

1 Meetings & sources

The text below draws on information provided by administrators in correspondence and at a number of meetings over the past calendar year, particularly a meeting on April 6.² Additional data has been drawn from publicly available sources, which are cited below, and the analysis below is that of the committee, not that of the administration. We attempt to spell out our methodology in the text and appendices, and provide our evidence or links to evidence. Budgets, however, are complex matters, and their analysis requires judgment: comments and corrections are welcome.

2 Executive summary

1. SIU has a low student-to-faculty ratio compared to peers, but faculty are not the only employee category where we have more employees, given the size of our student body, than our peers. See section 3 below.
2. Our athletics program is much larger than that of our peers, given the size of our student body, and has developed a large deficit that is not clearly accounted for on our books. See section 4 below.
3. Current Risepoint programs are covering direct instructional costs but are likely running at a substantial deficit once other relevant costs are included. See section 5 below.

¹ This draft was drafted by the committee chair, David Johnson, and shared electronically on 19 April, 2026 with the committee's members: Erin Hascup, Timothy Hurley, David Johnson, Jennifer Walker, Haibo Wang, Christopher Wienke, and Geoffrey Young. Committee members voted 6-0 (including the chair, with one member not recording a vote) to release the report with only minor changes approved via email.

² Present at that meeting were Austin Lane, David Shirley, Tim Leonard, Matt Kupec, Susan Simmers, and Jeff Burgin on the administrative side and Dave Johnson, Khalid Meksem, Geoff Young, Chris Wienke, John Farris, and Erica Blumenstock from the Senate. Several things covered in the meeting are not discussed here. They include context provided by administrators on the budgetary situation as it has evolved over the last ten years, notes about recent hiring and raises, and enrollment and demographic figures for Risepoint. We instead concentrated on matters more directly relevant to the questions submitted before the meeting about athletics spending and Risepoint finances. The meeting did not get to questions we had posed about SIU Foundation spending on the Tedrick Center and Saluki Village project, matters the committee may want to take up next year.

3 Staffing

3.1 Staffing data

In the fall of 2025, a review of “low-producing programs” was underway. One of the reasons for conducting the review was our low student-faculty ratio.³ While that ratio is in and of itself a good thing—and features in a fair amount of our marketing—it is also expensive.

We undertook an effort to contextualize this student-faculty ratio in terms of other categories of employees. With help from our colleagues in the administration, who held several meetings with us and provided helpful data, we came to the following provisional findings.

Table 1: Staffing ratios

	SIU	Peer average	Differential: SIU has this many times as many employees as average peer
Students per faculty	10.5	16.4	1.6
Students per non-faculty staff	10.0	12.9	1.3
Students per other employees	12.0	22.2	1.9
Students per all employees	5.8	8.0	1.4

Data used for the ratios above comes from IPEDS: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds> . Employees include full-time employees plus part-time employees at a 33% discount. Students are counted via FTE. Peers were selected by the administration: East Carolina University, North Dakota State, UNC-Greensboro, University of North Dakota, University of Maine, University of Southern Mississippi, and the University of Toledo.

IPEDS data reports we have roughly 800 employees in each category (faculty, staff, other). Staff includes (but is not limited to) what we would characterize as administration positions. “Other” is the most mysterious category. It includes the following: Service Occupations; Sales and related Occupations; Office and Administrative Support; Natural Resources, Construction and Maintenance; and Production, Transportation and Material Moving. Our colleagues in institutional research dialed down a bit into service occupations, which made up the largest chunk of “other,” and found that category covering a large range of job titles, including

³ Provost Tucker also presented data suggesting that we have more programs, given the size of our student body. This is a more complicated matter to analyze, given the difficulty of determining what counts as a “program.” (E.g., should a major with separate specializations count as just one program? Should an MA that is really just part of a PhD program count as a separate program?)

building service workers and supervisors; culinary workers and supervisors, laborers, and campus police.

3.2 Staffing observations

SIU has considerably more faculty and even more “other” employees than our average peer, given our student body size, while our number of staff is closer to being in line with our peers.

We all know that SIU employees are hard-working and dedicated, and that many areas of campus are understaffed. Evaluation of these ratios would require further analysis of how our mission and goals differ from those of our peers: there may be very good reasons why we need more of a given category of employee than our peers. A low student-faculty ratio, moreover, is a point of pride that should be maintained if doing so is fiscally responsible.

