

# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

## 2025 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM OPENING SESSION DETAILS

### OPENING SESSION 8:10 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

Meridian Ballroom	Artificial Intelligence and the State of Project Management – Are You Ready?
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**Panelists:** *Kurt Rolland, Covenant Technology Partners*  
*Kristina Wells, Financial Services Industry*

The framework of this panel discussion will include:

#### 1. The Current State of AI in Project Management

- How are PMs and organizations actually using AI today?
- Where is hype vs. practical reality?
- Are most PMs prepared for the changes coming?

#### 2. Winners and Losers

- Which organizations are seeing measurable benefits (efficiency, cost savings, decision-making improvements)?
- Who risks being left behind (slow adopters, industries with regulatory barriers, PMs unwilling to adapt)?
- What does this mean for career progression in project management?

#### 3. PMI and the Evolution of AI in PM

- How is PMI (and the PMBOK) framing AI's role in project management?
- What guidance, certifications, or frameworks are emerging?
- Are standards keeping pace with technology?

#### 4. Key Use Cases of AI for PMs

- Schedule optimization and resource allocation.
- Risk prediction and scenario modeling.
- Sentiment analysis in stakeholder communications.
- Knowledge management (automated lessons learned, chat-based project copilots).

#### 5. Resistance to Adoption

- Fear of job displacement vs. opportunity to elevate PM skills.
- Concerns about data privacy, security, and IP when using AI tools.
- Cultural and organizational inertia: "We've always done it this way."
- How to drive adoption responsibly and inclusively.

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## 2025 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM BREAK-OUT SESSION DETAILS

### MORNING BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

9:45 A.M. – 10:35 A.M. and 10:50 A.M. – 11:40 A.M.

Maple/Dogwood	Influence Without Authority
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**Presenter:** *Rose James, Edward Jones*

Project Leaders rarely have control over every voice at the table. Still, they are expected to deliver results through others. In this session, discover science-backed strategies and everyday practices that help you shape decisions, build alignment, and move forward even when authority is limited.

Hickory/Hackberry	The Lawless PM: How to Break the Laws of Project Management and Get Away Scot-Free
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**Presenter:** *Kevin O'Neill, Federal Reserve Bank St. Louis*

Project Management is full of "laws" - like Brook's Law, Hofstadter's Law and Horstman's Law - that are often treated as unbreakable truths. These principles have become part of the project manager's lexicon, shaping the way we plan, estimate and execute work. But what if these rules are not as ironclad as they seem? What if you could break them strategically, intentionally and not only avoid disaster, but actually drive success? In this session, we'll explore the origins and intent behind some of the most well-known project management laws. Learn how to creatively navigate difficult projects, when and how to challenge conventional wisdom and how to pull off "lawless" project management without getting burned. Whether you're a seasoned PM or just learning the ropes, this session will challenge you to think differently about the "rules" and empower you to break them... responsibly.

Oak/Redbud	Leading High Performing Teams
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**Presenter:** *Cort Hacker, Ameren*

Through 4 real-world vignettes, Dr. Hacker will share his experience building and leading high performing teams in a stressful environment. These vignettes, from a year spent in Korea, are tied to Project Management and building and leading high performing project teams.

Mississippi/Illinois	Predictability Unicorn
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**Presenter:** *Jerret Batson, Federal Reserve Bank St Louis*

Join me as we explore the evolving landscape of project predictability in an Agile world. This presentation will delve into discussions and practical techniques designed to help you understand and manage the probability window for work being completed in the world of uncertainty. Discover how to navigate the ambiguity of Agile project management and gain valuable insights into maintaining predictability amidst changing priorities and dynamic workflows. Whether you're an Agile practitioner, project manager, or team leader, this session will equip you with the tools and strategies needed to enhance your project's predictability and success.

*\*PMI PDU Reporting –Each break-out session is worth 1 PDU in the Talent Triangle category indicated.*

# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

## 2025 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM BREAK-OUT SESSION DETAILS

### AFTERNOON BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

12:55 P.M. – 1:45 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. – 2:50 P.M.

