

MINUTES

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 5, 2026

The University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees met on Thursday, March 5, 2026, in the Griffin Center on campus. Present were Trustees Barry E. Cox; John M. Dunn; Christine H. Keck; C. Wayne Kinney '77; Glen J. Kissel; Jeffrey L. Knight; Ronald D. Romain '73; and Michael J. Solliday '27. Trustee Chair, Christina M. Ryan was absent; First Vice Chair, John Dunn chaired the meeting on her behalf. 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 and Director of Athletics Jon Mark Hall; 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 called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

SECTION I – GENERAL AND ACADEMIC MATTERS

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2026, MEETING

Trustee Dunn called for approval of the minutes. On a motion by Mr. Knight, seconded by Mr. Romain, the minutes of the January 8, 2026, meeting of the Board of Trustees were approved.

Trustee Kissel noted he had additional questions about the follow-up information sent to Trustees which addressed the questions posed on January 8, during the Joint Committee and Board of Trustees meetings. Trustee Dunn deferred the business to the end of the agenda.

B. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

Mr. Dunn called on Vice President Strupp, who reported the next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Friday afternoon, May 8, 2026, on campus in the Griffin Center.

C. APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COMPENSATION AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Trustee Dunn announced, according to Article V, Section 3, Subsection (b) of the Bylaws, the Presidential Compensation and Evaluation Committee is appointed annually by the Chair of the Board at the March meeting of the Board of Trustees. In consultation with and on behalf of Chair Ryan, Trustee Dunn appointed the following Trustees to serve as the Presidential Compensation and Evaluation Committee:

- Christine Keck
- Wayne Kinney
- Ronald Romain
- Chris Ryan

D. REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

As Chair of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee, Trustee Dunn reported the committee met prior to the Board of Trustees meeting on March 5, 2026, and received a presentation on USI's student-run radio station, 95.7 The Spin. Students Matthew Kolb and Brianna St. Myers highlighted their work at the station, which was recognized with several awards, demonstrating the quality and caliber of USI's Radio and Television program. Mr. Dunn encouraged everyone to tune in to 95.7 while in this area, noting the students' professional job is often better than some commercial stations. Additionally, the Committee approved a recommendation to the Board for a new certificate and microcredentials that will be presented later in the agenda. Lastly, Provost Blunt provided information regarding the Williams Arts and Technology Academy's application to USI requesting charter authorization for a school in Fort Wayne, and a delegation of authority approval that will also be presented to the Board later in the agenda.

E. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Trustee Dunn called on President Bridges for a report. President Bridges began by welcoming Trustee Barry Cox to his first official Board meeting. With his appointment, USI will conduct its Board Retreat on Wednesday, April 1, a full day of development is being planned to include interactive exchanges and collaborative exercises. To prepare, Trustees received a packet at the close of the meeting containing materials to be completed ahead of the retreat, a content outline and other information regarding the session.

USI held its "Ignite Your Future" Adult Learner Expo through a virtual live session on Wednesday, January 28. This was an opportunity for adults to explore the array of credentials available at USI and learn the differences between non-credit options, micro-credentials, certificates, and full degree programs. To provide further flexibility, pre-recorded sessions in career and education alignment, determining the right credential and adult learner resources were provided by the USI Career Success Center. President Bridges acknowledged that Dr. Michael Dixon and Dr. Brian Crose are providing these types of activities to address the unique needs of this different enrollment market.

USI hosted 70 merit scholar applicants and their families on February 5 and 6 on campus with over 200 total guests in attendance. This group of strong academic achievers are students interviewing for USI's Presidential Scholarships. President Bridges welcomed families to campus in the morning, spoke about USI, then joined them for lunch. While engaging with the families, students, and others in attendance, President Bridges had the opportunity to glean insight from their perspectives. One of the more prominent factors to emerge was that USI is a teaching institution, where students get to work with their professors directly. This resonated with both parents and students. In addition, USI's housing is still relevant to students. Although some improvements will be needed in the future, right now students and parents like our housing units and options.

USI has a long-standing tradition as a teaching institution with dedicated faculty members, not teaching assistants, who are in classrooms and labs with our students every day sharing and demonstrating knowledge. The H. Lee Cooper Core Curriculum Teaching Award, established in 2000, provides a \$4,000 stipend and \$2,000 development grant to a faculty member annually. Longtime friends Lee and Ann Cooper visited campus in September and made the decision to remove restrictive criteria associated with their award. The thoughtful revision will simply recognize faculty members who have demonstrated dedication to the teaching profession and success of students rather than just core curriculum. This week, the Coopers also provided a gift of \$200,000 to the endowment. We appreciate them in many ways.

USI's second annual TEDxUSI, an independently organized TEDx event, was held on February 26 in the Performance Center. Amongst the six speaker presenters were three alumni from USI, a current USI Respiratory Therapy student, an emeritus USI faculty member and one UE student majoring in Psychology. The talks were recorded and published on the TEDx YouTube channel for those interested in seeing the presentations. President and Mrs. Bridges attended and thought it was well done, and an all-around great event.

USI's Human Resources (HR) Department underwent a recent restructuring, transitioning to a HR Business Partner model. This new structure gives each University division a clearly assigned partner who will serve as the primary contact for the division. This is to ensure faster, more personalized service and a deeper understanding of each division's needs. This approach also will strengthen HR's ability to proactively support workforce planning and employee success.

The USI Kinney College of Nursing and Health Professions hosted its Health Professions Day for high school juniors and seniors exploring careers in health care on Friday, February 27. The day incorporates hands-on experiences within various disciplines in health professions, as well as interactions with USI faculty and current students. Repeatedly, we see the importance of this as students try to determine career paths. Providing a day such as this exposes what is currently happening in those career fields. For USI, it's a great recruitment tool. And sometimes, students discover interest in something else USI offers other than what they initially were exploring. These programs are designed to help students make life-changing decisions.

USI Public Safety announced the launch of Screagle Watch, the replacement for Rave Guardian service. Screagle Watch is a free mobile app that allows USI students, employees, and the public to access various safety features on their personal devices. The switch happened on Monday, February 2. The new app still offers the familiar safety features of Rave but also includes new features such as availability to University guest visitors and parents, a news feed, and specific app announcements, broadening capability and enhancing

safety to a better and larger group. Users of Screagle Watch will still be able to call Public Safety through the app, just like they always have, as well as chat with Public Safety dispatch.

Students and staff at the Health Professions, Science, and Education Centers now have a convenient location to grab a snack or healthy lunch item. The Food Hive was opened on Wednesday, February 25, on the first floor of the Health Professions Center. Both faculty and students are excited to have this venue. USI had a similar but much smaller area previously; that was closed during the renovations. The Food Hive is a blend of convenience store, grocery store, and a grab-and-go offering healthy selections. Additionally, the Food Hive houses a Swirl location, which offers build-your-own açai bowls with a choice of base, fruit and toppings. Other features include a serenade machine with Starbucks coffee, hot chocolate chai lattes, and a “Smoodi” machine, blending on the go smoothies. Food Hive also has the latest technology, with a self-checkout register, by placing your selected items on a tray, the machine will quickly scan and ring up all items. Guests will have the option to complete the transaction with a credit card, Eagle Access Card with Munch Money or Flex Funds.

President Bridges called on Vice President Strupp to provide a report on Spring Commencement. Ceremonies will be held in Liberty Arena, Home of the Screaming Eagles, with one ceremony on Friday evening, May 8 and four ceremonies on Saturday, May 9. Vice President Strupp announced all are invited to attend as USI looks forward to welcoming thousands of friends, family and community members to campus. As of March 3, 2026, 1,587 students are eligible to graduate. Following USI tradition, we will have notable USI alumni as commencement speakers across the five ceremonies. Trustees were directed to a sign-up sheet in their handouts, asking three members of the Board to serve on the platform in each of the ceremonies.