What this initial analysis shows is that faculty are not the only employee category that should be examined if we are looking to make our operations more efficient. Any scrutiny of “low-producing programs” must include all aspects of our campus operation.

4 Athletics

4.1 Partial meeting summary from April 6

We begin with a partial summary of the April 6, 2026 meeting. We led with questions about the cumulative \$92.1 million deficit in athletics as of June 30, 2025, which had been reported by Vice Chancellor Simmers at a previous meeting of the Senate EC. We were told it has been covered from within the SIU Carbondale budget, but that SIU’s accounting doesn’t reflect that. That is, this deficit is not reflected in the budget of the athletics program (though another deficit is: see below), nor is it clearly reflected elsewhere. This appears to be an area of genuine uncertainty on the part of the administration.

The administrative team noted that there are numerous other campus budget areas with cash deficits; but none was close to that of athletics, and we do not discuss any of them further here.

When asked about what athletics was doing to lower the deficit, the points made by the administrative team included the following.

1. The problem is mainly on the revenue side rather than the expense side.
2. We are increasing fund-raising efforts and aiming to add premium seating.

3. Winning teams would help raise revenues.⁴
4. We are also working on trimming spending on scholarships, particularly on expensive scholarships for international students (who pay twice as much tuition and thus are charged to athletics at twice the cost).
5. Expenses are tremendously complicated given recent developments in paying athletes, lawsuits won against the NCAA, etc.
6. Other universities also have deficits in athletics, and our subsidy level is actually lower than that of most of our peers. (See table 2 below, provided by admin).

What we didn't get (perhaps in part because we didn't press for it) were clear estimates about the current year's deficit or how much, if any, the efforts outlined above will reduce next year's deficit.

⁴ It is perhaps worth observing here that just as many college teams lose on any given game day as win, making a budget based on winning seasons an unstable proposition.

Table 2: Revenues & subsidies (provided by the administration)

	A	B	C	D	E
4	% of Total Revenue	Column Labels			
5	Row Labels	Generated Revenue	Subsidy	Grand Total	
6	Kent State	33.9%	66.1%	100.0%	
7	Miami OH	34.9%	65.1%	100.0%	
8	Akron	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%	
9	Ball State	31.5%	68.5%	100.0%	
10	Bowling Green	36.8%	63.2%	100.0%	
11	Buffalo	23.3%	76.7%	100.0%	
12	Central Michigan	27.1%	72.9%	100.0%	
13	Eastern Illinois	36.8%	63.2%	100.0%	
14	Eastern Michigan	29.1%	70.9%	100.0%	
15	Illinois State	27.4%	72.6%	100.0%	
16	Indiana State	31.1%	68.9%	100.0%	
17	Missouri State	25.8%	74.2%	100.0%	
18	NIU	39.1%	60.9%	100.0%	
19	Northern Iowa	46.4%	53.6%	100.0%	
20	SEMO	25.3%	74.7%	100.0%	
21	SIU	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%	
22	SIU Edwardsville	28.3%	71.7%	100.0%	
23	Southern Ind.	15.3%	84.7%	100.0%	
24	Toledo	56.5%	43.5%	100.0%	
25	UMass	18.9%	81.1%	100.0%	
26	Western Michigan	47.7%	52.3%	100.0%	
27	WIU	32.5%	67.5%	100.0%	
28	Grand Total	32.2%	67.8%	100.0%	
29					

We noted in the meeting that the data above does not include the \$10.2 million dollar deficit that SIU is running (as of 2024, the last year for which we have ready data: see below for source). This appears to invalidate point #6 above. Our athletics expenses are reported at \$30.2 million, while our income is \$19.1 million. When asked about this deficit, we were told that other institutions do their accounting differently, so this isn't an apples-to-apples comparison. Comparisons are difficult, but we should not only make them when they appear to favor us and reject them when they do not.

4.2 Comparative data and analysis

We have therefore done some comparative analysis since the meeting of April 6. Data on athletics spending is available via the Knight Commission website:

<https://knightnewhousedata.org/fcs/southern-illinois-university-carbondale>

A spreadsheet of data downloaded from that site with the peers from the administration's table above is attached as Appendix A.

Data from the Knight Commission allows for a fuller comparison which, while not as flattering as the administration's numbers above, shows that SIU athletics spending is in line with that of our peers when it comes to the proportion of athletics spending that is a subsidy originating from outside the athletics program (i.e., is not accounted for by things like ticket sales, licensing, and donations to athletics). The key adjustment here is to account for deficit spending in the same way across institutions. We make the assumption here that other athletics departments cover their deficits (or distribute their surpluses) the same way SIU does, by transfers into the athletics budget (for deficits) or transfers out of the athletics budget (for surpluses).

