

UNIVERSITY STAFF SENATE REGULAR MEETING
MUC Mississippi/Illinois Room
Zoom Meeting ID 945 0315 5890
June 5, 2025 – 9:00 am
Approved Minutes

The regular meeting of the University Staff Senate was called to order at 9:07 am on Thursday, June 5, 2025, by President Doug James.

Present: Doug James (President), Kelly Jo Hendricks (Past President), Steven Green (President-Elect), Cindy Cobetto (Treasurer), Angie White (Secretary), Evan Lowis (ASR Constituency Rep), Christy McDougal (CSOR Constituency Rep), Linda Eilerman, Rachel Garrett (incoming Staff Senate member ASRP), Cheryl Jordan, Shane Kessinger, Sarah Kirkpatrick, Amy Miller, Tiana Montgomery, Amanda Russell (incoming Staff Senate member CSOR), Michael Tadlock-Jackson (ex officio), Jessica Take
Absent: Ben Kaminski (CSNP Constituency Rep), Maria Ferrari, Angela Pritchett, Dusty Rhodes,
Guests: Penny Raburn, Sydney Greenwalt, Cathy Passananti, Chris Hubbard-Jackson, Heather Knapp, Jessica McCawley, Patricia Merritt, Robert Newman, Brandon Stookey, Patricia Werner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Meeting minutes from May 1, 2025 were approved as written.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Health Service Presentation - Penny Raburn, Health Service Director, Sydney Greenwalt, Counseling Services Director & Clinical Psychologist, and Cathy Passananti, Health Promotion & Outreach Specialist, described Health Service's services. Currently, services are for students, but faculty and staff can participate in the annual Influenza Vaccine Campaign. Preliminary discussions are underway to extend services to faculty and staff, but current staffing prioritizes student access. Professional services are included in tuition and fees, with discounted rates for procedures, labs, and pharmaceuticals. Medical services include preventive exams, minor procedures, allergy injections, acute care for Upper Respiratory Illnesses, Sexual Health Consultations and Care, and Mental Health Assessment and Care (anxiety, depression, trauma). Counseling and Health Service provides care to about 250 students weekly. Dr. Greenwalt mentioned timely care, which offers 24/7 on-demand emotional support Telehealth counseling for students, faculty, and staff. More information is available at www.timelycare.com/SIUE

CSOR VACANCY ELECTIONS – 2 SEATS:

There were three applicants for two Senator vacancies in the category of Civil Service Open Range.

Leighann Fuller - Started working at SIUE's Office of First Year in Transitional Advising as a Success Coach in December 2022. Interested in serving on Staff Senate because I'll be visually impaired at the end of 2023 and want to promote inclusion and belonging for individuals with disabilities on campus, including staff, students, and faculty.

Amy Mitwally - Began working full-time in 2012 in the Office of the Registrar, first as front desk, then promoted to the graduation department, and three years ago to Assistant Registrar for Student Records and Graduations. As a student, I formed meaningful relationships with staff, particularly office support people who significantly impacted my life when I joined SIUE as a freshman. I see how our staff affects

the student experience and believe in shaping policies to promote their well-being. I also supervise seven full-time staff members, and I want to be part of this process.

Jory Chadwick - Lifelong resident of Edwardsville, always within 5-10 miles of the city. Graduated from SIUE twice. Began work at SIUE in 2008-09 as a GA in Financial Aid. Left due to budget crisis and hiring freeze in 2009, worked in private sector. Returned in 2019, worked in Financial Aid for a year, then moved to Enrollment Management as Budget Manager and HR Liaison. Currently, Business/Administrative Associate in Lovejoy Library. Interested in Staff Senate due to his extensive experience in higher education.

After an extremely close vote from eligible Staff Senate members, Amy Mitwally and Jory Chadwick were offered and accepted the vacant Senator seats. Their terms will begin in July 2025.

