

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2026
Via MS Teams & Morris Library Room 754/752
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order: Khalid Meksem

The March meeting was called to order by President Khalid Meksem.

II. Roll Call: John Farrish

Present: Nwamaka Anaza, Gary Apgar, Randall Auxier, Erica Blumenstock, Lingguo Bu, Lavern Byfield, Christopher Chiasson, Kwangho Choi, John Farrish, Erin Hascup, Timothy Hurley, Ghassan Ishak, Jenna Jamieson, David M. Johnson, Seung-Hee Lee, Jia Liu, Khalid Meksem, Katie Moore, Cinzia Padovani, Shelly Page, Kaitlyn Poirier, Jun Qin, Jonathan Remo, Nicole Roberts, Mohtashim Shamsi, Jennifer Sherry, Angela Shultz, Ahmed Torky, Haibo Wang, Christopher Wienke, Geoffrey Young

Absent: Laurel Fredrickson (Proxy is Wago Kreider), Cassie Wagner (Proxy is Cherie Watson), Jennifer Walker (Proxy is Stacy McKinney), Frances T. Lee, Kang Sun

Guests: Joe Abruscato, Iraklis Anagnostopoulos, Jebaraj Asirvatham, Richard Beach, Kelly Bender, Kristin Borchers, Benjamin Bricker, James Carter, Rachel Frazier, Shelly Gehrke, Brian Henry, Sarah Jiter, Victoria Groves-Scott, Michelle Kibby, Matt Kupec, Melissa Laake, Austin Lane, Kimberli Morgan, Marc Morris, Erin Perry, Jeffrey Punske, Rebecca Pursely, David Shirley, Susan Simmers, Jennifer L. Smith, Taylor Sprague, Mary Taylor, Jan Thompson, Constantinos Tsatsoulis, Sheryl Tucker, Lichang Wang, Wendell Williams, Benna Williams, Nick Wortman, Andrew Youpa

III. Approval of Minutes from February 10, 2026

Motion: J. Remo

Second: J. Jamieson

A vote commenced: 27 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. The minutes from February 10, 2026, were approved as presented.

IV. President's Report: Khalid Meksem

A. Job Posting Language – (approve proposed changes from HR – resulted from the *Resolution of the Faculty Senate of SIU Carbondale Regarding Inclusivity*)

K. Meksem stated since summer, we found out that the language has changed whenever we advertise for positions at SIU. The language that describes what we care about here at SIU and what my colleague and everybody fought for many years - diversity, actually inclusion and anti-racism - was deleted from job ads. So, the Senate took action, and we had a resolution that was sent to our upper administration. I did follow on it with the meeting with our HR and the meeting went very well. So, that language was reinstated, and it's actually now in every job posting that you will see coming out of SIU.

A vote was not taken. Faculty Senate President Meksem stated the language for job postings was approved by the Faculty Senate Executive Council.

B. Global Engagement Ad Hoc Committee (update)

K. Meksem stated as you know, the university has regressed a lot when it comes to international presence, global engagement and recruiting of international students and making the life of our international students better here at SIU. Therefore, we had a committee that

was created by the Senate. It's called the Global Engagement Committee. The committee met and discussed what was supposed to be SIU's position in the field of global engagement today. And to our luck, there was a document that was produced in 2021 by SIU Center for International Education in collaboration with the American Council on Education. That document was the effort of many people at SIU and it was forwarded to our upper administration at that time. However, nothing has changed. In fact, we have seen huge regression in the field of international recruitment and the services provided to our international students. The only thing which we have seen so far is actually more restrictions. So, therefore a meeting did happen, and there were a lot of good suggestions during that meeting. It will be forwarded to the Senate at the next meeting and hopefully we'll come up with a resolution that will be forwarded to our upper administrators for a better way to deal with the issue of international students and global engagement.

C. Business Practice Ad Hoc Committee (update)

K. Meksem stated this committee was created by the Senate because of the malfunctioning of business practices here at SIU. I can tell you until now there has been no progress. I know that this committee met with Vice Chancellor Simmers and hopefully we're going to have something good coming out of this committee.

D. Teaching Effectiveness Ad Hoc Committee - (no longer waiting for a charge – Provost Tucker does not anticipate forming this ad hoc committee)

E. Discuss proposed updated Resolution Form – (Chancellor/Provost signature line & approval date)

K. Meksem stated the resolution forms that the Senate comes up with are very important. We spend hours and hours consulting, come up with the resolution, and then that resolution will go to the Provost or Chancellor's Office. We never see that it has been signed and approved. Therefore, we question what happened? Our collective memory will be lost and then you have a new Provost or new Chancellor that will come in and that Provost or Chancellor actually can say I've never seen this, I'm not going to approve this. So, therefore, I am requesting officially that the forms that we are sending to the Provost or to the Chancellor and anyone here on campus from the Senate will have actually an extra line that shows the date and the signature when that resolution was approved by that administrator.

Provost Tucker stated yes, I'm completely supportive of updating the form, but do you know we do respond in writing to you on all resolutions? And we also have a database that Melissa and Melanie worked on quite some time ago because this same issue came up a couple years ago when I had to have somebody go look for resolution from 2016, I think on the emeritus faculty. So, the database is an important piece of that for tracking. **K. Meksem** stated yes, most of resolutions with RME's, yes, I really admire your work on doing that and actually I really applaud you for that effort. I'm talking about other resolutions where we don't receive any feedback and that has to change. **Provost Tucker** stated but you have. Since I've been here, to my knowledge, there's only one resolution I have not responded to because I don't know what we can do, whether we can do anything with it. All other resolutions I have responded to in writing.

V. Vice President's Report: Jennifer Sherry

A. Frances T. Lee resigned from Faculty Senate - SOM (work schedule conflict)

B. Cinzia Padovani – will have a Proxy for Fall 2026 (on sabbatical)

C. Laurel Fredrickson – (will be moving from CAM 2026-2027 & will not be serving on Senate)

VI. Invited Guests:

A. Chancellor Lane

Chancellor Lane stated thank you and good afternoon everyone on the call. I hope you had a great spring break last week. I have two very brief updates, one that I consider to be pretty

critical and that's the upcoming legislative session. We have our first hearing with the House on March 26th and with the Senate on April 28th. Our hope and if you were tuned in to the Governor's State of the Budget address, there is some appetite for funding for higher education to increase. For us that would equate to about \$2.7 million. I do want to remind everyone, last year we thought we were going to receive \$2.6 million in a state appropriation increase, and we only received \$877,000. So, it makes it a little difficult to do some of the things you'd want to do even though we still did them, but we were short pretty considerably last year. This year our hope is that that \$2.7 million is a reality at the at the end of the legislative session. We will find that out. You can always tune into those hearings and watch, because we are there front and center with the state reps and senators asking questions that we have no idea what they're going to ask. I think David, you are getting together what I call our sort of our quick and handy cheat sheet. It's a really informative piece, Dr. Meksem, if you'd like to see it. It's something I use every year when I go to Springfield just to prepare for any questions that may come up. It's a really good institutional profile piece. I would be glad to share that with anyone that would like to see. They have questions that range from what our deferred maintenance costs to what's the demographics of the institution? What's the enrollment? You name it, we get it and we don't know in advance when that's going to happen or not. The session doesn't end until the end of May and we'll find out what we look like then. So, hopefully we'll be in good shape there. A lot of preparation goes into that. CoS David Shirley, can you share the screen here on the Interim Provost Search? This gives you and again thanks to Dr. Meksem, the Faculty Senate, and for those who are listed as members of the committee for the Interim Provost Search Committee, you can read who is there. Typically, this is something where we actually don't need a committee. I can just appoint an Interim Provost. But after talking with our Faculty Senate Executive Council, we decided, hey, why not have a search committee formed for this Interim Provost? I was agreeable with that and that's what we're doing there. ACV Nick Wortman, you want to work through the permanent Provost timeline and update? I know you may still not be able to divulge the group that's going to do the national search, but I'll let you take it from there.

AVC Nick Wortman stated we are hopefully just maybe hours away from signing a contract that have been courting some of the several big firms and they're excited to help us launch the search and find a great candidate. In short, we'll be looking to really kick things off before summer. They're going to be working with us really diligently to do a lot of listening, building some profiles, hitting the market during summer and then doing interview selection in the fall. The goal is really to have someone hopefully in seat by January. We'll of course be flexible with the right candidate that comes forward. So, moving along quickly there and more information to come. **Chancellor Lane** stated we need to be a little flexible. We're flexible on those dates for candidates for the Interim Provost Search. I think those dates are pretty aggressive. Dave, you may want to put it (slide) back up there again just so they know what I'm talking about.

CoS David Shirley stated this is the current one. This is updated. **Chancellor Lane** stated this is public consumption. We can send this to you, Dr. Meksem, if you don't have it already, but we are moving forward and we have plenty of time. So again, thanks for the participation of the folks that are going to be on at least the interim search committee, and we'll move forward.

