

## **Draft text for remarks delivered by Dave Johnson to the BOT on behalf of the IEA unions**

**May 15, 2019**

Hi, I'm Dave Johnson, President of the SIUC FA, the union that represents tenured and tenure-track faculty at SIUC. I'm joined by Ami Ruffing of ACsE and Anna Wilcoxon of the GAU. Jeff Hayes of the NTT-FA isn't able to join us today.

### **Our commitment to SIUC, and working together whenever we can**

Members of the IEA unions have a long-term commitment to SIUC. ACsE, the FA, and the NTT-FA represent employees, many with decades of service to SIUC. We want SIUC to thrive: our future, as employees, and as residents of a region dependent on the university, depends on the future success of SIUC. GAU represents graduate students who will spend years on this campus and have a long-term investment (often in the form of tens of thousands of dollars of student debt) in the value of their SIU degrees. If SIUC continues to decline, the value of their degrees will decline with it. As union leaders, we are stewards of the long-term interest of SIUC.

We are happy to work with the SIUC administration whenever we can. We have consistently been allies with the administration in seeking for state funding. During the budget crisis, union leaders spoke up in defense of SIUC and the SIUC administration when some questioned whether this campus had made cuts and suffered during the Rauner era. Just this past spring, we reached out to IEA contacts at area high schools to help generate interest in SIU day. And we are always happy to talk to the administration when contractual provisions appear to stand in the way of ideas that are in the interest of our members and SIUC. So rather than saying "the contract won't let us do it," we encourage administrators to call us up and see if we can work something out. Often we can.

### **The enrollment crisis**

Everyone in this room associated with SIUC recognizes that enrollment is the number one issue facing the Carbondale campus. Our fall 2018 enrollment was 10,851. Enrollment was down by 13% from 2017 to 2013, the worst decline in the state. Going back to 2015, our enrollment is down by a staggering 28%, the second worst decline in the state (behind only Chicago State). Go back ten years, to 2008, and our enrollment is down by 47.5%. And as everyone recognizes, the immediate prognosis for the future is not good. Our freshmen class next fall will apparently be about as small as this year's freshmen class, in the range of 1000-1100 students. If one goes back a decade, to an era when SIUC's enrollment was stable, one finds that incoming freshmen made up about 12-13% of the overall student body. So an incoming class of 1000-1100 gives you a total enrollment of around 9,000 students. At 9,000, SIUC will be much closer in size to Western and Eastern than to the other members of the "big five" we used to compare ourselves to.

## **A self-inflicted wound on the retention front**

As important as recruitment of new students is retention of current ones. Here SIUC had some good news of late. The Saluki Success Program took the required UCOL 101 class, which had never been successful, and made it a powerful force for mentoring and supporting students. The hard-working NTT faculty in that program decreased the chance of students dropping out during the first semester by 20% and decreased the chance of them finishing the fall semester on academic probation by another 20%. To the dismay of many on campus, Interim Provost Komarraju has decided to cut those NTT faculty loose. She decided not to offer them contracts for next year (leaving open only the prospect of one-semester contracts, with no funding for the spring). So they are looking for jobs elsewhere. Her plan is to replace these successful NTT faculty by assigning the course to TT faculty who were hired to teach and do research in specific academic disciplines, not to offer training in basic student-success skills, and who do not want to teach UCOL 101. The likely result is that the course will once again become a failure.

## **The morale crisis**

Mismanagement like this, and the chronic decline in SIUC's enrollment, has had a catastrophic impact on campus morale. While falling enrollment is our single greatest problem, abysmal morale may be the greatest impediment to solving the enrollment crisis. Staff, faculty, and graduate students who are not happy to be at SIUC are not going to be able to recruit students to come to SIUC. So faculty, who are by and large more mobile than staff, are leaving in droves. And the faculty who leave are, by definition, strong candidates for jobs elsewhere. And given that few faculty are replaced, we are seeing a massive brain drain from this university. Most faculty I know are looking for jobs elsewhere—and it is only the weak academic job market that has kept many of us here.

