

2025-2026 CIVIL SERVICE COUNCIL
Wednesday, November 5, 2025
Student Services Building Room 307
1:00 PM

I. Call to Order

The November meeting was called to order by President Elizabeth Cheek.

II. Roll Call of Membership

Present: Elizabeth Cheek, Odessa Colombo, Mickel Cordes, Ann Coward, Liz Franklin, Cyndy Green, Amelia Ketzle, Diane McIntyre, Jason Phillips, Marianne Schoonover, Dina Timmons, Anthony Travelstead, and Christopher Vick

Absent: Thomas Becker, Kristen Matthews, Rick Pierson, Terry Richardson, and Jamie Schrader

Guests: Melissa Laake, Kristie Parkins, Nick Wortman, and Susan Simmers

III. Guest Speaker: Susan Simmers, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

VC Simmers presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, *"Southern Illinois University Carbondale Budget and Planning Committee Update."* Southern Illinois University (SIUC) has faced significant financial challenges over the past decade, primarily due to declining enrollment and a major state appropriation rescission in fiscal year 2016. Tuition revenue dropped from \$154 million in fiscal year 2015 to \$110 million in fiscal year 2025, though recent years show a modest upward trend. Tuition waivers—covering employee benefits, graduate assistantships, athletics, and state-mandated waivers—have decreased, while scholarships have increased. Uncollectible accounts are rising due to a state law change that prevents withholding transcripts from graduates. In fiscal year 2026, SIU received only \$852,000 of a planned \$2.6 million in state appropriations due to legislative withholding. Enrollment has declined from 17,292 in 2015 to 11,785 in 2025, including about 500 School of Medicine students (excluded from financial data). Retention rates have remained relatively stable. Fiscal year 2026 budget assumptions included increased tuition and enrollment, which did not materialize, leading to a projected income fund deficit of \$7.6 million. However, anticipated payroll savings of \$6.7 million and non-personnel reductions of \$850,000 are expected to offset much of this. The university has made steady progress reducing its state fund cash deficit—from \$19.2 million in fiscal year 2019 to \$5.8 million by the end of fiscal year 2025. The FY26 budget was submitted with a \$6.1 million deficit, requiring a non-mandatory transfer from other fund families to balance. Personnel costs dominate the budget at 71.7%, with utilities at 9.2% and facilities maintenance at 5.5%. Facilities and energy represent 17.2% of the budget, largely due to \$16.5 million in utility costs. The full fiscal year 2026 operating budget projects a \$15.5 million use of cash, with \$9.2 million attributed to athletics. Targeted reductions in hiring, salaries, and competition travel are expected to reduce this to \$8.1 million. SIU continues to invest in its workforce through the CBIZ study and has launched a new student retention model focused on supporting students with GPAs below 2.75.

VC Simmers was asked to expand on being over budgeted for salaries. She indicated they looked at what was actually spent on payroll for quite a few years, and every year it only increased 1-2%. Last year, we over budgeted in payroll, and we had quite a bit of vacancy savings. We have never jumped up 10% in salaries. I think we have money in the budget where we're not budgeting our position-by-position budget correctly, and we've got more money in the budget than we're actually paying the employees who are here.

A. Coward asked if targeted payroll reductions meant layoffs? VC Simmers stated no, not at all. We are doing an extra examination to make sure that's a position we should really rehire. We're trying to invest in and keep the people we have. A. Coward stated how did that 10% figure arrive for salaries? VC Simmers stated I can't give you the best answer for that yet, because my team is walking through the

details now.

IV. Public Comments – (none)

V. Approval of the Minutes for October 1, 2025

- Detailed minutes (key discussions, decisions, and action items)

E. Cheek stated the Executive Committee reviews the draft of the meeting minutes and makes revisions. Then it is brought to the full Council for approval, where they can be revised. E. Cheek suggested that the meeting minutes be put into Teams for full Council review instead of adding it to the meeting invitation, and the full Council was in agreement. The Council was given extra time to review and make edits if needed for the minutes on 10/1/25. The Council follows Robert's Rules. Key discussions, decisions, and action items are to be in the minutes.

Motion: A. Coward

Second: L. Franklin

A vote commenced: 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions; The minutes from October 1, 2025, were *postponed* for approval until the next meeting.

VI. Announcements – Congratulations to Thomas and Kaitlyn Becker on the birth of their son, Teagan Elliot. The Civil Service Council is sending flowers.

