

MINUTES

JOINT ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE & FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

January 8, 2026

The University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and Finance/Audit Committee met in joint session on Thursday, January 8, 2026, in the Griffin Center on campus. Present were Committee Chairs John M. Dunn and C. Wayne Kinney '77 and Trustees Glen J. Kissel; Jeffrey L. Knight; Ronald D. Romain '73; Christina M. Ryan; and Michael J. Solliday '27. Trustee Christine H. Keck was absent. Also in attendance were President Steven J. Bridges '89 M'95; Provost Shelly B. Blunt; Vice President for Finance and Administration Jeffrey M. Sickman '94 M'00; Vice President for Marketing and Communication Kindra L. Strupp M'22; Vice President for Development Andrea R. Gentry '05; Vice President for Student Affairs Abeer A. Mustafa; Vice President for Government Affairs and General Counsel Zachary A. LaGrange; Faculty Senate Chair T. Kyle Mara; and Student Government Association President Leonna O. Benton '27.

Trustee Dunn, chairing the joint session, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. REPORT ON LEVERAGING THE HOLMUSK PARTNERSHIP TO BUILD MARKET LEADING COMPETENCIES

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt for a report. Dr. Blunt introduced Dr. Sudesh Mujumdar, Dean of the Romain College of Business, and Peyton Hopkins '24, computer science alumnus, to share a report on the project USI completed through a distinct partnership with Holmusk applying machine learning to predict treatment adherence among patients with mental health conditions.

Using Holmusk's NeuroBlu Analytics platform, Mr. Hopkins and his peers accessed a large-scale clinical database, performed data preprocessing, cleaning, and exploratory analysis, and developed predictive models to identify factors influencing a patient's adherence to treatment. NeuroBlu is a data analytics software for behavioral health that leverages advanced machine learning capabilities, including natural language processing techniques, to transform unstructured clinical data into structured, analyzable formats. This enables clinicians and researchers to derive valuable insights and make data-driven decisions to improve patient care.

Damages from non-adherence to medical health treatment leads to an estimated \$100-300 billion in avoidable healthcare costs in the U.S., which is 3 to 10% of total U.S. healthcare costs. Non-adherence also leads to poor health outcomes and increased hospitalization.

After testing and comparing several models, the team selected the best performing model, which had an accuracy score of 82%. Comparing the model's predictions to actual outcomes builds trust and transparency, explains how features impact prediction, and identifies features that should be focused on.

Mr. Hopkins concluded that this experience provided him and his peers with exposure to an industry-grade data warehouse, while deepening their understanding of how machine learning models "learn," and demonstrated how computer science can drive positive changes in healthcare.

Trustee Ryan commended Mr. Hopkins and USI for this project, in her leadership role at Deaconess Women's Hospital, this type of work is exciting for its potential to positively impact patient outcomes and the healthcare industry.

Trustee Kissel inquired about the amount and type of coding required of the students in this project. Mr. Hopkins explained the process and details about the Python program used to develop the model, analyze the algorithms, extract and clean the data, and implementation.

2. CONTINUING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Trustee Dunn called on Dr. Shelly Blunt, Provost, to provide an update on enrollment trends for continuing undergraduate students. Provost Blunt began by reminding the Trustees this update is a continuation of the November Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee meeting.

Dual credit student enrollment for Fall 2025 was 2,161 on census day, September 12, 2025. This was short of the Fall 2025 target of 2,200. However, by the second fall start date on October 27, dual credit student enrollment was at 2,204. Students counted as dual credit are those who are currently enrolled in Indiana High Schools taking college level courses for credit. Trustee Kissel asked for follow-up information on the county distribution and courses taken of these students.

Dr. Blunt reviewed the continuing student enrollment for undergraduate students in Fall 2025, noting a positive outcome for USI. She provided a summary of the key metrics tracked to determine retention, noting the highest percentage of students not returning continues to be at the freshmen and sophomore levels.

USI experienced its highest second year retention rate over the last 12 years with the Fall 2023 cohort at 63.3%. Dr. Blunt contributed this success to the targeted focus on retention by each college, through implementing new campus wide retention initiatives, and by enhancing student support services and programs that impact student success.

There were several challenges impacting retention and persistence for Fall 2025. USI had 70 student-athletes that left the University, with 23 of those being first-year students. Additionally, there were 331 students (131 freshmen) who couldn't register due to outstanding balances, and 100 students (52 freshmen) who were academically dismissed. Combined, the three groups represent 16% of the first-year class. While analyzing the data, USI also looked at test-optional admissions which are those students admitted without SAT or ACT scores. Statistically, these students are 9 to 14% less likely to be retained. All the factors highlighted here represent critical areas for intervention moving forward.

Provost Blunt outlined specific retention efforts and initiatives implemented at USI over the past few enrollment cycles and the new efforts that launched in Fall 2025. Several efforts included policy revisions, curriculum redesign, and realignment of programming to student needs and interests.

Dr. Blunt concluded her report by reminding the Trustees of second start Fall 2026 enrollment targets and of upcoming plans to strengthen student persistence and success.

Dr. Blunt fielded several questions from the Trustees regarding student density on campus, programming for the nation's 250th anniversary, USI 101 curriculum, academic dismissals, financial barriers, and test-optional admissions. Follow-up information will be sent to the Trustees before the March meeting.

3. REPORT OF CONSTRUCTION CHANGE ORDERS AUTHORIZED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Trustee Dunn called on Vice President Sickman for a report. Mr. Sickman directed the Trustees to Attachment A, containing a change order below the \$50,000 threshold requiring approval by the Construction Committee. The order included adding a drain and making minor adjustments to the doors and windows in Health Professions as part of the Phase IV project. The cost of the work was reduced by a credit USI received for unused insulation expense included in the bid. This agenda item is provided for information.

There being no further business, Trustee Dunn called the Joint Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee & Finance/Audit Committee adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

**Summary of Construction Change Orders
Authorized by the Vice President for Finance and Administration**

HEALTH PROFESSIONS RENOVATION/ADDITION PHASE IV

Empire Contractors – General Contractor

CO 010

Added a drain for a ramp and two auto-closers on vestibule doors. Altered casement windows, changed hardware on the dental receptionist's window, and received \$26,863 credit for unused insulation expense included in bid.

\$ 12,242