On Friday, May 8, the Board of Trustees will meet in the afternoon, and Trustees serving on the platform for the graduate ceremony that evening, are asked to be in the Heritage Varsity Club room in Liberty Arena at 4 p.m. for robing and photos before the ceremony which begins promptly at 5 p.m. The first to deliver the keynote address at the graduate ceremony will be Vladimir A. Kasparov, a two-time USI alumnus from the Romain College of Business class of 2001 and master's class 2005. He's managing director of Portage Point Partners, where he specializes in managing complex financial and operational restructuring and serving in numerous interim executive roles.

On Saturday, May 9, USI has four undergraduate ceremonies beginning at 9 a.m. with the Romain College of Business. The alumni speaker for this ceremony is David “Dave” Ramsey, a 2005 USI graduate and Vice President for Data Science and AI Engineering at SYRV.AI, which is an AI innovation company.

The Kinney College of Nursing and Health Professions ceremony begins at 12 p.m. with Dr. Anthony D. Goodwin '89, Technology Operations Administrator at Ascension Health, Evansville, delivering the commencement address.

The Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education ceremony begins at 3 p.m. Doctor Sarah C. Wannemuehler, class of 1974 and master's class of 1978, will deliver the commencement address. She is USI Director Emerita of Clinical Practice and Teacher Education.

Lastly, the College of Liberal Arts ceremony begins at 6 p.m. with Chad D Horrell, class of 2004, as speaker. Mr. Horrell is Vice President, State and Local Practice for BGR Group, which is a lobbying and public relations firm based in Washington D. C.

President Bridges called on Dr. Kyle Mara for a report from Faculty Senate. This is a busy but rewarding time of the year for faculty, as they are in the middle of advising for the Fall 2026 semester, helping students successfully navigate another semester of registration. Faculty Senate had a small influx of charges submitted at the start of the academic semester, which focused on parental leave policies, sabbaticals, graduate faculty release time and other issues. Senate is coordinating with the provost and other appropriate University leaders to determine how best to address these charges. Lastly, Senate continues to make headway on other initiatives brought forward throughout the academic year, including ongoing discussions about updating some processes and procedures. Faculty are also looking forward to the upcoming spring break; it is a much-needed period of rest before the final push to the end of the semester and graduation. Trustee Kissel addressed Dr. Mara with follow-up discussion and questions from the January 8, 2026, Board meeting. Trustee Kissel noted the dates for Faculty Senate meetings in the spring semester are not listed on the Senate's USI web page and informed Dr. Mara of his conversation with University Archives on the publishing of Faculty Senate meeting minutes from Fall 2025.

President Bridges called on Leonna Benton '27, for a report from Student Government Association (SGA). SGA

has continued with its restructuring plan to better govern the organization with the conferral of its rules committee and a majority vote for the 2026-2027 school year. SGA will be implementing new positions including a new director of Student Wellness and Safety, a director of Environmental Sustainability, and five new first year representatives that will be brought forward with the goal of introducing new college students to leadership through mentorship in SGA.

SGA's new director of Student Wellness and Safety will make sure students are engaged with mental health awareness by partnering with departments like Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). They will also work closely with Public Safety to make sure they have the tools needed to continue making our campus safe from the student perspective.

Last month through a resolution, SGA's Environmental Sustainability Committee was created to promote educational programming and campus engagement, which is vital to increasing awareness on environmental issues and public policy and sustainability efforts at USI. The committee has begun meeting to address environmental issues on campus and plans to carry them into next year.

SGA's housing representatives plan to partner with other student organizations to perform a campus cleanup in the housing areas. Additionally, SGA has been in contact with Public Safety to communicate concerns regarding non-availability of bus transportation for students during winter break.

SGA's Commuter Student Committee has continued its efforts to increase communication and awareness for commuter students.

Sophia Driver, SGA's director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), has been working on programming to promote artistic expressions through partnership with other student organizations. A gala will take place on March 25, 2026, at 6 p.m. where students will have the opportunity to present their artistic expressions—written, spoken or handmade. All students, faculty, and staff are invited to attend.

SGA hosted an alumni panel to connect students to alumni providing networking opportunities earlier in January.

Through a referral and majority vote by SGA, a bill was brought forward to address SGA's Grant Committee appeal process. This bill will go into effect in time for the 2026-2027 school year. All students who apply for specific grants through SGA will have the ability to appeal the Grants Committee's decision through the University Court within the allowed time of ten days. More details of the bill can be found on Engage and the SGA website under the documents tab. The Grant Committee has awarded thousands of dollars to student organizations for travel, event fees, and startup fees for January and February. Lastly, SGA's Spring elections have begun and will close April 2.

F. REPORT ON THE INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Trustee Dunn called on Vice President for Government Affairs and General Counsel, Zach LaGrange for a report. The 2026 legislative session was a short session that began early when Governor Braun called for a special session to address redistricting and Indiana tax code compliance with the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). Following failed legislation on redistricting and naming the state sandwich, the Indiana General Assembly resumed session and focused on two constitutional amendments, several education matters, immigration, utility affordability, casinos, deregulation, social media limits for minors, housing and the relocation of the Chicago Bears. The short session is a non-budget year, in which the limited duration places unique pressures on legislators to push bills through, resulting in a hurried pace for the session. Additionally, bouts of severe winter weather drew a lot of time away from potentially beneficial work, with real pressure coming on at the back end of that session. Ultimately, 742 bills were introduced with 579 of those bills dying. However, when a bill dies, its ghost often lives on and finds its way into some of the other bills. Session ended with 163 bills hitting the Governor's office for signature. Governor Braun indicated he graded this legislative session as a B plus with 51 of his 58 priority items enacted. Vice President LaGrange thanked faculty and administrative staff for their assistance in taking his rushed phone calls in the hallways and providing information and support which helped inform and guide our efforts up at the Statehouse.

Of the 163 bills passed in the 2026 session, 15 will impact USI's operations or otherwise inform opportunities for the upcoming 2027 session, which is the long budget session. One of the largest, high priority issues faced was immigration, and we saw multiple different immigration bills come through, which were ultimately

consolidated into Senate Bill 1, Senate Bill 76, and Senate Bill 256. The two biggest takeaways from those are 1) institutions are not allowed to impede U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and 2) the attorney general may represent us if there is a resulting civil suit for noncompliance. It also addresses some penalties if we are found to be obstructing them. The follow-on piece to this was a foreign adversaries bill, which limits ability to enroll students from countries deemed adversarial in certain qualifying programs, which are heavily STEM based, unless we conduct a background check and find the student is not subject to foreign influence. This legislature will shape some policy to maintain compliance as we move forward in recruiting or enrolling international students, but it provides no material impact to USI operations currently.

A bill sharply reducing access to social media and cell phone use in the classroom for students or minors under the age of 16 emerged without much news coverage. We anticipate there will be some lawsuits and pushbacks causing further refinement as we go, but this is a unique step forward to help mitigate what they are calling the "anxiety generation" to try to help with that. We see that as an overall positive step.

Indiana's budget is largely focused on education, making it no surprise that many education bills are brought forward. Several concentrated on teaching the classics in the classroom and K-12 curriculum design. Representative Behning submitted several deregulation bills, which essentially became reregulation as they moved through the process. Most notable was a passed deregulation bill for higher education that Senator Deery authored, which will streamline reporting requirements by aligning some requirements and removing duplicative reports.

They raised the General Assembly's review threshold from \$2 million to \$3 million for capital projects related to our physical structures.

