

Session

Descriptions

Session 1

Certiport Certification Testing – Justin Barker, Certiport

Certiport testing must be registered for in advance. You may check to see if there are any open spots, but it is not guaranteed.

Session 2

Explore the area or go out to eat with colleagues at a local restaurant – all within ONE MILE

Maldaner's Restaurant
Saputo's
La Piazza Cucina Italiana
Obed & Isaac's Microbrewery & Eatery
Brewhaus

Maryflor
Subway
Jimmy John's

Session 3

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Council of Affiliates – Rob Zumberlein

All IBEA affiliate board representatives should plan to attend this meeting. The Council of Affiliates will meet to get updated contact information of the IBEA affiliates and to go over the responsibilities of affiliates.

Update on IBEA: Learn first-hand how your IBEA organization is growing – Heather Borowiak and Rod McQuality, IBEA President and Executive Director

Come and hear from your IBEA leadership about the newest tools and resources available to members. Also, join us for a discussion on how we can partner with our new business and university partners.

Tools for Incorporating AI into Student Reflections for Deeper Learning – Julienne Shields, Millikin

This intermediate-level session on artificial intelligence is designed for educators who use reflection as a pedagogical tool to deepen student learning. Participants will explore two approaches for integrating an AI companion that students can engage with through conversation and journaling. The session will also demonstrate how educators can use AI to summarize student reflections and assessments, enabling more meaningful and informed conversations between teachers and students.

Authentic Assessment Tools in the Age of AI: A Hands-On Workshop (Bring a laptop) – Corinne Hoisington

Unlock the future of classroom assessment and academic integrity in our hands-on workshop! We will move beyond traditional exams and quizzes to explore how AI-powered tools can transform the way you measure student learning and foster genuine engagement. You will also learn how to teach a critical new skill: prompt engineering, empowering students to communicate effectively with AI and leverage its power responsibly. Get ready to dive into innovative methods, including creating video discussion boards that make it harder to cheat and easier to assess true understanding, and designing authentic assessments that connect classroom concepts to real-world projects and community engagement. You will leave with practical strategies to ensure academic integrity while making learning more meaningful and exciting for your students.

The GPEAK System: Essential skills, resources, assessments, and training for educators – Heather Penczak, NIU

Join us for a session on GPEAK, an initiative developed by Illinois Central College in collaboration with key stakeholders, including Peoria's CEO Council, Regional Workforce Development Alliance, Greater Peoria Economic Development Council, and the Illinois Community College Board. The GPEAK system aims to develop and validate Illinois' ten essential employability skills through a system of curricular resources, assessments, and badges. GPEAK students can earn badges by demonstrating mastery of the key performance indicators aligned to the essential skills. Discover how these resources have been transformed into an educator-facing training site with easily digestible modules to empower instructors to cultivate college and career readiness by nurturing the development of essential employability skills. This session will be interactive with time to explore how you can incorporate GPEAK into your courses and programs to prepare students for college and career.

Session 5

Opening Session

Awards and featured speaker Dr. Rachael Mahmood, Illinois Teacher of the Year; Lunch provided

Session 6

Roundtable with University Staff – Rod McQuality

Hear first hand of expectations for students entering post secondary education from university staff. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a roundtable discussion these university staff members in preparing students for post secondary education.

Designing Project-Based Assessments with AI: From Standards to Student-Ready – Tori Hale

Designing project-based assessments that align to the National Business Education Standards can be overwhelming – especially when teachers are already short on planning time. In this session, discover how to pair MasteryMate with a chatbot tool to streamline the process. First, use MasteryMate to generate project-based assessment ideas tied directly to NBES standards. Then, take those ideas into Gemini or another chatbot to build out student-ready guidelines, deliverables, rubrics, and checkpoints. This workflow allows teachers to move from a vague standard to a full project outline in minutes – while still retaining professional judgment and classroom relevance. Participants will walk away with a repeatable process for creating authentic, standards-aligned assessments without hours of prep.

Developing Business Partnerships – Terry Stroh and Todd Stirn, Northern Kane County Regional Vocational System

The session will take participants through the process that we have developed for creating and maintaining strong relationships with our business and community partners.