If we apply this methodology, the subsidy rates for SIU and our peers (on average) look like this:

Table 3: Athletics subsidy (from Knight Commission data)

	Subsidy: student fees, institutional support, and deficit (or surplus) as percentage of overall expenses (spending).
SIU	68%
Average peer	69%
Differential	SIU subsidies 1% less

Our spending is also in line with the amount of money our peers spend per athlete, though we will admit to being shocked that we spend more per student-athlete than we do on many faculty members.

Table 4: Spending per athlete (from Knight Commission data)

	Spending per unduplicated athlete ⁵
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⁵ Many student-athletes participate in multiple sports; this figure avoids double-counting such athletes.

SIU	\$72,340
Average peer	\$70,503
Differential	SIU spends 3% more

While these figures show us in line with our peers, several others suggest we are spending too much on athletics compared to those peers. Our student fees are higher than those of our average peer.

Table 5: Student athletics fee (from Knight Commission data)

	Student fee for athletics
SIU	\$705
Average peer	\$494
Differential	SIU is 43% higher

We also spend more money per undergraduate than our average peer, a rough estimate of the percentage of our budget we spend on athletics.

Table 6 Athletics spending per student (from Knight Commission data)

	Amount of spending per undergraduate
SIU	\$3,771
Average peer	\$2,432
Differential	SIU is 55% higher

Another way of putting this is that while our undergraduate study body, at 8,000, is considerably smaller than our average peer (13,094), we spend as much as our average peer on athletics (our spending is \$30.2 million while the average peers spends \$31.0 million).

In addition, the Knight Commission reports on deficits housed within athletics budgets.⁶ Our figure is high.

Table 7: Deficits within athletics budget (from Knight Commission data)

	Athletics debt
SIU	\$25.9 million
Average peer	\$11.5 million
Differential	SIU is 43% higher

The Knight Commission also reports on debt servicing within athletics budgets. Given the size of our athletics debt, it is little surprise that our figure is large here as well.

Table 8: Debt servicing within Athletics (from Knight Commission data)

	Athletics debt servicing
SIU	\$3.4 million
Average peer	\$1.3 million
Differential	SIU is 162% higher

⁶ This figure is, to the best of our knowledge, distinct from the \$92.1 million which is not housed within athletics.

4.3 Observations on athletics spending

1. If we include our deficit spending, our athletics budget is no more and no less subsidized than those of our peers in proportional terms.
2. We spend no more than our average peer per student athlete.
3. Our student fee for athletics is 43% higher than our average peer.
4. We spend 55% more per student than our average peer.
5. Our athletics debt (the debt solely within the athletics budget) is 43% higher than that of our average peer, and the money we spent servicing that debt is 162% higher.⁷
6. The administration is to this point unable to account for how we have covered the athletics deficit not accounted for within the athletics budget.

Three broader observations.

Athletics spending is real money. We have 417 student-athletes on campus, and spend over \$72,000 on each of them. This is almost as much as the \$77,000 average salary for a SIU faculty member.⁸ The cumulated deficit in athletics, \$92.1 million, is higher than the total tuition payment in our FY 2026 budget (\$85 million).⁹

The mystery deficit could result in a crisis. The uncertainty concerning how the \$10.2 million debt in athletics is paid, and where the cumulated \$92.1 million deficit is housed, is concerning. If the deficit shown in the athletics budget is a mirage, then there are presumably surpluses or reserves in other accounts that are also mirages. When someone seeks to make a withdrawal from one of those accounts, they could find their balance is a mirage, rather as we discovered that extensive funds units and faculty thought were in distance education accounts were actually not there. Given the massive size of the athletics deficit, if we called to account for it, that accounting could well produce a crisis not just for athletics but for the university budget as a whole.

Our athletics program has grown as our enrollment and state support have declined. In 2004, we had 367 athletes;¹⁰ today we have 417. But our overall enrollment in 2004 was

⁷ The fact that the we spent proportionally more to pay down debt than our average peer could be considered a positive indicator.

