

ILLINOIS TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday March 3, 2026
12:45pm
Online via Zoom
(pdf version available here)

Attending Voting Members: Braja Mandal (CHEM), Murat Vural (MMAE), James Mann (INTM), Jade Hutchinson (SGA), Erdal Oruklu (ECE), Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Promila Dhar (BME), 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: Taylor Rojas (UGAA), Solomon Kang (SSB), Saran Ghatak (HASS), Kiah Ong (AMAT), Daniel Bliss (HASS), Cynthia Torres (Acad Affairs), Yasmin Rodriguez-Escutia (Armour Acad Advisor), Tracey McGee (ELS), Ishaan Goel (Student), Nicole Novak (Libraries), Abby McGrath (Enrollment Services), Nick Menhart (VP Assessment and Accreditation), Jeff Wereszczynski (VP Acad Affairs), Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Michael Arnaudo (Armour Acad Advisor), Kyle Hawkins (AMP), Kevin Cassel (VP Acad Transformation), Melanie Jones (Armour Acad Advisor), David Minh (CHEM), Norma Scagnoli (CLI), Keith Alexander (UGAA), Kelly Roark (CLI), Jennifer deWinter (Dean LCS), Katie Spink (Pre-Med), Pam Houser (INTM), Carrie Hall (Armour), Rich Klein (SSB), Kathy Nagle (ARCH), Diane Fifles (Univ Accred),

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:46pm

1. Approval of the proposed meeting agenda. Kathir Krishnamurthy shared the [proposed agenda](#) which had been previously distributed. John Twombly moved to accept the agenda and Andy Howard seconded the motion. 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 24, 2026](#) had previously been made available on the UGSC website. Andy Howard moved to accept the minutes and this was seconded by Kindon Mills. The motion passed without objection or abstention.
3. The next item was a discussion of the timeline that needs to be met in order for a proposal to make it into the next AY bulletin. Kathir displayed a [document](#) with the timeline he had worked out with UFC leadership that showed the details of the last possible day that proposals could be presented, depending on whether they were major or minor changes, at UGSC and what electronic voting deadlines there would be in order

to get everything approved in time for UFC to be able to meet their own deadlines. Any major changes presented at the March 10 meeting will need to be discussed with your departments internally and an electronic vote must be cast no later than the afternoon of March 17. He thanked everyone involved in these processes for being flexible to allow for as many proposals as possible to make it into the next bulletin. He also thanked the UGSC members for agreeing to hold special meetings to get through more proposals than otherwise possible.

4. The next item was to continue with committee business on the agenda from the previous meeting on February 24.
 - a. Changes to an existing program: Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry ([Assess plan](#), [Curr map](#), [summary doc](#)) and [CIM document](#). David Minh made the presentation.

David displayed his screen and showed the CIM document. He indicated that since the presentation that he made at the January 27 UGSC meeting, the steering committee met and made some adjustments based on the feedback that was received. The main changes since this previous UGSC meeting are

- the inclusion of some more choices for an upper division laboratory,
- the inclusion of some more options for technical electives including food science courses, and also courses towards the fulfillment of the certificates in AI Fluency and in AI Management,
- a change in the requirements of the Biophysics specialization to include thermodynamics and statistical physics instead of macromolecular techniques.

All of these changes have been approved by the Biology and Chemistry departments and the Biochemistry steering committee.

Nick Menhart wanted to make sure that the assessment plan which had been linked to the agenda in pdf form gets included in CIM as an excel file. He mentioned that, for submissions in the future, this should be done prior to presentation at UGSC.

Nick also pointed out that some of the revisions to the program (e.g., a third biochemistry course requirement and a change from one upper level chemistry course to a different one) would seem to require that the program offer low enrollment classes. He pointed out that this is in conflict with the university's efforts to reduce such offerings due to the financial difficulties we are facing.

David responded that this has been a consideration by the Biology and Chemistry departments and the steering committee and in part is being addressed by cross-listing one of the advanced required Biochemistry courses with a graduate level course. He indicated that the main rationale for the

revisions is to have a more modern program that will be eligible for accreditation by an external body and potentially attract more students to the university.

Andy Howard spoke in support of what David had indicated about cross-listing of classes. He mentioned that the net effect will be an overall net reduction of one course that needs to be offered by the department.