Operating a Student-Run Apparel Decorating Business – Tricia Campbell, Mount Pulaski High School

Interested in launching a school-based enterprise? This session provides a step-by-step guide to establishing and operating an apparel decorating business within your school. Learn about essential equipment, vendor relationships, classroom management strategies, common challenges and their solutions, and much more. The content can be adapted for a full-year course or implemented as part of a student organization such as FBLA, DECA, or FCCLA. Presenter Tricia Campbell has successfully implemented this program at two schools and has trained more than 500 educators nationwide to do the same.

Using QuickBooks Online as a Platform to Teach Accounting and Business Analysis – Lisa Ludlum, Western Illinois University

In addition to being a CPA, the presenter is also a QuickBooks Online ProAdvisor and will demonstrate how QuickBooks Online cloud accounting can be incorporated into accounting curriculum using an accounting cycle approach.

Career Development Experiences: A Toolkit for High-Quality Implementation – Heather Penczak, NIU

Join for an engaging and informative session exploring the Career Development Experience Toolkit. This in-person presentation will guide participants through the statutory definition of Career Development Experiences (CDEs) and offer practical strategies for implementing high-quality internships, youth apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships. Attendees will gain insights into community-based models, proven practices, and actionable next steps to enhance career readiness initiatives. The session will also highlight additional resources to support effective CDE implementation across diverse educational and workforce settings.

New Attendee, First timer, College Students – Heather Borowiak and Rod McQuality, IBEA

Do you want to learn more about IBEA and all that it does for business education in Illinois? Are you a new professional who wants to hear from experienced business instructors? Do you have questions you would like answered about teaching business education? If so, then this session is for you. Learn about IBEA and get some tips, tricks, and advice from experienced business educators.

Stock Trading and Commodity Trading Competitions – Serkan Karadas, Minh Tam, Tammy Schlosky, University of Illinois Springfield

In this session, we will showcase the stock trading and commodity trading competitions that we have been implementing in partnership with local high schools. Participants will learn how the competitions are set up and how their students can take part in them.

Education for Employment Systems: Updates and Opportunities – Nick Elder, Kaleb Smith, Terry Stroh

Explore how Illinois' Education for Employment (EFE) systems enhance Career and Technical Education through program oversight, partnerships, and student opportunities. This session provides a concise overview of EFE functions and showcases current statewide initiatives, including CCPE, work-based learning, and advocacy. The session concludes with an interactive discussion for participants to share questions, ideas, and strategies.

To AI or Not to AI? That's No Longer the Question – Julienne Shields, Millikin

Learn the fundamentals of artificial intelligence terminology and explore key ethical frameworks for AI use in the real world. Participants will engage in a guided conversation with an AI companion to examine its advantages and disadvantages for student learning. The session concludes with an exploration of a five-tier framework for incorporating ethical AI use into classroom experiences, a model developed by teachers to help increase AI literacy among high school students.

Turning Learners into Earners with Industry Certifications – Justin Barker, Certiport

Many companies are redefining their requirements for entry-level positions, shifting away from the traditional emphasis on bachelor's degrees and placing greater value on verified skills. In fact, three out of four employers report that certifications are valuable training tools and a key factor in their hiring decisions. Certifications not only enhance credibility and marketability but also open doors to high-quality entry-level career opportunities. This session explores certification programs available through Certiport and provides guidance on how educators can implement these opportunities directly within their classrooms.

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Accelerate Your Future with Educational Opportunities with the Stuart School of Business – Stuart School of Business, Illinois Institute of Technology

This interactive session will introduce the educational opportunities available through the Stuart School of Business, including undergraduate and graduate programs, certificates, and upskilling options. Participants will also experience a simulation of Stuart's ACE (Academic and Career Excellence) course.

What Can the National Business Education Association Do For You? – Dr. Barbara Hagler, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale

NBEA is a valuable resource for all business educators. Are you interested in collaborating with other business educators? Are you interested in business education lesson plans, publications, and professional opportunities? If so, you need to learn about the benefits of membership in NBEA.