Low salaries are one major factor. NTT faculty, civil service staff, and GA's are certainly underpaid, and GA's are forced to pay back far too much of their paltry stipends in the form of student fees—fees that are much higher than at other institutions in the region. But I naturally know the most about faculty salaries. As of the fall of 2016, TT faculty at SIUC were paid 15% less than our peers. And given that we've only seen a 1% raise since then, things have no doubt gotten worse since then. So one's reward for years of service is to see one's financial status slowly decline as spotty, miniscule raises fail to keep up with inflation, and fall far behind what would one be making at a peer university.

We recognize, of course, that SIUC is not flush with cash. But there are low-cost things that SIUC could be doing to help morale. One would be making fair pay for faculty, staff, and GAs a long-term priority, even if there is no short-term fix. Instead the administration nickels and dimes instructors to death, refusing to do things like pay them the standard one-month salary for summer courses that students in their program absolutely have to take. Another thing the administration could do would be to demonstrate respect for the expertise and experience of faculty, graduate students, and staff when it comes to the future shape of the university. Instead, they are doing the opposite.

## **Restructuring: bogus synergy and cost savings**

Which brings us to restructuring. As our enrollment plummets, we at SIUC have been spending much of our energy fighting over how to rearrange our academic units. Now the administration is going to impose three new schools, of Agriculture; of Education; and of Analytics, Finance, and Economics—despite negative votes from faculty in the units, from the faculty senate, and the graduate council. They are doing it despite votes to oppose the universal elimination of academic departments from undergraduate and graduate student government. And tenure-track faculty like me are the lucky ones: at least we got to vote, even if our votes end up getting ignored. NTT faculty—who make up the majority or even the entirety of faculty in some units—have often not even gotten to vote. Nor have graduate students or civil service been seriously consulted about the fate of their units.

How will restructuring increase enrollment at SIUC? It won't. Students aren't going to come to SIUC to study rehab because the Rehabilitation Institute has been broken up and redistributed to the School of Human Sciences and the School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences. They aren't going to come here to study forestry because the Department of Forestry has been submerged into a School of Agricultural Sciences. If anything, the longer names may put them off, as units that are currently independent, with their own identities, will be lost within new, larger units.

To his credit, former Chancellor Montemagno never claimed that restructuring would help with enrollment in the near term. Instead he made two main arguments. First, restructuring would produce new synergies between existing units. But “synergy” has proved an elusive concept, as it has in the corporate world, where merger mania resulted in at least as many misses as hits. And the administration has never been able to make synergy arguments specific to individual parts of the university. Only faculty in the relevant areas are capable of identifying possibilities for greater academic interaction, and where they have done so, as in the case of the School of Biological Sciences, they've supported merging into schools—and we in the IEA unions have supported them in this choice. But the administration insists on mergers even where faculty don't see such possibilities.

Here's another indication of how feeble the synergy argument is. Everyone who's worked at a university knows that academic departments aren't run by chairs: they are run by civil service staff. So if you are going to eliminate departmental red-tape and produce synergy by combining departments, civil service staff are going to know where tape can be cut, and where combining units is going to do more harm than good. But the SIUC administration has failed to consult with Civil Service staff. Staffers have been assured that they won't lose their jobs due to restructuring—which is good news, news we appreciate. But other than being told that they may have to change jobs as units are eliminated and reconstituted, they haven't been told anything. So the people most directly impacted by restructuring, and who would have much to contribute to any positive restructuring process, have just been told not to worry because everything will be taken care of later. At most, a few hurried meetings were held this spring to start planning for changes coming this summer or fall. But civil service staff know full well that there is no plan for how to

reorganize office staff, and that in the chaos that starts hitting this campus on July 1<sup>st</sup>, it will be civil service staff who are left to pick up the pieces.

The other argument for restructuring was cost savings. When he launched the restructuring process, Chancellor Montemagno claimed that it would save \$2.3 million. For context, note one of my least favorite figures about SIUC's budget: our athletics department runs an annual deficit of \$5 million. So either the savings from restructuring were extremely modest, or our athletics budget ought to be a front-page scandal (or both). But even the goal of \$2.3 million proved illusory. The numbers were fake—they relied on assumptions like SIUC not just demoting but firing every single associate dean on campus—and the administration stopped providing numbers, and said that anyone claiming that they were pushing savings was peddling “fake news.” But administrators still claim, as in recent communication to the IBHE, that savings would be “substantial,” even if they no longer dare to provide numbers that someone could check.

