ILLINOIS TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday February 17, 2026
12:45pm
Online via Zoom
(pdf version available here)

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

Chairing Meeting: Kathir Krishnamurthy

Also Attending: Brent Stephens (CAEE), Taylor Rojas (UGAA), Ray Lemming (CAEE), Kyle Hawkins (AMP), Saran Ghatak (HASS), Melisa Lopez (Student Success & Retention), Bo Rodda (HASS), Kiah Ong (AMAT), Daniel Bliss (HASS), Cynthia Torres (Acad Affairs), Yasmin Rodriguez-Escutia (Armour Acad Advisor), Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Nicole Novak (Libraries), Abby McGrath (Enrollment Services), Nick Menhart (VP Assessment and Accreditation), Jeff Wereszczynski (VP Acad Affairs), Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Michael Arnaudo (Armour Acad Advisor), Kevin Cassel (VP Acad Transformation), Norma Scagnoli (CLI), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Keith Green (HASS), Keith Alexander (UGAA), Ayesha Qamer (Registrar), Carly Kocurek (LCS), Reed Kroloff (ARCH), Carrie Hall (Armour), Rich Klein (SSB), Brian Casario (ELS), Kathy Nagle (ARCH), Diane Fifles (Univ Accred)

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:45pm

1. Approval of the proposed meeting agenda. Kathir Krishnamurthy shared the proposed agenda which had been previously distributed. Matt Bauer moved to accept the agenda and Fred Weening seconded the motion. Kathir asked if there anyone wanted to propose additions or changes 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 February 10, 2026 had previously been made available on the UGSC website. Kindon Mills moved to accept the minutes and this was seconded by Matt Bauer. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

3. The next item was a proposal to reduce the credit hours required for the Bachelor of Science in Applied Cybersecurity and Information Technology program. This proposal had been discussed at a previous meeting, and Kathir asked that Jeremy Hajek refresh everyone's memory of the proposal. Jeremy indicated that the proposal is to change the required mathematics classes from the Calculus track to a non-calculus curriculum. This

will enable the program to reduce the number of required credits from 129 to 121. There was no further discussion.

John Twombly moved to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Matt Bauer. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

4. The next item was a proposal for a new program: a Bachelors of Arts in Architectural Studies. Kindon Mills presented the proposal.

    Kindon explained that this degree is a non-professional degree to complement the current five-year professional Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.) degree program. The proposed BA degree is a more flexible option for students who want to pursue the fundamentals of architecture as a discipline but not necessarily as a profession.

    She gave a bit of background on the types of undergraduate degrees one can obtain broadly in the discipline of architecture:
    ●   a five-year professional B.Arch. degree from which one can obtain licensure without needing a master's of architecture
    ●   a BS in Architectural Studies which is a pre-professional degree preparing students for a two year master's of architecture program, and
    ●   a BA in Architectural Studies which is a non-professional degree preparing students for a three years master's of architecture program if they want to pursue licensure.

    The college of Architecture has performed in house studies that indicate that there is a need for such a BA in Architectural Studies program here at Illinois Tech. Currently, if a student in their first or second year decides they don't want to continue with the rigors of the professional B.Arch degree, they don't have any alternative in the college of Architecture. If the student doesn't have a second choice of major in the university we often do not retain the student at Illinois Tech. This program will give students an alternative as well as also possibly attracting other students to Illinois Tech.

    The new program would not require additional courses to be offered. The first three to four semesters would be the same for the BA and B.Arch. students. The BA students can then use their Architectural electives to pursue areas of interest and will also have 18 free electives from which they will be required to either pursue a minor or a specialization.

    Kindon also discussed the learning objectives of the program as well as the employment opportunities for students obtaining the BA degree.

    Matt Bauer asked a question / made a suggestion to make sure that the fact that the program will require a minor or specialization appears in the bulletin information for the program.

Jeff Wereczszinski mentioned that he thought this was a great addition to the college or Architecture and that it should bring in more students to the field of architecture.

As this is a new program, voting will not occur until the next UGSC meeting. Kathir encouraged everyone to take the proposal to their academic units for any further input and to be prepared to vote at the next meeting.

5. The next agenda item was a proposal for a new program: a BS in Construction Management and Architectural Technology. Brent Stephens made the presentation of the proposal.