B. Provost Tucker

Provost Tucker stated I just have one item. You'll be receiving an announcement from the Provost about the Higher Learning Commission or HLC focus visit. It's just sort of a primer for faculty so that people remember we have a focused visit coming up May 4th and 5th, and it is specifically about the issues that they raised on our four-year assurance review with student learning outcomes as it relates to regular courses, core curriculum, jointly convene courses between graduate and undergraduate. Most faculty won't interact with the team, but any faculty could be asked by the team. So, we want to make sure everybody understands what

that process looks like, why they're here, so that we can address the concerns. And I do want to give kudos to our Associate Provost for Academic Programs, Julie Dunston and our Director of Core Curriculum, Jeff Punske, because they have done a tremendous amount of work, with our Faculty Fellow as well, to get the campus moving in the right direction so we can address these issues. So please, when you do see that, take a few minutes to read through it. It's a couple of pages long, but it really just walks you through why they're here, what to expect if they do ask you or for any artifacts from your class. They can do that while they're here, and we have to provide those. So, thank you.

C. Director of Study Abroad: Brian Henry (opportunities/goals)

(B. Henry shared a PowerPoint presentation titled, "For the Future of SIU – What is Study Abroad?") B. Henry stated thank you everyone for inviting me to join today. I am the new Director of Study Abroad, although I've been here for 10 months, so I think I get to keep saying that for a little longer. I wanted to come and speak with you all today because I know the pivotal impact that faculty have on the campus and especially on the student experience. I've worked at several different institutions, so I've been able to see the iterations and what's possible. I really want to shout out the Global Engagement Committee that I just heard about, because I do believe that study abroad opportunities should play a pivotal role in that. So, I wanted to share with you all, because I know some people are aware and some people are not of what study abroad really can be. I believe for SIU this could be a catalyst for immense change. Study abroad data has come out over the last few years showing that it improves GPA, completion, retention and transfer rates, and these rates are even higher in the students of color, financial need, first generation and STEM. So, the students that I'm noticing at SIU are often targeting to try to improve their experience, study abroad actually helps to improve those academically and their engagement. Employment skills are produced. I won't go into depth here due to the sake of time, but also, I want everyone to be aware that study abroad is more than just a faculty member taking a small group of students abroad. There are so many opportunities that can be built through exchange partnerships, direct enrolled partnerships where we can have very strong academic collaborations in the sense of sending students, but also potentially even sending faculty. I'd shout out that we're actually sending Charles Ruffner to a partner of ours later this semester, actually, and it's through that partnership with the other university. And then these are some of the things I'd like to call out as opportunities for SIU to build. Study abroad really is a catalyst. I've seen it grow the student experience at many institutions. I believe it can help enhance recruitment, retention and the student success here at SIU. I also think there's an opportunity to internationalize to improve the institutional health and future. I also think we can develop some intentional strategic partnerships to not only develop signature programs for different colleges, but also enhance and build some more faculty-led programs as well, because those are the one of the main goals or main crutches for study abroad mobility. I want to note that study abroad is not a replacement of academic opportunities. I know some faculty I've spoken with do think that it is a loss because the students leave us, but what I would propose is it actually enhances their retention opportunities and it oftentimes influences and inspires the students to go on and do more, whether it's here at grad school or whether it's being able to work abroad post grad. It definitely impacts their trajectory in life. And just to wrap up, I do want to propose if you're a faculty member or even staff or administration, what is your dream? What is something that you want to bring to your professional career? What is some way that being internationally focused or global could help you achieve that? Are there opportunities for collaboration across the campus in different colleges? Who have you never considered working with? What are some areas you'd like to grow in and could international opportunities help to facilitate that? And then what would you love to accomplish? Is there a way to accomplish it or add international opportunities to your portfolio? And then, what fulfills you in your career? I

asked the same questions of our students, so, I propose them to you all today.

D. Faculty Ombudsperson: Michelle Kibby

(M. Kibby shared a PowerPoint presentation titled, "University Faculty Ombudsperson.")

M. Kibby stated thank you for inviting me to speak with you today. Given the time constraints, I'm just going to provide a brief overview. As Faculty Ombudsperson, I provide confidential, impartial, independent services to assist faculty and graduate assistants with informal resolution of their problems and conflicts. I'm often asked how do I differ from the services provided by the union. One of the ways is that my services are not limited by the collective bargaining agreement, so I can work with topics such as peer-to-peer conflict, which would not typically fall under the CBA. However, because I follow the International Ombuds Association Standards of Practice, which are underlined above, I cannot engage in formal procedures. I also cannot be an advocate for any individual. And so, if someone is needing this type of service, very often if they are union represented, I will refer them to their union rep. If they don't feel comfortable working with the union for whatever reason, or they're not union represented, such as the School of Medicine, I can kind of guide them through what they would need to do, but I can't participate in the process myself, because I can't engage in formal procedures. In contrast to not being able to be an advocate for an individual, I can be an advocate for systemic change. And so, if I'm noticing consistent problems across the unit or across the university, I will bring it to the appropriate administrative official for them to be aware of it so that they can address it in a de-identified fashion, because I work confidentially. I also present reports annually to the Chancellor and Provost, where I discuss trends of what I've seen for the past year and make suggestions, again, in a de-identified fashion. I have made policy recommendations when I thought something needed to be updated for various reasons. Another common question that I'm asked is what kind of problems do you see? So, this was from my last annual report over the last fiscal year. The most common ones that I saw were career related, administrative related and peer related. In terms of career related, very commonly are concerns related to workloads and course assignments of various natures. Something more specific to this past academic year were things related to international status, thanks to our current US administration, some concerns there, and then I've seen multiple NTTs with concerns related to workload retention and salary discrimination. In terms of administrative related concerns for school directors, some program directors, very often it's related to either communication and or conflict. So, the more benign just feeling unsupported or poor communication to the more substantial bullying and harassment were some of the more common ones here. For Deans, either just doing nothing, not being responsive when faculty reach out, or just backing the school director blindly despite what they said if they do have an audience. For both parties, very often, concerns have been brought forth related to student concerns. When students have grievances, they felt, especially early in the process, that their side was not heard. That the students were just kind of accepted without taking into account faculty experiences or their perceptions and even their documentation. And then last, peer-related concerns were typically related to communication and conflict. So, what do I do? This slide shows the common actions that I have performed with the most common being in the top left, working down to the lesser common in the top right.

E. CBIZ Compensation Study: Taylor Sprague & AVC Nick Wortman

AVC N. Wortman stated I put a link in the chat to our compensation 2030 website. The information that Taylor Sprague is going to share today is really just a review of information that we shared back in November of 24 when the faculty portion of the CBIZ study was really completed, and it's been sort of on hold until we are getting ready now to do some wage reopeners with our FA and NTT contracts. The FA specifically has about \$1.2 million earmarked to be distributed based upon the results of this study. And what I'll say is that the study is

going to be a starting point of negotiations for us. So, FA and NTT folks will sit down at the table. We'll be using the data from this study to get to a good place, always collaborative and looking forward to good bargaining.

T. Sprague stated thank you all for having me. I'm hoping you all can see my screen. As Nick mentioned, in the brief time I have, I'm going to quickly walk you through the methodology steps we took to conduct the faculty pay analysis as well as the results we found at the conclusion of that study. So, when we started, we conducted the external market analysis. We utilized data from CUPA-HR, which is really the gold standard of salaries across higher education institutions, focusing on peer groups in the R1/R2 status. We have the peer group specifically outlined over on the right there of which we matched the faculty positions across the board based on discipline and rank. And so, we evaluated all disciplines by rank and education across the board, across the CUPA-HR database. We assessed then national discipline paid differential data across the universe of the CUPA-HR data to see where our disciplines paid higher or lower than the average across the universe of the data in the database. From there we can then begin to document market percentiles of which we have outlined on here the market 50th percentile base salary across all faculty positions at the institution at the 2-digit CIP code level. At a very high level, what you can see is the market data trend line in green. There's a lot going on. You may need to zoom in a little bit if you have this printed out. But ultimately, the blue line is the line of best fit for the internal faculty pay. Each blue dot represents a faculty position at the institution. What you see on average is majority of the positions are below that green line. You do have some above, but majority are below to say on average across the institution, majority of the faculty positions are below that market 50th percentile base salary data point per job. After aggregating all the data, we can pull it together to develop a new salary structure. So, we've recommended here what you see is our 100% salary structure for faculty or Tier B. We created 4 salary structures that are just based on a general differential of this 100% salary structure here based on those comparisons to the overall average CUPA market data. And so, what you see is within each hierarchy of rank is associated with a salary range, minimum, midpoint, maximum and range spread. An idea of what disciplines fall into each of these tiers are just a few examples. So again, tier ABC and D with a differential based from Tier B of 100. So, Tier A being 90%, Tier B being that 100%, Tier C 20% above, Tier D 40% above. So, some examples of what will fall into those tiers and the salary structures are over on the right. Tier A, geography, journalism, for example, Tier B, agricultural, nutrition, Tier C, business, civil engineering, and Tier D, accounting, mining, finance. And then we just outlined the amounts that fall into each tier. You see they decline as we work our way up in tier. At the point in time of this analysis, these are our results that we found. And so, we have now integrated the salary structure with employees that fall within those disciplines and tiers to find 494 employees below the salary range minimums. That total amount comes to \$3.8 million or 7% of payroll. We found 116 employees above the proposed salary range maximums of about \$1.4 million or 2.5% of faculty payroll. Second step of implementing the salary structures is then running a compression analysis to say when we adopt these salary structures, where do employees fall within the structure? Are they appropriately placed throughout the ranges based on things like time in job and performance? When we ran this compression analysis, we found adjustments for 533 employees totaling \$3.2 million or 5.9% of faculty payroll. A quick road map for the 2030 outline - the assessment, you can kind of think of what we've conducted as of today. We've quantified the scope of issues and put costs associated with those. We validated those concerns that we heard at the beginning of the analysis and added transparency of here's what we're going to do, here's what we did, and this is what it looks like. Goals for year one were just to optimize the budget that's allocated for the analysis across staff and faculty, focus on internal equity, finalize policies, procedures, promotions and guidelines, things like that. Years two through five where