### **Restructuring: the college structure & rubber stamping**

So restructuring will not help enrollment; it will almost certainly not produce any positive synergy in areas where faculty think it won't produce synergy. And the administration cannot identify savings from restructuring, in part because they haven't even worked out basic elements like what to do with civil service staff. Yet they are now imposing schools against the will of faculty and students. And the hard part of the restructuring process has just begun. The most controversial decisions have been left for last. Most of the schools still on the administration's proposed structure—the structure they've shared with this board and the IBHE—are opposed by faculty.

And one vital factor left unresolved thus far is our future college structure. SIUC's current structure—and its future one—will include three basic levels of administration. First will come basic academic units—now mainly departments, which would be replaced by schools in the new regime; second are colleges (like the current colleges of Business, Science, and Education); third is the central administration (the provost's office). All three are necessary for the university to run properly. But thus far all restructuring has done is to recombine units at the departmental and school level, which has broken up our current college structure, leaving many units reporting directly to the central administration, while others are in colleges that are shells of their former selves. So next year many faculty, GA's, and staff will not only be trying to figure out how to make new schools work, but trying to make them work without having a functional college structure. Meanwhile others will be left in colleges that are shells of their former selves. And even many faculty who support the new school structure oppose the administration's plans for the college structure in their area.

In short, if things go as they are going right now, the administration is going to be pushing through many more school and college plans that faculty reject. Administrators are talking to faculty about new structures, true enough. But while they will say that they hope to reach plans faculty and administration agree on, the proof is in the pudding. And we have proof right now that the administration is perfectly willing to impose its will even when

faculty do not agree. Thus faculty who would, in the last plan the admin has supplied, be assigned to schools or college structures they believe would be bad for their programs and their students have good reason to fear that they will end up in those structures, as have their colleagues in agriculture, education, and economics.

### **Restructuring: winners and losers**

If restructuring isn't saving us money and won't produce greater cooperation amongst faculty (at least not when faculty are being mashed together into new units against their will), what is it doing? One thing it is doing is picking winners and losers. For the people who are being forcibly merged with a bunch of other units aren't getting synergy: they are getting demoted. While some departments will grow, retaining their current leaders and office staffs and gaining other programs, others will be submerged into new units, where a number of units once headed by individual chairs and individual office staffs will have to make do with one director and one office staff. So the College of Engineering is apparently going to see all of its units promoted to separate schools, rather than being mashed into a single school (as was the original plan); so too other units are surviving restructuring by being promoted—by gaining additional programs without being merged by other units—including Computing, Psychology, and Criminology.

To be clear, we have absolutely nothing against colleagues in these units turning restructuring into a win rather than a loss. But there has almost no public discussion about these *de facto* decisions to promote computing, psychology, criminology, and engineering while demoting agriculture and education. SIUC may need to make decisions, hard decisions, about what areas to emphasize and which to pull back from. But these decisions need to be made out in the open, with full review, including by this board. If SIU as a system is to have any sort of identity or mission or all, and if this board is to do anything other than select presidents and chancellors and rubber stamp their decisions, it must weigh in on decisions that will result in fundamental changes to any campus in the system.

### **Our requests to the board**

So we are asking you to earn the trust placed in you by taking ownership over decisions that will fundamentally reshape SIUC. Do not follow the lead of your predecessors on the board, who delegated the authority to reshape SIUC to a set of interim administrators. Ensure that decisions are connected to the missions of SIUC and the entire SIUC system.

Do not look the other way when the interim campus administration and interim president push through controversial decisions faculty and students oppose. Rather, instruct them to seek consensus. Tell the interim campus administration, and the interim president, that you expect them to present you with plans that secure the support of the campus community.

Tell the interim campus administration, and the interim president, that you expect them to prioritize plans with a direct connection to improving enrollment. And tell them that they must take steps to improve morale on campus, above all by demonstrating that the

expertise and experience of SIUC students, staff, and faculty will play a decisive role in shaping the future of the university.

