

MINUTES

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

November 6, 2025

The Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee of the University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees met on Thursday, November 6, 2025, in the Griffin Center on campus. Present were Committee Chair John M. Dunn and Trustees Christine H. Keck; Glen J. Kissel; Ronald D. Romain '73; and Christina M. Ryan. Also in attendance were President Steven J. Bridges '89 M'95; Provost Shelly B. Blunt; Vice President for Student Affairs Abeer A. Mustafa; and Vice President for Marketing and Communication Kindra L. Strupp M'22.

Trustee Dunn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF NEW CERTIFICATES AND MICROCREDENTIALS

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt to review the new certificates and microcredentials in Attachment A, which provides a complete abstract describing three new certificates and two new microcredentials proposed for implementation Fall 2026. Dr. Blunt asked the college deans and department chairs to provide the details of their respective programs. Dr. Julie McCullough reviewed the information regarding two nine-credit-hour undergraduate certificates in Restaurant Management and Human Lactation; Romain College of Business Dean Dr. Sudesh Mujumdar, discussed the twelve-credit-hour undergraduate certificate in Financial Management; a nine-credit-hour microcredential in Health and Society was presented by Dr. Andy Buck; and Dr. Denise Lynn provided details on the nine-credit-hour Public History microcredential.

A Committee recommendation to the Board of Trustees for approval of the Certificates and Microcredentials in Attachment A was approved.

2. REVIEW OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt to review the Academic Program Development Plan. Dr. Blunt directed the Trustees to Attachment B, which provides an overview of academic programs under consideration including Baccalaureate, Master's, Certificates, and Microcredential programs for the 2025-2027 and 2027-2029 biennia.

3. ENROLLMENT UPDATES

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt, who introduced Mrs. Koryn Parsons '11 M'14, Director of Undergraduate Admissions and Dr. Michael Dixon, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, for a report on current Fall 2025 post-census enrollment.

Mrs. Parsons provided census results for Fall 2025 new undergraduate enrollment, including the composition of new and transfer students. The Fall 2025 targeted enrollment goal for new freshmen was 1,350 students and 400 for transfer students, a projected increase of 2.2% over Fall 2024, giving a total combined target of 1,750 students. At census, USI's actual enrollment was 1,367 freshmen students and 386 transfer students, for a total of 1,753, successfully meeting the overall target. New transfer students represented nineteen states and twenty-nine counties within Indiana. The Ivy Tech Community College System was the leading source of transfer students, followed by the Illinois Eastern Community College System, Vincennes University, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, and Southeastern Illinois College. USI has maintained a steady transfer enrollment trend despite the national decline in community college enrollment, highlighting the institution's continued success in recruiting transfer students.

Mrs. Parsons provided an overview of new freshmen enrollment trends, comparing Fall 2020 through Fall 2025 with freshmen enrollment at USI increasing over the past three years. For Fall 2025, 1,367 new freshmen enrolled, representing students from 22 states and 65 counties within Indiana. The academic profile of this class reflected an average GPA of 3.5, average SAT score of 1120, and average ACT score of 24.

She reviewed enrollment targets for Fall 2026 with a 3.5% increase over Fall 2025. Additionally, locations with strong growth opportunities and focused recruitment efforts were reviewed. Mrs. Parsons emphasized enrollment goals are informed by data analysis of high school senior populations and enrollment trends, and reviewed the factors that may contribute to increased enrollment.

Indiana requires all high schools to offer college and career fairs, which has expanded USI's presence statewide. An additional admissions counselor has been assigned to focus on transfer students, doubling outreach to community colleges. USI also hosts the Greater Evansville College Fair and collaborates with academic colleges to organize discipline-specific events for prospective students.

In closing, Mrs. Parsons described Admissions' multi-channel approach to student engagement. Efforts include expanding email and text messaging campaigns through a partnership with an external firm, increasing the use of mailers, and developing a postcard series aligned with University Marketing and Communications themes to target surrounding counties.

Dr. Michael Dixon, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, provided an update on graduate enrollment. He noted graduate programs have two start dates in both the fall and spring semesters. Because of census occurring at the end of the fourth week, enrollment at census does not include students from the second fall start date. The profile of enrolled graduate students reflects an average age of 35 years, with two-thirds being female. Geographically, 56% of students are from Indiana, 42% from out-of-state, and 1.9% are international.

At census, new applications increased by 2.8% from 1,245 in Fall 2024 to 1,284 in Fall 2025, while new student enrollment increased by 0.8% from 707 to 713. As of October 26, 2025, one week after the second start date, applications had increased by 3.1% to 1,360, and enrollment increased by 2.1% to 773. Total graduate enrollment on October 26 was 1,962 students, a 0.5% increase over Fall 2024. Dr. Dixon attributed the modest growth to factors such as the transition from a master's program to a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy, which reduced capacity from 30 to 18 students, and the need to replace approximately 700 graduates from spring and summer 2025.

Dr. Dixon concluded by outlining strategies to achieve a 2% enrollment increase for Fall 2026. These include expanding partnerships, revising curricula to enhance program appeal, and implementing a comeback campaign to re-engage students who paused their MBA pursuit.

