

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

**I. Welcome and Call to Order**

- a. Meeting started at 3:02 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, J. Roberts, and K. Sullivan

**III. Review and Approval of Minutes: January 2026**

- a. Spence Farmer motioned, and T. Lutgring seconded; motion passed.

**IV. Vote: Parental Leave IFC 4 weeks to 6 weeks**

- a. L. Groves motioned; H. Perigo seconded; motion passed.

**V. Reports of Officers & Standing Committees**

- a. Officers
- i. Chair (Garrison)
- President's Council:
    - (1) Full on the Board of Trustees
      - (a) Spoke about Homecoming weekend, 2159 on the Dean's list, MLK Luncheon a success, Jon Mark talked about the strong academics for athletes, Foundation reported on the million-dollar gift from Larry Rutledge, and Dr. Mustafa talked about student affairs.
  - B. Bruner resigned Senator position as he left USI on 1/31/2026
  - Soft start on Administrator evaluations; will not be tied to evaluations. It will be a paper form this year, but it will likely be Dynamics next year. Training will be provided for supervisors and their reports.
  - Evaluations Committee - Spring Roll Out, written format with hopes of going electronic, still trying to get training and messaging together
- ii. Vice-Chair (Pryor)
- HLC 3 committee – just attending meetings
  - Traffic Appeals committee – work on an appeal
  - Working on early recruitment for Admin Senate 2026-2028 elections
- iii. Past Chair (Tieken)
- N/A

- iv. Secretary/Treasurer (Tieken)
  - Budget is \$1,122.19
- b. Standing Committees
  - i. Employee Events and Outreach – Emily Ozee, Chair; Hannah Perigo, Vice Chair
    - Nothing to report
  - ii. Employee Relations and Benefits – Michelle Kirk, Chair; TBD, Vice Chair
 

Review of 3 IFCs:

    - Retirement Sick Leave Payout:
      - (1) The committee is working to reinstate a benefit that was eliminated for faculty and exempt staff in 2014. This IFC requests that the university consider extending the unused sick leave policy to Faculty and administrative staff in addition the currently covered non-exempt staff member, who are not entitled to an early retirement sabbatical and not eligible for retirement service pay.
      - (2) This change would help to align the benefits to be more similar to those of support staff in the post-retirement era.
    - Vacation Accrual Limits
      - (1) The committee is exploring options to increase the maximum vacation accrual. While a jump to three times the annual rate was considered, the committee is currently presenting three alternative options to move forward, thinking that a drastic increase might be rejected. The following is proposed:
        - (a) Implement a year-end overflow bucket, allowing employees at their maximum limit to shift one to two weeks into a "use it or lose it" reserve at the close of the fiscal year, provided the time is taken by September 30.
        - (b) Accrual increase, where employees with 10 or more years of service would see their annual allowance increase from 20 to 25 days.
        - (c) Payout, a periodic "cash-out" of a designated portion of vacation hours every five years for employees who remain at their maximum accrual.
    - Sick Leave Accessibility
      - (1) A third proposal is being finalized regarding sick leave availability. The goal is to make sick leave accessible at the very start of employment rather than requiring a waiting period. We propose granting an initial allocation of three (3) days (22.5 hours) of sick leave effective upon the date of hire. To maintain fiscal neutrality, the accrual rate for the remainder of the first year would be adjusted proportionally.
  - iii. Professional Development – Erin Hollinger, Chair; Spence Farmer, Vice Chair

- We met 2/4 and reviewed and edited our committee goals. They were sent to the Admin Senate email so they could be changed.
  - We plan to offer a BYO lunch and learn the week of Spring Break for admins, along the theme of professional communication skills (not sure on exact title). Jennifer is checking on available rooms in the UC that week, then we will firm up the date/location.
  - We will work on a blurb for the email that will go out through the Admin Senate email for all new admins each month to notify them of the online onboarding/orientation. If Admin Senate could send Jennifer a copy of the new admins, she will assign the training to them before they get the email.
  - We will begin working on beefing up the web page on the Admin Senate site to include more information and resources for admins.
- iv. Nominations and Elections – Tricia Tieken, Chair
- We start asking for help in March to get ready for recruiting.

**VI. Unfinished Business**

- a. Ongoing Projects:
- i. Administrator Award Planning – ongoing project
  - ii. Best of the Nest February winner: Kathy Oeth

**VII. New/Updates Business**

- a. Legislation from ERB updates – will send to K. Mara, and then it will go to J. Sickman
- b. Review the goal progression of committees

**VIII. Announcements**

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

**IX. Adjournment**

Meeting ended at 3:29 p.m.

The next Administrative Senate Meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2026, in UC 2206.

## **New Business – 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. Accrued Sick Leave payout of 60 hours for employees who retire without a sabbatical and without service pay. Retiring staff are now eligible for this.
2. Remove the cap on family sick leave time. The time will still be designated as “family sick” on the timesheet for statistical purposes.
3. Change the vacation maximum. The committee will examine various methods, including raising the cap to 600 hours.

\*This is the IFC that the committee unofficially voted to work on first.

### 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. Review the election process to ensure user-friendliness
3. Engage constituents throughout the year to increase top-of-mind awareness