⁸ <https://irs.siu.edu/interactive-factbook/faculty-and-staff/faculty-average-salary.php>

⁹ <https://siusystem.edu/vp-finance/budget-institutional-reporting/SIUFY26OperatingBudget.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://ope.ed.gov/athletics/>

21,589;¹¹ in 2024 it was 11,790.¹² We have more athletes but fewer students to pay student fees to support them directly or pay tuition to support them indirectly. State funding, another source for subsidizing athletics, has also declined by a similar margin, as funding has been roughly flat in nominal dollars while declining by 40% in real terms (due to cumulative inflation since 2004). In other words, we are trying to support a more ambitious athletics program than we had when both our enrollment and our state support was almost twice as great as they are today. This may well not be sustainable.

5 Risepoint finances

5.1 Administrative figures and initial discussion

The table below, provided by the administration, provides basic data on Risepoint programs thus far.

Table 9: Risepoint finances (from the administration)

Risepoint Revenue and Expense Summary					
As of 3/31/2026					
	202460	202520	202540	202560	202620
	Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Fall 2025	Spring 2026
Total Tuition & General Fee	427,116.25	751,832.25	431,442.00	1,294,914.75	1,426,032.00
Total Waivers	(91,901.70)	(147,818.15)	(94,070.25)	(278,521.00)	(294,723.00)
Tuition Revenue Net of Discounting	335,214.55	604,014.10	337,371.75	1,016,393.75	1,131,309.00
Less Payment to Risepoint	(177,565.88)	(327,172.01)	(178,219.50)	(564,259.61)	(632,575.37)
Less Total Faculty Cost	(150,227.63)	(192,791.38)	(99,921.75)	(209,115.75)	(192,671.50)
Contribution to University Operations	7,421.04	84,050.71	59,230.50	243,018.39	306,062.13
Percentage of University Contribution of Net Revenue	2%	14%	18%	24%	27%
Waiver % of Tuition and Revenue	22%	20%	22%	22%	21%

The table above, presented and discussed in the April 6 meeting referenced above, shows that Risepoint courses covered instructional costs, and then some, despite our giving Risepoint half of student tuition and the general student fee. The trend is upward, and by spring 2026 Risepoint programs were netting over \$300,000 dollars, which is 27% of net revenues as calculated above (i.e., billed tuition & fees once waivers are subtracted).

¹¹ <https://hlcaccreditation.siu.edu/common/documents/pdf/siuc-factbook-enrollment-data-1975-2017.pdf>

¹² We here use total enrollment rather than undergraduate enrollment only as it was easier to access for 2004.

One issue here, as noted in the meeting, is that instructional costs are not the only costs. Tuition has to help pay for other things as well (Medicare for instructors, electricity, a library, D2L, etc.). That's why the summer budget—a largely online budget similar in that respect to Risepoint—set a rate 40% for the “contribution to university expenses” (a.k.a. “overhead”). School directors were told they had to hit that number if they were to offer summer courses. We came in at 38% last summer, as we were informed in the April 6 meeting.

There is another way in which the figures above diverge from the summer plan. Summer budgets were calculated using a tuition discount rate of 46%. (i.e., we estimate that we will only collect 54% of nominal tuition). That is, we know that not only waivers but scholarships supplied by SIU¹³ and other factors (including students who simply fail to pay) are factored in, we only collect 54% of the sticker price. The figures above only include tuition waivers, which brings the tuition recovery rate down to 78%, but only 78%.

These two differences suggest that it is overly optimistic to assume that current Risepoint programs contributing to campus finances.

4.2 Translating Risepoint figures into the summer model

In Appendix B, we attempt to provide a more realistic accounting for Risepoint finances by using the assumptions baked into our summer funding model. Appendix C (an excel sheet) gives the figures employed to do this. Our summer courses are taught online, for the most part, so the budgeting model employed ought to be a reasonably close match for online Risepoint programs. The appendix lays out a methodology which we believe provides a far more realistic account of Risepoint finances than the basic figures provided by the administration, given omissions outlined above.

Our Risepoint programs are a hybrid, as Risepoint provides some services SIU would otherwise provide, including marketing and recruitment for said classes as well as assisting in retention, course and curricular design, and assessment. This means that a comprehensive accounting for Risepoint finances would need to consider the full range of those services and precisely how much SIU saves by outsourcing those services to Risepoint—that is, how much additional spending SIU would have needed to provide those services in house. Our appendix attempts to account for this, at least in part, by removing the General Student Fee, which is split with

¹³ While the SIU Risepoint contract does not address this specifically, collection of scholarship money was one of the reasons the state of Minnesota voted to outlaw tuition sharing agreements, and we assume they collect half of the scholarship funds awarded by SIU. <https://www.newamerica.org/insights/opm-watch-how-minnesota-became-the-first-state-to-restrict-tuition-share-deals/>

Risepoint and is supposed to cover services like those Risepoint provides, from our calculations.