VII. Reports

A. Council President

1. **Chancellor's Meeting** – E. Cheek stated the meeting was October 27, 2025, and AVC Nick Wortman and Chief of Staff David Shirley attended. Executive Committee's letter regarding HR's attendance at Council meetings was discussed. Individual concerns need to be addressed with HR individually moving forward. N. Wortman or his civil service representative will attend the Council meetings, and items will be presented in a similar format to the HR Business Forum. Hiring chill, custodial staffing levels, equity compensation study, possible pay adjustments, professional advancement, or incentive for employees earning degrees here, and communication/ understanding of reconsideration forms were all discussed. Once Human Resources provides a reconsideration decision to the employee, the employee has 15 days to appeal a decision for SUCSS re-evaluation. The Chancellor's Office and Human Resources are working with University Communications to promote the Saluki Commitment to staff for their dependents. For incoming freshman, the requirements are: be a first-time incoming freshman enrolling full-time on-campus in the fall 2021 semester or later, have a cumulative high school GPA of 2.75 or higher, have an annual family income less than \$120,480 with assets less than \$50,000 based on your FAFSA, be an Illinois resident who attended an Illinois high school, be a dependent student under age 24, and be eligible for Federal financial aid. The next meeting is November 14, 2025.
2. **Board of Trustees' Meeting** – Next meeting is December 4, 2025, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.
3. **Chancellor's Leadership Council** – No meeting in October, no report.

B. School of Medicine Civil Service Council – Kristie Parkins

E. Cheek stated Dawn Hattey left the School of Medicine. Kristie Parkins will be replacing Dawn.

C. Annuitants Association – E. Cheek posted a legislation update in the Teams folder. A. Travelstead stated there were two emails that SUAA sent regarding Tier 2.

D. Human Resources – Nicholas Wortman, Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources

AVC Wortman presented a PowerPoint presentation titled, "Southern Illinois University Carbondale HR Updates for Civil Service Council 11.5.25." Some of the Civil Service staff in HR will attend meetings to provide updates to the Council. This year, Sprintax Calculus is used to make sure international employees and student workers are taxed at the correct rate for their country. For assistance, the international tax office contact is at INTLTX@siu.edu. Regarding retirements and terminations, a

resignation/separation form needs to be completed as far in advance as you can so information can be reported to SURS and CMS. Staff can contact retire@siu.edu for a retirement checklist. Update your time entry officer in APEX. Don't run reports until you are notified, otherwise you will get the wrong data. Contact fringe benefits at hrfringe@siu.edu for questions regarding ESL, FMLA, Time Reporting, Vacation and Sick Leave balances. Negotiations update: ACSE and FOP are ongoing, SEIU finished, Teamsters/Farm & Forest ratified and are awaiting signatures, LiUNA/Administrative Professionals and LiUNA/Grounds ratified and are working out all the red lines, and LiUNA/Library are starting very soon. Ethics Training completion is required by December 31, 2025. Mandatory annual Title IX Training must be completed by December 19, 2025. Compensation 2030 updates – salary increases were updated on 10/1/25 and were on SM20 and MO11 pay. Presentation slides can be found at <https://hr.siu.edu/compensation-2030/>. Submission of reconsideration request forms can be submitted until October 24, 2025. One hundred forty reconsideration forms have been submitted. HR will communicate any changes within 60 days. HR will still entertain desk audits and temporary upgrades. Documents should be emailed directly to Heather Rich at heather.rich@siu.edu. IT is still working on online desk audit request forms. HR plans to go live with the onboarding component in NeoEd on December 1, 2025. Training guides will be published on the website: <https://hr.siu.edu/employment/>. Coming soon is a Partner Group Pilot where people in similar types of roles can share ideas and resources to offer informal mentorship while solving problems and improving processes. We want these groups to work with areas like HR and procurement.

A. Coward asked if a notation can be added to the website about how to connect to HRSS. **E. Cheek** stated you now have to be connected to the VPN. **N. Wortman** stated yes, it's an additional security feature. You can't log into the HRSS unless you're on the campus network or connected to a VPN if you're off campus. **E. Cheek** stated it is affecting students and **L. Franklin** stated it is affecting some retirees.

A. Coward asked about the new classifications – when will the change happen? **E. Cheek** stated that will not happen until they get through all the reconsideration forms. **N. Wortman** stated, correct, Elizabeth.

A. Coward asked if the Partner Pilot group will be Teams based. **N. Wortman** stated yes.

D. McIntyre stated is this limited to those classifications? **N. Wortman** stated for this pilot group, yes, and we're looking to expand this. We want to create a Teams group.

E. Cheek asked about the Faculty/Staff Appreciation website. **N. Wortman** stated the website will have involvement, recognition, benefits, employee spotlights, and employee of the month listed.

