

UIUC AAUP Policy Committee

Agenda for January 20, 2026 Meeting with Charles L. Isbell, Jr., Chancellor John Coleman, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs 4:30 p.m. via Zoom

Probable attendees:

Charles L. Isbell, Jr., Chancellor
John Coleman, Provost and Vice Chancellor

Robin Kar, Chapter President, Law and Philosophy
Carol Symes, Chapter Vice President, History
Hadi Esfahani, Economics
Richard Laugesen, Mathematics
Cary Nelson, English
David O'Brien, Art and Design
Robert Dale Parker, English
Dana Rabin, History
Daniel Steward, Sociology
Leslie Struble, Civil and Env. Engr
Carol Tilley, School of Information Sciences
H. F. Williamson, Chapter Secretary, Economics

(A) Questions addressed to the Chancellor and Provost

1. Public perception of higher education
 - a. What do you see as the most important public criticisms of higher education in Illinois right now? What accounts for the rise of negative views of the university in the public sphere, however inaccurate they may be (or perhaps, in light of how inaccurate they are)?
 - b. How do you believe the university (and specifically the faculty) should respond to those criticisms? How can the faculty and the AAUP better communicate the value of a public research university to the broader public?
2. Current national political climate
 - o How is the university positioning itself in response to recent and anticipated federal actions? To put it differently, to what extent are long-term strategic goals and plans being re-shaped by the present national environment?
 - o With regard to the recent renaming of the campus diversity office, is this a strategic adaptation, a capitulation, or something else?
3. Developments at peer institutions
 - a. Through what organizations or alliances is campus leadership coordinating with and learning from other universities, as it responds to changes in federal policies? Do campus leaders communicate regularly with counterparts at other Big Ten or flagship institutions? What is the administration's attitude regarding University Senate Resolution RS.25.01, which urges the university to join a Mutual

Academic Defense Compact (MADC) for the Universities of the Big Ten Academic Alliance?

- b. How much do you know about developments at other universities (e.g., agreements reached with federal government, how decisions have impacted research funding, what actions have overruled faculty governance, Title VI investigations)?
4. Title VI complaints
 - a. How is the university handling the current increase in Title VI complaints?
 - b. What support is provided to affected faculty and staff?

(B) Questions addressed to Chancellor Isbell

5. Your leadership style
 - a. What values guide you the most when difficult trade-offs have to be made?
 6. Strategic directions
 - a. Which campus initiatives are most strongly aligned with your vision?
 - b. How do you plan to seek input from faculty and other stakeholders?
- On all these issues, we welcome any thoughts you may have, now and later, about how the AAUP chapter can help.