A bill granting the ability to teach out our under-threshold programs moved on, which will give between four and five years to teach out any program that's deemed under threshold by the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). There was some new financial transparency legislation pushed through from the One Big, Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) with respect to low earning degrees, resulting in some need for changes next year as we move into the budget cycle.

There were also opportunities that emerged as the session progressed, including the state's relaxing of the requirements for Certified Public Accountant or CPA licensure, and like opportunities in the nursing, dental hygienist, respiratory therapist, and sonography fields. Legislation allowing for more workforce development directives to be able to pull more reports as well as some public - private enterprise pieces will allow us to get better data faster enabling us to align programming and better address the needs of Indiana. Additionally, they modified the statute regarding open records requests, providing a path for pushing back on some requests, which should result in spending less time giving out public information. Overall, it was a very quick session, with minimal negative impact on our institution and for the region.

Trustee Kissel raised a question regarding Senate Bill 88 (SB88). Specifically, if it includes language about accepting the Classical Learning Test (CLT) if we also accept SAT and ACT for admissions? Vice President LaGrange explained SB88 ended up requiring a study and better understanding as to what the Classic Learning Test is and how that would impact organizations but allows state institutions to accept the CLTs as an alternate interest examination. Notably, the CLT does not have a math component, so there are some questions about the impact of that.

Trustee Kissel asked Vice President LaGrange to expand on the legislation about the low-income earning degree. Vice President LaGrange explained the OBBBA contained language to realign financial transparency with respect to anticipated return on investment (ROI) for a degree. In connection, there's a mechanism that if the degree field you're enrolled in ultimately doesn't provide an earning potential greater than what you would earn with just your high school diploma, then Title IV funds would not be available to you. So over time, this would potentially cause those programs to threshold out and no longer be available. That was part of the corresponding change pushed with the OBBA. Indiana took it a step further and wants to have the CHE review those pieces. The backdrop though is that this law was passed at the federal level and requires regulations, which the Department of Education must work through in the coming period. It doesn't appear we're going to be able to start collecting that data until 2027. Then it will require a three-year projection. They are already wrestling with that data because right now it's self-reported and doesn't come from any actual firm mechanism, making what we currently have inaccurate. It is going to take time for development, so the programmatic impact is unlikely to hit until a couple of years have passed. The anticipated timeframe for better data is likely 2028. Senate Bill 204, at the state level, allows a five-year bandwidth to teach out those programs, so actual impact

to USI would be in 2032, giving us plenty of runway to align and work with the deans to make sure our degree programs are solidly aligned.

Trustee Kissel questioned if the bill eliminating student enrollment from foreign adversaries will impact any USI graduate programs at this time. Vice President LaGrange replied not at this time. Named foreign adversaries currently include China, Iran, Venezuela, North Korea, and Russia and the qualified programs named are chemical engineering, industrial engineering, mechanical engineering, virology and AI computer science. USI can't enroll a student from those countries in a qualified program, unless we perform a comprehensive background check, which mirrors what is done by the federal government when they issue an F - type visa, and then get an attestation that they will update us and provide a family history report showing all family members. USI would then have that information available if it's requested later to check for foreign influence. The language isn't shall not enroll; it's may enroll if you complete these additional background checks.

G. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Mr. Dunn called on Vice President LaGrange to discuss the delegation of Board authority. A State Educational Institution that is registered as an authorizer with the state board for charter authority may establish a charter in accordance with Indiana law. At its July 15, 2021, meeting, the University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees approved the University's Charter School Authorization registration as "Authorizer" by the State Board of Education.

In accordance with IC 20-24-3-14, the State Education Institution's Board of Trustees shall be ultimately responsible for choosing to authorize a charter school and responsibilities for maintaining authorization rests with the university's board of trustees; or shall be assigned authorization authority and authorization responsibilities to another entity that functions under the direction of the university's board of trustees. Additionally, an entity created under subsection (c) is subject to Indiana law. Before a university may authorize a charter school, the university must conduct a public meeting with public notice in the school corporation or county where the charter school will be located.

It is recommended that delegation of authority of the Board of Trustees be approved. And, with approval, the Provost Office will have authority to approve or deny the authorization of a charter to the Williams Arts and Technology Academy in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, following a public meeting held in accordance with Indiana law.

Trustee Kissel interjected asking the provost "*is it true that this public meeting was to be held this evening (March 5, 2026) in Fort Wayne for the Williams Arts and Technology Academy?*" Provost Blunt confirmed the public meeting schedule. Additionally, the following questions were asked by Trustee Kissel and answered by Provost Blunt:

- 1) *Do you anticipate that after that public meeting is held, that you will go ahead and approve them, or what's the procedure?*

The next step is for the feedback to be shared with the committee evaluating the application and then they make a recommendation to my office. They will consider the information provided with the application and supporting documents and the feedback provided at the public hearing then discuss everything in committee and make a recommendation to approve or deny to the Provost Office, and then the Provost Office will make the final decision.

- 2) *I understand the Indiana Agriculture and Technology School and the Springville Community Academy are the two other charter schools that we are involved with. Is that correct?*

That is accurate, yes correct.

- 3) *So, what do we do once they are chartered? What happens at USI?*

USI provides oversight to those schools. Each has their own school board that monitors the running of the school. They hire the faculty and the staff. We provide oversight by attending school board meetings and receiving annual reports from the schools. Each has performance metrics they must meet. Those reports are submitted to the state for review and financial audits. If all metrics are met the charters can be approved for a five-to-seven-year period depending upon the request and the application. USI also performs mid-charter reviews to ensure they're making progress. We also provide board training for their board members and some professional development in that way.

- 4) *So, who does that at the University of Southern Indiana? Is this a full-time person here?*

Yes, USI has an Associate Director of Charter Schools who reports to Jaclyn Dumond, USI's K-12 Partnership Director in Outreach and Engagement, and we meet regularly to look at those kinds of options. USI's Finance Office is also involved in making sure that the budget is adhered to and if there are any shortcomings they might recommend improvements.

5) *So, why did Williams Arts and Technology reach out to the University of Southern Indiana?*

I can't speak to why they reached out to us. There are a lot of charter schools, and I think they have connections or network within the state, it's possible someone recommended USI to them.

6) *Again, I'll ask the question I asked before in committee, is there any counseling about educational philosophy in our interactions, for example, urge them to adopt a core knowledge curriculum as the philosophy of the school?*

The schools must meet Indiana standards for K-12 education. They propose a curriculum through those standards and the state, the authorizer is not in the weeds of how the school is run, that's the school board's responsibility. We provide authorization and oversight, but don't direct the curriculum.

7) *So, but is there any like urging or counseling or any other kind of interaction that might influence their philosophy?*

Not from USI.

On a motion by Mr. Kinney, seconded by Mr. Cox, the Delegation of Authority was approved.

H. APPROVAL OF NEW CERTIFICATE AND MICROCREDENTIALS

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt for approval of a new certificate and microcredentials. Dr. Blunt directed the Trustees to Exhibit I-A containing the abstracts for the certificate and microcredentials recommended for approval. The University proposes to offer an undergraduate certificate in Coaching and microcredentials in Rural Health, Healthcare Leadership, and Environmental Health.