Table 10: Risepoint: summer model versus administrative figures

Risepoint contribution via administrative figures	\$306,062 surplus in Spring 2026
Risepoint deficit via the summer model	\$279,179 deficit in Spring 2026

Translating the limited figures we have on Risepoint into the summer model is not a simple matter, as anyone who takes on the appendix will see. But we have attempted to be fully transparent about our data and methodology, and welcome corrections.¹⁴

The least that can be said is this. Risepoint classes have not been subjected to the same budget model applied to online summer classes, or, to the best of our knowledge, to any model that accounts for costs beyond direct instructional costs or considers any uncollected tuition beyond tuition waivers. A school director who proposed a suite of summer classes and did not account for these costs would see their plan rejected. A faculty member whose summer course could not cover these costs would see their course cancelled. We do not see why we should subject Risepoint programs to lesser scrutiny than our own online offerings must bear.

¹⁴ A case in point: at his presentation to the Board of Trustees on April 16, Dave Johnson quoted a figure of \$400,000 for the loss Risepoint programs would have incurred in the spring of 2026 if we translated them into the summer model, rather than the \$280,000 loss above. Subsequent work has shown the \$400,000 figure was too high. Johnson regrets this error.

Data

Data	IPEDS ID	Year	Total Unduplicated At
Eastern Illinois University	144892	2024	374
Illinois State University	145813	2024	459
Northern Illinois University	147703	2024	409
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale	149222	2024	417
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	149231	2024	258
Western Illinois University	149772	2024	359
Ball State University	150136	2024	451
Indiana State University	151324	2024	410
University of Massachusetts Amherst	166629	2024	610
Central Michigan University	169248	2024	493
Eastern Michigan University	169798	2024	496
Western Michigan University	172699	2024	396
Southeast Missouri State University	179557	2024	370
Missouri State University	179566	2024	389
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York	196088	2024	376
University of Akron	200800	2024	435
Bowling Green State University	201441	2024	429
Kent State University	203517	2024	558
Miami University	204024	2024	591
University of Toledo	206084	2024	415
University of Southern Indiana	151306	2024	326

Data

Number of Sports Tea	NCAA Subdivision	FBS Conference
21	Football Championship Subdivision	
19	Football Championship Subdivision	
17	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
17	Football Championship Subdivision	
16	No Football Subdivision	
17	Football Championship Subdivision	
19	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
15	Football Championship Subdivision	
21	Football Bowl Subdivision	Independent
17	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
19	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
16	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
15	Football Championship Subdivision	
17	Football Championship Subdivision	
16	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
18	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
18	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
19	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
18	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
16	Football Bowl Subdivision	Mid-American Conference
17	No Football Subdivision	

Data

Total Expenses	Total Revenues	Other Revenue	Corporate Sponsorshi
\$18,164,374.00	\$15,123,197.00	\$855,584.00	\$286,649.00
\$28,391,757.00	\$31,460,587.00	\$1,679,608.00	\$1,559,568.00
\$34,489,400.00	\$29,239,753.00	\$1,287,273.00	\$1,187,087.00
\$30,165,861.00	\$19,924,295.00	\$1,222,005.00	\$2,132,796.00
\$11,680,456.00	\$11,002,950.00	\$203,115.00	\$528,738.00
\$14,513,239.00	\$11,674,076.00	\$420,359.00	\$90,012.00
\$29,311,450.00	\$32,402,369.00	\$911,627.00	\$719,726.00
\$20,155,345.00	\$20,058,407.00	\$460,952.00	\$691,052.00
\$61,892,203.00	\$63,848,711.00	\$1,848,835.00	\$922,506.00
\$36,647,136.00	\$36,371,379.00	\$955,952.00	\$403,108.00
\$37,237,950.00	\$37,237,950.00	\$987,921.00	\$215,528.00
\$40,487,397.00	\$39,763,357.00	\$2,419,584.00	\$1,394,200.00
\$15,699,913.00	\$16,320,360.00	\$636,281.00	\$449,711.00
\$34,252,090.00	\$34,252,090.00	\$4,263,099.00	\$809,478.00
\$42,103,311.00	\$42,261,274.00	\$1,191,547.00	\$1,108,824.00
\$34,998,430.00	\$36,557,687.00	\$1,225,409.00	\$888,092.00
\$31,864,795.00	\$32,404,228.00	\$450,779.00	\$826,152.00
\$34,905,286.00	\$32,368,594.00	\$1,105,004.00	\$1,973,657.00
\$40,651,234.00	\$40,340,840.00	\$1,882,608.00	\$1,022,619.00
\$38,725,933.00	\$38,725,933.00	\$1,258,836.00	\$552,246.00
\$13,200,948.00	\$13,973,558.00	\$95,567.00	\$247,841.00

