

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
URBANA SENATE OBSERVER
(Final; Information)

SC.27.08 Report on the September 17, 2026, Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the
University of Illinois System in Urbana

Alice Campbell Alumni Center

11:28 am Exited Executive Session into Regular Session

- Reminder of Open Meetings Act requirements and restrictions on disruptions by Board Secretary, Jeffrey Stein
- Opening Remarks: Board Chairman Jesse Ruiz
- Illinois State Song performance by Sarah Navy, a very impressive PhD student in Music at Urbana-Champaign
- Remarks by President Timothy Killeen
 - Introductions of various system and university officers, as well as observers
 - Reminder of 10-year strategic framework (https://www.uillinois.edu/strategic_framework) set out by the Board, with commitment to access and affordability, that enrollment at UI mirrors Illinois, impact of our scholarship, highlight the centrality of the humanities and arts
 - “Demonstrable Success” across system: 102,267 students, \$9.6B budget, \$1.53B research spending, \$1.5B for health, \$24.9B economic impact
 - Example of Forbes Biological station, with ties to UIUC, UIC, the IL Natural History Survey, and Prairie Research Institute, opened in 1894: recent work surveying ospreys
 - Example of Illinois Quantum and Microelectronics Park, with Discovery Partners Institute as “key partner”; DPI now moving to “responsible AI”; “Innovate Springfield” and recent 10-year agreement with Illinois Innovation Network
 - Impact of UI-affiliated hospitals and health clinics
 - Highlights from arts and humanities at UIS and UIUC; \$1.2M in discretionary funds for arts
 - Illinois Virtual Schools & Academy, with recent work at UIC and UIUC
 - All these examples are “a product of listening” combined with “going to where the people of Illinois live and work”
- Remarks by UIUC Chancellor Charles Isbell, Jr.
 - Welcome and opening anecdote about a former UIUC graduate student featured in our alumni magazine, as example of perseverance:

https://www.illinoisalumnmagazine.org/illinoisalumni/library/item/summer_2026/4344234/

- 61,060 students “each paving their own path” at UIUC
 - We want to be “good ancestors” as lead into *Illinois Leads* strategic plan:
<https://strategicplan.illinois.edu>
 - Goal 1: Preparing Future Leaders
 - Goal 2: Shaping the Future with Research
 - Goal 3: Serving the Public
 - Goal 4: Developing Economies
 - Goal 5: Working Together
 - Implementation framework
 - Layer 0 — Foundational Systems
The infrastructure that supports the work
 - Layer 1 — Goals, Strategies, and Priorities
The substance of the plan, from intent to action
 - Layer 2 — People, Coordination, and Belonging
The ownership and collaboration that advance the work
 - Layer 3 — Measurement, Telling Our Story, and Thought Leadership
The evidence of progress and the account the university gives of it
 - Steering Committees being assembled for each Goal
 - Played promotional video: I want you to imagine that on the largest collegiate scoreboard in the country
- Committee Reports
 - Governance, Personnel, and Ethics: forwarded items 1-4 on Board agenda [below], heard update on IQMP, updates on federal relations
 - University Healthcare System: heard updates on recent impacts on healthcare system, College of Dentistry will transfer to using Epic, update from financial officer (including that HB1 may lead to loss of coverage for some on federal health care)
 - Audit, Budget, Finance, and Facilities: forwarded items 5-15 on Board agenda [below], heard updates on UIUC’s IGB, indoor golf, audit updates
 - Academic and Student Affairs: heard updates from Prairie Research Institute
 - Public Comment (3-minute time limit)
 - Mark Thompson: on the “damage” supposedly caused by UIUC faculty member Bill Ayers and general indictment of UI as “liberal” institution both former and present, and so on; expects a response
 - Erez Cohen, Executive Director of Illini Hillel on state of Jewish life on UIUC campus: examples of antisemitic targeting on campus; concern that University treats incidents on case-by-case basis

12:24pm Break

12:35pm resume regular session

- FY 2027 Budget summary by Vice President/CFO and Comptroller Paul Ellinger
 - Many items not set (changes to endowment, federal changes)
 - Total \$3.17B for UIUC; total tuition across system \$1.76B (UIUC 63%)
 - Salaries and Benefits are 49.3% of budget
 - Recurring costs growing faster than unrestricted revenues
- University Senates Conference Chair, Lynn Fisher (UIS)
 - Introduced herself to Board, including experience at UIS and with USC
 - Overview of role of USC and its composition
 - Working to promote agreement on proposed revisions to the *Statutes*: ST-83, ST-91; working toward timeline for ST-83 as a comprehensive package (looping in Executive Vice President advisory group)
 - Input on system policies shared by President's Office
 - Proposed symposia: Public Education for the Public Good
 - USC retreat: October 19-20
- UI Alumni Association President David Bambrey
 - Engagement metrics: total annual engagement 170,530 (up 6% from previous year) across all alumni outreach
 - Four buckets: experiential, volunteer, communications, philanthropy
 - Coordinates with VC for Advancement and Foundation
 - Engaged with 32% of potential alumni last year vs. 24% as average among our peers
 - Example programs: IlliniLink, Speaker Series, *Illinois Alumni* (digital and physical)
 - Homecoming: Alumni Awards
 - Snow globe Program: Year 4

1:13 pm Agenda Items and Voting

- Agenda and materials available here:
<https://www.trustees.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/September-17-2026/>
- 15 agenda items, as well as 2 settlement authorizations, all approved unanimously
- Of particular interest for the Urbana Senate
 - 01. Revised University of Illinois System Policy on Conflict of Interest in Research [OT-400, which was recently transmitted to the Senates for notice, not approval]
 - 02. Amend Multiyear Contract, Head Coach, Women's Basketball, Urbana
 - 06. Construction, Armory, Urbana
 - 07. Project and Design, IGB, Urbana
 - 08. Construction, Swine Research Center relocation, Urbana
 - 09. Indoor Golf Facility Expansion, Urbana
 - 10. Japan House Addition, Urbana

1:23 pm Board adjourned

Submitted by Shawn Gilmore, Vice-Chair, Senate Executive Committee