we're going to continue progress toward implementation of the salary structures across institutions, continue to update the structures annually, continue to focus on employees above and below those maximums and minimums, and continually, where possible, narrow ranges. It's going to increase our market competitiveness and keep that maximum at a reasonable level across the board. But again, where we can annually try to narrow them, that will be evaluated each year. Key considerations finally that have come up throughout this process - all of these items are only going to be based on the appropriateness of things like the state appropriation, student enrollment, tuition revenue, CBAs, grants and self-supporting operational impacts across the institution as well.

F. Risepoint Rep: Vice President/Managing Director Tony Abruscato

T. Abruscato stated thank you so much for the time today. We have been partners for just over two years now and working through some current programs that we've been working with the team on for the last two and a half years, but also added some more programs to the portfolio recently. That additional amount of programs to the actual portfolio will help us realize about \$4 million north of \$4 million in annual revenue by the time we get to 2030, and that should get us to just over 1,000 students in the ending enrollments by that same time. So, working really tightly with our Deans of course and our SIU online counterparts. And then David Shirley, if you could share the screen here on your end, I can walk you through some of the partnership offerings of course, and then we can open it up for some quick questions as I know that I have limited time. *(A PowerPoint slide was shared online titled, "What We Offer: Student Orientation Solutions.")* One of the things that we offer is a new student orientation solutions for the institution. This would be branded specifically to the Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and we would build out a student hub where students can get all of the information that they need for courses, other tools and resources of course, and all lined up directly with your parent website. Working with the team, specifically with Jeff in the marketing and communication side of the house, our team would generate a new student orientation. Students with all managed programs can go into this learning hub and find all of the information that they need and of course directly linked back to the parent site for SIUC. *(A PowerPoint slide was shared online titled, "What We Offer: Course Development Support.")* And on the course development support side of the house as well, we have folks that were faculty members themselves. Some of those folks were program directors and even Deans in the past, and they would offer course development support. So, working directly with every faculty member as part of the managed programs and knowing that the faculty member is really the subject matter expert. So, taking that information and working with an instructional designer on our end, making sure that we put in some best practices, of course the pedagogy that we know works with other institutions that we partner with and using those best practices, obviously bringing artificial intelligence into the mix as well and then scaling that information for growth. So, as we course develop with you all side by side, we work on two to three courses at the same time as we develop them for the program. And those courses are done sort of in a just in time fashion and then of course tools and other technologies as well as our platform that we help out with course development. *(A PowerPoint slide was shared online titled, "What We Offer: Faculty-Driven Course Development Support.")* The support that we offer to each of the faculty members working with us in the portfolio, this is sort of our timeline and what this may look like for those folks working with us. It's sort of an eye chart here, but you can tell that it's a 20-week development cycle. And if you look at it from a 20-week standpoint, there are certain milestones that we meet the faculty where they are working with best practices, making sure that we understand what it is that they need for their course development and then working through each of those modules week by week to make

sure that they are ready to present that information to students in the course, then we do that course production piece of it. A big piece of this would be our quality review process, and we work with Quality Matters. So, we have trained individuals on our end. We run that through Quality Matters. We make sure that it does meet those standards and then provide that feedback directly to the faculty we're working with, as well as the program directors and the Dean's Office. And then it's upon the faculty member to make those adjustments if and when needed. And then, that course is ready for presentation to the students in the classroom. Of course, David has this presentation slideshow for you all in case you wanted to make sure that you took a second to look at it. In addition to those things we do as part of the partnership is offer our marketing and our recruitment services that go along with that. So, on the front end, essentially we are recruiting students for the managed programs in the portfolio, and we walk them through every piece of the process, learning about every single program from the programs themselves and our folks represent you all as if they were sitting next to you in the office and talking specifically to those programs, and then walking students through the application process. And then once that application is completed, it goes through to the admissions department working with VC Wendell Williams and his team. And then once a student is accepted into the institution, they work with the financial aid office and the registrar's office for registration and financial aid packaging. And then from there – K. Meksem stated please stay for the Q&A section.

G. VC Susan Simmers (Business Practice update)

(VC Susan Simmers shared a PowerPoint slide titled, "Training and Meeting Updates.") She stated to Dr. Meksem I have my team looking into what's going on with your expense report. As of March 26, we have 239 expense reports in the accounting department and quite a number of those just came in February. We did try to recruit another position to help us process and pay these faster. However, after the candidate accepted an offer, a week later they called back and declined. So, we've reposted, but we've had no success yet. Our update is these are trainings we've already done, but we scheduled one more session that was held today. There were a lot of questions on international travel, so we're developing some sessions for that topic. We're still meeting every week to work on our travel app, which is some of the things that you all brought up about - we don't have a tracking mechanism and such, but our app will take care of that, and we're working weekly with the IT department to develop that app. We have a travel session coming up with the ad hoc committee on Tuesday, March 24th from 9:00 to 10:00 AM, and we're going to show the ad hoc committee the travel app and what we've developed so far. And then we're also working on some honorarium process, and we're going to also meet with the group on Tuesday, March 24th. So, we have a 9-11 AM meeting. The first hour is going to be about travel and the second hour is going to be about honorariums. And then the last time I gave you an update, I said we were scheduling one more session about procurement processes. We have that scheduled with the ad hoc committee March 26th from 9:00-10:00 AM.

H. VC Wendell Williams (upcoming high school visits)

(VC Wendell Williams shared an Excel page titled, "SIU Takeover Tour: Southern Illinois.") He stated what you see before you is a very comprehensive list. During the month of April, from April 7th to the 23rd, we will embark on trying to visit every high school in Southern Illinois. And you can blame your current president and vice president for the great idea of trying to get the other faculty to be involved. They have been involved on business; they have done excellent jobs, and we'd like for you guys to visit as many of the locations as you can work into your schedules. I have with us Sarah Jiter, who is our Director for Admission. She'll give you a little bit more information. **Director Sarah Jiter** stated during these events, we are going to

celebrate all of our students who have been admitted. We're going to present gifts to those that have been enrolled, and we're going to talk them through their financial aid offer to show how affordable we are for them. The piece that we could really use some help with is our faculty joining us on these visits, if they're available to really talk about our R1 designation and how working with our faculty here sets us apart from our partners in the community and our competitors and our bordering states. So, we would love for you all to join us if you are interested. If there's a date you're free or a school you really want to go to, you can just e-mail VC Wendell Williams or myself, Sarah Jiter, and we will make sure that you have the most up-to-date schedule and so you can join us for our visits. VC Williams stated we'll share this with you so you'll get an idea of the tentative dates. Some schools are still confirming at this moment, and that's why we want you to email us so we can keep you informed of any changes that might occur.

I. VC Matt Kupec & AVC Jeff Gleim (Southern Illinois Takeover Tour)

(VC Matt Kupec shared a PowerPoint presentation titled, "Faculty Senate Meeting, Tuesday, March 17, 2026, by SIU Foundation.") VC Matt Kupec stated I'm going to run through a couple of slides here. VC Williams and Dir. Sarah Jiter just talked about the Saluki Takeover tour through Southern Illinois. I just want to give you a quick update, kind of the thinking behind everything, the approach. This is the process that we have in fundraising - Engagement, getting donors and alums to lean in, Story Telling, telling the great things that you all are doing, Making the Ask and that equals Transformative Fundraising Growth. With that, we launched this a few years ago, the Saluki Takeover Tours as a great way to accomplish a whole bunch of things from alumni relations, philanthropy, government relations, public relations and enrollment management. Working closely with Wendell and his great team, we've had 40 plus Saluki Takeover tour receptions over the last two years. We just went through St. Louis from March 3rd to March 6th. You can see the agenda there. It was a remarkably successful takeover tour. Nearly 400 folks attended the reception down at Ballpark Village. Not only did we have great visits and signed agreements with the community college, but we secured significant financial dollars. So, just a spectacular takeover in St. Louis. Last year, we went through Southern Illinois. This was the agenda last year. Amazing success - you can see all the high school visits and everything that went along, the receptions. This year, we've highlighted in yellow - we will be in central Illinois (Peoria & Springfield) March 24th & 25th, and then we will do our march through Southern Illinois from March 31st to April 21st. We will kick off at Touch of Nature in Makanda, and that should be an incredible launch to this Southern Illinois Takeover. All this about leaning in and getting donors involved and engaged - this chart on the right shows giving to higher education over the last seven years. There's been an increase about 44% and you can see on the left here at SIU we've had a 200% increase over that same time period. And what that does is provide a record level of Foundation scholarships. You can see the Foundation gave out nearly \$6 million last year. I believe we're going to hit \$6 million this year, over 2000 students. Nearly one in five received a Foundation scholarship. So, the takeover tour is a really important part of the process, leading to the transformation and leading to support of what you all are doing and the support of our students and changing lives.

