

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
(Final; Information)

CC.26.29 Urbana Faculty Nominations to the Search Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President

BACKGROUND

At its February 26, 2026 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the composition of the Search Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President including three faculty members from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The Urbana-Champaign Senate was asked to provide at least eight nominees, but no more than ten nominees, for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

NOMINATIONS

The Senate Committee on Committees presents the following slate of nominees. Statements of interest are included.

Rummana Alam	LAW	Stephen Maren	LAS
Jenny Amos	ENGR	Meaghan McKenna	AHS
Pedro Hallal	AHS	Meicen Sun	SIS
Joseph Irudayaraj	ENGR	Oktay Urcan	BUS
Mary Kalantzis	EDUC		

Faculty senators may submit virtual floor nominations beginning March 9, 2026 and ending March 13, 2026. Faculty senators may vote for up to nine faculty members online beginning March 23, 2026 and ending March 27, 2026.

Nominees will be notified of election results on April 1, 2026. The final slate of nominees will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees through the University Senates Conference for the Board's selection of three faculty members to serve.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
Chaya Sandler, Chair
Kent Choquette
Linda Herrera
Gal Hochman
Tania Ionin
Myles Johnson
Bernhard Scully
Gavriel Campbell, *ex officio*
Jenny Roether, *ex officio*

STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

Rummana Alam (Teaching Professor, LAW)

Professor Alam joined the legal writing faculty at the College of Law in 2010. She holds both a JD (magna cum laude) and LLM from the University of Illinois College of Law. She also earned a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Western Ontario and a Bachelor of Science from McMaster University. She is licensed to practice law in Illinois, New York, and Ontario, Canada. Professor Alam practiced for over four years as in-house contracts counsel for Carle Foundation Hospital, where she focused on health care transactional law. In Canada, Professor Alam completed her articling with the City of Toronto's legal department. She teaches Legal Writing and Analysis, Introduction to Advocacy, and Drafting for Transactions and Health Law Practice.

Jenny Amos (Teaching Professor, ENGR)

Jenny Amos is a Teaching Professor in Bioengineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She is a AIMBE Fellow and Board of Directors Member, BMES Fellow and Board of Directors Member, ABET Commissioner, two-time Fulbright Specialist in engineering education. She has won multiple awards and recognitions for her teaching and scholarship of teaching both on and off campus. Outside of BIOE, she has also worked to revolutionize the future of graduate medical education serving as a founding member of the Carle-Illinois College of Medicine. She also holds affiliations with Art+Design, the Siebel Center for Design, the Center for Global Studies, the College of Education, and the Health Sciences Engineering Center. Amos has served her campus community on several high-level search committees, University Senate, and the Education Policy Committee. She was recognized for her service with the Campus Outstanding Faculty Leadership Award in 2022.

Pedro Hallal (Professor, AHS)

Dr. Pedro Hallal is a Professor in the Department of Health and Kinesiology. He served as President of the Federal University of Pelotas, Brazil (2017 to 2020) and is currently the System Representative for Brazil in the University of Illinois System's Brasillinois Initiative. He serves in the University Senate and as a member of the Honorary Degrees Committee. His primary area of research is physical activity and public health. He has published more than 500 scientific articles, and his work has been cited >100,000 times. Prof. Hallal was the leader of the 2012, 2016 and 2021 Lancet Physical Activity Series – work that informs the global health burden of physical inactivity. He chairs the Global Observatory for Physical Activity, which monitors physical activity surveillance, research, and policy in 186 countries. He also served as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Physical Activity and Health (2021-2025) and is Director of the MPH.

