

ILLINOIS TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday January 27, 2026
12:45pm
Online via Zoom
(pdf version available [here](#))

Attending Voting Members: Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Promila Dhar (BME), Fred Weening (AMAT), Emily Leiner (PHYS), Braja Mandal (CHEM), Murat Vural (MMAE), Jade Hutchinson (SGA), Erdal Oruklu (ECE), Nicole Legate (PSYC), Erin Hazard (HASS), John Twombly (SSB), Kindon Mills (ARCH), Jeremy Hajek (ITM), Matthew Bauer (CS), Andy Howard (BIOL), Stephen Kleps (CAEE)

Chairing Meeting: Kathir Krishnamurthy

Also Attending: Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Kiah Ong (AMAT), Daniel Bliss (HASS), Cynthia Torres (Acad Affairs), Gabriel Martinez (Armour), Nicole Novak (Libraries), Jeff Wereszczynski (VP Acad Affairs), Kyle Hawkins (AMP), Michael Arnaudo (Armour Acad Advisor), Kevin Cassel (VP Acad Transformation), Keith Alexander (UGAA), David Minh (CHEM), Ayesha Qamer (Registrar), Katie Spink (Pre-Med), Pam Houser (INTM), Leslie Johnson (ARCH), Taylor Rojas (UGAA), Rich Klein (SSB), Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Katherine Quiroa (UGAA), Melisa Lopez (Student Success & Retention), Yasmin Rodriguez-Escutia (Armour Acad Advisor), Nick Menhart (VP Assessment and Accreditation), Diane Fifles (Univ Accred), Carly Kocurek (LCS), Carrie Hall (Armour), Melanie Jones (Armour Acad Advisor), Norma Scagnoli (CLI), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Brian Casario (ELS), Kathy Nagle (ARCH)

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:47pm

1. Approval of the proposed meeting agenda. Kathir Krishnamurthy shared the [proposed agenda](#). He indicated that this is the same proposed agenda that was previously distributed by email except that one item was removed at the request of the presenter. Kindon Mills moved to accept the agenda and Matt Bauer seconded the motion. Kathir asked if there anyone wanted to propose additions to the agenda; none were proposed. The motion to accept the agenda as presented passed without objection or abstention.
2. Approval of Meeting minutes. The minutes for the UGSC meeting on [January 13, 2026](#) had previously been made available on the UGSC website. Matt Bauer moved to accept the minutes and this was seconded by Kindon Mills. The motion passed without objection or abstention.
3. The next item consisted of several proposals from the HASS department. Erin Hazard presented the proposals:

- a. [Updated Humanities major](#) to reflect (H) and (S) classes that can be shared with majors.

Katie Spink asked where in the UGSC minutes was the change in policy that allows the sharing of Core courses with majors. Nick Menhart indicated that it was part of the [Core pilot framework document](#) that was passed at the [December 9 special meeting](#) of UGSC.

This proposal was viewed as a minor change and as such could be voted on at this meeting. The motion to accept the proposal was passed without objection or abstention.

- b. [Policy and Ethics](#) and [Science and Technology Studies](#) minors have been submitted for elimination

These two proposals were both to remove minors being offered by the HASS department. Erin indicated that these had not attracted many students and that currently there are few or no students seeking these minors.

Kindon Mills commented that the elimination of the Policy and Ethics minor will have consequences felt by students in Architecture. She mentioned that the ARCH department is committed to giving its students a broad education and the university as a whole should be concerned if the courses in the Policy and Ethics minor are no longer offered.

Daniel Bliss mentioned that there is a possible proposal in the making for an interdisciplinary major between HASS and Architecture that would address some of Kindon's concerns. Erin said that she was unaware of this proposal, and as the Architecture historian in the HASS department, she wanted to be included in these discussions. Kindon indicated that she is in favor of interdisciplinary programs involving Architecture, but stressed the need for courses to be offered by the partnering department for the students in Architecture.