There was no further discussion. Braja Mandal made a motion to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Andy Howard. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

- b. Revision of existing Physics Minor ([summary doc](#), [CIM doc](#)). Emily Leiner made the presentation. She shared her screen and displayed the summary document. She explained that the current minor is not very flexible and very few students pursue the minor. The proposed revision would make the minor feasible for many more students.

The current minor requires three specific 300 level classes and two specific 400 level classes. The proposed revision would instead require the 200 level class, General Physics III, give a choice of two out of four specific 300 and 400 level Physics courses, and then allow students to take any two other Physics courses at the 300+ level.

Katie Spink asked whether there had been consideration of allowing General Physics I and/or II to be part of the minor. Emily indicated that the department did not want to allow the courses in the minor to be at that level. There was also some discussion about whether the two versions of General Physics III allowed in the minor (one for Engineering majors which didn't include a lab and the other which did have a lab) were very similar or not.

There was no further discussion. Fred Weening moved to accept the proposal and this motion was seconded by John Twombly. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

- c. New minor: Minor in Quantum Science ([summary doc](#), [CIM doc](#)). This proposal was also presented by Emily Leiner. She indicated that there is a lot of funding in the Quantum Science arena: Quantum computing and other related areas.

This minor that the Physics department is proposing just makes use of existing courses. As was the case with the revised Physics minor that just passed it requires General Physics III. Additionally it requires two specific 400 level Physics courses: Quantum Theory I, and Quantum Computing. And finally students would have to choose two courses from a list of seven specific Physics classes. To take the courses in the minor students would have to have the

complete Calculus sequence and Differential Equations; so the target audience is mainly Engineering majors.

There were no questions. Andy Howard moved to accept the proposal and John Twombly seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

d. Changes to

- i. [the Premedical Studies Minor](#). Katie Spink made the presentation. She indicated that this was a much needed update to the minor.

Several courses in the current minor no longer exist and those are removed from the revised minor. The Organic Chemistry lab requirement is updated to reflect the current offering. Physics has created a two course, non-Calculus based, sequence which covers the material needed to prepare for the MCAT, and so those Physics courses are now an option in addition to the Calculus based Physics sequence. This also allows a decrease in the Mathematics requirements, since Calculus is no longer needed as a prerequisite for the Physics requirements. In addition to removing several Humanities and Social Science courses that are no longer offered, several new Humanities and Social Science courses have been added.

There were no questions. Kindon Mills moved to approve the proposal and this was seconded by Andy Howard. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

- ii. [the Preparatory Program for Medical Studies](#) Katie Spink also presented this proposal. She explained that this is a non-degree program. It is meant for students who already have a Bachelor's degree in a non-science discipline, but need mathematics and science courses as prerequisites for medical school or other professional schools.

The changes to this program are similar to the Pre-med studies minor as far as Math and Physics are concerned. The non-Calculus based Physics sequence is added as an option and the Calculus requirements for Math are replaced with lower level mathematics courses.

Andy Howard asked if students can take other statistics courses in place of the Math 425 statistics course listed. Katie responded that in practice very few students in this program need a statistics course as most have had one in their Bachelor's degree program.

There were no other questions. Andy Howard moved to accept the proposal and this was seconded by Kindon Mills. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

- e. Conversion from incubator program to regular degree program: [Bachelor of Science in Business and Information Technology](#). John Twombly made the presentation.

John indicated that this has been a fairly successful program. He mentioned that there are currently 23 students in the program. As far as incoming students, there are 3 applications and 2 deposits as of last week.

There are no proposed changes to the program other than taking it off incubator status and making it into a regular degree program. The program itself doesn't require any courses that aren't taught in other existing degree programs in Business or Information Technology.

As this will be a new degree program, Kathir asked UGSC members to get input from their academic units and be ready to vote on this proposal at the next UGSC meeting.

- f. Conversion from incubator program to regular degree program: [Bachelor of Science in Business and Psychology](#). John Twombly also presented this proposal.

John explained that this is much like the previous proposal. This program doesn't have quite as many students as the Business and IT program. It currently has 11 students and there are 3 applications from new students with 2 having made deposits. Like the other conversion program, this program requires no additional courses to be taught. All of the courses would have to be taught for existing Business students and existing Psychology students. So the additional students in this program are an add-in to the university.

There were no questions for John. This will be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

- g. [Course numbering policy](#). This was presented by Daniel Bliss.

