

ISU Staff Council Minutes

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Meeting location: DeGarmo Hall room 551 and on Zoom at

<https://illinoisstate.zoom.us/j/88622098748>

Meeting format adapted from Roberts Rules of Order (Standard Order of Business, <https://robertsrules.org/agenda>). This document was designed to comply with [WCAG 2.1 requirements](#).

1. Call to Order

1.1. Time: 12:01 PM

2. Roll Call

2.1. Members Present: Amy Secretan, Terry Jackson, Rachel Waring-Sparks, George Banks, Lawrence Lair, Amke De Boes, Rebecca Brown, Stuart Palmer, Lawson Cassels, Monica Elkin, Alicia Lage, Derek O'Connell, Zubayer Khaled, Calvin Ross, Colette Homan (ex-officio), Becky Franz (ex-officio)

2.2. Members Absent: Daniel Freburg, Dillon Maher

3. Action: Approval of Meeting Agenda

3.1. Motion: Calvin Ross

3.2. Seconded: Derek O'Connell

3.3. Vote: Approved

4. Action: Approval of [August 11 Minutes](#)

4.1. Motion: Calvin Ross

4.2. Seconded: Stuart Palmer

4.3. Vote: Approved

5. Co-Chairs's Report

5.1. Welcome to Zubayer Khaled!

5.2. Recap of meeting with President Tarhule

Discussed the storms and all the work done to recover campus

Discussed the new property on G.E. road and taking ideas for what to do with the new space on the other side of the College of Engineering.

5.3. Items for upcoming meeting with President Tarhule

6. Secretary's Report

6.1. No news :)

7. Treasurer's Report

- 7.1. Nothing new to report – still working through training and getting access

8. Representative's Reports

8.1. Academic Senate

- 8.1.1. Senators – First Senate meeting is tomorrow night. Will have a report at our next meeting.
- 8.1.2. Planning and Finance Committee (Stuart/Terry)
- 8.1.3. Academic Affairs Committee (Rachel)
- 8.1.4. Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee (Daniel)

I've been added to a Teams group by Kevin Pickett. Next meeting date is 6 Sept. 6- 7 pm at Founders Suite (conference side)

- 8.1.5. University Policy Committee (Amke & Stuart/Terry)

8.2. Campus Communication (Daniel, Alicia, Derek)

Next Board of Trustees meeting is 23 Oct. Board of Trustees has reached out with recommendations for coffee hour topics. At the October 23 coffee hour, the Board has requested, "An Excellence By Design Progress Report" as the coffee hour topic. Members of the Steering Committee would present.

- 8.3. Employee Advisory (Becky)
- 8.4. University Foundation Board (Monica, AP TBD)
- 8.5. Annuitants Association (Lawson, AP TBD)

October 14th

- 8.6. Team Excellence Award (Amke & Derek)
- 8.7. Parking and Transportation (George, Stuart, Lawson, Monica)

Will be notified when they have a fall meeting date selected.

- 8.8. Police Chief Advisory (Amke, CS TBD)

9. Liaison Reports

9.1. Human Resources (Cindy & Colette)

Talked to VP Glen Nelson, he will put out a campus email that will include information about the budget videos.

Discussion about obtaining consent from employees before publishing their information for tip of the hat, milestones, or spotlights

- 9.2. Web Manager (Lawrence) - No report.

10. Standing Committee Reports

10.1. Scholarship

Scholarship awards will go out in October.

10.2. Awards

Setting a meeting.

10.3. Elections

10.4. Programming and Events

- Has met and discussed a beginning of the semester event and the President's office is asking about bringing back the staff holiday party.
- Council wants to know the financial support coming from the President's office before deciding to move forward. Fall 2026 would be too soon so this would be an event that we plan on for Fall 2027 if we move forward.
 - President's Office historically covered ~2/3 of budget with the councils splitting the remainder
 - Interested in knowing how much the President's Office can commit financially and in terms of planning capacity before we commit ourselves.
 - Large requirements – volunteers, workgroups, lots of logistics
 - Connect with Rachel Caracci to assess logistics and feasibility of this year vs. next year
 - Concerns around timing to pull off this year – perhaps more realistic to plan for 2027
- Say Hello with Cocoa kick-off event: late September or wait until October (when cocoa may be more seasonally appropriate?)
 - Tables for affinity groups on campus? There are 4 on campus. Could offer folks to drop off materials at tables and not expect them to “staff” the table.
 - Location ideas: STV 401, Spotlight Room, Fell Lobby, or Atrium?
 - Plan A: Atrium if Dillon can leverage social capital within Admissions
 - Plan B: Spotlight Room
 - Swag? TBD based on funds
 - Ballpark number of attendees: 50
 - May also depend on location – Spotlight lends itself to drop-ins, Atrium is more appropriate for intentional attendance