J. VCR/Dean of Graduate School: Costas Tsatsoulis

(VCR Tsatsoulis shared a PowerPoint presentation titled, "OVCR and Grad School Update March 17, 2026.") VCR Tsatsoulis stated I want to talk to you about the applications. This is the latest data. Our application, this is graduate students obviously are down by about 15%, although our admissions are up by 6% compared to the same period of time last year. The biggest drop in terms of application has been international students down 31%, while our domestic applications have been up, which is very positive. The other thing that's extremely

positive is our PhD applications are up, both international and domestic. And our admissions are up by more than 50%, and these are all for the fall. Look at the domestic admits, almost three times more admitted this time compared to last year. So, faculty are doing an excellent job. Faculty committees are doing excellent job. The partners of Graduate Studies are doing an excellent job. Let's look a little bit at other things. The 3MT - the Three Minute Thesis has been completed. The winner will compete in the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools meeting on March 27th in Kansas City. The Graduate School is 100% supporting the student. Fellowship awards have been announced. Grad. catalog changes have been finalized and as I mentioned last time, the grad. certificates are now degrees and policy changes have been implemented and approved by the Graduate Council starting in the fall. Research - we closed the books for January. The books for February are still open. Our submissions have been up tremendously compared to last year, but our awards have been down. One of the reasons the awards are down is because of the government shutdown. A lot of these proposals have not been looked at. We have proposals that have been sitting there for a year, so we'll see what happens with that. Our expenditures are projected to be down by about 4%. Same reasons with that, if proposals don't get reviewed and don't get awarded, then the money is not being spent. At the end of January, we submitted our HEARD Report. This is the NSF Higher Education Research and Development Report, which is what allows us to be ranked as R1. Our expenditures were \$59.6 million. As you may know, \$50 million is the limit. We have some major renovations at Gower and the next three slides I will skip, although we can show them really quickly. It shows you what will be renovated, what will be made, and it's going to be part of the PowerPoint if you want to look at it later. That's an experimental kitchen for \$1.6 million and the biotech facility for \$7 million. We visited the Advanced Energy Research Board, which is a bicameral, bipartisan committee in Springfield, hoping to receive financial support for our Advanced Energy Institute and our work that we do. In St. Louis, there was a meeting by DARPA Connect. Some of my faculty and myself visited there to learn more about DARPA proposals. Our electronic system, Quali, to submit proposals is operational. We're slowly moving faculty to it. There's been a number of online resources for training and we've also done a lot of training in person over teams. Let's talk research - IRB 101 in two days. We do an IRB refresher every semester. On April 2nd, we have a workshop on early career research funding opportunities. We're talking about not just a career award, but also research funding for junior faculty. Working with state agencies now has a date, it's April 7th. On March 30th, a very important day long retreat from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM in the Student Center ballrooms, it's called Climbing the R1 Ladder: From 181 to 165. It's a very serious discussion about our research and PhD education and how do we remain and retain our R1 ranking. Every eight years we have to review IBHE recognized centers. The Advanced Energy Institute review has been completed and submitted. The two undergraduate research programs - we have REACH and Thrasher - the funding has been awarded. The Scholar Excellence Awardee has been selected and will be announced on April 14th during the Board of Trustees meeting in Carbondale. We received 48 foundation grant proposals; they're under review right now. We are collecting and submitting to the Board of Trustees our IBHE recognized center annual reports. That's something that it's annually given to the Board of Trustees, the system and then IBHE. And I want to remind everybody that we have a center, a second center that's been around for 75 years with extremely successful work - the Center for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences. It's 75th anniversary is celebrated on March 28th and 29th with barbecues and a lot of other events and a lot of the alumni are coming back to the place where their career started.

K. Faculty Advisory Council to IBHE: Lichang Wang

The FAC to IBHE meeting was held via Zoom on February 20, 2026, following my previous report to the FS on February 3, 2026. There was a presentation on "Transforming

Undergraduate STEM Education: Supporting Equitable and Effective Teaching,” based on the National Academies Consensus Study Report by Prof. Anne Egger from Central Washington University, Professor Archie Holmes from the University of Texas, Austin, and Kerry Brenner, Study Director of National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. The report can be downloaded from <https://www.nationalacademies.org/publications/28268>. A shorter overview can be accessed from:

<https://nap.nationalacademies.org/resource/28268/interactive/>. In addition to discussions on effective STEM teaching following the above presentation, the interesting topics include the state higher ed budget, the FY27-State Budget Bills related to Higher Ed, especially the Public Univ. funding formula – HB 1581/SB 0113 (HB 5037 starts the process over); Community College funding formula – introduced as an amendment to SB 0118 in 2025; Tier 2 Pension fix – SURS/SMP-CIP issue – HB 2378 & HB 4363, and developing student needs surveys. Details of the meeting can be found at <http://www.facibhe.org/meetings/minutes.php>. The next FAC to IBHE meeting will be held on March 20, 2026.

L. Graduate Council Chair: Kelly Bender

- Resolution supporting the University Distinguished Professorship proposal was passed.
- Resolution updating Post-Baccalaureate Certificate policy was passed- this allows courses that were taken as part of a certificate to be counted towards a graduate degree. This policy update was necessitated by passage of policy in November, which now allows certificate completions to be listed on transcripts as completed degrees. And so, now these courses can be counted towards a graduate degree as well as some stacking with two certificate programs able to share no more than 1/3 of the required hours in common.
- Approved the RME to add a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Artificial Intelligence for Learning and Training.
- Approved the RME to add a Graduate Certificate in History.
- Discussed forming an ad hoc committee to work with Faculty Senate on Risepoint oversight.
- Review of Innovative Teaching-TAA proposals should be completed by GC on March 17th, with rankings to the Graduate School anticipated on March 20th.

K. Meksem stated there are serious discussions in the Senate to have Grad. Council as part of the Senate. This will make life easy and it will integrate the effort, not duplicating efforts. There will be most likely a formal proposal coming to you directly to talk about integration in quick and efficient matters. **K. Bender** stated she would be happy to share that with the council.

M. Q & A – *(time was extended to answer all Senate questions)*

M. Shamsi: CBIZ Compensation Study

M. Shamsi asked whether the salary tables shown in the CBIZ presentation (minimum, midpoint, maximum by rank) reflected actual SIU faculty salary data or a model. Taylor Sprague clarified that the tables represent proposed salary ranges based on external benchmark data, not internal SIU faculty salaries. The external data is used to construct the proposed ranges. M. Shamsi suggested it would be more informative for faculty to see a table based on actual SIU salary data by rank, showing where individual salaries fall within the proposed ranges. He noted that previous presentations gave the impression the ranges were based on real SIU data, which caused concern among faculty. **T. Sprague** confirmed that detailed deliverables do exist, including exhibits that show where individual faculty members fall within the proposed ranges, though they were not shown in this condensed presentation.

K. Meksem: CBIZ Compensation Study

K. Meksem asked whether SIU salary data was used in the study and how nine-month faculty contracts were handled. The concern that converting nine-month salaries to twelve-month equivalents could misrepresent

actual pay and inflate salaries by nearly 30%. **T. Sprague** confirmed that comparisons were conducted on an apples-to-apples basis. When comparable peer data was available at nine months, nine-month salaries were used. The study does not propose annualizing nine-month SIU faculty salaries to twelve months when the comparison group is also nine-month based.

J. Remo: Discussion on Rise Point Online Program Management Agreement

J. Remo provided context regarding Southern Illinois University's October 2023 agreement with Academic Partnerships, now operating as Risepoint, to serve as the university's online program management (OPM) provider. The original contract covered a limited number of graduate programs in the Colleges of Business and Analytics and Health and Human Sciences. Addendum 2 expands the agreement to include 10 additional graduate programs and 8 undergraduate programs, representing the first undergraduate offerings under this contract. He asked whether Addendum 2 had been signed by the university. **Chancellor Lane** confirmed that it has been signed. According to the online management agreement, SIU will provide all online courses by Risepoint in an accelerated format consisting of eight-week classes over five semesters or terms. In addition, the university will make faculty available to develop courses included or to be included in the managed programs to meet project management program start dates, which I understand for the undergraduate programs, is spring 2027. Addendum 2 identifies these programs. I'm not going to go into that now. I just want to clarify with Risepoint. Is this Risepoint's understanding for this agreement with the Southern Illinois University? **T. Abruscato** stated, yes, yes it is. **J. Remo** stated while agreements make clear that the university is entirely responsible and sole authority over the selection of the employment and the management of its faculty and staff, I would like to clarify on one point here. Does Risepoint offer courses directly or through a third-party provider that the university may choose to use in order to fill its contractual obligations to meet managed program start dates or to keep courses running on an ongoing basis. **T. Abruscato** stated we actually don't offer the courses. The courses will come from the institution themselves. **J. Remo** stated the question is do you either directly or through a third-party provider by some type of a facilitation have agreements to backfill any courses that our university may not be able to provide to manage our Risepoint agreements? **T. Abruscato** stated we do not, and in the case that that happens, then we make adjustments as the university sees fit. **J. Remo** stated are there any other agreements with Rise Point beyond the original October agreement and Addendum 2? **T. Abruscato** stated not at this time.