Carly Kocurek wanted to stress that the proposal is just to eliminate the minor, not to eliminate any course offerings. She also mentioned that some of the courses in the minor had not been offered in some time. Kathy Nagle made the related comment that she knew of 2 or 3 ARCH students who were interested in the minor, but because courses in the minor weren't being offered hadn't officially declared the minor.

Nick Menhart mentioned that thought needs to be put into creating minors that will attract a large number of students. There are some cases, Bioinformatics for one, in which the minor has a lot more students than the major. The main question of viability is can you put 25 - 30 students in the classes that the minor requires on a regular basis.

There was more discussion about the Policy and Ethics minor in particular and ultimately Erin made a motion to table the vote on its elimination. This motion was seconded by Matt Bauer and passed without objection or abstention. Erin indicated that she would initiate a discussion at the next HASS department meeting regarding keeping the minor given the interest expressed by members of UGSC.

Regarding the proposal to eliminate the Science and Technologies Studies minor there was no opposition voiced. Andy Howard moved to accept the proposal and Jeremy Hajek seconded the motion. The motion carried without objection or abstention.

c. Proposed changes in Game Development and Experiential Media program

Carly Kocurek presented the proposal. She indicated that there are two changes being proposed:

1. to remove COM 424 Document Design from the list of required classes and balance this with increasing the number of technical elective credits, and
2. to replace the engineering graphics courses, which are no longer being offered, with in-house developed graphics classes.

There were no questions or discussion. Kindon Mills moved to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Jeremy Hajek. The motion passed with no objection or abstention.

4. The next three agenda items were all from CS and were presented by Matt Bauer

- a. [Certificate in Foundations of Computer Science](#)

Matt explained that this certificate is on the books, but has never been pursued by a student. But now there is interest in the form of a partnership with an international university to offer this certificate program. The issue is that the gateway course to get into the program is currently CS401, a course which only graduate students can take. The proposal is to also allow students to take CS 331 as a gateway course. Undergraduate students can take CS 331.

Kindon Mills asked for a little more detail about the partnership. Matt explained that the certificate program was originally designed 4 or 5 years ago for people who wanted to change careers. The international university is looking to partner so that their students can get a credential from a U.S. institution. Rather than having their students do a dual degree program with Illinois Tech, the idea of the certificate program is being put forward.

Andy Howard asked if the certificate would be a graduate level certificate or an undergraduate level certificate. Matt responded that it would be at the undergraduate level. Katie Spink followed up this with whether this certificate is something that our undergraduate students could pursue. Matt said no; the certificate is for non-degree seeking students.

Andy Howard moved to accept the proposal and Fred Weening seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

b. [Elimination of some CS minors](#)

Matt shared his screen and showed some data on the number of students who obtained various CS minors over the past 6 years. Three of the minors had substantial numbers, while the other 4 minors had relatively low numbers. The proposal is to eliminate these 4 minors; namely

- Minor in Computational Structures
- Minor in Computer Networking
- Minor in Operating Systems
- Minor in Programming Languages

The elimination of these minors would not eliminate any course offerings.

Jeremy Hajek moved to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Fred Weening. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

c. [Updates to the BS in AI program](#)

Matt indicated that all of the revisions in the proposal were adding more course options for students to meet program requirements. For instance, currently CS340 is a requirement and the proposal would now require CS340 or CS440 or CS445. There are several other instances of changes like this (giving students more options) that are detailed in the proposal.

Fred Weening moved to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Murat Vural. The motion passed without objections or abstentions.

5. Daniel Bliss presented the next agenda item which was a follow-up to a discussion on a proposal he introduced last fall on [a standardized course numbering policy](#).

Daniel discussed the need for having such a policy: among other issues, the current situation creates problems with transfer credits and the Illinois Articulation Initiative. He asked for questions and / or suggestions to tweak the current proposal.