Data

Donor Contributions Competition Guarante Conference/NCAA Dis Ticket Sales

\$1,583,655.00	\$824,000.00	\$1,249,058.00	\$115,096.00
\$1,790,024.00	\$132,007.00	\$2,492,607.00	\$1,547,075.00
\$1,761,204.00	\$2,789,000.00	\$3,965,973.00	\$939,130.00
\$2,817,773.00	\$480,500.00	\$1,674,857.00	\$1,443,107.00
\$857,681.00	\$337,000.00	\$1,079,201.00	\$148,047.00
\$612,613.00	\$830,000.00	\$2,004,110.00	\$115,359.00
\$1,389,677.00	\$3,331,375.00	\$3,586,441.00	\$1,081,516.00
\$2,049,818.00	\$1,013,500.00	\$1,336,498.00	\$855,428.00
\$3,208,677.00	\$4,042,654.00	\$2,386,704.00	\$1,904,713.00
\$2,233,282.00	\$3,706,900.00	\$3,316,822.00	\$823,689.00
\$2,641,595.00	\$1,752,125.00	\$4,188,917.00	\$958,062.00
\$6,425,096.00	\$3,241,460.00	\$3,657,789.00	\$1,587,049.00
\$942,304.00	\$973,000.00	\$1,307,262.00	\$449,494.00
\$2,551,940.00	\$631,000.00	\$1,249,377.00	\$763,320.00
\$1,634,829.00	\$1,753,756.00	\$3,416,100.00	\$644,108.00
\$3,509,950.00	\$2,209,580.00	\$3,725,215.00	\$592,875.00
\$2,756,510.00	\$2,341,300.00	\$4,217,805.00	\$1,573,506.00
\$864,176.00	\$3,795,500.00	\$3,223,093.00	\$480,685.00
\$1,545,537.00	\$2,749,000.00	\$4,497,753.00	\$932,994.00
\$3,736,402.00	\$1,635,000.00	\$5,598,268.00	\$1,558,994.00
\$1,388,914.00	\$411,500.00	\$258,000.00	\$306,100.00

Data

Institutional/Governm	Student Fees	Total Academic Spend	Athletics Related Debt
\$8,382,839.00	\$1,826,316.00		\$106,798.00
\$10,913,772.00	\$11,345,926.00		\$23,646,093.00
\$10,482,267.00	\$6,827,819.00		\$0.00
\$4,514,409.00	\$5,638,848.00		\$25,885,805.00
\$3,310,910.00	\$4,538,258.00		\$0.00
\$4,893,401.00	\$2,708,222.00		\$478,427.00
\$8,836,407.00	\$12,545,600.00		\$0.00
\$2,645,771.00	\$11,005,388.00		\$15,390,000.00
\$38,786,044.00	\$10,748,578.00		\$46,014,838.00
\$24,931,626.00	\$0.00		\$5,932,539.00
\$26,493,802.00	\$0.00		\$3,789,221.00
\$21,038,179.00	\$0.00		\$9,232,227.00
\$10,089,384.00	\$1,472,924.00		\$0.00
\$20,773,508.00	\$3,210,368.00		\$32,823,578.00
\$22,965,710.00	\$9,546,400.00		\$0.00
\$24,406,566.00	\$0.00		\$47,539,503.00
\$6,260,000.00	\$13,978,176.00		\$0.00
\$7,200,463.00	\$13,726,016.00		\$1,578,479.00
\$8,957,272.00	\$18,753,057.00		\$1,977,304.00
\$15,865,418.00	\$8,520,769.00		\$22,964,409.00
\$9,889,769.00	\$1,375,867.00		\$18,900,161.00

Annual Debt Service, Leases and Rental Fees on Athletic Facilities

\$56,305.00
\$2,182,655.00
\$0.00
\$3,378,113.00
\$0.00
\$425,973.00
\$0.00
\$1,488,438.00
\$4,297,318.00
\$2,060,131.00
\$265,000.00
\$1,631,064.00
\$0.00
\$3,641,033.00
\$0.00
\$4,988,014.00
\$0.00
\$0.00
\$1,977,304.00
\$2,358,193.00
\$1,350,887.00