Trustee Dunn called for discussion, with Trustee Kissel reiterating (in summary) the comments and concerns he provided at the earlier Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee meeting, *verbatim*:

- *"I will not be supporting this. I'd like to support the coaching one, though. I maybe should have investigated that more."*
- *"I am very concerned because of the very, very heavy policy component to the three health micro-credentials and the three courses that SB202 compliance should be very explicit in each and every syllabus, and it's not, at least in the ones that were sent to us yesterday. That's a very big concern of mine, because, in fact, that was the whole impetus of SB202 was to ensure if policy issues are raised, that there is fair discussion on that. And I am just very concerned about that."*
- *"I am also concerned about the lack of prerequisites. Many of the courses, like for example, have a 400-level course, PH488 Advanced Environmental Health, and at least according to this syllabus, there is no prerequisite for a 400-level course. And amongst the things they do, I am looking at the course learning outcome, integrate multiple multidisciplinary approaches, for example, public health, urban planning, environmental science to propose comprehensive solutions to complex environmental health issues. And there's no prerequisites. That sounds like a very heavy lift for having no prerequisites. So that also bothers me a lot."*
- *"I'm going to be voting no on this."*

Upon the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee, and a majority ruling (7-1), the new certificate and microcredentials in Exhibit I-A were approved.

I. APPROVAL OF CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt. The candidates for doctoral, master's, bachelor's and associate degrees, and certificates to be conferred May 8, 2026, and May 9, 2026, are listed in Exhibit I-B. It is recommended that award of the respective degrees be approved subject to the completion of all requirements.

On a motion by Mr. Romain, seconded by Mr. Kinney, the conferral of the degrees and certificates presented in Exhibit I-B subject to the completion of all requirements was approved.

J. APPROVAL OF CANDIDATES FOR HONORARY DEGREES

Trustee Dunn called on President Bridges for approval of Honorary Degrees. The USI Honorary Degree Policy states, an honorary degree from the University of Southern Indiana is the highest form of recognition granted by the institution. Individuals who have given distinguished and extraordinary service consistent with the mission of the University are eligible for consideration. That service may be to the University itself, and/or to

local, statewide, national, or international communities. Individuals selected to receive an honorary degree should exemplify the highest ideals of integrity, service, and dedication to learning.

In accordance with the policy, the Honorary Degree Committee and President Bridges recommended that the conferral of the following honorary degree during the Spring 2026 Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 8, 2026, be approved.

DOCTOR OF LAWS to John L. Deem, Associate Vice President Emeritus for Student Affairs and Assistant Professor Emeritus of Accounting for his 44 years of impactful service that began early in the University's existence as Indiana State University – Evansville through its formative years and establishment as the University of Southern Indiana. Dedicating over half his life to the University, Mr. Deem served numerous key roles exemplifying unwavering commitment to education, contributing to the institution's growth, and leading with integrity to achieve the University's mission of service to students, the Evansville region, and the State of Indiana. His dedication to teaching and learning extended beyond the University of Southern Indiana, serving on the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Board for over twelve years. Established in 1990, the Deem Family Scholarship Endowment continues to support USI students today.

President Bridges added that he had the honor of working with Mr. Deem for a large part of his career, and validated Mr. Deem has all of the characteristics exemplified in this honor.

On a motion by Mr. Romain, seconded by Mr. Solliday, the Honorary Degree was approved.

SECTION II – FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. REPORT OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

Trustee Dunn called on Trustee Kinney for the Committee report. The Finance/Audit Committee met prior to this meeting and received an update on USI's unrestricted assets from Neil Heppler, Senior Institutional Advisor with Mariner Wealth Advisors and the investment advisor for University Investments. The Committee also reviewed the Construction Change orders that were authorized by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and those approved by the Construction Committee related to Health Professions Renovation Phase IV, University Creative and Print New Building, and the STEM Discovery Lab in Rice Library. Lastly, the Committee reviewed a summary of audits and other activities conducted by the Internal Audit Department during 2025 and approved the proposed 2026 Annual Audit Plan.

Trustee Kissel addressed the Chair, requesting to ask questions regarding the audits performed by Internal Audit. Trustee Dunn allowed for questions.

Trustee Kissel asked Chief Audit Officer, Brad Will, to approach for questions. The following dialogue occurred.

Kissel: "I am looking at the audit recommendation matrix, and I am seeing it goes 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and there are various revised target dates. Can you explain to us what that means here?"

Will: "When we issue an audit recommendation, we always ask management if they accept the recommendation, and also to provide a target date so internal audit can follow up. It also allows the Finance/Audit Committee the opportunity to see progress being made. What's not in your packet is a slide shared with the Finance/Audit Committee at each of my presentations in the fall and the spring, which shows the totality of recommendations issued in a particular year. So, the total number of audit recommendations and their ranking, as well as those that have been completed and those remaining outstanding, are represented so Trustees see that management addresses the majority of internal audit recommendations on a timely basis. There are some that have had modifications to the date of implementation for a variety of reasons. As I mentioned to the Committee this morning, Internal Audit is comfortable that management takes our recommendations seriously, and, that there are occasions when they must prioritize different activities over others. As long as they're attentive to the things that we're asking, it doesn't create a lot of concern. Yes, there are some items, and generally, it's only two or less, that remain outstanding for multiple years."

Trustee Kinney (Finance/Audit Chair): "The committee looked at all the critical factors of these this morning, higher risk matters are resolved, basically in the year that they were brought up. These are all intermediate lower type activities. The Committee felt very comfortable that Brad's group did a good job in addressing those concerns."

Kissel: "So Brad, I am trying to understand, looking at the first page calendar year 2020 the target was originally January 31, 2021, then revised March 31, 2021, January 31, 2022, et cetera, up to December 31, 2025, June 30, 2026, and this is the bonds payable post issuance compliance. So why all these interim target dates?"

Will: "As reported to the committee earlier on this matter, when an audit is conducted for a particular area, we have a finding and we rate that finding based on its impact on that area. Yet that department may have many other things or critical functions to perform. Those things can sometimes get in the way of completing something by a target date. Contributing factors might include personnel turnover, or sometimes it's just different priorities. Do we want something to linger on that long? Absolutely not. But these are items that don't place the university at a significant risk. Particularly when you look at the totality of all recommendations and the overall attentiveness to getting the majority of those things completed. So, yes, I understand your question and why it's there, but we are not overly concerned about where we are with this issue, and in the most recent conversations with the group responsible for addressing it, expectation is for it to be rectified and cleared within the next four to five months."

Kissel: "Okay, so you know I am just inquiring because there may be a good reason we have the targets moving or we have new circumstances and we have to address those as things change here. But it appears like one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine ten eleven target dates for this one item. And maybe that's a good thing that we're keeping after it, and you are. It kind of just surprised me when I when I saw that there."

Kinney: "Maybe I can interject. Internal Audit has a staff of two people. There were 17 audits performed in one year and we're down to one or two outstanding. Our Finance/Audit Committee wants Internal Audit to focus on high priority items, and the critical factors that were identified. There is always a priority of where we put the two resources and what projects we work on. In Committee, Trustee Cox even brought up the point and asked Mr. Will how priorities are set, and the Committee felt comfortable with the way in which priorities are determined."

Kissel: "I do have more questions. I'm looking at calendar year 2024 administrative appeals. And it's updated in both the university handbook and on the university, website was part of the recommendation, with a goal of August 1, 2026. My question is for President Bridges and for Brad possibly, who holds the university handbook? Who's responsible for that? Because I've noticed that there are a lot of errors in the handbook. And I am just wondering when they're going to be corrected and who's responsible for correcting the errors in the handbook or updating it?"

Bridges: "Actually, the handbook is really a shared responsibility. Human Resources (HR) oversees the management and administration of the handbook, but various policies and sections included in the handbook have different individuals or departments that are responsible for updating those. Twice a year, HR sends out communications to all departments and individuals who have ownership of a particular policy or section asking for updates to those policies. Updates are also done through a review and approval process."

Kissel: "I looked at the handbook last week, it was dated November 10, 2025, when it had last been updated. So let me clarify, President Bridges is it correct that HR owns the university handbook?"