Maple/Dogwood	Introduction to Scrumban-Leveraging for Flow
<p><b>Presenter:</b> <i>Kris Bohnenstiehl, Federal Reserve Bank St Louis</i></p> <p>When organizations embark on their Agile journey, Scrum is often the first framework they encounter. However, the Agile world encompasses over 40 different frameworks and methodologies, each with its unique approach. In this session, we introduce Scrumban—a hybrid framework that combines the best elements of Scrum and Kanban to enhance team efficiency and workflow.</p>	
Hickory/Hackberry	Leadership in Action: Six Stories of Turning Dysfunction into Success
<p><b>Presenter:</b> <i>Chris McSherry, Bayer</i></p> <p>It's a collection of anecdotes from five of the best leaders I've had in my 35 year career on what they did to turn around dysfunctional teams they inherited, plus one story of my own.</p>	
Oak/Redbud	Simplifying Software Product Management (Ways of Working)
<p><b>Presenter:</b> <i>Joe Tiernan, Nestle Purina Pet Care</i></p> <p>Software product management can seem daunting, but at it's core it is project management that uses software as part of the solution. It follows the same key project management processes we're all familiar with, but it sometimes has different terminology.</p>	
Mississippi/Illinois	Are You Solving the Right Problem – Why Digital Transformation and AI Initiatives Fail
<p><b>Presenter:</b> <i>Raj Iyer, LETS Consult, LLC</i></p> <p>How do you know you are building the right product? Do you know your customer or the problem well enough? Many digital transformation and AI initiatives fail. Most companies are solving the wrong problem. According to research from the Harvard Business Review, a significant portion of companies, around 85% of executives, believe their organizations are "bad at diagnosing problems," meaning they often end up solving the wrong problems by not properly identifying the root cause or most impactful issues, leading to potentially wasted time and resources on solutions that don't address the core challenges.</p>	

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# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

## 2025 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM CLOSING SESSION DETAILS

### CLOSING SESSION

3:00 P.M. – 3:50 P.M.

Meridian Ballroom

Radical Adaptability as Your Secret Weapon To Thrive Through Disruption

**Presenter:** *Tyler Norman, Scholastic, Inc.*

Strength without agility is mere mass - Fernando Pessoa

In a world where AI, complexity, and the pace of change continues to explode, agility and adaptability are no longer "nice to have" but are a minimum requirement for survival. In this session you'll learn the specific challenges this theme presents to individuals, teams, and organizations, as well as strategies for each to thrive through this era of constant disruption.

At the conclusion of this session, attendees will be able to:

- Understand the unique challenges presented by today's era of continuous disruption and proliferation of AI applications, and risks for those who don't address these challenges head on
- Implement strategies to systematize adaptability at an individual, project team, and organizational level
- Identify specific opportunities, both immediate and long-term, to thrive and differentiate yourself through change

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## 2025 SIUE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

### KEYNOTE SESSION PRESENTERS

NAME	TITLE	COMPANY
<i>Kurt Rolland</i>	<i>Principal AI Architect</i>	<i>Covenant Technology Partners</i>
<i>Kristina Wells</i>	<i>Program Leader</i>	<i>Financial Services Industry</i>
<i>Tyler Norman</i>	<i>Director, Strategic Supply Chain Programs</i>	<i>Scholastic, Inc.</i>

### BREAK-OUT SESSION PRESENTERS

NAME	TITLE	COMPANY
<i>Rose James</i>	<i>Program Leader</i>	<i>Edward Jones</i>
<i>Kevin O'Neill</i>	<i>Technical Program Manager</i>	<i>Federal Reserve Bank St. Louis</i>
<i>Cort Hacker</i>	<i>Portfolio Manager</i>	<i>Ameren</i>
<i>Jerret Batson</i>	<i>Agile Coach</i>	<i>Federal Reserve Bank St Louis</i>
<i>Kris Bohnenstiehl</i>	<i>Senior Scrum Master</i>	<i>Federal Reserve Bank St Louis</i>
<i>Chris McSherry</i>	<i>NA Business Insights Project Manager</i>	<i>Bayer</i>
<i>Joe Tiernan</i>	<i>Capital Planning Engineer</i>	<i>Nestle Purina Pet Care</i>
<i>Raj Iyer</i>	<i>Principal Coach, Trainer</i>	<i>LETS Consult, LLC</i>