AI in Business Education – What is Low Hanging Fruit and What are Big Future Waves – Julienne Shields, Millikin

This roundtable discussion invites educators to collaborate and explore pathways for integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into business-related instruction in the coming year. Participants will consider key questions such as: How can we design real-world learning experiences that build AI literacy? What skills will businesses expect from students as entry-level roles evolve in response to AI advancements? How can we help students distinguish between ethics in the classroom and ethics in the workplace? Additional organic discussions will emerge throughout the session, and key insights will be captured using AI tools in Google Studio.

Collaborative Strategies to Attract and Support Business Education Majors – Illinois State University

This presentation will create a collaborative space for educators and administrators to exchange ideas, examine emerging trends, and share effective strategies for recruiting and retaining students in business education. Drawing on experiences from Illinois State University, the session will highlight innovative approaches to program design, targeted outreach, and efforts to strengthen the pipeline into the teaching profession. Special emphasis will be placed on the essential role business educators play in mentoring future teachers, offering early exposure to the profession, and shaping the future of teacher preparation. Together, we will explore practical strategies for engaging high school students and sparking their interest in pursuing business education as a major. Practicing business teachers in the audience will be encouraged to contribute their insights as we collectively identify promising approaches to growing and sustaining the field.

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Affiliate Meetings

This session begins with a brief 10–15 minute gathering of the full IBEA membership for organization-wide updates and announcements. Following this joint session, attendees will break into their respective affiliate groups to conduct local business, discuss regional initiatives, and collaborate on strategies that support business education in their areas. This is a valuable opportunity to connect, share, and strengthen local engagement within the broader IBEA network.

Session 10

Bell-to-Bell: Entry & Exit Activities That Actually Work – Tori Hale

Tired of wasted minutes at the start or end of class? This session gives you a bank of plug and play entry and exit activities designed for CTE and business classrooms with little to no extra prep required. From two minute debates to quick reflection grids, you will learn versatile frameworks that spark focus at the beginning of class and capture learning at the end. These strategies are not just fillers; they are reusable protocols that build consistency, reduce classroom management issues, and deepen student thinking while saving you time. Participants will leave with ready to use templates that can be dropped into any lesson tomorrow with only minimal adjustments if needed.

Unlocking Students' Creativity with AI- The Right Business AI Tool – Corinne Hoisington

Join us on a thrilling journey of discovery with AI and generative AI. We will explore how these tools can transform learning by fostering creativity, critical thinking, and responsible digital citizenship. In this engaging session, you will discover powerful AI tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Gemini, Claude, and Perplexity. You will also learn the art of prompt engineering to help students craft effective prompts for AI-powered creations and explore how AI can equip students to tackle real-world challenges while becoming agents of positive change.

Teaching in the Age of AI: Use Cases from Medical Education and Lessons Learned – Dr. Sookyung Suh, Southern Illinois University

Dr. Suh will share practical tips, tools, and ethical considerations for using artificial intelligence (AI) effectively and responsibly in education. Participants will gain insight into how AI is integrated within the medical profession among doctors and support staff and explore ways to purposefully incorporate AI in their own classrooms to enhance teaching efficiency, student engagement, and learning outcomes.

IBEA Roundtable with University and Business Partners – Rod McQuality: Executive Director of the IBEA

IBEA business and university partners will discuss strategies to increase the effectiveness of the newly established partnership program. Although the session is geared toward IBEA partners, it is open to all who would like to listen and share ideas on the effectiveness of the partnerships.

Ten Activities You Can Use in an Intro to Business Class – Josh Ebbert

This session will provide participants with activities that can be used in an Intro to Business or Personal Finance class. Activities include topics such as types of economic systems, budgeting, consumer decisions, and other topics covered in Intro to Business classes.

Explore AI Literacy and Pedagogy: Redefining Skills and Assessment of Learning – Neetu Singh, Kara McElwrath, Hei-Chi Chan; University of Illinois Springfield

This interactive session is designed for educators who want to harness the power of artificial intelligence (AI) to transform teaching and enhance student learning. Moving beyond the hype, the session explores practical, hands-on applications of AI tools tailored specifically to educational disciplines. Participants will learn how to use Google NotebookLM to streamline content analysis and resource creation by automating traditionally time-consuming tasks, while also exploring its potential to help students engage more deeply with course material. The session will also demonstrate how MagicSchool AI can serve as a powerful teaching assistant, saving hours of planning time by instantly generating differentiated assignments, project-based learning scenarios, rubrics aligned to standards, assessments, and real-world examples that connect students to content. In addition, a significant portion of the session is devoted to navigating the ethical and responsible use of AI in the classroom, including discussions of academic integrity, data privacy, algorithmic bias, and best practices for transparent integration. This highly practical session will equip participants with the knowledge and tools to begin using AI confidently and responsibly in their teaching.