Bridges: "HR coordinates the university handbook, but individual departments own the policies and those are looked at twice a year. HR sends the communication asking for updates, updates are submitted, and then those are incorporated in the handbook by HR. But HR doesn't own individual policies as some may be department specific. We are constantly working to update and keep it accurate, but there is always room for improvement in any process."

Kissel: "So, when will the next update be coming up?"

Bridges: "We're in the process of doing it now."

Dunn: "Trustee Kissel, I might add that you currently serve on the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee, these questions relate to finance committee business, which you may get to serve before your term is up."

Kissel: "I do have another question if you can indulge me, John. So, Brad, in calendar year 2025, authorized driver certification. Having been a faculty member here, this was a while back, there was a time when the College of Science, Engineering and Education had a very strict driver policy, but the university had a very lax one. I remember distinctly, there was a situation where we were renting a vehicle through the university, and the student who was going to be driving was not asked to provide a driver's license to be copied. So, my question is there, a consistency between the very strict and good policies of the college and of the university?"

Will: "I am not familiar with the policies of the college specifically, but Internal Audit looked specifically at the policies and procedures implemented and directed by Risk Management, which are well aligned with the strictness you're speaking of. In fact, it was almost too strict in terms of the requirements we had on people who were occasional drivers who might drive their personal vehicle. I would say that I feel very comfortable with the Authorized Driver Certification process, and the activities conducted in risk management university wide."

Kissel: "So maybe the provost can help me here, but this may be old history that I'm going over, but boy, it was horrible confusion because a college had a really good and strict driver policy, and the university had a very lax one and it was very confusing. Can you help me here? Is there consistency across the institution?"

Blunt: "The difference with Pott College is that the college has its own vehicles, so they're managing use of those. I wasn't in Pott College when that policy was developed, so I don't know all the details of it. I do know there has been discussion about changes to the driver policy campus wide and how that might impact the college moving forward."

Will: "I would just add that risk management looks at authorized drivers from the perspective of what their role is at the institution. So, if you have a role working with HR and with the departments that require you to drive or

where you are expected to drive on a regular basis, they are overseeing the certification and authorization of those drivers, which wasn't occurring maybe a half a dozen years ago or so. Also, we work with our outside insurance providers and that's how we make our decisions. We don't make decisions unilaterally based on our own opinions; we consult with insurance brokers to make sure that we're doing the things needed to keep the university's risk low."

Kissel: "Finally, I am looking on the last page, Ghost student fraud risk. Talk to me about that. How often is that happening here at the University of Southern Indiana?"

Will: "It's a risk that exists in higher education and the point of that being on our audit advisory services plan is for us to perform a risk assessment to determine what the risk level is what the controls are in place to prevent and detect the possibility. Community colleges are particularly susceptible because they really have an open acceptance policy for students, and they don't do as much to identify or confirm identity of students. What's happening is there's fraud potential on federal student aid, where a student will apply, get admitted or accepted, they enroll, they get the financial aid, and then they disappear. So, that's a risk assessment that we've scheduled to talk with the financial aid department, and our admissions folks about the things that we have in place to prevent and detect that."

Kissel: "So, how often do we think that it's happened here at USI? Or has it not happened?"

Will: "We have had instances where we have detected situations within the last year or so, where we had fraudulent applicants. But the point of this review is to get into the weeds of that, to identify what controls we have in place and what are our risks so we can be better at identifying and preventing it going forward."

Trustee Dunn called for the order of the day and moved to the next agenda item.

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

Trustee Dunn called Vice President Sickman for the report. Before reporting on construction change orders, Mr. Sickman directed the Trustees to two items in their handouts, 1) 2025-2026 Financial Report that includes the audit opinion for the fiscal year, and 2) the unaudited statements for the current fiscal year period ending December 31, 2025.

Exhibit II-A contains one change order related to the ongoing renovation of the Health Professions Center that exceeded \$50,000 and required approval by the Construction Committee by email according to policy. A space that was designated for storage in the original design was repurposed to classroom space to meet the growing needs of the college.

The remaining change orders for the new Creative and Print building and the STEM Discovery Lab listed in Exhibit II-A are below the threshold requiring approval by the Construction Committee. They are provided for informational purposes.

C. UPDATE ON CURRENT CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Trustee Dunn called on Vice President Sickman, who introduced Director of Facility Operations and Planning Jim Wolfe for a report on the status of current construction projects. He directed the Trustees to Exhibit II-B for a list of projects and a summary of the cost and funding sources for each project.

During the presentation, Trustee Kissel raised questions regarding additional HVAC systems listed on the STEM Discovery Center project in Rice Library installed in Starbucks, and about relative funding sources. As part of the overall infrastructure in the Rice Library, USI ensured the proper equipment would be in place going forward. It is more cost effective while contractors are already working in that building. Because the work that's being done is for that building's infrastructure, it is added to the project in progress versus separating it as its own project. The HVAC system is not for Starbucks; it's for the Rice Library, which is USI's facility. Starbucks is just what occupies that space with other areas on that floor also served by that HVAC system.

SECTION III – PERSONNEL MATTERS

A. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUTHORIZATION FOR EMPLOYMENT OF FACULTY AND STAFF

Trustee Dunn called on Vice President Sickman for the annual authorization. The University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees, pursuant to Indiana Code 21-38-3-2 and 21-38-3-9, annually authorizes the President of the University of Southern Indiana to employ faculty and staff, and to establish salaries, and wages within budgetary capabilities. The last authorization was on March 6, 2025, and approval today will allow the University to continue this critical function.

Trustee Kissel addressed Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Kyle Mara, with a question. The following discussion occurred.

Kissel: “I remember attending a Faculty Senate meeting a year and a half or so ago, maybe it was this past year or half a year ago, in May perhaps, and there was a presentation about faculty salaries. Has there been interaction between Faculty Senate and the president concerning faculty salaries?”

Mara: “Yes, the Economic Benefits Committee, during its yearly report, provided information about the status of faculty salaries across the university at all levels. Each year, Senate then engages the Vice President for Finance and Administration, now Vice President Sickman, and previously President Bridges. Senate has been speaking with them about this issue, in addition to talking with Provost Blunt since she oversees these levels of employment and faculty. This discussion is ongoing and often comes down to budget constraints.”

Kissel: “Has the Faculty Senate made any recommendation to the administration with respect to that?”

Mara: “The Economic Benefits Committee’s last recommendation was to deal with salary compression.”

Kissel: “So, what do you mean by compression?”

Mara: “Compression within the faculty and staff compensation in terms of what new employees are hired in at versus what longer serving faculty and staff salaries increased to at the university, based on budget concerns and constraints.”

On a motion by Mr. Cox, seconded by Mr. Kinney, the annual authorization for employment of faculty and staff was approved.

B. REPORT ON FACULTY, ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF RETIREMENTS

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt to review the following faculty, administrative, and staff retirements.

Associate Professor of Health Services Ethel A. Elkins, in accordance with the regular retirement policy, will retire effective June 1, 2026, after 17.5 years of service.

Circulation and Testing Center Manager Kathleen K. Oeth, in accordance with regular retirement policy, will retire effective May 23, 2026, after 15.5 years of service.

C. APPROVAL OF EMERITUS STATUS

Trustee Dunn called on Provost Blunt for approval of emeritus status. On a motion by Ms. Keck, seconded by Mr. Romain, the following emeritus titles were approved.

Associate Professor Emerita of Health Services Ethel Elkins

Circulation and Testing Center Manager Emerita Kathleen K. Oeth

OLD BUSINESS

Prior to meeting adjournment, Trustee Kissel addressed Chair Dunn requesting discussion of old business.