S. Page: Faculty Salary Communication and Next Steps

S. Page raised concerns about faculty difficulty understanding the presented salary charts and asked whether individual employees would have the opportunity to see how the proposed salary structures apply to them personally, potentially through one-on-one meetings with HR or project representatives. **AVC Nick Wortman** emphasized that the salary presentation represents a starting point for negotiations and is not finalized. Any adoption of the proposed structures depends on outcomes at the bargaining table. Once negotiations are completed and an agreement is reached, the administration plans to clearly communicate impacts to faculty, similar to the approach used with staff—through open forums and individualized letters. **S. Page** asked whether she should distribute the current materials to law faculty or wait to avoid confusion. **N. Wortman** advised consulting with Faculty Association (FA) and Non-Tenure Track (NTT) representatives, noting they have access to more comprehensive data for negotiation purposes. **N. Wortman** put a link in the chat about the Compensation 2030 website (from November 2024) and noted it could help provide broader context for the information shared. **S. Page** acknowledged the guidance and confirmed receipt of the resource link.

C. Wienke: Request for Student Outcomes Data on Risepoint Programs

C. Wienke asked whether data exists on student debt levels, program completion rates, and job placement outcomes for academic programs managed by Risepoint, and whether that data could be shared with the Faculty Senate or its committees. **Tony Abruscato** confirmed that Risepoint produces an annual white paper covering these specific metrics and stated that he would send the document to the university following the meeting. **Chancellor Lane** added that SIU's Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (led by David

Shirley) also tracks or intends to track similar data internally. He requested that this be noted as information the university should retain and monitor independently.

D. M. Johnson: Faculty and Student Concerns Regarding Risepoint Partnership

He raised concerns from a student perspective regarding the Risepoint partnership, noting that approximately 50% of tuition revenue goes to Risepoint. The speaker framed a concern as a “two-horned dilemma”: either students are not receiving sufficient value for the tuition paid, or SIU is effectively outsourcing core academic functions—such as course design, curriculum assessment, and online pedagogy—to a for-profit external provider, potentially creating programs that are only partially SIU-owned. He asked how SIU and Risepoint would respond to concerns that students might perceive their education as a hybrid product rather than a fully SIU program. **Tony Abruscato** clarified that *Risepoint does not design curriculum or courses*. All curricula are developed and controlled by SIU faculty. Risepoint’s role is limited to supporting course development, including providing instructional templates, best-practice guidance, and instructional design resources. Risepoint staff work alongside faculty but do not control course content or academic decisions. **Chancellor Lane** stated that this model is consistent with Risepoint partnerships at SIUE and many other universities nationwide. He emphasized that the *academic programs remain institution-owned*.

Dean Marc Morris described the development and outcomes of SIU programs participating in Risepoint, including the MBA, MPA, and MSBA programs.

- Existing programs (e.g., MBA) were revamped by SIU faculty to improve structure and time-to-completion.
- Faculty fully controlled curriculum design and later made adjustments based on student feedback and program assessment.
- Instructional designers provided suggestions and support, but academic authority remained with SIU faculty.

Chancellor Lane acknowledged ongoing faculty concerns and misconceptions about Risepoint partnerships, noting prior meetings where these issues were discussed extensively. He emphasized that the partnership is a support model, not a transfer of academic control, and thanked participants for clarifying faculty experiences.

J. Jamieson: Faculty Concerns About Undergraduate Programs, UCC, and Timeline

She expressed significant concern regarding the inclusion of undergraduate programs in the Risepoint agreement, particularly the shift from traditional 16-week in-person courses to 8-week online formats. Concerns were raised about how this change would impact the University Core Curriculum (UCC) and whether governance structures are prepared to support such a transition. **J. Remo** stated UCC is not ready for this. He noted that the Spring 2027 start date presents a tight timeline that may impose a substantial additional workload on faculty, graduate assistants, and instructional staff. There was concern that faculty and GAs would be required to rapidly redesign and deliver courses without sufficient preparation or support. **J. Jamieson** stated as someone that's in public health where we're part of the UCC, it's extremely concerning to me and faculty and GAs that also help teach these courses and how we're going to help mentor those GAs to be able to execute something that I don't feel like was consulted very heavily with faculty that are going to be in charge of trying to make sure we provide a positive learning experience for our students, which is why we're here.

Tony Abruscato (Risepoint) acknowledged the concerns and stated that course development is a consultative, faculty-centered process. He explained that courses are developed incrementally, typically two courses at a time, not by compressing 16 weeks of content into 8 weeks. Instructional design support is provided to help faculty prioritize learning outcomes and adapt pedagogy appropriately. T. Abruscato emphasized that the process is not force-driven, that faculty are met “where they are,” and that Risepoint has a long track record of successful partnerships using this model. He acknowledged the importance of the UCC, noting that many general education courses are involved, and reiterated that development proceeds step by step in collaboration with all stakeholders.

R. Auxier: Faculty Concerns About Eight-Week Courses, Tuition, and Risepoint Comparisons

Comparison to Old Dominion University:

R. Auxier referenced a March 12 *Inside Higher Education* article describing a faculty vote of no confidence at Old Dominion University, following administrative plans to shorten some online courses from 16 weeks to 8 weeks while charging the same tuition. The speaker suggested this raised concerns about whether all online partnership models are successful. **Tony Abruscato** (Risepoint) stated that he could not comment on Old Dominion's situation, as he was not familiar with the specifics and does not work directly with that institution. **Chancellor Lane** noted familiarity with Old Dominion leadership but emphasized that the situation there is not comparable to SIU. He stressed that participation in Risepoint programs is voluntary, not mandatory, and that no program proceeds without mutual agreement. If timelines or models do not work for SIU, the university can slow or stop implementation. **R. Auxier** asked whether SIU charges the same tuition for an 8-week, 3-credit course as for a 16-week, 3-credit course, referencing prior concerns about student value. **Dean Marc Morris** confirmed that tuition is the same, consistent with historical practice, and that this approach has not changed. The eight-week courses deliver the same course content and credit outcomes, with the accelerated format allowing adult learners to progress more quickly through degree programs, which aligns with student demand. **R. Auxier** asked for clarification on what is meant by "the same," particularly given his experience teaching eight-week courses. He questioned how equivalency is defined and why students would choose on-campus education if the experience and outcomes are identical. **Dean Morris** responded that while content remains the same, students choose between online and on-campus formats based on learning preferences, geographic constraints, and work obligations. Online formats allow SIU to reach students who cannot attend campus but still seek an SIU degree.

J. Jamieson: Proposal to Hear Faculty Experiences with Rise Point Programs

J. Jamieson questioned the portrayal of Risepoint programs as beneficial and low-burden for faculty, expressing concern about the actual workload and support involved. It was suggested that, before expanding the partnership further, Faculty Senate should hear directly from SIU faculty who currently teach in Risepoint-supported programs. **K. Meksem** agreed to the great suggestion – invite 1 or 2 faculty with Risepoint experience to the April meeting.

J. Punske: RE: UCC

As the UCC Director, I'm expecting an early initial report from Risepoint about what the demands will be. I'm happy to share that with any appropriate Faculty Senate committees or sub bodies. I know UEPC will be one, but if there's any other bodies, just let me know. I've yet to receive that, but I will. We have had some correspondence about existing eight-week online courses that exist that are in the UCC.

K. Meksem: Discussion on Saluki Takeovers – Costs, Purpose, and Outcomes

K. Meksem relayed questions from other Faculty Senate members to Vice Chancellor Matt Kupec regarding Saluki Takeover events, specifically asking about the expenses versus financial return of these activities and whether the university makes or loses money from them. **Chancellor Lane** responded in Vice Chancellor Kupec's absence, clarifying that Saluki Takeovers are not intended to generate direct revenue. Unlike fundraising events, their primary purpose is enrollment growth and alumni engagement, not profit.

Strategic Purpose of Takeovers:

- Increase student recruitment and enrollment
- Strengthen alumni and community relationships
- Support long-term tuition revenue growth, which helps fund institutional priorities such as faculty and staff compensation

Referencing the St. Louis takeover, Chancellor Lane noted that the initiative included approximately 25 different events, such as:

- Community college partnerships and signing events
- High school recruitment visits

- Meetings with educational and community partners
These activities are intended to broaden recruitment pipelines rather than produce immediate financial returns.

VC Wendell Williams added that many takeover visits involve alumni in key leadership roles, such as superintendents and principals, which helps SIU gain access to schools and regions where recruitment had previously been difficult. These relationships also encourage continued alumni giving and long-term engagement. **Chancellor Lane** provided an example of an alumnus met during the first Chicago Saluki Takeover who later contributed \$4-5 million dollars to the Saluki Step Ahead program. This program has significantly increased enrollment through partnerships with 48 community colleges, demonstrating indirect but substantial returns from takeover engagement.

