

Board Meeting  
January 21, 2021

APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF AND DELEGATE TO COMPTROLLER  
AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT FOR HEAD VARSITY  
COACH, FOOTBALL, URBANA

**Action:** Approve Appointment of and Delegate to the Comptroller the Authority to Execute a Multi-Year Contract for Head Varsity Coach, Football

**Funding:** Non-Appropriated Institutional Funds in the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics Operating Budget

The Chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Vice President, University of Illinois System recommends the appointment of Bret Arnold Bielema as Head Varsity Coach, Football, Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, Urbana-Champaign, on a multi-year contract. The Director of the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics, Joshua H. Whitman, following consultation with and approval of the Chancellor, requested Mr. Bielema to serve as “Head Varsity Coach, Football--Designate” effective December 19, 2020, in anticipation of seeking Board of Trustees approval for a multi-year contract, consistent with Board policies. The Chancellor now requests the Board approve this appointment and delegate to the Comptroller the authority to execute a multi-year contract for Mr. Bielema consistent with the terms and conditions set forth herein.

A contract is proposed for Mr. Bielema for a six-year term, expiring on the later of: (i) January 31, 2027, or (ii) the day after the football team's last game of the 2026 season (including bowl game as applicable). Mr. Bielema's compensation shall consist of an annual Base Salary and Additional Compensation related to television, radio, education, public relations and promotional activities. Taken together, these are referred to as Total Compensation and are set forth in the table below.

Contract Year	Base Salary	Additional Compensation	Total Compensation
Year 1: (12/19/20 - 1/31/2022)	\$1,000,000	\$3,200,000	\$4,200,000
Year 2: (2/1/2022 - 1/31/2023)	\$1,025,000	\$3,275,000	\$4,300,000
Year 3: (2/1/2023 - 1/31/2024)	\$1,050,000	\$3,350,000	\$4,400,000
Year 4: (2/1/2024 - 1/31/2025)	\$1,075,000	\$3,425,000	\$4,500,000
Year 5: (2/1/2025 - 1/31/2026)	\$1,100,000	\$3,500,000	\$4,600,000
Year 6: (2/1/2026 - 1/31/2027)	\$1,125,000	\$3,575,000	\$4,700,000

Mr. Bielema will also receive additional retention compensation payments if he remains continuously employed as Head Varsity Coach, Football, through July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2025. Retention compensation payments will be in the amount of \$300,000, plus a formulaic "adjustment amount" based on regular season victories during the two-year period immediately preceding each of the retention compensation payment dates. Mr. Bielema will also be eligible for annual performance incentive compensation based on achievement of goals established in advance by and at the discretion of the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. Goals will derive from athletic and academic achievements, including conference championships, post-season appearances, conference

and national coaching awards, increases in game attendance and team academic performance. The maximum amount of performance incentive compensation for which he could be eligible on an annual basis is \$1,500,000.

Other significant terms and conditions of Mr. Bielema's employment, which will be negotiated and also included in the employment agreement, will include moving expenses, use of courtesy vehicles and/or a vehicle stipend, a country club membership, tickets for admission to DIA sporting events and standard benefits with contributions and benefit amount based upon the Base Salary where relevant. These terms and conditions are consistent with similar provisions for prior head football coaches at the University of Illinois and are customary within the industry.

Mr. Bielema's employment agreement will set forth instances in which he may be terminated for cause, including, but not limited to, failure to perform his responsibilities, conduct that brings the University into disrepute, or violations of laws, policies, or governing rules. The employment agreement will also provide for the payment of liquidated damages in the event Mr. Bielema is terminated without cause, subject to mitigation if he obtains other employment following termination. Similarly, Mr. Bielema will pay to the University liquidated damages in the event he resigns his employment without cause prior to the conclusion of his term. The employment agreement shall set forth adjustments in the liquidated damages obligations of either party during each year of the term.

Funding is provided from non-appropriated institutional funds in the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics operating budget.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, the General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The President concurs with this recommendation.

(A biosketch follows.)

BRET ARNOLD BIELEMA

Education

University of Iowa, B.S., 1992

Professional or Other Experience

University of Iowa, 1994-95, Graduate Assistant; 1996-2001, Linebackers Coach

Kansas State University, 2002-03, Co-Defensive Coordinator

University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004-05, Defensive Coordinator; 2006-12, Head Coach

University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, 2013-17, Head Coach

New England Patriots, 2018, Consultant to the Head Coach; 2019 Defensive Line Coach

New York Giants, 2020, Outside Linebackers, Senior Assistant Coach