

University of Southern Indiana Administrative Senate Minutes
Wednesday, March 4, 2026 | 3 p.m. UC 2206

I. Welcome and Call to Order

- a. Meeting started at 3:03 p.m.

II. Roll Call

- a. Present:
Chair Members: J. Garrison, A. Pryor, and T. Tieken;
Senators: E. Damm Schmitt, S. Farmer, L. Groves, E. Hollinger, M. Kirk, T. Lutgring,
and H. Perigo
Absent: E. Ozee
- b. Guest(s): D. Bonczewski and K. Sullivan

III. Review and Approval of Minutes: February 2026

- a. T. Lutgring motioned
b. H. Perigo seconded
c. Motion passed

IV. Reports of Officers & Standing Committees

- a. Officers
- i. Chair (Garrison)
- President's Council:
- ii. Presidents Council 2/17
- Steve: Met with Merit Scholars, got great feedback on Student Life, and some good thoughts on Housing. The Hive space in HP opens next week, Trustee orientation for Barry Cox, who talked a bit about the other boards he serves on
 - Sarah Will: Presentation on USI Benefits - Benchmark data via CUPA 2024-2025
 - Looked at Masters Institutions, Public, Operating Expense
 - CUPA Median for PPO plans is higher
 - Retirement - CUPA Median 9%
 - Vacation/Sick - exempt and non-exempt, we are LOWER based on the median
 - Maximum accrual for vacation for USI is higher than the median
 - 12 paid holidays, same as CUPA
 - Only 44% have the winter break
 - Paid family leave is 6
 - Tuition Benefits ahead by 3 hours
 - Ahead on tuition benefits with family
 - Carey added dates to the agenda
 - Nita: March Board Meeting coming

- Kindra: Womens Basketball game if they make the tournament
 - Andrea: Scholarship Luncheon looking for students to RSVP
 - Del: New comedy/drama opens this weekend
 - Abeer: HATLS interview day, Open House for Student Life, Freshman Move-in
 - LB: POP-up pantry is going well. RA Interviews this week.
 - Jason: Title 2 Ada compliance - webpage for guidance - best effort to be compliant, core assessment full data set.
 - Koryn: Up 12 deposits, Speech Competition, HATLS interview, Orientation Registration open 3/2,
 - Emi: Food Expo went well
 - Abby: Student Worker Appreciation in March, after spring break, invited support staff to a meeting
 - Jeff: Jim Wolfe is retiring on June 1
 - Shelly: Open House for Career Success Center, March 31 Rockin Registration
 - Next Meeting March 17
 - Evaluations Committee Met again:
 - The last plan was too ambitious
 - Training over summer - August Fall Meeting Training
 - September into October timeframe
 - Training plan - July and August & HR Training Hours
 - 6months for new hire, 90 days for transfers
 - Fall 2026 trial run, then spring 2027 full rollout
 - Digital is the goal.
 - Materials on the webpage for managers and employees
- iii. Vice-Chair (Pryor)
- No report
- iv. Past Chair (Tieken)
- No report
- v. Secretary/Treasurer (Tieken)
- Budget is \$1,117.54 (after pending \$27.80 BuyUSI Sodexo cookie tray order for the 3/10/2026 Professional Development Lunch and Learn session)
- b. Standing Committees
- i. Employee Events and Outreach – Emily Ozee, Chair; Hannah Perigo, Vice Chair
- Half-sheet flyer that would link to the Admin Senate website and have a QR code
 - Bloom Board – central location so Admin Senate can spotlight our Administrators and us
 - Monthly or bi-weekly email that would go out to Administrators (e.g., Thank You Thursday)

- Wellness Walk for Administrators or Book Club – trying to engage more of our Administrators
 - Have a landing page for this
- ii. Employee Relations and Benefits – Michelle Kirk, Chair; Trista Lutgring, Vice Chair

Review of the following three presented IFCs:

 - Increase Maximum Vacation Accrual
 - Motion: M. Kirk
 - 2nd: E. Hollinger
 - Motion Passed: Yes
 - Faculty and Administrative staff, who are ineligible for Early Retirement, Sabbaticals, or Retirement Service Pay, receive a payout for unused sick leave upon retirement
 - Motion: M. Kirk
 - 2nd: E. Hollinger
 - Motion Passed: Yes
 - Amendment to Sick Leave Accrual Policy
 - Motion: M. Kirk
 - 2nd: E. Hollinger
 - Motion Passed: Yes
- iii. Professional Development – Erin Hollinger, Chair; Spence Farmer, Vice Chair
 - Lunch and Learn on Tuesday, March 10, at 12
- iv. Nominations and Elections – Tricia Tieken, Chair
 - Looking for someone to assist
 - Will send out nomination elections email early April 2026

V. Unfinished Business

- a. Ongoing Projects:
 - i. Administrator Award Planning

VI. New/Updates Business

- a. Best of the Nest Winner for March: Keith Scheller

VII. Announcements

- a. Many jobs are open and posted on the HR website. Please share these opportunities with friends and family.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting ended at 4:06 p.m.

The next Administrative Senate Meeting is scheduled for April 1, 2026, in UC 2207.

Committee Goals

Employee Events and Outreach:

1. Develop a new administrator onboarding experience - cards, check-in emails, potential buddy system
2. Connect more with current administrators by hosting more events - i.e., BYOLs, employee walks, etc.
3. Monthly administrator emails

Employee Relations & Benefits

1. Standardize flexible work arrangements: Define eligibility criteria by role, set a default baseline (e.g., 1–2 remote days/week where duties allow), and allow ad hoc flexibility for short term needs for those not utilizing consistent remote days. FREE in terms of actual costs.
2. Create a sick leave donation bank: Re-draft policy and pilot within one area. We need to consider the HR Administrative burden and come up with solutions there. Also, this could be considered a "FREE" endeavor.
3. On campus childcare: Conduct a feasibility study and partnership scan - If anything admin senate can "post" our efforts in USI today to show if this is possible.
4. Compensation and livable wages – always a concern and main reason we can't keep Administrative Assistants here....constant turnover in some departments due to wages; Athletics Department and Marketing/Communications Department all got wage increases when the University went to D1. No other areas were upgraded like that.
5. Vacation Time Policies – need to extend the cap and adjust the earning of vacation days based on tenure (reach 10 years = more vacation).
6. Dress Code Flexibility – helps with costs of business attire, retention, etc.
7. Expanded Flexible Work arrangements – helps with recruiting and retention.

Professional Development

1. Provide at least one professional development opportunity for administrators per semester
2. Provide the online new administrator welcome session to all new administrators on a regular basis
3. Continue to add content and resources to the Admin Senate PD web page to share professional development opportunities, links to FAQs, and serve as a resource for administrators.

Nominations & Elections

1. Increase election participation (# of votes) by 5%
2. Utilize Past Chairs to promote elections
3. Review the election process to ensure user-friendliness
4. Engage constituents throughout the year to increase top-of-mind awareness