REPORTS:

President Doug James – Thanks to those completing their terms on Staff Senate. Looking forward to continued leadership with Steven Green—honored to pass the presidency to you. Attended a constituency head meeting with Chancellor two days ago. We're working on a bidirectional communication partnership, where we send ideas and concerns to the administration and receive information from them to share with constituents. We're considering multiple communication channels, including formal, informal, and social media. The administration is always looking for conversations with constituency groups. During the meeting, a question arose about positions vacated by the early retirement incentive. The answer was simple: case-by-case evaluations with three typical options. The reorganization is responsive, and we may backfill a position as is, which could result in a different salary than a new hire unless negotiated prevailing wage. Alternatively, we could restructure the position to maintain the head count or eliminate it. The governor wants to hold 2% of the 3% operational budget increase in reserve and must approve its allocation. At the constituency head meeting, we discussed SIUE's enrollment. We expect a 3% increase for the fall, though it's not set in stone.

Past President Kelly Jo Hendricks – Here are a few updates since May. I attended all six Commencement exercises and the service awards, where some faculty members received service awards. Congratulations to anyone with a milestone! Years of service at SIUE! UPBC completed our work for the semester since most committee members are faculty, and not all faculty have summer contracts. We finalized recommendation letters for different majors, minors, and elimination. I attended the meeting with Chancellor Minor. I attended Bill Winter's retirement reception. It was fascinating to see three past Chancellors return to wish him well. He retired from SIUE but joined Knox College as staff. Best of luck to him. Doug mentioned that enrollment for the first year of fall is up, which is exciting. New student orientation starts tomorrow. Many sessions are Mondays and Fridays, and they're already full. They've opened two backup dates if the numbers continue to increase. We'll open additional backup dates if needed. Overall enrollment is predicted to exceed the FY 25 enrollment in the fall. We'll likely exceed 12,000 students. The impact on international students is uncertain. We'll likely retain several, as many haven't been able to return home due to visa restrictions. The new international student population remains unknown. As Doug said, thank you to everyone for allowing me to serve Staff Senate for the past few years. We've been active on campus and accomplished great things, but our work is far from over. Best of luck to the new leadership and senators. I'm always available to assist when appropriate.

President-Elect Steven Green – Well, I don't have a report of any type of meetings or anything. I briefly was able to attend that more meeting with the Chancellor with along with everyone else from exec board. I had other meetings that I had to attend to at within Alton with our administration, so I had to

jump off, so I wasn't there for the entire port of it. But I was there for a piece of it. Thank you, Doug, for your remarks. Regarding my upcoming, I guess leadership towards this. Thank you, Kelly Jo, for being an example for the past couple of years that I've been part of the Staff Senate. I like to say to everybody here with me becoming the president of this. and being from a different campus, give me a lot of grace because there's well, there's 2 things, one a lot of grace and 2. I'm a grunt; I am not a director. I am not any higher-level management. I am feet to the ground. I will always do my best. I would always be available, and I will try my best to create an environment that not only sheds light on staff issues and how we can help the students here, but also with East Saint Louis, while also with Alton, with also with Belleville. Because we have multiple campuses that I feel don't get enough representation as they should when it comes to a lot of the issues that staff are facing, and how the decisions or things that are happening here affect everybody. I just want to say that. I guess we'll have an interesting ride!

There were no other executive reports.

Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration – The search brought three additional candidates to campus May 19 – 21. The search committee met the following week to discuss feedback with the consultants for their report to the Chancellor. I believe they are just waiting on a decision.

Executive Director of Marketing & Communications – Search is being extended. Austin Hinderliter, who was our representative, is no longer able to continue as our appointee as they extend the search.

Curator of University Events – Two candidates were selected for on-campus interviews. A final candidate was selected by Administration with consultation from the committee notes and recommendation from the Chair. This individual has been offered and accepted the offer to work at SIUE. At this time, she did not tell us who it was.

SIU System VP for Financial and Administrative Affairs – We have 28 candidates that we are currently reviewing. We will send our notes and top five candidates to Dr. Sheila Caldwell by tomorrow, and then we will meet again on Monday. The plan is to do Zoom interviews later next week, with the hopes of inviting candidates the third week of June.