Daniel asked Kathir to display the document. He mentioned that currently there is no formal numbering policy at Illinois Tech which has led to some inconsistencies in numbering across the curriculum. This policy is meant to define a clear numbering system policy. This is really a pre-requisite for overhauling our core curriculum and reforming other aspects of our curriculum going forward.

Daniel summarized what the document stated about each of the levels of course numbering: zero-hundred, one-hundred, etc.. After this summary he asked for questions.

Murat Vural had a concern regarding some of the wording in the policy. In particular he was concerned that the way it is written it seems that 300-level courses must have prerequisites of 200-level courses. Jeff Werezczynski pointed out that the policy says that 300-level courses will typically have 200-level courses as prerequisites (“typically”, not “must”).

Kindon Mills indicated that in the school of Architecture there are a lot of cross-listed courses at the 400 and 500 level. She asked if there would be limits to how many 400 level courses a graduate student can take and limits to how many 500 level courses an undergraduate student can take. Jeff responded that there are already university limits in this regard and departments can specify more restrictive limits. This policy will not change that, but it will add that an undergraduate program cannot require any 500 level class in a degree program.

Nikki Legate had some questions again related to wording of the policy and prerequisites: for instance, can a 300 level course have just a 100 level course as a prerequisite? She also pointed out that while the policy mentions 200 level courses as prerequisites for 300 level classes it doesn't mention 300 level courses as prerequisites for 400 level courses. It seems like there is a lack of consistency in the document. Jeff agreed that there is some asymmetry in the document and that it may need some revision in that regard. Nikki asked one further question and that concerned the administrative burden that may be required to align existing course numbers to a new policy: will there be a way to handle this somewhat automatically rather than requiring a large number of program revisions?

Jeff indicated that he believed that renumbering could be done fairly painlessly with the existing registration systems, but he would want to get confirmation of this from the registrar's office. Abby McGrath agreed that this wouldn't be a major issue; she indicated that she would ask Ayesha Qamer (who couldn't be here today) to write up a step-by-step process for departments to follow for renumbering courses.

There were some more questions of unique situations that departments faced. Jeff and Daniel indicated that they would be happy to meet individually with departments to iron out details. Daniel thanked everyone for their input and indicated that with this input we are much closer to a final draft of the policy.

5. The next item was new business for this UGSC meeting. The Applied Mathematics department is proposing two new degree programs through the incubator policy:
 - [Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics with Artificial Intelligence](#)
 - [Bachelor of Science in Statistics with Artificial Intelligence](#)

Fred Weening made the presentation. He indicated that the mathematics department currently offers a BS in Applied Mathematics and also a BS in Statistics. Each of these programs requires that students obtain a minor. The proposed new programs simply replace the requirement that students obtain a minor with the requirement that students obtain both of the 9 credit AI certificates: AI Fluency and AI Management. All of the other requirements are unchanged. He indicated that the associate department chair Kiah Ong is here to help answer any questions.

Murat Vural asked about how the total number of credits of the new programs compare to the existing BS programs. Kiah Ong displayed the [summary document](#). He acknowledged that we are substituting 18 credits (two 9 credit certificates) for a 15 credit minor. But, since we are now allowed to do double counting of required courses in major programs with courses that can satisfy areas of the core curriculum, the proposed programs actually have three more free elective credits than the existing programs. One of the philosophy courses for the AI Management certificate and the COM 200 course for the AI Fluency certificate can be double counted.

Nick Menhart mentioned that the certificate programs will have, and are required to have, their own learning objectives and assessments. The learning objectives and assessments of these new programs the math department is proposing are the same as the learning objectives of the existing programs in the math department together with the uniform learning objectives and assessment of the certificate programs. This is a good and an efficient way of doing things. If there are going to be other similar new degree proposals of the type X plus the AI certificates, he encourages the proposers to talk to Kiah or to himself to see how the learning objectives and assessment plans are set up.

There was no further discussion. Kathir indicated that since these are being proposed under the incubator policy, they could be voted on at this meeting. Before holding a vote, he asked for a show of hands of voting members to make sure that a quorum was still present (there was still a quorum).

Kindon Mills moved to accept both of these new degree proposals under the incubator policy. This was seconded by Jeremy Hajek. The motion passed without objection or abstention.

6. The next item was a proposal of a new degree program:

- [Bachelor in Facilities Management](#)

from the INTM department. James Mann made the presentation.