NOTE: **E. Cheek** suggested for the agenda (moving forward) to move the HR report under the Guest Speaker. No one opposed to the proposed change.

E. SURS Member Advisory – Elizabeth Cheek – The committee has not met.

F. Council Committees

1. Executive/Budget – Tony Travelstead

A. Travelstead stated they met and set the agenda.

2. Bylaws – Marianne Schoonover – Committee has not met.

3. Civil Service Benefits – Odessa Colombo/Amelia Ketzle - Committee has not met.

4. Education Assistance – Tony Travelstead - Committee has not met.

Holiday Luncheon is December 10, 2025. Raffle tickets are \$5/pc or 3 for \$10. Volunteer sign-up sheet is in the Teams folder. Gift and Kind Form must be used for tax purposes on donations received from off-campus donors.

5. Elections – Tony Travelstead - Committee has not met.

6. Public Information – Thomas Becker - Committee has not met. A. Travelstead stated an open

forum is being set for November 17, 2025.

7. **Range – Tony Travelstead/Ann Coward** – Committee has not met. A. Travelstead stated they started on their FOIA letter regarding CBIZ.

G. Constituency Committees

1. **Academic Calendar Committee – Todd Duermyer** – (no report)
2. **Advisory Committee to the Director of Public Safety – Andy Hawkins** – (no report)
3. **Technology Advisory Committee – Ann Coward & Amelia Ketzle**
A. Ketzle stated a tech news channel was launched in Teams. Email A. Ketzle or A. Coward to be added to the group for updates or if you have any concerns with technology.
4. **Honorary Degrees – Todd Duermyer** – (no report)
A. Travelstead stated the committee completed the assignment. They deliberated on October 17, 2025, with over 34 nominated individuals. There were eight distinguished service awards and 26 honorary degrees applicants which were narrowed down to two each. Those were forwarded for approval by the Chancellor and then to the Board.
5. **Intercollegiate Athletics Advisory – A. Travelstead** - Committee has not met.
6. **Naming University Facilities – Marianne Schoonover** - Committee has not met.
7. **Parking and Traffic Appeals – Mickel Cordes** - Committee has not met.
8. **Recreational Sports and Services Advisory – Shari Garnett** – (no report)
9. **Student Center Advisory – Todd Duermyer** – Committee has not met.
10. **Traffic and Parking – Stacia Werner** - (no report)
11. **University Joint Benefits –Dina Timmons/Elizabeth Cheek** – Committee has not met.

H. Special/Other

1. **Chancellor's Planning and Budget – Elizabeth Cheek/Marianne Schoonover**
Committee met October 22, 2025. M. Schoonover stated what you saw from VC Simmers was exactly what was presented at the meeting. The committee meets annually.
2. **Employee Advisory Committee to the Merit Board – Elizabeth Cheek**
Meeting was held October 22-23, 2025, at Governors State University. Council of Councils followed on October 24, 2025. EAC continued discussion on open and continuous testing, extra help, compensation, and register maintenance. Next meeting is January 22-23, 2025, in Urbana. The meeting on April 23-24, 2025, is at ISU, July 22-23, 2025, is at Urbana, and October 21-23, 2026, is at Eastern (which will include Council of Councils).
E. Cheek was re-elected for a EAC seat with a term through December 31, 2029. No campus election process was needed as she was the only applicant.
3. **Legislative Advisory – Ann Coward**
Pensions were reviewed – nothing new.
A. Travelstead stated Tier 2 may get revamped. They are looking at extending the age of retirement to 67-68. Now, it's up to 37 years to get full retirement. Tier 1 you can retire at age 55 or have 30 years in regardless of age. Health insurance is vested at 20 years.
4. **Network Empowering Women Committee – Diane McIntyre**
D. McIntyre stated there is no new information.
5. **System Staff Advisory – Elizabeth Cheek** – Committee has not met.

VIII. Old Business

- **Future Guests** - no guest for December.
- A. Travelstead stated the System Staff Advisory conducted their last training session of the year.
- **Council of Councils Attendance (E. Cheek, O. Colombo, C. Green, & A. Travelstead)**
A. Travelstead stated there was an update from SURS; there's a SURS representative on EAC now.
E. Cheek stated the next meeting will be at Eastern in October.

IX. New Business

- A. Coward spoke about being selected to serve on the Search Committee for the Director of Extended Campus

position. There were 18 candidates, and 3 were submitted to Provost Tucker to review. The candidate is expected to start on January 1, 2026.

X. Non-Agenda Items – *(none)*

XI. Adjournment

Motion: M. Schoonover

Second: A. Coward