There were no more executive searches.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Confidence in Administrative Leadership – The Staff Senate Executive Board met with Chancellor Minor last month. We looked at three concerns that were presented through Staff Senate:

- **Civil Service Hiring Practices:** Chancellor said he's currently working with HR to make sure there's more clarity and to ensure we are operating appropriately. We've had multiple policy revisions around some of our interim appointments; Dr. Minor said there are multiple offices involved with those approvals with HR, EOA, and Vice Chancellor levels. He said there was certainly no malicious intent.
- **Availability of Major Addresses to Those Who Cannot Attend:** Chancellor Minor indicated we have multiple A/V teams and limited ability to capture recordings. There is some effort to encourage physical gathering. Dr. Minor also indicated we want to manage our exposure of sensitive data. However, Chancellor Minor did mention that there is an appetite for *possibly* recording these presentations and posting them internally only, which I think makes sense.
- **Transparency and the Rhythm of Communication:** During this discussion we realized that transparency isn't the bigger issue, but rather the lack of communication and the clarity when we receive it. Chancellor Minor did say he owns responsibility to communicate better formally and informally.

We look forward to these adjustments, so we have better information more often.

Questions Related to the Salary Increase to the Unrepresented Staff – June 16th is the target date for the check increase. The backpay is targeted for the end of June, potentially the next paycheck. HR believes it's likely to happen by then, so the process shouldn't be lengthy. One question is how classification changes after the effective date impacts salary treatment. There are guidelines that account for various scenarios, but I can't share them with Staff Senate yet. One example is a civil service open range employee who moved into a representative role on January 16, 2024. The question is what their effective date was and if they'll be eligible for the increase. There's also some uncertainty about the backpay.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion – Employee Accrued Paid Leave Donation Policy – HR sent the policy out to the campus. There was confusion because the concerns from the unions and Staff Senate members appear to have gone unaddressed. Staff Senate Policy Review Committee will continue asking questions regarding the implementation of this policy.

Revival of Staff Senate Scholarship – Because of the vacancies on Staff Senate within the last year, there isn't a current Chair for the Scholarship Committee. Amanda Russell volunteered to help Chair the committee, and Jory Chadwick also offered to serve on the committee.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Public Relations – No report.

Scholarship – See update above.

Fundraising – No report.

Policy Review – Attempting to get dates for June.

Staff Development & Well-Being – Reached out to Carl in HR to set up a Q&A with the Benefits Team webinar. We are looking at scheduling this for early September. Maria is also working on getting scheduled another drug take back. We're looking at holding those events every other month.

Diversity Initiatives – We met on May 22, the last committee meeting for the fiscal year. We discussed the national shutdown of DEI programs and their impact on us. One member suggested continuing discussions with senior leadership about DEI efforts and their impact on the university community. As chair, I stated that we completed our charge by starting work and planting seeds for personal and professional growth. DEI is more than an acronym; it's action. I'm grateful to this phenomenal team that joined me to help with the work. The committee will continue working with university staff and departments on diversity programming and initiatives. Our next meeting will be in the fall of 2025, as you all know. For new members, our meeting agendas, committee agendas, and minutes are in the folder on our Teams channel. I have some news: I'll be leaving the university, so I'll have to vacate my seat and position as Chair of Diversity Initiatives Committee. Thank you to those who believed in me.

Elections & Operations – No report.

ACTION ITEMS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Camp Launch – July 11-18
- b. Welcome Weekend – August 14-17 (1st year student move-in)

- c. First Day of Fall Semester – August 18
- d. Homecoming/Family Weekend – September 22-28
- e. Volunteer Opportunity – New Student Convocation 8/15
- f. Parking Permits
 - a. Pre-Tax Payroll Deduction available 6/16 – 7/7
 - b. List ALL plates (Steps toward LPR)
 - c. New permits required by 8/18

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Invitation to Budget Reporting Workgroup

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Shane Kessinger discussed a list of budget items, including large frameworks with banners, campus lighting, flowers, and upcoming rebranding efforts, including repainting the water tower. Staff Senate members were asked if these initiatives will attract or retain students. If not, a FOIA request is needed to provide hard budget numbers to the community and students.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.

Submitted by Michael Tadlock Jackson, University Governance