Data Dictionary

Metric

Total Expenses
Total Revenues
Other Revenue
Corporate Sponsorship, Advertising, Licensing
Donor Contributions
Competition Guarantees - Revenues
Conference/NCAA Distributions, Media Rights, and Post-Season Football
Ticket Sales
Institutional/Government Support
Student Fees
Total Academic Spending (University-Wide)
Athletics Related Debt
Annual Debt Service, Leases and Rental Fees on Athletic Facilities

Data Dictionary

Definition

Total athletic operating expenses, including athletic scholarship costs.

Total revenues for the athletics program minus "Less Transfers to the Institution." [i]

Revenue from the following categories: Compensation and benefits provided by a third party; game program, novelty parking and concession sales; sports camps and clinics; athletics restricted endowment and investments income; and other operating revenue.

Revenue generated by the institution from royalties, licensing, advertisements and sponsorships.

Funds contributed from individuals, corporations, associations, foundations, clubs or other organizations external to the athletics program above the face value for tickets.

Revenue received from participation in away or neutral-site games.

Revenue received from the NCAA (including championships) and athletics conferences, media rights, and post-season football bowl games.

Revenue received from ticket sales for all NCAA-sponsored sports at an institution.

Revenue received from governments, direct funds from the institution for athletics operations, and costs covered and services provided by the institution to athletics (and for athletics debt) but not charged to athletics.

Fees paid by student and allocated for the restricted use of the athletics department.

Total expenditures for the direct role and mission activities of an institution. It includes functional classifications of expenditures for instruction, research, public service, academic support, student services, institutional support, scholarships and fellowships, and operations and maintenance.

Total athletic debt balances owed by the athletic department.

Payment of principal and interest on athletic facilities debt, leases and rental fees in the reporting year.

NOTE: NCAA definitional changes increased, for some institutions, the amounts reported in this area beginning in 2017.

Applying the summer model to Risepoint classes

In order to apply the summer model, we must:

- Use different (and lower) tuition recovery rate;
- Require a different (and higher) contribution to university expenses/overhead
- Correct for the fact that the administration’s figures include the general student fee¹ as well as tuition, whereas the general fee is not included in summer calculations.

We detail our methodology and reasoning below to maximize transparency and allow others to correct any errors. The letters embedded below correspond to rows on the attached excel sheet. We refer to the figures above as the “administrative figures.” Our analysis is of spring 2026 figures alone—the semester most favorable to Risepoint programs.

Figures provided by the administration

	202460	202520	202540	202560	202620
	Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Fall 2025	Spring 2026
Total Tuition & General Fee	427,116.25	751,832.25	431,442.00	1,294,914.75	1,426,032.00
Total Waivers	(91,901.70)	(147,818.15)	(94,070.25)	(278,521.00)	(294,723.00)
Tuition Revenue Net of Discounting	335,214.55	604,014.10	337,371.75	1,016,393.75	1,131,309.00
Less Payment to Risepoint	(177,565.88)	(327,172.01)	(178,219.50)	(564,259.61)	(632,575.37)
Less Total Faculty Cost	(150,227.63)	(192,791.38)	(99,921.75)	(209,115.75)	(192,671.50)
Contribution to University Operations	7,421.04	84,050.71	59,230.50	243,018.39	306,062.13
Percentage of University Contribution of Net Revenue	2%	14%	18%	24%	27%
Waiver % of Tuition and Revenue	22%	20%	22%	22%	21%

We start by subtracting waivers (B) from revenue (A), which yields Tuition Revenue Net of Discounts² (C). We then give Risepoint their 50% cut (D) and subtract faculty costs (E). These are the first five figures provided by the administration.

To translate these figures to the summer model we need to make the following changes.