10.5. Communication, Outreach, and Marketing

- Created Communication, Outreach, and Marketing channel in Teams to organize committee work

- New [form to request work from the committee](#), whether on behalf of the work you're doing with the Council, in your home departments, or other topics that are of interest to AP and CS staff.
- If your home departments post on socials, tag Staff Council to have our accounts share

10.6. Employee Concerns and Well-Being – Met 8/21

- Notes from Aug. 21 meeting: [2026-08-21 Meeting Notes \(ECWB\).docx](#)
- Set a plan for regular monthly meetings of the committee, with option of ad hoc meetings for time-sensitive or special cases.
- Committee will take a proactive approach, considering issues of importance to staff to bring up in other venues like the whole Council or Senate, as well as taking specific issues from staff.
- Topics to discuss can come from Council, from Senate, from individual Council members, or from individual ISU staff.
- Discussed relationship with HR liaisons. We think their insights will be important and we may ask them to come to some meetings and provide information when relevant, but won't ask them to be regular participants in ECWB meetings.
- Individual concern regarding hiring policies brought forth in June was resolved.

10.7. Discounts

The EmployeeDiscounts@IllinoisState.edu email has been converted from a shared inbox to a distribution list. Functionally similar but easier to use and notify. It is working as intended now.

11. Ad hoc Committee Reports

12. Unfinished Business

12.1. Taking over [Homecoming Campus Decorating Contest](#)? Thoughts?

- Request from Alumni
- Goals: increase fac/staff engagement in Homecoming, broaden participation
- Major lift: one-day judging commitment, Alumni thinks that the current judging team would be willing to continue judging
- Would this involve us taking over all responsibilities? (e.g., sending the form, news articles, posting the award recipients, paying for the plaques for award winners)
- Suggestion that form should remain linked on the Homecoming page for continuity
- We are interested enough to get more information
 - Need clarity on expectations of taking this over
 - Communication
 - Assembling judging team
 - Is this a request for us to take over this year or next year?
 - Paying for the plaques for award recipients?

- Terry and Amy will follow up with Jamie Sennett to learn more and get our questions answered

12.2. Public Comment Discussion

- Are we subject to the Open Meetings Act?
 - Recommendation to assume we are since all other aspects of our shared governance structure are and provide time for public comment at the beginning of the meeting
 - Alternate recommendation to not provide space for public comments since there are other mechanisms to reach out to Staff Council
 - Colette will reach out to General Counsel to ask if Staff Council meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act – table this conversation until we receive confirmation from GC
 - Are our meeting dates/times/locations/minutes publicly posted?
 - Communications team will pull approved minutes from Teams to post on our website.
 - Potential ideas:
 - Separate comments section for comments on old business (beginning) or general comments (end)?

12.3. 2026-2027 Goal Setting

- Improve staff morale
- Increase Council visibility
 - Continue social events for community-building and morale
 - Outreach to constituents to get to know council was not successful in prior years
 - CCE is doing a session on shared governance that may give us insight on how interested folks are in learning more about it/us: <https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2026/08/civics-isu-panel-with-campus-leaders-explains-shared-governance-on-september-2/>
 - Women in Leadership event was successful
 - We can do more than provide cookies 😊
- Increase staff representation on Academic Senate
 - New leadership on Academic Senate now
 - Benchmark other institutions' staff representation on shared governance
 - This has been done previously – Stuart will share this

12.4. Areas for growth as a combined council

13. New Business

14. Announcements

14.1. Pulse of our Constituents

14.2. What's Happening on Campus

14.3. Other announcements

15. Adjournment

15.1. Motion: George Banks

15.2. Seconded: Derek O'Connell

15.3. Time: 1:15 PM