

University Senates Conference
Finance, Budget, & Benefits Committee
Minutes

DATE: Thursday, December 4, 2025

PLACE:

University of Illinois Chicago
Richard Daley Library, Room 1-360
801 S. Morgan St.
Chicago, IL

University of Illinois Springfield
Brookens Library, Room 180G
One University Plaza
Springfield, IL

I Hotel & Conference Center
Loyalty Room
1900 S First St
Champaign, IL

PRESENT: Barnwell, Carmichael, Danziger, Erricolo, Hale, Lyons

ABSENT: None

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m. by Professor Lyons.

II. Approval of remote participation

None

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Approval of minutes from November 11, 2025

A motion was made by Professor Danziger and seconded by Professor Carmichael to approve the minutes from November 11, 2025. No discussion. The minutes were approved by a voice vote.

Yes: Barnwell, Carmichael, Danziger, Erricolo, Hale, Lyons

Online: None

No: None

Abstain: None

V. Today's Business

a. Discuss topics and questions for EVP Jones

FBBC members revisited the draft questions for CFO Ellinger and EVP Jones. The committee refined the question list and discussed whether to invite both CFO Ellinger and EVP Jones. FBBC decided to invite CFO Ellinger to an upcoming FBBC meeting and to hold off inviting EVP Jones. Many of the committee's questions for EVP Jones have been discussed in recent USC meetings, and focusing on CFO Ellinger at this time would allow the committee to explore additional topics aligned with his expertise.

FBBC also expanded its discussion to include sustainability, deferred maintenance, and ongoing maintenance, and whether these topics warrant further exploration. There was general consensus that members are interested in pursuing these issues.

As revised, the current topic list for CFO Ellinger includes:

1. International enrollment trends: An update on the challenges facing all three universities should international student enrollment decline;
2. Budget model and risk strategy: Given that the budget model relies heavily on tuition revenue, what are the system's risk mitigation strategies?
3. Sustainability and growth strategy: An overview of current sustainability and growth planning at the system level. While each university may have institution-specific plans, is there coordination or system-level goal-setting related to issues such as ongoing and deferred maintenance and the environmental impact of new and existing facilities? If these matters fall outside CFO Ellinger's purview, whom would he recommend the committee consult?
4. Support for UIS: What actions can the system take to assist UIS in addressing enrollment declines? Given its current operating deficit, what is the plan to restore the campus to financial stability?
5. Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) Contingency Planning: If the ICR rate decreases from 60% to 35%, what contingency plans are in place?
6. Compensation competitiveness: A comparative analysis of compensation levels across peer institutions to ensure we are remaining competitive.

Professor Lyons will take the lead in contacting CFO Ellinger to determine his availability and identify any additional system representatives who may be appropriate to join the discussion.

- b.** Discuss other potential topics and questions for speakers
FBBC discussed other potential speakers for upcoming FBBC meetings and related lines of inquiry.

Kelvin Droegemeier was identified as a potential guest to discuss the JAG Fair Model and its implications for Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) funding, including possible system-level support. Proposed questions include:

1. What are the implications of the JAG Fair Model for ICR funding across the University of Illinois System?
2. Is there potential for system-level support to address any impacts?

3. What role might shared governance play in these discussions?
4. Are there anticipated implications for graduate student enrollment and retention?

Jami Painter and Katie Ross (System HR) were identified as potential speakers to provide updates on HR and benefits issues, including Tier 2 pension developments and the Safe Harbor Act. Proposed questions include:

1. Legislative update: What is the current status of Tier 2 pension reform? Additionally, can you provide a broader legislative update on other proposed or recently enacted legislation the committee should be aware of?
2. Healthcare premium outlook: Are changes anticipated in employee healthcare premiums, especially if the subsidies for the Affordable Care Act go away? What are the prospects for CMS negotiations and their potential effects on system health benefit options and costs?
3. Reimbursement processes: Why do travel reimbursements require multiple levels of review? What improvements could be made to streamline the process?
4. Procurement and purchasing complexity: Why is the purchasing process so complex? What opportunities exist to simplify or modernize the process?

Professor Lyons will reach out to Professor Droegemeier, Ms. Painter, and Ms. Ross regarding meeting availability.

Professor Barnwell will inquire about a potential guest/contact person for discussions related to the short- and long-term costs associated with the University's labor relations strategy. As a follow-up, Professor Lyons made an inquiry to EVP Jones and the point of contact for labor relations at the system level is Tom Riley, the Executive Director of Labor and Special Counsel for the University of Illinois System.

The committee also discussed the proposed revisions to Statutes 90 and 91 and their potential cost implications, and whether these topics should be taken up by FBBC. While discussions are underway at UIUC, the Chicago and Springfield campuses have not yet addressed these proposals. The committee agreed to revisit this issue at the next meeting to determine appropriate questions and identify potential guest speakers.

- c. Discuss potential invitees for upcoming FBBC Meetings
FBBC reviewed upcoming meeting dates and considered the best fit for the guests: January 20 (1:45-2:25pm), February 18 (1:00-2:15pm), March 24 (1:00-2:15pm), and May 22 (1:45-2:25pm).

Professor Lyons will check with Mr. Perryn to confirm the length of time for each of the upcoming meetings.

- VI. New Business
None
- VII. Old Business – Action Items
None
- VIII. Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

Information for the minutes provided by Professor Barnwell and Professor Lyons.

David Perryn
USC Administration