

Leadership Council on Mission, Planning and Budget
Minutes: March 13, 2026
MLK Jr. University Union
Arcola/Tuscola Room

Voting members present: John Blue, Alexandra Bradley, Steve Brantley, Arlene Brown, Todd Bruns, Jon Coleman, Gabe Grant, Brian Keith, Amber May, Catherine Polydore, Stacey Ruholl, Marjorie Worthington

Voting members absent: Marisol Gamboa, Eric Wahls, Michelle Wayne , Claire Weber, Callan Wilson

Non-voting members: Jay Gatrell, Mike Hutchinson, Anne Flaherty, Cindy Hutchison, Matt Bierman, Josh Norman, Holly Farley

Non-voting members absent: Mindy Spencer

1. Call to order: Amber May called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm

2. Approval of minutes: Motion to approve November 7, 2025, minutes. T. Bruns moved and G. Grant seconded to approve as written. The motion carried by acclamation.

3. LCMPB Executive Committee Report: None

4. New Business:

1. Administrative Reports

- i. President: President Gatrell shared the State of Illinois House Hearing will be on March 26 in Springfield and the Senate Hearing on the evening of April 14. Governor Pritzker has recommended a 1% increase in appropriations. Day of Action will take place on April 16 and members of the UPI and student body will attend to advocate for adequate funding. Katie Anselment is also working to acquire adequate funding.
 - EIU's tuition remains below inflation
 - 47% of high school graduates leave the state of Illinois for higher education
 - Campus parking concerns will be discussed next week with amendments put into effect next school year
 - Internal committees are being reviewed for activeness and relevance
 - Reorganization plan will be brought to the Board of Trustees at the April 16 meeting
- ii. Vice President for Academic Affairs: Dr. Holly Farley reported an email has been sent out to faculty encouraging them to allow students to miss class to participate in the April 16 Day of Action in Springfield.
 - Task force for advising has been convened to discuss reenvisioning of first year advising. They will meet multiple times in SP26 and FA26. Feedback will be collected from faculty senate, CAA and PAG in SP27 with an advising recommendation prepared for the President and Provost in SP27.

Minutes prepared by: Cindy Hutchison

- Paper based course evaluations will be ending. Scantron software is outdated and poses a risk to data integrity and operational continuity. Qualtrics is being explored as a better option and faculty will have a QR code for the students who complete face-to-face courses. The projected annual savings will be \$20,000.
 - Pedagogy Day was March 12 and included keynote speaker Kevin Hallinan from the University of Dayton. His focus is equity in AI and he is an advocate of adopting university wide AI that allows all students and faculty to have access to the same resources.
 - Student Research and Creative Activity Day will be April 22. Classes will not be held as usual on that day and students will be required to take part in research activities instead. There will be posters, presenters, break-out sessions, and panels. Graduate students will also be doing 3-minute thesis that morning with a graduate expo in the MLK Grand Ballroom that evening.
- iii. Vice President for Business Affairs: VP Bierman shared that the EIU Financial Audit is complete and the State Compliance Audit is nearly complete. The Statement of Economic Interests and Supplemental Statement of Economic Interest are being distributed and must be completed by May 1 to avoid financial penalties for noncompliance.
- Network hardware replacement has begun. Most academic buildings will be completed over the summer and internet outages will be communicated in advance.
 - Working with Capital Debt advisors on securing a \$14.0M bank loan for the Thomas Hall renovation; this will go to the Board of Trustees for approval in April.
 - Annual Civil Service Evaluations will be done electronically this year, and all job descriptions will be updated to a new template. Human Resources will provide more information in the spring.
 - Due to the US penny being discontinued, starting this summer, the university will begin rounding down to the nearest nickel at all cash locations where cash is accepted.
 - The Campus Space Committee has been meeting to consider classroom space to take offline, office space to consolidate, and the impact of the academic reorganization.
 - Budget updates: FPM expenses are tracking to be over budget. No more repairs are being made than in previous years, but the repairs are more expensive. The FY27 process has begun with first steps including Tuition and Fees sent to Student Government reflecting a 2.5% increase for undergraduate and 2.9% increase for graduate. Preparations are being made to take the FY27 preliminary budget to the June Board of Trustees meeting.
 - Project update: Integrated Science Building design was delayed due to portions of the design being rejected by CDB reviewers. The Utility Tunnel Project is underway, and fences will begin to go up next week. The proposal for the 2026 parking lot work will be brought to the Board of Trustees in April for consideration. Union roof and structural repairs continue with plans to complete structural repairs to the MLK Union in Summer and Fall 2026.

- iv. Vice President for Student Affairs: VP Flaherty reported VPSA Jeremy Alexander is the Interim Executive Director of Housing & Dining, Catie Danner is the Interim Director of Leadership & Engagement, and VP Flaherty has absorbed the Dean of Students position.
- Housing is presenting the proposed room and board rates for the 26-27 year to Student Government Association at their meeting on March 25.
 - Thomas Hall renovation if approved at the April Board of Trustees meeting, is anticipated to be completed for Fall 2027.
 - The RFI process and contract review for the management of the bookstore will be presented at the April Board of Trustees meeting.
 - Office Space Transitions May/June: University Housing & Dining staff are moving to the Health & Human Services Building. Career Services is moving to the 3rd floor of the MLK Union. Greek Live is moving to the 2nd floor of the current SAC space. OLE and some RSO's are moving into the current Housing & Dining space – this area will become known as "Pather Commons".
 - All staff are encouraged to participate in the A.L.I.C.E training.
 - Alert EIU has been changed so that all staff and students with cell phone numbers in Banner will receive the alerts unless they opt out. Alert EIU has been connected to the weather alert system allowing alerts to be shared across the campus speaker system.
 - The annual Bonine Suicide Prevention Conference will be on Friday April 10.
 - New hires: Paul Noble, Ast. Director, Facilities Operations beginning March 23.
- v. Vice President for University Advancement: President Gatrell gave the update for VP Spencer.
- Giving Day will be on April 22 in conjunction with Research & Creativity. Mailers are being sent out this week.
 - Spring Fling is back this year and will be held on April 18, registration is open on the EIU website.
 - President Gatrell shared VP Spencer is leaving EIU effective March 27. With her departure, an Interim FEO and Interim VPUA will be appointed with a search for a replacement to take place after the end of the year.
- vi. Vice President for Enrollment Management: VP Norman reported that 23% of Enrollment Management's operating budget remains. Admissions is the most impacted with only 15% remaining due to inflation and a 20% rise in first-year applications.
- Financial Aid: 7500+ students have been packaged for 2026-2027 with \$98M+ offered to prospective students. Talent Awards will be finalized by the end of March. New online SAP process is launching this summer. Academic Works deadline is March 15 and the new administrator of Academic Works is Shelly Cohoon.
 - MARCOM: EIU leads Illinois publics in NACE placement rate at 91.2%. Website is fully upgraded to PHP 8.4 for performance, security and longevity.
 - Registrar update: New transfer course equivalency tool launched to support transfer students and staff.

- Admissions: #EIUGoTime is scheduled for April 28 – May 1. Spring Open House is scheduled for March 30. New territory management system is live and improving staffing flexibility and responsiveness.

5. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.