K. Meksem: Faculty Senate Discussion on Foundation Support and University Infrastructure

He asked why the SIU Foundation primarily supports student scholarships but does not more actively fund teaching and research infrastructure, such as laboratories and facilities? He cited the lack of a functional greenhouse in the College of Agricultural Sciences as a concrete example, noting negative impacts on student recruitment, retention, and trust. **Chancellor Lane** explained that the Foundation has contributed approximately \$5.7 million in scholarships this year, which supports enrollment and student access. He emphasized that donor intent directs how funds are used, limiting the Foundation's ability to reallocate money toward infrastructure unless donors specify that purpose.

VCR Tsatsoulis highlighted several Foundation-supported initiatives, including:

- \$1.1 million toward renovations at the Gower Translational Research Center
- A \$500,000 loan for BioLaunch
- Support for undergraduate research through the Thrasher Award

These examples were shared to demonstrate that the Foundation does support facilities and research when donors target those areas.

VC Matt Kupec stated that the Foundation sees itself as an accelerator, helping the university improve but unable to fund all priorities. He confirmed that the greenhouse project remains a high priority, historically envisioned as a state-private match, and noted that:

- The Foundation funded architectural planning for a greenhouse and an Ag Education building
- Discussions with state legislators and potential donors are ongoing
- The Foundation cannot currently fund the full project outright but is committed to partnering

K. Meksem expressed dissatisfaction, noting that the greenhouse has been described as a priority for over a decade without realization. He raised concerns about promising students facilities that do not exist and potential reputational and ethical consequences. **VC Susan Simmers** reported sustained advocacy over the past year, including:

- Engagement related to Rebuild Illinois funding
- Ongoing discussions with IBHE and CDB
- Legislative outreach by John Charles and campus leadership

Leadership emphasized that legislators are invited to campus annually and that advocacy begins well before legislative sessions.

VCR Tsatsoulis and Chancellor Lane noted meetings with state and federal legislators, including Senator Duckworth, and encouraged faculty participation in congressional directed spending requests. Faculty asked whether they could be more directly involved in meetings with legislators. Administration and leadership agreed, stating that faculty voices are critical and committed to issuing targeted requests to Faculty Senate when advocacy requires subject-matter expertise (e.g., greenhouse use and impact). Administration agreed to notify the Faculty Senate when opportunities arise for faculty to participate in legislative and donor outreach, acknowledging the value of faculty insights in strengthening advocacy and funding efforts.

D. M. Johnson: Discussion on Timing of Provost Departure Announcement and Administrative Transparency

D. M. Johnson requested that Chancellor Lane respond to a concern previously raised regarding the timing and transparency of the announcement of Provost Tucker's departure. He noted that prior to the February 20 announcement, the Provost's departure was an "open secret," which he argued contributed to tangible costs and disruptions.

Two major initiatives that were halted at faculty request:

- The review of low-producing programs
- The search for a new Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (COLA)

While faculty requested these pauses, Johnson argued they became untenable because they were undertaken under what he described as false pretenses—namely, the assumption of Provost continuity and unified administrative support. He noted that by the time the COLA search was canceled, over \$60,000 had been spent on a consulting firm.

He asked why the Provost's departure had not been announced earlier, suggesting that earlier disclosure might have reduced wasted effort or allowed initiatives to proceed differently.

Chancellor Lane stated that:

- No financial loss has occurred, noting that the COLA search contract remains active and within budget.
- Administrative changes are only announced after a formal resignation letter or agreement is in place.
- At the time referenced, no resignation or transition agreement existed, and no next steps had been finalized.
- There is no institutional rule requiring announcements to be made at a specific time.
- Personnel matters require discretion, particularly out of respect for the individual involved.

Chancellor Lane emphasized that it is the Chancellor's responsibility—not a direct report's—to communicate major leadership transitions. He stated that premature announcements without agreed-upon transitions could be harmful and unprofessional. Once plans for interim and permanent Provost searches were clarified, he issued the announcement.

D. M. Johnson referenced an email in which Chancellor Lane instructed Provost Tucker not to communicate her departure plans to campus and asked how this reflected concern for her interests. He argued that the directive suggested an intent to delay announcement until June.

(Chancellor Lane shared an email on the screen that was from Chancellor Lane to Provost Tucker.)

Chancellor Lane reaffirmed that:

- The directive was consistent with established administrative practice.
- Context surrounding the email included legal and personnel discussions in which Johnson was not involved.
- Until agreements were finalized, the Provost remained under contract through June, limiting what could be communicated publicly.
- Protecting personnel privacy and ensuring accurate, complete messaging were guiding considerations.

D. M. Johnson closed by reiterating his interpretation of the email and concern about delayed transparency, while acknowledging the discussion.

K. Meksem: Discussion on Administrative Policies, Appointments, and Governance

He raised concerns about the lack of clearly defined, faculty-accessible operating policies governing senior administrative appointments, such as the Provost and Chancellor. Drawing on experience developing school and college operating papers, the speaker suggested that similar documents could help clarify procedures, expectations, and roles, thereby reducing confusion and friction. K. Meksem asked whether faculty could work with administrators to draft or update operating papers related to senior administrative positions, including processes for hiring, evaluation, and termination. **Chancellor Lane** noted that some relevant language already exists and invited input from HR leadership for clarification. **AVC Nick Wortman** explained that guidance for administrative appointments is primarily found in:

- Board of Trustees policies
- Campus policies governing Administrative/Professional (AP) positions

These documents provide the foundational rules for appointments and employment actions.

K. Meksem asked when these policies were originally developed, expressing concern that they might be outdated. **AVC Wortman** indicated he would need to verify the dates but did not believe they were excessively old. In his professional opinion, current policies generally align with best practices, though he expressed openness to reviewing feedback and considering updates where appropriate. **K. Meksem** emphasized that clearer policies would be useful not just for searches, but for the entire employment lifecycle—including hiring, continuation, and termination.

Chancellor Lane explained that existing structures already differentiate between:

- Contract employees, with clear start and end dates
- Continuing employees
- Term appointments

He noted that these distinctions are well established and consistent with practices at other institutions.

NOTE: Motion: J. Sherry; Second: J. Jamieson. Senate approved for the meeting to extend 30 minutes. All approved. (S. Page noted she has a class at 3pm and N. Anaza stated she had another meeting at 3pm.)

VII. Reports

A. Executive Committee: Chair, Khalid Meksem

- 1. Senate Budget & Release time for Vice President's role & UEPC Chair**
- 2. Preliminary Report** - idea of merging Graduate Council with Faculty Senate

K. Meksem commented on other Faculty Senates, their compensation, budget, etc. He stated when he was given the budget, he was shocked. There are almost no numbers to do anything in the Senate. That's why we are asking for an official budget for the Senate. We are also asking for an adjustment of salary for Melissa to reflect really the duties she's in charge with. K. Meksem stated I must remind you that she also works with other constituencies, not only the Faculty Senate, which make things more interesting. Do more work and get paid less; that's the motto here, it seems. Melissa spends a lot of time talking to me, Jennifer, Jonathan, to everyone here, developing the agenda, following up on invitees, reports for meetings, etc. Regarding the idea of merging Graduate Council with Faculty Senate – everybody would be informed of what's going on and it would be more beneficial to a university like SIU. There was a discussion at the Executive Council. We might need to discuss the details of the meetings – we may have two meetings per month or extend the meetings. The details could be discussed later on. I just want you to be aware of that.

B. Election Committee: Chair, Jennifer Sherry

- 1. Election for (1) Judicial Review Board Member** - (to satisfy from the college where the Chair came from – CALPS) - **Derek James Fisher**

Election of (1) JRB member from CALPS is complete. There were 18 total votes, and Derek James Fisher received 10 yeas votes. I will reach out to the JRB Chair, Dr. Liliana Lefticariu, and report the Faculty Senate vote at the end of today's meeting.

Motion: J. Remo

Second: K. Meksem

A vote commenced: 23 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. The newest Judicial Review Board member, Derek James Fisher, has been approved as presented. His term is December 2025 - December 2028.

2. Faculty Senate Election – Spring 2026

The Faculty Senate Elections Committee has met and is wrapping up nomination lists for Faculty Senate seats for 2026-2027. Nominations will be open very soon. Nominations and voting for seats will be on a tight timeline, so please take note. Nominations and voting will

take place via email link; please ask nominees if they wish to serve on the Faculty Senate before nominating them. This process has been very tedious. I would recommend it to be totally revamped on not only the software side for HR because it has been an absolute nightmare to get all of this done. So, bless my committee for taking the lead to going out to the colleges and schools to be able to get these lists fortified for this process. So, I appreciate my committee's work.