As the summer model only accounts for tuition (not fees), we need to account for the fact that the General Student Fee is included in the administration’s figures but not as part of the

¹ “The General Student Fee funds course design and development, startup costs, instruction and administrative support, and the necessary technological and other infrastructure to support course development and delivery of courses taken by off-campus and online students.”

https://tuition.siuc.edu/tuition_est/notes4b.html

² The administration’s chart labels the third figure “Tuition Revenues Net of Discounting” but it actually includes the general student fee as well.

summer budget. That fee, for a full time (12 CH) graduate student, is \$960, whereas tuition runs \$5,634; the fee is thus 14.6% of the total of tuition plus general fee. It is split with Risepoint, just as tuition is. This fee “funds course design and development, startup costs, instruction and administrative support, and the necessary technological and other infrastructure to support course development and delivery of courses taken by off-campus and online students.” We will remove it from our calculations in what follows on the assumption that Risepoint takes on some of those functions—which presumably justifies us handing over half of that fee. We thus assume that Risepoint’s work allows SIU to cover its share of the services the fee is meant to support while splitting the fee with Risepoint.

The general fee accounts 14.6% of the total given in (A). If we subtract the fee, we get total tuition without that general fee (G).

Before paying Risepoint, we calculate tuition waivers, using the 21% figure from the administrative chart, yielding (H). Subtracting this from total tuition gives us tuition net of waivers (I).

We owe Risepoint half of this net tuition (J). Our net is now (K)—our 50% of tuition.

But as tuition waivers aren’t the only discount from tuition (additional discounts include scholarships and unpaid bills), we apply the difference between the waivers (21%) and the total discount rate used for the summer budget (46%), i.e., 25%. This is 25% of net tuition (L).³ Subtract this from our net after Risepoint (K) and we get M.

Faculty costs (N) are unchanged from the administrative chart. If we subtract them, we get the net after faculty (O). We have gone slightly into the red.

We have yet, however, to include the contribution to university finances which the summer spreadsheet says goes toward Medicare, utilities, and other costs of instruction. This figure is 40% of tuition after all discounts. We subtract waivers (H) and other discounts (L) from billed tuition, and take 40% of this total.

This leaves us with our net contribution to university finances (Q), which is negative.

Now our online summer courses are not a perfect match for online Risepoint courses. Risepoint courses are something of a hybrid, and Risepoint does some of the things that SIU does for students in non-Risepoint classes, including marketing, recruitment, retention and important aspects of course and curricular design and assessment. These are the sorts of things that the 40% overhead figure for regular summer courses is presumably meant to pay for. But note that the calculations above allow Risepoint to collect half of the “general student fee” which is

³ There are some assumptions here to unpack. Here’s one: our understanding is that Risepoint’s 50% cut includes scholarship money students receive from SIUC. (This was one of the things that led legislators in Minnesota to ban this sort of tuition sharing agreement.) This means that if we provide a student with a \$1,000 scholarship, we never see that money. But we still give Risepoint \$500, and we never collected the other \$500. This helps show why we have to use a more realistic discount rate for tuition than one that only accounts for waivers.

supposed to cover many of these things. And Risepoint doesn't cover utilities or Medicare, two features the 40% is supposed to help cover.

It may also be the case that the tuition discount rate for Risepoint classes is lower than that for regular classes. Risepoint students may not be eligible for as many SIU scholarships, for example. But they surely ought to be eligible for some, at least if we are going to make any pretense of considering them SIU students rather than students to be exploited. They will also not pay 100% of their bills. We see no sounder assumption to make than that we should expect them to pay the same share of their tuition bills as other students.

A. Total tuition & General Fee	\$	1,426,032.00
B. Total waivers	\$	294,723.00
C. Tuition (and General Fee) revenue net of discounting	\$	1,131,309.00
D. Risepoint's cut	\$	632,575.37
E. Faculty costs	\$	192,671.50
F. "Contribution to University Operations" (nominal)	\$	306,062.13
G. Tuition billed sans general fee	\$	1,218,420.43
H. Waivers at 21%	\$	255,868.29
I. Tuition net of waivers	\$	962,552.14
J. Risepoint's cut (of net tuition)	\$	481,276.07
K. Net after Risepoint payment	\$	481,276.07
L. Additional discount (46%-21% = 25% of billed tuition)	\$	304,605.11
M. Net tuition after additional discount	\$	176,670.96
N. Faculty costs (as above)	\$	192,671.50
O. Net after faculty costs	\$	(16,000.54)
P. Contribution to university finances @40% of tuition net discounts	\$	263,178.81
Q. Net after contribution to finances	\$	(279,179.35)

Schedule A: Correcting for fees

1. CH tuition for grad student at 12 hours, Spring 2026		5634
2. General fee for grad student at 12 hours		960
3. Tuition as percentage of Tuition and general fee		85.4%
4. Total tuition sans general fee	\$	1,218,420.43
5. General fee payment	\$	207,611.57