He displayed a [powerpoint presentation](#) which highlighted the features of the program. The program will separate out the existing specialization in Facilities Management as part of the Bachelor of Industrial Technology and Management program, and make this its own degree program. A INTM department survey of FM professionals as well as the INTM advisory board supports having a dedicated Facilities Management credential. This would be the first BFM degree in the Chicago region. This program will follow the same 66 credit 2+2 completion model of the BITM degree program. There is strong demand for graduates with this credential. There will not be any additional cost to offer the program starting in Fall of 2026. The anticipated initial cohort is 15 students.

There were no questions for James. Since this is a new program it will be voted on at the next UGSC meeting.

7. The next two items were from HASS. These were both presented by Saran Ghatak who was substituting for UGSC member Erin Hazard.
 - New minor: Minor in Critical AI
This actually was an error in the agenda as the Minor in Critical AI has been presented and approved at the [February 17 UGSC meeting](#) (see item #9). This wasn't realized at the time and so the minor was presented and voted on again (it passed again with no objections or abstentions)
 - Revision to an existing program: [Bachelor of Science in Public Policy](#). Saran explained that the revisions were to
 - change the ITP class from LCHS 100 (which no longer exists) to SSCI 100
 - reduce the number of credits required by the program from 129 to 121 which was accomplished by making use of the new rule which allows for double counting between the core curriculum and the major
 - to add some new courses for the 400 level capstone experienceAfter confirming that there was still a quorum present, Kathir asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Matt Bauer made the motion which was seconded by Fred Weening. The motion passed without objection or abstention.
8. The next item was a [policy update](#) concerning free electives in programs exceeding the university's 120 credit hour minimum requirement for Bachelor degree programs. Jeff Werczszynski made the presentation.

Jeff explained that since the university reduced the minimum number of credits required for a Bachelor's degree from 126 to 120 a few years ago, many programs have revised down their required number of credits to, or very to, this new minimum. There are still

some programs, however, that require above this 120 minimum while at the same time have free electives in their programs.

The new policy states that all credits required in a program are clearly aligned with defined program learning objectives or externally mandated curricular standards.

Matt Bauer indicated that he understood the intention of the policy, but is concerned that limiting the number of free electives may impact the number of certificates or minors that a student may be able to get. In particular, some programs require a minor and list free electives in the program that students can use in order to obtain the minor.

Jeff responded that if the program required that students obtain a minor for the degree, then those free elective credits (needed to satisfy the requirements of obtaining a minor) would count as being aligned with program learning objectives. He also pointed out that there is nothing preventing a student in any program from taking above the minimum required number of credits if they desire for instance to pursue a minor or certificate program that is not required in the degree program.

Matt also pointed out that many students who transfer into Illinois Tech, say from a partnership program from a community college, will have transfer courses which will not meet specific requirements of their degree program at Illinois Tech. If a degree program has required free electives beyond the 120 credit hour limit, then those transfer credits can be counted as meeting requirements of the program. If we do away with those free elective credits beyond the 120 minimum, students will feel like some of their transfer credits are not counting for anything.

Jeff understood Matt's point, but indicated that we need to weigh that against the students who come to Illinois Tech with no transfer credits and are told that they need to take courses beyond the 120 minimum which satisfy no program learning objectives.

Murat Vural spoke in support of Matt's position indicating that from a psychological, and marketing, perspective it might be better to keep some programs with requirements of free electives beyond the 120 so that transfer students feel that their prior work counts for something. This might sway them in their decision to come to Illinois Tech as opposed to another institution which doesn't have a program in which all of their transfer credits are used. Murat indicated that he was interested in knowing the motivation behind having this new policy.

Jeff indicated that he didn't feel we should be designing our programs around an expectation that students are going to be bringing in transfer credits that may not count toward requirements of programs tied to learning objectives of the programs.

Jeff indicated that from a personal perspective he loves the idea of students taking courses in areas of their interest that may be outside of credits required for a program. He mentioned that some of his best experiences as an undergraduate came from taking courses that would be considered free electives here. But we are talking about what the minimum requirements of a program are here, and all of the credits required beyond the university minimum of 120 should be tied to learning objectives of the program.

9. Other Business. No one had any other business for discussion.

Murat Vural moved that the meeting be adjourned and this was seconded by Fred Weening. There was no objection or abstention to this motion.

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 pm.