   Brent explained that this is a program that the CAEE has been thinking about for some time. It would be attractive to students who start in Architecture or in an Engineering program, but decide that they don't want to be licensed architects or licensed engineers, yet want to stay in the construction field. There are a lot of positions in the construction industry that are filled with people who don't have a license in architecture or engineering, and this program would prepare students for those sorts of positions.

   The program requirements are fairly evenly split between architecture and construction/engineering/management. Brent went on to describe the required courses in the program in more detail. He also mentioned that the program would require students to participate in a capstone design project working with engineers which is a great experience. There would be many different entry points into the program including for transfer students coming in with a two-year associates degree in construction management.

   Kevin Cassel asked about what programs students graduating with this degree could feed into. Brent indicated that most definitely students would be prepared for the masters in Construction Engineering and Management program, but also a more general engineering management program. Kindon Mills added that students could enter a master of architecture program or perhaps a masters of business management program or even a law degree.

   As this is a new program proposal, it will be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

6. The next item was a proposal for a name change of a program; specifically to change the BS in Psychological Science to be the BS in Psychology. Nikki Legate made the presentation.

   She indicated that when prospective students are searching for Psychology majors they will likely not search. Psychological Science and so may miss the program at Illinois Tech. This change will also align Illinois Tech more with its peer institutions. There are no other changes to the program being proposed.

A name change is designated as a major change to a program, and so this will be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

7. The next agenda item was also from the Psychology department. The [proposal](#) is to put the BS in Behavioral Science and Wellness program into hiatus status.

   Nikki indicated that the eventual plan is to eliminate this program, but as a first step they are proposing putting it into hiatus so that no more students can enroll in the program. She explained that there just hasn't been that much student interest in the program; there are currently five students in the program. The department felt it would be better to consolidate into just the Psychology degree program and offer a specialization in Behavioral Science and Wellness as well as some other specializations.

   Murat Vural asked if elimination of this program would also entail eliminating some course offerings. Nikki indicated that it would not.

   The proposal will be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

8. The next item was also [a proposal](#) for a name change of a degree program, this time from the ITM department. They are proposing to change the name of the BS in Applied Cybersecurity and Information Technology program to be the BS in Cybersecurity program. Jeremy Hajek made the presentation.

   Jeremy mentioned that in the agenda item he submitted he had accidentally written that the new name was BS in Cybersecurity and Information Technology; but the actual proposal is to drop "and Information Technology" from the name of the program as well.

   Jeremy indicated that the reason for proposing the name change was much like that of the Psychology program discussed early. The ITM department feels that this name will be easier for prospective students to find when searching for programs offered by various universities. This proposal is not asking for any changes in requirements, just to change the name of the program.

   Erdal Oruklu wanted to confirm that with the dropping of "IT" from the name of the program that there was no change in curriculum. Jeremy confirmed this. Erdal remarked that he found it kind of weird to drop a major component of the program from the name of the program. Jeremy responded that the ITM department's view is that IT is a foundational structure to the discipline of Cybersecurity and that it no longer needs to be part of the degree program name. In much the same way that, for instance, Calculus is a supporting part of an Engineering program but isn't listed in the name of the program.

   This proposal will be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

9. The next agenda item was [a proposal](#) from the HASS department for a new minor: Critical AI. Carly Kocurek made the presentation.

   Carly indicated that the topics the minor will cover include things like ethical frameworks, validation of results, understanding when it's appropriate to use something and when it's not, identifying potential harms, and also placing these things in their historical, cultural, and technological context. She also indicated that the Provost had expressed an interest in the construction of such a minor from Lewis College. The minor has two required courses and then students can select three additional courses from a list of options.

   Jeff Wereszczynski asked if this was coordinated at all with the AI certificates that Nicole Beebe presented at the last UGSC meeting. Carly indicated that this was separate and the Provost and Dean of Lewis college expressed that they should continue with this separately.

   Andy Howard asked how this relates to the concept of the "plus AI" degrees that were discussed at the last UGSC meeting. Carly indicated that some of the courses within the minor would be supporting programs that offer a plus AI degree.

   There was no further discussion. Andy Howard moved that the proposal be accepted and this was seconded by Matt Bauer. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

10. The next item was [a proposal](#) of another minor, a minor in Medical Humanities, from the HASS department. Carly Kocurek made the presentation.