Trustee Kissel reminded the Trustees of the supplemental information provided to the Board, following the January 8, 2026, meeting. The information was in response to questions raised during the Joint Committee and Regular meetings. Trustee Kissel asked several follow-up questions on the data provided on Dual Credit enrollment by county and high school, inquired about USI's plan to celebrate USA's 250th birthday, and reiterated his stance on requiring US History or civics topics in USI 101 course curriculum. Provost Blunt responded to all additional inquiries and comments.

Trustee Dunn reminded the Trustees of their duties for oversight, then called for any further business. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey L. Knight
Secretary

Program Summaries
Certificates and Microcredentials to be offered
By the University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Indiana

Certificate in Coaching

Program Award Level: Undergraduate

CIP Code: 13.1314

Mode of Delivery: Online or Hybrid (online and in-person)

Academic Units: Kinesiology & Sport, Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education

Credit Hours: 11

Proposed Implementation Term: Fall 2026

Program Description

The Certificate in Coaching prepares students with foundational knowledge, practical skills, and professional competencies needed to coach athletes across various competitive levels. The program integrates principles of athletic performance, psychology, and injury prevention to develop effective, ethical, and safety-conscious coaches.

Students will examine essential concepts in coaching theory and practice, including leadership, communication, motivation, and the physiological and psychological factors that influence athletic performance. Coursework emphasizes evidence-based strategies for improving performance, promoting athlete well-being, and fostering positive behavior and long-term development.

Coursework

- **SPTM 226 – Principles and Problems of Coaching (3 credit hours)**
- **EXSC 376 – Behavioral Strategies in Exercise & Sport (3 credit hours)**
- **KIN 282 – CPR for the Healthcare Provider & Sport Injury Prevention (2 credit hours)**
- **KIN 390 – Special Topics in Coaching (1–3 credit hours)**
KIN 390 may be offered in 1, 2, or 3 credit-hour formats, providing flexibility for traditional and non-traditional students. The 3-credit option may also be completed fully online through coursework focused on current issues and challenges in coaching. Regardless of format, students must complete a total of 3 credit hours in KIN 390 to earn the certificate.

Program Objectives

Graduates of the Certificate in Coaching will be able to:

- Understand the critical administrative responsibilities involved in coaching (e.g., planning, scheduling, recruiting) and apply effective communication strategies with athletes.
- Utilize evidence-based motivational strategies to foster positive behavior and long-term athlete development.
- Demonstrate preparedness for emergency situations and implement effective injury prevention practices.

Rationale for the Program

The Certificate in Coaching supports the University of Southern Indiana's strategic plan to strengthen community partnerships and broaden institutional impact. Students who complete this program will be well-prepared to serve as coaches in youth leagues, middle schools, and high schools throughout southern Indiana—playing a vital role in the development of future student-athletes.

The certificate also aligns with the HOPE Agenda established by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, which emphasizes building human capital to support future state leadership.

This certificate will replace the current Coaching minor and Strength & Conditioning minor. It will be marketed to both current students and K–12 educators seeking continuing education credits required for teaching license renewal.

Instructional Resources and Program Needs

All courses included in the certificate are currently offered on a regular basis; therefore, no additional instructional resources are required.

Career Relevance

Upon earning their Initial Practitioner License, K–12 educators in Indiana must renew their license every 5 or 10 years, depending on the selected renewal pathway. Renewal requires the completion of 6 credit hours of undergraduate or graduate coursework. The Certificate in Coaching provides educators—particularly those teaching physical education or coaching school sports—with meaningful, relevant coursework that leads to a recognized credential upon completion of 11 credit hours.

From a hiring perspective, school corporations often prefer to employ teachers who also possess coaching qualifications. However, newly graduated teachers frequently lack both coaching experience and formal coaching education. A licensed teacher who holds a coaching certificate is significantly more competitive than a candidate without such training, helping address a common staffing challenge in schools.

Microcredential in Rural Health

Program Award Level: Undergraduate

CIP Code: 51.2299

Mode of Delivery: Online or Hybrid (in-person and online)

Academic Units: Health Administration & Community Health,
Kinney College of Nursing & Health Professions

Credit Hours: 9

Proposed Implementation Term: Fall 2026

Program Description

The Microcredential in Rural Health provides undergraduate students—and community members—with foundational knowledge and applied experience related to the unique health challenges of rural communities. Students will explore key concepts including rural health disparities, access to care, rural health policy, community engagement, and the social determinants of health.

The curriculum emphasizes interprofessional collaboration and culturally responsive approaches to care. Through coursework and experiential learning, students will develop skills relevant to rural health practice, advocacy, and policy.

Designed to complement a wide range of majors—including community and public health, health administration, nursing, social work, and disciplines outside KCNHP such as business or environmental sciences—this microcredential prepares students to support the well-being of rural populations in Indiana and beyond. Because all required content is embedded within the three designated courses, the microcredential is also accessible to community learners seeking specialized rural health training.

Coursework

- **PH 284 – Public Health (3 credit hours)**
- **PH 351 – Rural Healthcare (3 credit hours)**
- **PH 352 – Social Dimensions of Healthcare (3 credit hours)**

Program Objectives

Upon completion of the microcredential, students will be able to:

- Examine social, economic, and environmental factors that influence health outcomes in rural communities.
- Identify barriers to healthcare access and analyze the role of health systems in rural settings.
- Understand how rurality impacts health in underserved communities and population health outcomes.
- Participate in interprofessional learning and evaluate collaborative strategies to address rural health needs.
- Apply theoretical knowledge to practical settings through case studies, community-based projects, or service-learning experiences.

Rationale for the Program

The University of Southern Indiana serves a region with significant rural populations who face persistent health disparities. Rural residents frequently encounter limited access to healthcare providers, higher prevalence of chronic diseases, substance use disorders, mental health challenges, and socioeconomic factors that negatively affect health outcomes. At the same time, rural areas often struggle to recruit and retain professionals who understand the complexities of rural health.

This microcredential responds directly to these needs by preparing undergraduate students with specialized training to serve rural populations effectively. It advances USI's mission as a regional leader in health education and community engagement across Southwestern Indiana and surrounding areas.

The program also supports state and national priorities. It aligns with **Healthy People 2030** objectives and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services initiatives aimed at reducing health disparities and improving outcomes in rural regions. By equipping students with rural-specific competencies, the microcredential helps build a pipeline of professionals prepared to serve in underserved communities.

Instructional Resources and Program Needs

The microcredential will be supported by existing faculty within the Department of Health Administration and Community Health. All three courses will be taught by full-time USI faculty.

One course is already required for both the Health Administration and Community & Public Health majors, while the two remaining courses—previously offered as special topics—will transition to permanent courses with their own numbers.

Since all instructional resources are in place, no additional faculty, facilities, or resources are needed.

Career Relevance

The Rural Health microcredential enhances student employability by providing specialized competencies in rural health systems, health disparities, community outreach, and interprofessional collaboration. Graduates will be well-prepared for positions in:

- Rural hospitals
- Public health departments
- Community health centers
- Nonprofit and community-based organizations
- Behavioral health agencies

By building a workforce with rural-specific expertise, the microcredential strengthens regional capacity to address healthcare access challenges and improve population health outcomes in underserved communities.

Microcredential in Healthcare Leadership

Program Award Level: Undergraduate

CIP Code: 51.0701

Mode of Delivery: Online or Hybrid (in-person and online)

Academic Units: Health Administration & Community Health,
Kinney College of Nursing & Health Professions

Credit Hours: 9

Proposed Implementation Term: Fall 2026

Program Description

The Microcredential in Healthcare Leadership provides undergraduate students with foundational skills necessary to lead people, processes, and organizational change within today's complex healthcare environment. Designed for students in health administration, public health, nursing administration, and related fields, the microcredential emphasizes personal leadership development, ethical decision-making, communication, and team-based problem solving across diverse healthcare settings.

