overall, Kyle brings a unique blend of experience and attributes to be a strong contributor to the board.

Ashley Oliver (ENGR)

Ashley Oliver is a junior bioengineering student on the varsity women's track and field team that won the Big Ten Indoor Championship in 2024. As an African American woman herself, she is very aware of the experiences of minority student athletes on this campus. She is interested in this opportunity because there are discrepancies within the athletics department that she wants to be able to address. In addition, she wants to amplify the voices of female student athletes in decision making processes. She currently serves as an E-Board member on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers.

Dylan Strackman (AHS)

Dylan Strackman is a dedicated and engaged student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, pursuing a B.S. in Recreation, Sport, & Tourism on a Pre-Law track. His experience as a Football Video Manager for Illinois Athletics demonstrates his deep interest and knowledge of men's athletics, while his background in marketing and communications at the radio station WPGU 107.1 highlights his understanding of business and financial management. Dylan's leadership roles, including positions in Alpha Phi Omega and student organizations, reflect his commitment to student welfare and minority participation. His familiarity with the university's academic and educational objectives is reinforced through his work in student media and advocacy groups. Passionate about fostering an inclusive and successful athletic environment, Dylan seeks to contribute his skills in media, leadership, and student engagement to the committee, ensuring a well-rounded and informed perspective on intercollegiate athletics and student-athlete welfare.