    Carly indicated that this minor is designed to attract students who are interested in careers related to the medical field; not just pre-med students but others who are interested in the healthcare industry. The minor has two required courses, and then students choose three courses from a list of options. Students in, for instance, biology could get a lot of their Humanities credits satisfied while also obtaining this minor.

    Andy Howard commented that he is concerned that none of the courses in the minor are from Biology or Biomedical Engineering. Carly responded that this is a minor from the Humanities department. Medical Humanities comes from fields like technical communications, ethics, and medical documentary production.

    There was no further discussion. Matt Bauer moved to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Jeremy Hajek. The motion passed, but with one vote of opposition by Andy Howard.

11. The next agenda item was [a new program proposal](#) from the HASS department: BS degree in Communication and Emergent Media. Bo Rodda made the presentation.

    Bo explained that this program is meant to graduate students who can serve as interpreters and communicators between technical systems and communities. Graduates would have skill in using AI and be able to identify quality information produced by AI. There is also a strong ethical foundation to the program.

    Bo further discussed the learning objectives of the program and the structure of its design. There will be a foundation of traditional ethics, media theory, informational literacy and technical communication. In addition there will be course work that integrates AI tools into communication while maintaining human oversight and critical evaluation.

    The program is also designed for having the possibility of online delivery. The four new courses that are developed for the program will be deployed online in both a synchronous and asynchronous environment.

    As this is a new program it will be voted on at the next meeting.

12. The final agenda item was other business. Nick Menhart said that he had two items he wanted to discuss:
    - (1) In view of the upcoming accreditation visit in the Fall, we will be having a mock visit with some HLC peer reviewers next month. There will be an all-faculty meeting during the lunch period of March 25 and he indicated that he would like to have a good faculty turnout to this meeting. More information will be sent out through the marketing department.

    - (2) Those faculty teaching 400/500 level cross listed classes know that the university got into some trouble previously for not having distinct learning objectives for the undergraduate and graduate versions of the courses. The compliance rate with this policy had been just 30% two years ago and is now at 68%, but the university would like to continue to increase this compliance rate. The university has been reviewing course syllabi specifically for learning objectives and it has been a time consuming process to obtain the syllabi. So it has been discussed at Academic Council to get the course syllabi through faculty's Canvas sites. Unless there is objection this is what is going to be done in the future.

      Norma Scagnoli added that the Center for Learning Innovation is going to have training on learning objectives, assessment, and alignment with program objectives.

Murat Vural asked a question regarding whether they are just looking at current syllabi or past syllabi. He indicated that for accreditation purposes his department has different syllabi than what are typically given from faculty to students. The ABET syllabi are all in the same format, but what faculty provide to students can be in whatever format the faculty member wants. Nick indicated that it would be better to call these different names. Matt Bauer mentioned that in CS they call the documents for ABET course overviews to set them apart from faculty syllabi for students.

Kathir also had some other business items. Before proceeding he wanted to make sure that there was still a quorum (which there was).

- His first item had to do with an inaccuracy in the January 27 meeting minutes that has come to light. In the minutes it says that CS was proposing eliminating 4 minors when in fact the proposal that was given in the agenda was to eliminate 5 minors. The minor for elimination that was left off the minutes was in Software Engineering. He asked for a motion to correct these minutes. Kindon Mills made the motion and this was seconded by Andy Howard. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

- His second item was that at the last meeting there were two proposals to make changes in the upcoming bulletin: (1) for dual and joint degrees and (2) for AMP and "plus 1" degrees. Since he needs to approve these changes within CIM he wanted to get a record of a vote on these proposals at UGSC.

  Kindon Mills asked for clarification: Are we now voting on whether to discontinue the co-terminal program? And how does this apply to students who entered under a previous catalog but may wish to enter into a co-terminal program.

  Nick Menhart supported Kindon's position that there are important questions that need to be answered clearly. There was a fair amount of additional discussion and ultimately Jeff Wereczszynski suggested that we ask for more information from Nicole Beebe before taking any vote.

  Kathir indicated that he would include the exact wording of the proposal that is in CIM with the next meeting's materials.

  There was continued discussion as to the financial reasons for and against making such changes. Given that the meeting was now 20 minutes beyond the scheduled meeting time, Kathir asked for a motion to adjourn. Kindon Mills made the motion which was seconded by Matt Bauer. There were no objections or abstentions.

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 pm.