C. Undergraduate Education Policy Committee: Chair Jonathan Remo

1. RMEs:

- a. RME Rename Minor in Mythology to Mythology and Religious Studies**
- b. RME Rename Sustainable Horticulture Systems Specialization to Urban Horticulture**
- c. RME UG Certificate AI Social Media Strategist**
- d. RME Specialization Companion Animal**

On Tuesday, February 24, 2026, the Undergraduate Education and Policy Committee (UEPC) met, discussed, and approved supporting resolutions for four RMEs. Eight of the ten UEPC members were in attendance (Drs. Chiasson, Choiy, Jamieson, Martin, Padovani, Perry, Remo, and Ms. Abbey Tate, Vice President for Undergraduate Student Affairs). The votes were 8-0 for the RMEs listed above (a. - c.). The vote for Specialization Companion Animal was 7-0-1, with one abstaining because they brought the RME to the committee. (There was no discussion by Senate.)

Motion: n/a

Second: n/a

A vote commenced: 22 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. The above (4) RMEs (a. – d. listed above) were approved as presented.

2. Priority Programs Review – (has been paused by Chancellor Lane)

3. Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) Policy – (*draft policy from Provost Tucker*)

This draft policy is intended to address concerns raised by HLC following submission of our Year 4 Assurance Review and the US Department of Education requirements.

During the February 24th meeting, UEPC also reviewed the Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) Policy at the request of the Provost's Office. The committee sent two questions to the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs (APAP) for clarification: What is the anticipated timeline for initiating or implementing the review process outlined in the Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy? Who is on the Saluki Online Council? The committee received the following response to these questions from Associate Provost Julie Dunston: Once the policy is reviewed by Faculty Senate and Graduate Council and approved as to form by legal, the review process will continue with all courses that commence after that. The RSI policy went into effect July 1, 2021, so we need to begin working towards compliance as soon as possible. Saluki Online Council is made up of a faculty representative from each college, nominated by the Deans. Given these answers from the APAP Office, the UEPC confirms reviewing the policy as requested.

The scheduled presentation and discussion with Dr. Craig Engstrom, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, regarding ADA Title II digital accessibility requirements for instructional materials and the support available to faculty for compliance, was postponed due to the director's inability to attend the meeting.

4. Resolution Calling for Faculty Oversight of Risepoint Programs

The UEPC met on Friday, March 6, 2026, to discuss and approve a resolution calling for faculty oversight of Risepoint programs. The committee has become aware that Southern Illinois University Carbondale entered into contractual agreements with Risepoint, for-profit online program manager, without formal consultation with the appropriate faculty governance bodies. The UEPC's primary concern is that these agreements require Core Curriculum courses, elective courses, and other program-specific courses to be offered in accelerated formats outside the academic units responsible for those courses, with broad implications for the UCC curriculum. Seven of the nine UEPC members were in attendance, including Drs. Bu, Choiy, Jamieson, Martin, Padovani, Perry, and Remo. The resolution calling for faculty oversight of Risepoint programs passed unanimously. The resolution was read.

Faculty Senate Resolution Calling for Faculty Oversight of Risepoint Programs

Whereas curricular oversight is the primary responsibility of the faculty; and

Whereas Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) has entered into contractual agreements with Risepoint, a for-profit online program manager, without formal consultation with appropriate faculty bodies; and

Whereas Risepoint programs require multiple start dates, accelerated formats, and the reduction of prerequisites to co requisites, thereby impinging on faculty authority over curriculum and pedagogy; and

Whereas Risepoint programs require Core Curriculum and elective courses, along with other program-specific courses, to be offered in accelerated formats outside the academic units responsible for those courses, affecting the undergraduate curriculum broadly; and

Whereas Risepoint staff have been authorized to use siu.edu email accounts and to manage siu.edu web domains without clear disclosure to prospective or current students; and

Whereas under the current contract the university is obligated to remit 50 percent of tuition revenue from Risepoint programs to Risepoint; and

Whereas Risepoint's for-profit model has been the subject of credible concerns, including targeting marginalized or underprepared students, extracting revenue through enrollment growth beyond program capacity, obscuring its involvement in academic programs, monetizing previously free services, and entering into long term contracts that may limit institutional autonomy; and

Whereas these concerns have led to legislative action limiting Risepoint like arrangements in the State of Minnesota; and

Whereas faculty are concerned that outsourcing recruitment, programs, and SIUC's institutional name to a for-profit company may undermine academic quality and harm the university's reputation;

Therefore, be it resolved that all Risepoint programs, including those scheduled but not yet open to students, be submitted for formal faculty votes at the program level and before the Faculty Senate (for undergraduate programs) and / or Graduate Council (for graduate programs); and

Be it further resolved that faculty votes occur only after faculty have been fully informed of the proposed contractual language, Risepoint's program and curricular design proposals, the staffing and financial models, and any additional materials requested by faculty; and

Be it further resolved that the faculty vote shall be the deciding factor in determining SIUC's participation in any Risepoint program; and

Be it further resolved that no future arrangement affecting the faculty's curricular authority shall be undertaken without explicit faculty approval through the Faculty Senate and / or Graduate Council.

R. Auxier stated it is automatically moved since it's your committee. **J. Sherry** stated looking at Risepoint a lot of their students who are enrolled in the program and this is a graduate program, do not pay tuition. Therefore, they're having major influx of tuition waivers. We're still paying 50% on those folks. **J. Jamieson** stated if faculty then takes a class, we would still be paying 50% to Risepoint? **J. Sherry** stated that's correct. We're in the hole before we start on

some of these programs that are probably on the list. It may work in the College of Business. I find it very hard to believe that the eight-week course is exactly the same experience as a sixteen-week course. **D. M. Johnson** stated either Risepoint is offering half of these programs or they're ripping students off. Half of the tuition payment is going to Risepoint. Either that program is half Risepoint's program and at most half ours, or they're ripping us off. **R. Auxier** spoke about an article and how universities appear to be renting out their reputable brand names while outsourcing vital services to a private company. Vistria owns Risepoint and University of Phoenix.

Motion: n/a

Second: n/a

A vote commenced: 23 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. The Resolution Calling for Faculty Oversight of Risepoint Programs was approved as presented.

D. Budget Committee: Chair, D. M. Johnson

D. M. Johnson stated the last Executive Council meeting was largely given over to budgetary matters because we were speaking with VC Matt Kupec from the Foundation in addition to the Chancellor. Chancellor Lane and VC Matt Kupec, I believe both offered to meet with us again to try to talk about such questions in more detail. As we saw today, it's very easy to get into the weeds on budgetary things and so a smaller format than a floor full faculty Senate meeting will probably be advisable. So, I plan to work with President Meksem to come up with a meeting that would involve the Budget Committee in some way to try to get at some questions about spending, Foundation spending, particularly new construction on campus and other fiscal matters. **K. Meksem** stated David, if you can send me an e-mail or request a meeting then I can forward it to them, then we can have a meeting.

E. Committee on Committees: Co-Chairs, Shelly Page & Jonathan Remo - (no report)

F. Faculty Status and Welfare Committee: Chair, Mohtashim Shamsi

M. Shamsi stated on March 3rd, the committee met and discussed the compression study or you can say salary presentation, which was presented by one of the representatives of CBIZ at the last Faculty Senate meeting in February. So, the committee members noted that the salaries of several faculty members do not fall into the range provided in that presentation. However, that was just a proposed structure. Therefore, it was decided to collect data from the faculty through an online form and compare it with the compression study. So, the form was approved before the spring break and sent out with an ambitious deadline of March 13th. We collected 77 responses by the first deadline, but there was a motion, second, and vote on extending the deadline. So now the new deadline is April 14th. Faculty sent the link as a reminder to their constituencies with the fresh deadline along with the PowerPoint presentation or it is in a PDF format. By the way, that is public information, because when we send out this presentation to our faculty, so one of the faculty already pointed out the online version which is already available on HR website. So, the link was already shared with the Faculty Senate Executive Council and also the other faculty members. Feel free to send out to your constituency to collect more data so that we can get the actual information and compare with their data, which we propose to collect by themselves so that we can compare where the faculty salaries are falling in this range. It is not only about the salary itself, but it also has some subjective questions as well, for example their mental health or other kinds of issues they are facing. **K. Meksem** asked for the survey to be shared on the Faculty Listserv.

D. M. Johnson stated I probably should just say the FA is due to start negotiating again. So, your information will be valuable and we can probably also share some information in the other direction in terms of faculty salaries. We will be looking at a spreadsheet with everybody's salary on it as we bargain and we try to figure out what is fairest, what's the best

way to distribute whatever money we can get out of the administration. **M. Shamsi** stated what's your timeline of the negotiation? **D. M. Johnson** stated we could start at any moment now. So, I think my understanding is that March 1st actually was the date at which negotiations could be entered into. So, I will be reaching out to Matt Romero, the President of the FA and seeing when we can get that going. It needs to take place this semester and at least some of us will be getting some sort of raise on top of the across the board raise that's planned already which should take effect on July 1st.

K. Meksem stated this is a call for the Senators – if you would like to serve on a committee that will be representing the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Association, please contact me. This way I can forward your name to the head of the FA. You might do a good job in negotiating than what they have done last time. **D. M. Johnson** stated anybody, not a member of the FA is not going to be on the negotiating team. What you get out of paying dues is having to vote on a contract. If you are a member, you can play a kind of leadership role in the FA. You're very welcome to join, of course. But the union is a separate body from the Senate. It has a certain legal status; the Senate does not. **K. Meksem** stated so, if you are a member of the Faculty Association and would like - this way can forward your name and you can represent the faculty as the Faculty Senate there.