Nick Menhart had some suggestions for changes. He displayed a document that had a couple of [amendments to the wording for 400 and 500 level courses](#). He indicated that the university had been sanctioned in the past for not properly handling 400 and 500 level courses. He said that the amendments that he is suggesting would help avoid similar problems in the future.

Jeff Wereszczynski remarked that the university needs a uniform course numbering system, and that he was surprised that this issue had not been fixed previously. He suggested that Daniel, Nick, and himself meet to hammer out some details and provide a revised proposal to be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

There was some additional discussion about the rules that must be followed for 400 and 500 level cross-listed courses. Kindon Mills also mentioned that some exceptions to the rules listed may need to be made for Architecture since their accrediting bodies and rules may be at odds with some of the normal conventions of other disciplines. Leslie Jones, also from ARCH, indicated that currently the rules for 400 and 500 level classes have created an administrative nightmare for ARCH which has to track 700+ students.

It was agreed that any and all concerns be brought to Nick/Daniel/Jeff for consideration when they revise the numbering policy in the document that Daniel put forth for discussion.

6. The next item was a [revision to the BS in Biochemistry degree program](#). David Minh made the presentation.

He indicated that the revisions would increase conceptual depth of the major. The program would culminate with an advanced biochemistry capstone which would be cross-listed with a graduate course. Space for new requirements would be made in the program by reducing the requirements in mathematics and physical chemistry. He offered to answer questions and go into more details as needed.

Katie Spink indicated that she had some major issues with the proposal: some of the Biology courses have been renumbered and some have been renamed. None of this has been discussed in the Biology department. David countered that both Chemistry and Biology had voted to give the steering committee curricular oversight of the interdisciplinary Biochemistry program. Katie agreed with that statement, but said that this does not give the steering committee the right to dictate what courses the Biology department will offer. There needs to be consultation with the Biology department and bringing this proposal to UGSC prior to that consultation is premature.

Jeff Wereszczynski questioned the motivation for removing the physical chemistry course, since it would seem that this would be foundational to many modern computational methods. David indicated that the physical chemistry course was being replaced with a physical chemistry course designed for biochemists. Jeff questioned how many additional new courses are going to need to be taught for this degree program; having low enrollment courses being offered is a significant issue with current budgetary constraints.

Nick Menhart asked if this proposal has been entered into CIM. David indicated that he had not done this yet, he didn't realize that this was required at this point in the process. He indicated that the documents he provided contain all the information that would be in CIM. Nick responded that by putting the proposal in CIM, it would become much clearer as to what new courses were being required which is essential information for UGSC to consider. David said that he would enter the information into CIM prior to UGSC's next meeting. He had brought this to UGSC today since he was concerned that if he didn't it would be too late to get the revised program into the next Illinois Tech catalog.

Fred Weening asked Kathir if he had gotten clarification as to the date when things need to be approved in order to get into the next bulletin. Kathir indicated that all approvals (UGSC, UFC, the Board of Governors) need to be completed by April 30. Jeff remarked that UFC has implemented a nice system for electronic voting that UGSC might copy to speed up the approval process a bit.

7. Kathir noted that the meeting was running past the allotted time. Murat Vural indicated that his presentation would be very short, and Kathir agreed to let him make the presentation.

Murat indicated that currently for both the Mechanical Engineering and Aerospace Engineering programs in the MMAE department the course Chem 124 is required. This is a 4 credit course consisting of 3 credits of lecture and 1 credit of lab. The

proposal is to replace this with Chem 122 which is just the lecture portion of Chem 124.

Part of the motivation for this proposal is due to a partnership with a school in China. Their program does not have a chemistry lab requirement, and so this proposal would more align the program at Illinois Tech with the program in the partnership.

Before moving forward to ask for a motion to accept the proposal, Kathir wanted to confirm that there still was a quorum of voting members at the meeting. There were, in fact, only 5 voting members currently at the meeting so a quorum was no longer present.

Braja Mandal moved to adjourn the meeting and this was seconded by Murat Vural. There was no opposition to the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02pm