We are not asking for inaction or preservation of the status quo. On the contrary, we have just pointed out, in terms I suspect are clearer than any administrative presentation you will receive, how dire the situation is.

But decisions about the future of this campus must be based on argument and evidence, rather than simply the inertia from a plan left behind by a former chancellor, and the process must pull the campus together rather than pulling it apart.

We do not expect you to micromanage this campus: we do expect you to insist that it is managed properly, with due attention to the views of all on this campus, including the students, staff and faculty we represent. If you are going to do this, you must retake ownership of the restructuring process.

### **Addendum (after the meeting)**

As board members, the restructuring process puts you in a tough spot. It is horribly complicated. You can't be expected to master every detail. And I am sure that you want to trust campus leaders. I actually think that you *can* trust campus leaders—trust that they are doing their level best to make the right decisions for SIUC. I trust our current leaders on that level, but of course you can trust that someone is *trying* to make the right decision while also believing that they are not making the right decision.

And you should also trust SIUC faculty, staff, and students. As has been evident at many a board meeting, individual SIUC faculty, staff, and students have different views. So you should trust the votes. When faculty vote that the administration is forcing them to do something that will hurt their program and their students, you should trust faculty votes. When the faculty senate and graduate council also vote to oppose such moves, you should also trust those faculty votes. When the undergraduate and graduate student government vote against restructuring (as they did by voting against elimination of all departments, and by their votes of no confidence against Chancellor Montemagno), you should trust student votes.

Conflicts between trustworthy sources about important issues are precisely why we have governing boards. When we have such a conflict, I would humbly suggest that it is your job to intervene. In such cases it is not enough, to my mind, to just require transparency. There's a world of difference between asking the president to explain why he made a decision and reviewing that decision yourself. As the Board of Trustees, you are not expected to merely observe what administrators do. On the biggest issues, when there is real conflict, you are expected to provide genuine oversight. The buck stops with you.

How to do this without micromanaging? The first thing to do is to say this to both parties: we want you to compromise. We want an action plan you can both live with. Send both sides back to the drawing board, with a quick deadline for return.

It's only if the two sides can't agree that you would need to intervene on specific issues. Give both sides a fair hearing. Demand that each provide evidence that their position will do more to help SIUC attract, retain, and educate more students, and that their position is more in keeping with the missions of SIUC and the SIU system. And then make a decision yourselves.



# IEA Unions Presentation

May 15, 2019



# Introductions

- Ami Ruffing, ACsE
- Anna Wilcoxon, GAU
- Jeff Hayes, NTT-FA
- Dave Johnson, SIUC FA

*Table 1: Combined Undergraduate and Graduate Enrollment (based on FTE)*

**Combined Enrollment Change in Enrollment in 2018**

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	From 2015	From 2017
CSU	3,618	2,734	2,429	2,267	-37%	-7%
EIU	7,282	6,234	5,339	5,892	-19%	10%
GSU	3,920	3,886	3,554	3,320	-15%	-7%
ISU	18,183	18,533	18,308	18,115	0%	-1%
NEIU	6,366	6,101	5,777	5,201	-18%	-10%
NIU	16,502	15,712	14,982	14,352	-13%	-4%
SIUC	14,995	13,880	12,463	10,851	-28%	-13%
SIUE	11,985	11,870	11,523	10,942	-9%	-5%
UIC	28,687	28,935	30,418	31,620	10%	4%
UIS	3,921	3,985	3,526	3,211	-18%	-9%
UIUC	47,644	48,765	49,634	50,755	7%	2%
WIU	9,561	8,934	8,134	7,260	-24%	-11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,664</b>	<b>169,569</b>	<b>166,087</b>	<b>163,786</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

Source: IBHE



TOP STORY

SIU | Saluki Success Program

# SIUC's new mandatory freshman orientation class makes big impact on retention

GABRIEL NEELY-STREIT *The Southern* Mar 3, 2019  7

99¢ YOUR FIRST MONTH!



Asia Taylor, a sophomore at SIU, credits the Saluki Success Program with helping her overcome a concussion that nearly caused her to drop out.