Through integrated coursework and applied learning experiences, students will examine the unique leadership challenges within healthcare organizations, cultivate their personal leadership style, and gain tools for effectively managing interdisciplinary teams and advancing organizational goals.

Coursework

- **HP 211 – The Healthcare Delivery System and Healthcare Policy (3 credit hours)**
- **HA 411 – Healthcare Leadership (3 credit hours)**
- **HA 412 – Leadership by Design (3 credit hours)**

Program Objectives

Students completing the microcredential will be able to:

- Demonstrate self-awareness and reflection in developing a personal leadership style.
- Apply leadership theories and models to real-world healthcare scenarios.
- Communicate effectively with diverse teams and stakeholders.
- Navigate ethical and organizational challenges encountered in healthcare environments.
- Participate in interprofessional learning and evaluate collaborative strategies to address leadership needs at both personal and organizational levels.
- Collaborate to improve outcomes and support organizational change in healthcare systems.

Rationale for the Program

Healthcare organizations are experiencing rapid and ongoing transformation driven by evolving patient needs, regulatory shifts, workforce shortages, technological advancements, and increasing system complexity. In this environment, employers increasingly seek professionals who understand healthcare delivery systems and possess the leadership competencies required to guide teams, manage change, and advance organizational effectiveness.

The Healthcare Leadership microcredential aligns with the University of Southern Indiana's mission to prepare students for leadership and service in a diverse and global society. It offers students—especially those studying health administration, public health, or nursing administration—a valuable opportunity to develop and document essential leadership skills that are highly sought after in the healthcare workforce.

Because the microcredential requires only the three designated courses, it is also accessible to community members seeking professional development or leadership advancement in healthcare settings.

Instructional Resources and Program Needs

The microcredential will be supported entirely by existing faculty and staff within the Department of Health Administration and Community Health. All courses are already part of the department's regular offerings. Consequently, no additional faculty, facilities, or institutional resources are required for implementation.

Career Relevance

The Healthcare Leadership microcredential strengthens students' career readiness by equipping them with practical, evidence-based leadership competencies valued across the healthcare industry. Graduates will be prepared for roles in:

- Hospitals and health systems
- Public health agencies
- Long-term care and assisted living facilities
- Community and nonprofit health organizations
- Ambulatory care and behavioral health settings

Skills gained through the microcredential—such as communication, ethical decision-making, team management, and leading organizational change—support entry-level administrative, supervisory, and project management roles. The credential also signals to employers and graduate programs that the student possesses not only foundational knowledge of healthcare systems but also the leadership capacity needed to guide teams and respond effectively to the evolving demands of the healthcare industry.

Microcredential in Environmental Health

Program Award Level: Undergraduate

CIP Code: 51.2202

Mode of Delivery: Online or Hybrid (in-person and online)

Academic Units: Health Administration & Community Health,
Kinney College of Nursing & Health Professions

Credit Hours: 9

Proposed Implementation Term: Fall 2026

Program Description

The Microcredential in Environmental Health at the University of Southern Indiana introduces undergraduate students to the core concepts, challenges, and practices of environmental health. This program provides foundational knowledge about the relationships between environmental conditions and human health, preparing students to analyze and respond to pressing public health issues such as pollution, climate-related impacts, water and air quality, and occupational health risks.

Students will examine how environmental factors influence disease patterns, policy development, and community health outcomes. The microcredential emphasizes interdisciplinary thinking and the development of practical skills relevant to careers in public health, environmental science, environmental policy, and health advocacy.

Coursework

- **PH 284 – Public Health (3 credit hours)**
- **PH 484 – Environmental Health (3 credit hours)**
- **PH 488 – Advanced Environmental Health (3 credit hours)**

Program Objectives

Students completing the microcredential will be able to:

- Describe key environmental health risks and their impacts on human populations.
- Apply principles of toxicology, epidemiology, and environmental science to assess environmental exposures.
- Analyze regulatory and policy approaches used to protect environmental and population health.
- Interpret environmental health data and communicate findings effectively.
- Identify prevention and mitigation strategies for environmental health hazards.
- Engage with communities and stakeholders to promote environmental health awareness, prevention, and advocacy.

Rationale for the Program

Environmental health is an increasingly critical field, reflecting the growing recognition that environmental factors directly and indirectly influence individual and community well-being. Offering this microcredential provides the University of Southern Indiana with a strategic opportunity to prepare students to address emerging public health challenges and workforce demands across health, science, and policy sectors.

The microcredential aligns with USI's mission to deliver high-quality, accessible, and relevant education. It supports institutional priorities related to academic innovation, student success, and community engagement. By encouraging students to engage meaningfully with environmental health issues—both locally and globally—the program also fosters civic responsibility and prepares graduates to be informed, responsible community members.

Because all content is contained within the three required courses, the microcredential is also accessible to community members seeking professional development in environmental health.

Instructional Resources and Program Needs

This microcredential will be supported by existing faculty and staff within the Department of Health Administration and Community Health. All required courses are taught by full-time faculty, and no additional faculty, facilities, or resources are needed for implementation.

Career Relevance

The Environmental Health microcredential enhances students' career readiness by equipping them with specialized knowledge and applied skills increasingly valued in:

- Public health agencies
- Environmental consulting firms
- Regulatory and governmental bodies
- Healthcare systems and hospital compliance units
- Nonprofit and community organizations

Students will gain competencies in exposure assessment, environmental data interpretation, environmental policy analysis, and risk communication—preparing them for roles in environmental health, occupational safety, sustainability initiatives, and health policy.

The credential also strengthens preparation for graduate study in public health, environmental science, environmental policy, or related fields. It signals to employers a focused commitment to addressing environmental determinants of health and protecting community well-being.

**CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA
May 8 and 9, 2026**

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Chris Barnes
Cara Dunn
Melissa Goemmel
Christy Dawn Gretencord
Tina M. McCalmont
Britney Orth
Carrie L. Wright

**DOCTOR OF NURSING
PRACTICE**

Sarah Brandsasse
Sara E. Burger
Kelly M. Butler
Courtney D. Chastain
Esther O. Gbadesogun
Brandie L. Kopsas-Kingsley
Dulcebelle Pearson
Janessia C. Pettigrew
Jamie L. Phillippe
Heather R. Presley
Kathryn N. Reed

**POST-MASTER'S
CERTIFICATE**

Clifford A. Bowen JR
Emma K. Bridges
Charity J. Broyles
Antonio L. Cuthbertson
Brenna Ferguson
Amy Frew
Leslie D. Guy
Melissa Hardin
Dalene Hobart
David K. Maldonado
Tara L. Pearce
Daniel T. Stec
Janette S. Young

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Madison E. Bockelman
Alice R. Burris
Abigail R. Eckert
Desarai M. Frederick
Rian Kisner
Natalie M. Mosby
Anitra N. Murphy
Jackelin Padilla-Silva
Hannah B. Pike
Madison Pliska
Zachary S. Precup
Simone Szeremeta Oliver
Amanda Williams

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
ENGLISH**

Emily A. Hays
Ashlee Hoos
Katherine C. Moore

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
LIBERAL STUDIES**

Austin French
Aaron M. Giauque

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
SECOND LANGUAGE
ACQUISITION, POLICY AND
CULTURE**

Alexandria K. Brennan
Jamarro D. Johnson
Maria M. Parshukova

**MASTER OF ARTS IN STRATEGIC
AND ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMUNICATION**

Haley Cade
Haley R. Flamion
Ami L. Lloyd
Darrin R. Lloyd
William E. Marsee
Trisha D. Merz