Financial Literacy for Middle School – Maggie Owen, Illinois State Treasurer’s Office

Money Minded Illinois curriculum books were created by former teachers to meet all ISBE financial literacy standards and most inquiry standards. The Illinois State Treasurer’s Office provides these robust materials free to teachers and school districts across the state. Join us as we discuss the dynamic subjects and assessments available in the middle school book. We will demonstrate an interactive lesson on investments that can be used with the rest of the Money Minded unit or incorporated into your lesson plans.

Using QuickBooks Online as a Platform to Teach Accounting and Business Analysis – Lisa Ludlum, Western Illinois University

In addition to being a CPA, the presenter is also a QuickBooks Online ProAdvisor and will demonstrate how QuickBooks Online cloud accounting can be incorporated into accounting curriculum using an accounting cycle approach.

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In the Blink of an AI: Preparing for a Future of New Career Paths – Corinne Hoisington

Imagine a business classroom where students are empowered to discover their full potential as career paths evolve to meet the demands of the future. Artificial intelligence is not just transforming technology—it is redefining the world of work. This session explores the exciting possibilities of AI in the job market and its growing influence across industries. Participants will examine cutting-edge AI tools that are reshaping entire sectors, making critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability more essential than ever. The discussion will highlight how AI is creating new career opportunities, transforming existing roles, and providing valuable insights into the future of work. Attendees will also experience how AI can support self-discovery, helping students take ownership of their learning and prepare for success in a dynamic, rapidly changing workforce.

Session 12

Escape the Ordinary: Designing Digital Escape Rooms – Kara McElwrath, University of Illinois Springfield

Transform your classroom into a dynamic, problem-solving experience in this hands-on, bring-your-own-device session. Participants will learn how to design and implement digital escape rooms using two of Google's most powerful and accessible tools: Sites and Forms. Digital escape rooms are not only engaging but also highly effective for reinforcing content, fostering collaboration, and developing critical thinking skills. This session will guide attendees step-by-step through creating a compelling narrative, embedding clues and puzzles, and setting up an automated feedback system that allows students to advance only when they submit correct answers. Participants will leave with the foundational knowledge to design custom escape rooms for any business or computer science topic, from mastering accounting principles to debugging code. Bring your device and get ready to create an unforgettable learning experience for your students.

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Financial Empowerment for High School & College Students – Maggie Owen, Illinois State Treasurer’s Office

Empower your students to take control of their personal finances with free materials provided by the Illinois State Treasurer’s Office. The Illinois Financial Wellness Hub is an online platform that provides resources and tools to all Illinois residents, making it a go-to trusted site for financial questions. Financial literacy can help teens and young adults make better decisions and prepare for the future. We’ll discuss the basics and focus on practical tools for everyday activities. You’ll walk away with FinWell Hub passports for classroom engagement and flexible resource guides to incorporate into your lesson plans. * Materials suitable for high school and college students. Users must be 13 years or older.

Engage, Inspire, Enroll: Relationship-Centered Strategies for Business Educators – Ally Ferguson

How do business educators grow their programs in a competitive academic landscape? The answer lies in relationships. Students enroll and stay where they feel connected, valued, and inspired. In this interactive session, participants will explore practical strategies for building strong educator-student relationships that boost engagement and enrollment. Through discussion, role-play, and action planning, attendees will leave with concrete tools to foster positive connections and recruit the next generation of business leaders.

Past Presidents Council

This annual meeting brings together past presidents of the Illinois Business Education Association to engage in meaningful dialogue, provide strategic counsel, and support the ongoing mission of IBEA. Participants will review organizational progress, offer insights on current initiatives, and explore opportunities to strengthen business education across the state. The session also serves to recognize the continued leadership and legacy of those who have shaped the association.

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