RECOMMENDED

BREAKING TOP STORY

SIU CARBONDALE

## With no guaranteed contract, Saluki Success staff may leave amid revamp

GABRIEL NEELY-STREIT *The Southern* Apr 29, 2019 3

We YOUR FIRST MONTH!



Gauri Pitale (from left), Nick Weshinsky, Abigail Wheatley, Laura Borger and Casheena Stephens of the Saluki Success Program.

RECOMMENDED

### OPINION | VOICE OF THE SOUTHERN

The Southern's editorial board members are: Alee Quick, digital editor; Les Winkeler, sports editor; and Tom English, executive editor

ALERT TOP STORY

Voice of The Southern

## Voice of The Southern | If Saluki Success Program isn't broken, don't fix it

May 5, 2019 Updated May 10, 2019 1



The University is granting this request.

calculated Sept 22

**Potential administrator savings:**

10% salary increase - 42 chairs	\$ 462,395
Reduction to 9-month appointments-42 chairs	919,519
Associate and assistant deans	943,000
Reduction to 6 deans from 8	370,000
Potential administrator savings	<u>2,694,914</u>
Less: Salary increment-15% for 15 directors of schools	(300,000)
Net savings	<u>\$ 2,394,914</u>

### **Agricultural and Life Sciences (3 schools)**

**Agricultural Sciences**<sup>1</sup> (Agribusiness Economics; Animal Science; Forestry; Plant, Soil and Agricultural Systems)

**Biological Sciences**\* (Microbiology; Plant Biology; Zoology)

**Earth Systems & Sustainability**\* (Geology; Geography & Environmental Resources)

### **Business & Analytics (3 schools)**

**Accountancy** (Accounting)

**Analytics, Finance & Economics**<sup>1</sup> (Economics; Finance; Information Systems Technologies)

**Management & Marketing**<sup>1</sup> (Hospitality and Tourism Administration; Management; Marketing; Public Administration)

### **Health & Human Science (3 schools)**

**Health Sciences**\* (Allied Health; Rehabilitation Institute)

**Human Sciences**<sup>1</sup> (Food and Nutrition; Kinesiology; Public Health & Recreation Professions; Social Work)

**Psychological & Behavioral Science**\* (Psychology; Behavior Analysis Therapy)

### **Education**<sup>1</sup> (single school)

Counseling, Quantitative Methods and Special Education; Curriculum and Instruction; Educational Administration and Higher Education; Workforce Education and Development; (Office of Teacher Education)

### **Science, Technology, Transportation, Engineering & Math (6 schools)**

**Applied Engineering & Technology**\* (Technology, Electronic Systems Technologies, Technical Resource Management)

**Computing**\* (Computer Science)

**Engineering** (Civil and Environmental; Electrical and Computer; Mechanical and Energy Processes; Mining and Mineral Resources)

**Mathematical and Statistical Sciences**\* (Mathematics)

**Physical Sciences** (Chemistry & Biochemistry; Physics)

**Transportation** (Aviation Management & Flight; Aviation Technologies; Automotive Technology)

### **Social Sciences, Humanities, Media, & Arts (5 schools)**

**Architecture, Art & Design** (Art and Design; Interior Design, Fashion Design, Architectural Studies)

**Justice & Public Safety**\* (Criminology and Criminal Justice; Paralegal Studies; Pre-Law, Public Safety Management)

**Humanities** (Africana Studies; English; History; Languages, Cultures and International Trade; Philosophy)

**Media, Communication, & Performing Arts** (Cinema and Photography; Communication Studies; Journalism; Music; Radio, TV and Digital Media; Theater)

**Social Science & Multicultural Studies** (Anthropology; Linguistics; Political Science; Sociology)

*NOTE: Two college-driven proposals to create two colleges from this group are in a draft stage*

Source: Admin to IBHE



# Status

- Lots of controversy
- Lots yet to be resolved
- College structure will be a mess
- College structure controversial
- Review process a rubber stamp?



# Requests

- Reclaim authority over major decisions
- Connect decisions to campus and system mission
- Require consensus-building
- Demand focus on enrollment (including retention)
- Require attention to morale
- Demand arguments & evidence
- Retake ownership of restructuring.