G. Governance Committee: Co-Chairs, Randall Auxier & Jun Qin

1. Resolution Regarding Recent Instability in SIU's Academic Leadership

R. Auxier stated I think I do have to read this first resolution because there's a lot of strong language in it, and people may object to it. However, this language is significantly softened and updated. The Provost actually helped us understand that we didn't understand what had happened. And so, the Governance Committee has met four times since the last full Senate meeting and had had a quorum at each meeting. And we revised a couple or three of these resolutions with each succeeding meeting as information came our way. And I have to say the reason information came our way is because these resolutions were shared with the Executive Committee and through the Executive Committee with some of the upper administration. And so, one of the things I have to say is Provost Tucker was quite forthcoming with some of the information we need, helping us understand that we don't know enough to put the right wording on some of this stuff, and so we've tried to make it more general now. So anyway, there's some strong language here. If somebody objects to it, amendments might be taken in a friendly fashion by the Governance Committee. *(The resolution was read.)*

Resolution Regarding Recent Instability in SIU's Academic Leadership

Whereas Provost Sheryl Tucker has confirmed that she will not continue in her position when her current contract ends (June 2026); **and**

Whereas she confirms that she informed Chancellor Lane of this eventuality some months ago; **and**

Whereas the decision to keep this information from the Faculty and Students of SIUC has been harmful to our prospects for a smooth transition, and violates our right to a timely and collaborative search for a new chief academic officer; **and**

Whereas the absence of transparency by the administration has become a chronic problem affecting SIUC's commitment to shared governance; **and**

Whereas decisions inflicting permanent harm to the stability, morale, and operational processes of SIUC have been implemented by the administration during the time in after which she had already informed the Chancellor that she will leave the position of Provost at the end of her current contract; **and**

Whereas the power to appoint new faculty, staff, and administration affecting the academic programs of SIUC should rest in the Provost's office; **and**

Whereas the power to make judgments regarding promotion, tenure, and hiring of new faculty, must be carried out in a timely fashion by the Provost's office, **and**

Whereas the confidence and trust between the Faculty and current administration has been in decline for many months, due to other failures on the part of the administration regarding transparency, communication, basic understanding of the Faculty point of view, and in disregard of our role in governing the University in a professional and collaborative manner; **and**

Whereas the faculty bears no responsibility for the chronic failures in leadership that have beset SIUC for decades, but rather we have been called on repeatedly to protect the University and its mission from incompetent, short-sighted, self-serving, and misguided administration; **and**

Whereas these chronic problems result in part from the hiring of candidates recruited from the outside by expensive services that have repeatedly failed to bring in candidates suitable to SIUC's culture and history:

Be it therefore resolved that no decisions affecting the long-term academic programs and personnel shall be made until stable leadership has been appointed, and that among the decisions to be suspended are the Program Reviews, and all administrative searches at the level of Dean or above; and

Be it further resolved those interim leaders who are acceptable both to the Faculty Senate, Faculty Association and Graduate Council, be appointed in collaboration with the Faculty and all other constituent groups, **and**

Be it further resolved that Interim leaders will be selected from qualified Faculty currently serving with experience at and understanding of SIUC's mission, history, and culture, and that these interim leaders will be in charge of the searches for permanent replacements, without the presence or assistance of external agencies, and without interference from SIUC's Human Resources structure.

R. Auxier stated it's automatically moved from the committee. There was a lot of discussion on this committee. If you don't like the language now or are uncomfortable with it, you should have seen it before. If people are significantly uncomfortable with this, somebody could move to table it. **D. M. Johnson** stated I've got a question about the end of the resolution where you're calling for interim leaders to be in charge of the search for permanent replacements. **R. Auxier** stated you are supposed to avoid certain teams. **D. M. Johnson** stated yeah, but you haven't said, for example, that the interim leaders would not be eligible for the permanent positions. **R. Auxier** stated no, that's not in this resolution. It does seem important though, because we've had recently a problem with that, haven't we? So, would you like to amend this by adding that? **K. Meksem** stated I think it's good as it is. So, let's leave it as it is. Perfection is not always good. **D. M. Johnson** stated that's true enough, but I don't understand to some extent the motivation or the confidence that you have in the interim leaders being in charge of the search for permanent placements. **R. Auxier** stated as the Chancellor made clear, he makes the decision, and he doesn't have even have to have a committee. So, at some level, this doesn't matter. I think it expresses a sentiment. Remember, it's just a resolution. They don't have to do anything about this. This is not binding or anything. **D. M. Johnson** stated yeah, but that that's not a reason to do pass a bad resolution, right? I mean, that's an argument against doing any resolutions at all, right? So, I guess I would move that we drop the last resolved clause. **K. Meksem** stated I think it's a good one. **R. Auxier** stated Professor Johnson has moved we drop the last clause. Is there a second? It is seen zero. Doesn't sound like that amendment is going anywhere. *(There was no more discussion.)*

Motion: n/a

Second: n/a

A vote commenced: 21 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. The Resolution Regarding Recent Instability in SIU's Academic Leadership was approved as presented.

2. Motion/Second/Vote on Resolutions:

a. Resolution of the SIU Faculty Senate on Senate Support and Leadership

b. Resolution of the SIU Faculty Senate on Senate Support Staff

R. Auxier stated I think we might be able to bundle the rest of these. So, one of these is about Melissa's position description and her pay. It was important that this came out of the

committee and Khalid has already negotiated with Human Resources what's called a desk review and our prospects for getting an improved situation for Melissa. Now I asked Khalid, so do you want me to just drop this? And he said no, keep it. He wants to keep it. So, in any case, I do believe that what this resolution is about is going to happen anyway, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't go on record. So, I'd like to bundle the rest of these.

K. Meksem stated we have two resolutions, Senate Support and Leadership and then Senate Support - together. **R. Auxier** stated the second one just asked for a budget for what Khalid is always complaining about, that we can't do anything, but that's also included in another resolution. The resolutions are automatically moved since they're coming from the Governance Committee. **R. Auxier** stated by the way, it's very informative to read one of those and look at what UIC and UIUC and Northern Illinois get in a way of support for their Faculty Senate, which is a lot more than we get.

Motion: n/a

Second: n/a

A vote commenced: 21 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. Both resolutions were approved as presented (Resolution of the SIU Faculty Senate on Senate Support and Leadership & Resolution of the SIU Faculty Senate on Senate Support Staff*).

**Melissa stated, "Thank you!"*

3. Preliminary Report - idea of merging Graduate Council with Faculty Senate

R. Auxier stated we began the discussions and Jun, who I think will continue, I'm almost done with the Faculty Senate and I asked Jun would he be willing to continue the discussion of combining Graduate Council, which is primarily a governance issue with Faculty Senate. And he said he's willing to take the lead on that as we continue into the next year, because this can be complicated. K. Meksem stated yeah, it will take time.

4. Resolution Regarding Delivery of Online Programs and Courses

R. Auxier stated what this is that it's from the Provost's Office, but I don't know who is responsible for this, but a policy was communicated to the School Directors through the interim Dean's office. It looks like one of my colleagues in the College of Liberal Arts managed to get assigned all online courses and then moved to Italy. We can all see why that would tend to undermine our mission. And so, I get this, I understand the background, but the problem is that the response to that was an overarching policy that goes way beyond the collective bargaining agreement. There was a time when we had in our CBA a provision for being physically present in our offices. However, that is no longer part of the collective bargaining agreement. It was substituted for Student Engagement Policy. With the absence of that in the CBA, there really is no basis for the administration requiring us to tell them where we are when we're delivering these classes. In addition, with the aggressive push for us to deliver online content, either we're going to be a 21st century university or we aren't. And so, working remotely is a part of that. If our students are online, there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to be online. And so, there's a double standard that they're trying to require us - that either these online courses are part of our future and we're going to be online teachers, or they negotiate with the Faculty Association our physical presence on this campus. And so, this policy was communicated to, but it wasn't communicated to everybody, apparently - College of Liberal Arts. It's an overreach, a rather serious one. They're trying to tell us where we have to be. The policy stated even those who are teaching online eight-week classes still have to be on campus after they're over. It's all in the addendum. So, that's the reason that this is here. So, it's moved automatically because it

came from the committee. By the way, there were no no-votes on any of these on our committee.

Motion: n/a

Second: n/a

A vote commenced: 20 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions. The Resolution Regarding Delivery of Online Programs and Courses was approved as presented.

VIII. Old Business – (none)

IX. New Business

- **J. Sherry** stated we took a tour of the SIU Food Pantry, and we received an email asking if we wanted to see if Faculty Senate would be willing to have a food collection or food drive. I would like to take the lead on that if that's acceptable and work with them to see if we can donate food times and maybe do a link where people can donate financially. No one opposed. K. Meksem stated that is a good initiative. J. Jamieson stated I will help.

X. Adjournment

Motion: D. M. Johnson

Second: J. Jamieson