ILLINOIS TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday October 28, 2025
12:45pm
Online via Zoom
(pdf version available here)

Attending Voting Members: John Twombly (SSB), Andy Howard (BIOL), Matthew Bauer (CS), Murat Vural (MMAE), Patrick Ireland (SSCI), Erdal Oruklu (ECE), Erin Hazard (HUM), Nicole Legate (PSYC), Promila Dhar (BME), Braja Mandal (CHEM), Kindon Mills (ARCH), Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Stephen Kleps (CAEE), Emily Leiner (PHYS), Steve Rubinow (ITM substituting for Jeremy Hajek)

Chairing Meeting: Fred Weening (AMAT)

Also Attending: Diane Fifles (Univ Accred), Ishaan Goel (SGA), Keigo Kawaji (Armour), Melanie Jones (Armour Acad Advisor), Kyle Hawkins (AMP), Nick Menhart (CCAC), Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Yasmin Rodriguez-Escutia (Armour Acad Advisor), Katherine Quiroa (UGAA), Mary Haynes (UGAA), Nicole Novak (Libraries), Katie Spink (Pre-Med), Ankit Srivastava (UFC), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Taylor Rojas (UGAA), Kevin Cassel (VP Acad Affairs), Michael Arnaudo (Armour Acad Advisor), Pam Houser (INTM), Melisa Lopez (Student Success & Retention), Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Kelly Roark (CLI)

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:49pm

1. Approval of the proposed meeting agenda. Fred Weening shared the proposed agenda and noted that UGSC chair Kathir Krishnamurthy was not able to attend and run today's meeting. He asked if there were any additional items or other changes to be made; there were none. Matt Bauer moved to accept the agenda and this was seconded by Kindon Mills. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

2. Approval of Meeting minutes. The minutes for both the UGSC meeting on September 9, 2025 and September 23, 2025 were displayed. These had previously been made available on the UGSC website. Matt Bauer moved to approve the minutes and this was seconded by Stephen Kleps. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

3. The next item was a vote on a proposal from Stuart School of Business to
    a. revise the existing BS in Financial Economics program, and
    b. create a new program: BS in Business and Cybersecurity.

Fred Weening explained that the on-line vote for these two programs was right on the borderline of having enough response to be viewed as a legitimate vote. There were 10 voting members who responded to the email asking for a vote. Of those 10, nine voted to approve both proposals and one abstained on both proposals. Currently there are 18 voting members of UGSC (this excludes the chair Kathir Krishnamurty who as chair does not get a vote, and the SGA representative who has not been named yet this year). Since it may be debatable whether the turnout for the online votes constitutes quorum, Kathir had asked that we have an in-person vote at this meeting.

John Twombly refreshed everyone's memory as to the details of the two proposals. Stephen Kleps moved to approve both proposals. Victor Perez-Luna seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection or abstention

4. The next item was a further update to the Standard Operating Procedure document for UGSC. Fred Weening displayed the document and described what changes had been made since the previous version:
    - Section IV called "Informational Items" was renamed to "Minors and Certificate Programs." The content of the section was also changed to indicate that although in the past minors and certificate programs were treated as informational items (and no vote of approval was required), going forward creation and revision of minors and certificate programs will require a vote of approval.
    - In the section on Policies affecting Undergraduate Education, the document now specifically indicates that items brought forward by voting members or ex-oficio members of UGSC must be put on a meeting agenda by the UGSC chair.

    Kevin Cassel suggested that the additional phrase: "in a timely fashion" be added to the sentence indicating that the chair must put items on a meeting agenda. There was no other discussion.

    Andy Howard moved the document, with the change that Kevin Cassel suggested be approved. Kindon Mills seconded the motion. Fred Weening asked for a show of hands for all those in favor of the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 12-0 with no abstentions.

5. The next item concerned a document on piloting some changes to the Core Curriculum. The document had been distributed shortly before this meeting, and today's discussion was an initial reading of the document.

    A brief history of the creation of the document (provided post meeting by Nick Menhart): Jennifer deWinter and Kevin Cassel (and before him Liad Wagman) co-chaired a task force convened by then provost Christensen to study the core and make recommendations for revisions to the provost. As a result, a report was delivered to the provost's office earlier this semester. The provost's office then used that report as a starting point to develop the proposal in front of UGSC today.

Kevin Cassel described the contents of the document. He indicated that the task force working on revising the Core Curriculum had been working on and off for the past 2 years, but with accreditation underway it has not been the best time to make significant changes to the curriculum. He explained that there are three changes that the document is proposing to pilot beginning in the spring 2026 semester.

1. Allowing the double counting of courses in the Core Curriculum: In other words, courses used to fulfill requirements of the Core Curriculum can also be counted toward meeting requirements of a students' major.
2. A new two-course communications sequence which would replace the current (C) course designation method that is currently being used to satisfy the communications requirements of the Core.
3. A new design related entrepreneurship course that Jeremy Alexis wants to pilot.

Fred Weening asked if there were questions or comments for Kevin.

Katie Spink pointed out that none of these courses appear in the schedule of courses offered in the spring, and asked how the courses would be populated. Kevin indicated that they will be doing some recruiting of students for the courses. Additionally for the spring they will use the IPRO 397 designation for the new design course that Jeremy Alexis will teach.

Kindon Mills asked for some clarification as to how the communications part of the core is being proposed to change. She mentioned that currently one of the requirements can be met by taking a (C) course from within a student's major. She expressed concern that if that no longer can occur students in Architecture will have to take an additional 3 credits outside of their major — and this would add to the total number of credits for graduation. Kevin indicated that currently there are 21 credits required for Humanities and Social Sciences in the core and the additional 3-credit core communications course would end up counting in this area. So there will not be any additional course the students will need to take. Katie Spink concurred in that in the document the second communications course is replacing HUM 200. Kevin pointed out that this is how the courses are accounted for in the pilot, but not necessarily how the ultimate changes may be implemented.

Erin Hazard asked a question about the content of the COM 200 course. In the document it seems to focus on AI and she was wondering if that is the intention. Kevin indicated that, yes, this is how the course was designed. It is intended to teach communication in the age of AI.

Matt Bauer expressed concern that there might not be enough students to pilot the COM 200 in the spring, since many students will have completed HUM 2XX this semester. He also indicated that the repurposing of the IPRO 397 course is a good idea, but he wanted to make sure that students taking this new class will still meet the learning outcomes of IPRO 397

Andy Howard indicated that he teaches two (C) courses in his department and takes the communications aspect of the course very seriously. He indicated that it will take quite some convincing to have him agree to give up the current (C) structure.

Nick Menhart pointed out that we should keep in mind that this is a pilot proposal of some of the ideas that arose in the Core Revision Committee. There are other ideas that the committee is considering as well, but the ones in the pilot proposal are the ones that are ready to test out right now. Kevin agreed and stressed that we are not discussing changing the core today, instead just looking at some ideas and getting some feedback and data through a piloting process.

Kevin thanked everyone for today's discussion and asked that everyone take this back to their departments for further input and that we will have a more formal discussion at the next UGSC meeting.

6. Other Business. There was no other business.

Kindon Mills moved that the meeting be adjourned and this was seconded by Matt Bauer. There was no objection.

The meeting adjourned at 1:21 pm.