Joseph Irudayaraj (Professor, ENGR)

Prof. Joseph Irudayaraj is the Founder Professor of Bioengineering and the Associate Director of Shared Resources for the Cancer Center at Illinois. He previously held academic positions for 13 years at Purdue University, 7 years at Penn State, and four years at Utah State. At Purdue, he served as the Deputy/Interim Director of the Bindley Bioscience Center for 5 years. He is a distinguished recipient of many awards. As a fellow of several prominent bio/biomedical engineering societies, he has chaired multiple NIH panels, including SBIR review panels. Throughout his career, he has mentored over 45 graduate students and 40 postdoctoral scholars, published over 400 refereed articles, and taught 14 different courses. At UIUC, he has served on the University Graduate College Committee, Dean's Advisory Committee, and Faculty Affairs Committee, and currently sits on the Named Professorship Committee.

Mary Kalantzis (Professor, EDUC)

Mary Kalantzis is Professor of Education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and served as Dean of the College of Education from 2006 to 2016. An internationally recognized educational leader and scholar, she has played a central role in shaping policy, institutional reform, pedagogy, and educational innovation. During her deanship she guided the College through a period of strategic growth and national prominence, launching major initiatives in digital learning and establishing one of the first fully online doctoral programs at Illinois. Kalantzis has also held major leadership roles internationally, including President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services at RMIT University. Her scholarly work, has profoundly influenced literacy education worldwide. Across her career she has combined intellectual leadership with institution-building, financial literacy, advancing educational equity, digital learning and transformative approaches teaching and assessment.

Stephen Maren (Director, LAS)

Dr. Stephen Maren is the Director of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology and a Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. As a distinguished neuroscientist and UIUC alumnus, Dr. Maren returned to his alma mater in 2024 following an illustrious career at Texas A&M University and the University of Michigan. His groundbreaking research on the neurobiology of emotional memory has earned him international acclaim; he consistently ranks among the top cited neuroscientists globally. With over 30 years of continuous funding from the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Maren has a sustained record of academic excellence and research productivity. His deep-rooted connection to Illinois, combined with a world-class scientific pedigree, allows him to represent the university's mission of transformative discovery and its tradition of fostering global intellectual leadership.

Meaghan McKenna (Assistant Professor, AHS)

Meaghan McKenna is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Science at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Her research addresses problems of practice related to implementation of multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), with a specific focus on how writing is conceptualized, measured, and supported within early grades. She develops and tests scalable approaches to writing assessment and instruction that can be integrated within MTSS to improve educational and developmental outcomes. To ensure the relevance and utility of her work, she prioritizes research–practice partnerships to collaboratively identify implementation challenges and iteratively refine solutions. Across studies, educators and students are not merely participants but co-constructors of knowledge, ensuring that the assessment tools and instructional materials developed are feasible in authentic contexts through the integration of implementation science principles to promote sustainability. Dr. McKenna was recently honored with the Early Career Contributions in Research Award from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Meicen Sun (Assistant Professor, SIS)

Meicen Sun: Assistant professor, School of Information Sciences. Her research examines the political economy of information, the geopolitics of data, and information policy. Her writings have appeared in academic and policy outlets, including International Organization, Foreign Policy Analysis, Harvard Business Review, The Hill, World Economic Forum, and the Asian Development Bank Institute. She had previously conducted research at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and at the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. Bilingual in English and Chinese, she has also written stories, plays, and music and staged many of her works -- in both languages -- in China, Singapore and the U.S. Sun served as a Fellow on the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on China and is an affiliated faculty with the MIT FutureTech. AB with honors, Princeton University; AM with Certificate in Law, University of Pennsylvania; PhD, MIT; postdoctoral fellowship, Stanford University

Oktay Urcan (Professor, BUS)

Oktay Urcan is professor of accountancy and Fred & Virginia Roedgers Faculty Fellow in Accountancy. He joined the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2014 after being an assistant professor for seven years at London Business School and, before that, a teaching assistant for five years at the University of Texas at Dallas. His research interests include archival financial accounting: debt market relevance of accounting information, accounting disclosures, and macro accounting. He has made the List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent at the University of Illinois several times, and received the Raymond A. Hoffman Faculty Excellence Award in Accountancy in 2016. Urcan received his BA in management from Bogazici University in 2002 and his PhD in accounting from the University of Texas at Dallas in 2007.