**MASTER OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION**

Daniel Abraham
Olive Acholonu
Joshua J. Achury Albarracin
Oluwafemi J. Adebiji
Jose O. Aguilera-Galvan
Waleed K. Alahmadi
Ahmed Albayoumy
Ahmed Alkawaz
Michael Alltop
Wasim Alsharabi
Jeannie M. Ambler
Jacinta I. Anakua
Bianca J. Anderson
Allyson M. Armstrong
Jenna M. Arnold
Kyle Astin
Vincent Bailey
Shari Baird
Amina Bale
Logan J. Ball
Aaron W. Banister
Ernesto Banuelos
Heather B. Barbare
Robyn Baron
Brooke D. Bassler
Saima Batool
Abanoub Benyamin
Ian Berdsen
Lauren E. Berry
Gregory Best
Haley Betten
Reagon E. Bieber
Ryan A. Birt
Jordan Bittel
Jacey L. Blanford

Bradley S. Blaylock
Paul C. Bohlen
Michael J. Bolognone
Jeanne L. Bradley
Penny Brandt
Theresa I. Brandt-Guerra
Abby Bretzke
Troy Brewer
Nicole L. Bridges
Rachael Brown
Quinton Brumett
Brock A. Brunstetter
Megan L. Buechler
Erin Bunkers
Keely S. Burk
Francesca Burtron
Timothy Butler
Thomas R. Byrd
Jon Callane
Megan Calloway
Chloe Campbell
Kaitlynn E. Campbell
Marvin Campbell
Samantha Candler
Nikole Carlisle
Christopher Carpenzano
Cristina Catana
David J. Cave
Matthew Certa
Johnathon L. Chatman
Jawad Chaudhry
Brayan S. Chavarria Acuna
Joan K. Chipana Zambrano
Eva Chung Loo
Susan Cichock
Taylor S. Clemmons
Linda I. Clyborn
Kayla G. Colter
Aaliyah Compton
Helen M. Conley
Megan L. Conley
Brandon W. Conner
Conner J. Coomes
Cameron Cormany
Ximena Correa-Medina
Angela Cortez
Alexandra Cousin
William Cousins
Trista L. Crudup
Donald A. Cruz
Jessica E. Cruz
Johnathan Cullum
Alan Czajkowski
James C. Daniels
Abdul H. Dauda
Hanna Davis
Hanna M. Dearman
Jennifer Dearman
Taylor N. Deaton
Taylor M. Decker
Saira Y. Delacruz

Kimberly J. Delaney
Chelsea N. Delap
Kenneth DeLeo
Amritpal Dhillon
Cynthia M. Dobbs
Joshua E. Dolen
Jordyn D. Donohoo
Juan Dorantes
Andrew Dornhecker
Carson J. Drake
Robert R. Drennan
Angela M. Duenn
Katherine Durcholz
Carissa L. Durko
Marko Durovic
Gabriel I. Dzienny
Justin Edwards
Mariya Eldridge
Garrett M. Elliott
Chera Ellis
Cody J. Ellis
Madilyn K. Ellis
Jacob M. Engle
Micah Englert
Lauren M. Evans
Lisa R. Ewing
Glorianna Fam
Spence M. Farmer
Jordan Ferrell
Ryan D. Fisher
Robert Fizer
Blaine Foresman
Juliet E. Fortney
Nancy Foutch
Zackery L. Fox
Joel F. FoxDoan
Loretta Frazier
Kathleen Freeman
John Freudenthal
Jessica S. Ganapathy
Javier Garcia
Krystle R. Gemuendt
Mijash Ghimire
Dhritiman Ghosh
Mariah Gibson
Carter M. Goebel
Zachary Gould
Alexander Graf
Daquera Green
Nicholas R. Gutekunst
Jorge Gutierrez Ramirez
Lama Hajjo
Natalie Hamilton
Michael Hampton
Franklin C. Hancock
Virginia G. Hancock
Logan R. Hansen
Uma Hari
Vanessa M. Harrell
Wesley H. Harris
Michael J. Harvey
Samuel A. Hatchett
Rachael E. Hathaway
Peter J. Haydock
Robert Hayes
Sarah Hayes
Robert M. Head
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**Summary of Construction Change Orders
Authorized by the Vice President for Finance and Administration**

HEALTH PROFESSIONS RENOVATION PHASE IV

Empire Contractors – General Contractor

CO 011		\$ 105,060
	Buildout of planned storage room, L093, to a high-tech classroom/lab. Improvements include wall framing, drywall and paint; drop ceiling; infrastructure for A/V and increased electrical outlets; HVAC controls and infrastructure; and extend fire sprinklers from existing ceiling through the new drop ceiling.	

UNIVERSITY CREATIVE AND PRINT NEW BUILDING

Danco Construction Inc – General Contractor

CO 001		\$ 44,438
	Added HVAC and electrical supply for new additional commercial printer. Added automatic door operator to one door while omitting door operators from two doors.	

CO 002		\$ 11,373
	Added deck covering of G60 galvanized metal to the dock. Subgrade soils of 25' x 120' x 1' were determined to be structurally unsuitable. Excavated existing soil and replaced with clean soil. Retest was satisfactory.	

CO 003		\$ 12,760
	Added 2x4 wood blocking to exterior wall for necessary support of exterior metal panels. Changed plan location of a transformer from floor to ceiling to conserve floor space and move it from the path of fork trucks. Removed and rebuilt concrete apron of shared large opening of adjacent building.	

STEM DISCOVERY LAB, RICE LIBRARY

Garmong Construction – General Contractor

CO 002		\$ 3,459
	Added condensation drain for new Starbuck's HVAC and structural support for operable wall. Painted additional corridor wall. Relocated lighting control sensor. Credit for not using roof ladder.	

Summary
Construction Projects

March 5, 2026

Projects Under Construction

Health Professions Renovation/Addition Phase IV

Project Cost **\$ 50,000,000**

Funding Source: Legislative Appropriation - 2023

Planned Completion: August 2027

Wright Administration Renovation/Addition

Project Cost **\$ 32,000,000**

Funding Source: Legislative Appropriation - 2023

Planned Completion: December 2027

University Creative and Print New Building

Project Cost **\$ 2,500,000**

Funding Source: Legislative Appropriation - 2019

Planned Completion: March 2026

Center for Applied Business Technologies, Romain College of Business

Project Cost **\$ 1,300,000**

Funding Source: USI Foundation

Planned Completion: August 2026

University Home Improvements and Updating

Project Cost **\$ 1,250,000**

Funding Source: Legislative Appropriation - 2019

Planned Completion: July 2026

STEM Discovery Lab, Rice Library

Project Cost \$ 730,000

Funding Source: USI Foundation

Planned Completion: June 2026 (currently in use)

**Orr Center Lower Level Partial Renovation for Online and Adult Learning,
and Student Financial Success Center**

Project Cost \$ 625,000

Funding Source: Special Projects

Planned Completion: April 2026

New Harmony Double Log Cabin Roof Replacement

Project Cost \$ 135,000

Funding Source: New Harmony Project Reserve

Planned Completion: April 2026

Liberty Arena Lighting and Controls Replacement

Project Cost \$ 125,000

Funding Source: State Repair and Rehabilitation

Planned Completion: August 2026

Projects In Design

Physical Plant Boilers 1 & 2 Replacement

Project Cost \$ 1,600,000

Funding Source: State Repair and Rehabilitation

Education Building Classroom, ED1101, Renovation

Project Cost \$ 625,000

Funding Source: State Repair and Rehabilitation