There being no further business, Trustee Dunn call the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

ABSTRACTS

Certificates and Microcredentials to be offered By the University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Indiana

Certificate in Restaurant Management (Undergraduate)

The Certificate in Restaurant Management is a nine credit -hour certificate that provides individuals with a strong foundation of knowledge in managing a food service operation. The required courses focus on food safety, restaurant management, purchasing, human resource management, and controlling food service costs. In addition to traditional coursework, there is a practicum course that provides students with hands-on experience in a food service establishment. Students must earn a C or better in all courses. Certificate is open to all majors, minors, and individuals in the community. The program does not require new or additional faculty. One faculty is certified as an instructor/proctor through ServSafe and is qualified to proctor all required exams. The certificate program is offered online with the exception of two proctored exams, and no additional classroom space or supplies will be required for this online certificate.

Evidence of Job Market Need: Due to job market demand heavily focusing on certification over a bachelor's degree for employment within the field of restaurant/food service management, we will offer a Certificate in Restaurant Management to allow for a greater number of individuals to complete the required certification at USI and generate credit hours, while simultaneously preparing individuals to enter management positions in food service operations. Individuals will earn the Restaurant Management Professional credential and complete the ServSafe certification.

Certificate in Human Lactation (Undergraduate):

The Certificate in Human Lactation provides a foundation of knowledge necessary to adequately support a breastfeeding dyad. The required courses for a nine credit-hour certificate focus on basic nutrition, anatomy and physiology of lactation, common lactation issues, and lactation support in community and clinical settings. The courses have a dyad-focused approach to lactation management by focusing on both the mother and baby experience. Students must achieve a grade of C or better in all required courses. The certificate is open to all majors and minors at USI and members of the community.

Evidence of Job Market Need: Multiple healthcare providers across Indiana—including inpatient hospitals, health departments, private practice and milk banks, are actively hiring IBCLCs and lactation consultants. Roles include inpatient and outpatient lactation support, program development, and education, with both full-time and part-time positions available. Employers are seeking candidates with IBCLC certification and experience in maternal-child health, indicating a sustained demand for qualified professionals.

Financial Planning Certificate (Undergraduate):

The Financial Planning Certificate is a 12-hour credit-hour undergraduate certificate program that will offer USI students the requisite background for careers in financial planning, advising, and wealth management. This certificate will allow our students to highlight the skills and knowledge they have gained while at USI. One additional lecturer may be required each semester.

Evidence of Job Market Need: As the population ages and individuals seek help with retirement planning the demand for financial advisors will increase. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projected a 17% growth rate nationwide in financial advisor jobs from 2023-2033. On April 8, 2025, the premier source for labor

markets in Indiana predicted a 14.6% increase in financial advisors statewide through 2032 with the Evansville region having a 12.4% increase in financial advisors.

Health and Society Microcredential (Undergraduate): This nine credit-hour undergraduate microcredential is focused on providing a sociological foundation for students preparing to work in medical and health-related fields. Future health care providers would benefit from this micro-credential because understanding the social determinants of health and the social organization of health care is important to their work and patients. For example, pre-med students need a strong foundation in sociology because the entrance exam to medical school (MCAT) tests them on core sociological knowledge. Both USI and non-USI students can complete this micro-credential. USI students do not have to be formally enrolled in the micro-credential program to take the courses. The nine credit hours for the micro-credential must be earned at USI and may be applied toward a major or minor in Sociology.

Evidence of Market Need: The United States currently has a shortage of doctors and faces worsening conditions in the coming years due to demographic changes among doctors and the pool of students in the medical school pipeline. The acceptance rate to medical schools in the United States remains just above 40% indicating the supply of doctors is tightly controlled. For non-pre-med students, according to the Indiana Employment Outlook Projections, Healthcare Support is projected to have the second the greatest number of job openings in Indiana and the most in Southwestern Indiana. In more fine-grained occupational categories, Medical and Health Service Managers and Home Health and Personal Care Aides represent some of the fastest growing fields in Indiana.

Public History Microcredential (Undergraduate):

A public history microcredential will serve the community by providing individuals with a credential that introduces them to the latest research, methods, and tools used in various public history locations including museums, archives, historic sites, or libraries. This micro credential will be the first of its kind in Indiana and thus could elevate the University of Southern Indiana's visibility and produce more credit hour production. The micro credential requirements are 9 credit hours.

A significant portion of history majors pursue careers in public history. This micro credential proposes to give students that are on campus the opportunity to explore careers in different areas and give them work experience that will prepare them for post-graduate studies or careers at public history institutions. This credential will introduce different career pathways for students who are interested in history but do not seek to become teachers.

Evidence of Labor Market Need: This microcredential will place USI students in Indiana institutions to explore work in public history, once there, it will help the students to create a network to assist in their future career goals. It will enable students to complete a professional credential that will allow flexibility for the demands of the labor market

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA
New Program Development Plan**

**Revised by Academic Planning Council
20-Oct-2025**

Baccalaureate Degree

Master's Degree

Doctorate Degree

Certificates

2025-2027 Biennium

Business Economics	Food and Nutrition (Dietetics)		Spanish for Health Care Professionals (UG-C)
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Microcredentials

Graduate: Applied Neuroscience in Business
Undergraduate: Public History
Rural Health
Healthcare Leadership
Environmental Health
Health and Society
Applied Neuroscience in Business

2027-2029 Biennium

Medical Laboratory Science			
Mental Health Counseling			

UG-C - Undergraduate Level Certificate
Grad - Graduate Level Certificate