

Assurance Argument

Illinois State University - IL

3/23/2015

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.
(This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

We at Illinois State University work as a diverse community of scholars with a commitment to fostering a small-college atmosphere with large-university opportunities. We promote the highest academic standards in our teaching, scholarship, public service and the connections we build among them. We devote all our resources and energies to creating the most supportive and productive community possible to serve the citizens of Illinois and beyond.

Adopted by the Academic Senate, Illinois State University, May 7, 2008

This mission statement guides all operations at Illinois State University. The statement has been adopted in accordance with shared governance processes shaped by and reflective of the unique nature and culture of the institution. The mission statement articulates concepts upon which the University's strategic plan (*Educating Illinois*) is based. *Educating Illinois*, in turn, guides all operations of the institution.

[1.A.1] The process used to adopt the mission statement is appropriate to Illinois State.

The mission statement for Illinois State University was developed and adopted through shared governance processes that guide all major decisions at the University. The Academic Senate, the primary governing body of the University, adopted the mission statement February 6, 2002, and amended it May 7, 2008. The mission statement was reaffirmed in 2012-2013 through adoption of the latest edition of *Educating Illinois*.

The mission statement is at the heart of *Educating Illinois*. The statement is reviewed as each new edition of the plan is compiled. Development of the latest edition of the plan was led by a task force appointed by then-President Al Bowman. Through two phases of consultations the

task force sponsored six open forums attended by 215 faculty and staff members, 44 focused discussions with various units and constituency groups, and an online survey generating more than 500 responses. The plan was ultimately endorsed by the administrative/professional and civil service councils, Student Government Association, and the Academic Senate before being adopted by the Board of Trustees February 22, 2013. The mission statement may also be reviewed by the Academic Senate at any time outside the *Educating Illinois* strategic planning process.

[1.A.2] Programs, services, and the enrollment profile are consistent with the mission.

The university mission statement shapes academic programs of the Division of Academic Affairs and student support services of the Division of Student Affairs as well as initiatives of the Division of Finance and Planning and the Division of University Advancement. In the Division of Academic Affairs, the program review process (see 3.A.1) is used to evaluate academic programs for their contributions to the University mission and strategic plan as well as to *The Illinois Public Agenda*, the strategic plan of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The Division of Student Affairs has used the Campus Labs platform to create a comprehensive, systematic, and consistent approach to strategic planning, program review, and accreditation reporting for its numerous support services. Programs and services of the Division of Finance and Planning are guided by its Strategic Plan (April 2012), while programs and services in the Division of University Advancement are guided by its 2014-2019 strategic planning document. Both plans align with *Educating Illinois*.

Consistent with its mission, Illinois State primarily serves undergraduate students, with graduate programs offered in selected areas of strength. Illinois State is chiefly a residential university with comprehensive student services and cocurricular programming. The student population consists primarily of traditional-aged learners from Illinois communities. The percentage of students from historically underrepresented populations continues to increase, reflecting the changing demographics of the state. The University continues to maintain a 19:1 student to faculty ratio with a high percentage of small classes, consistent with the emphasis on small-college atmosphere and individualized attention. In fall 2014, 72 percent of undergraduate classes had fewer than 30 students

[1.A.3] University priorities align with and support the mission.

Planning and operational documents of the four divisions reflect integration of the university mission into operations, programs, and services. The Division of Finance and Planning's strategic plan is a typical example in its statement of alignment with *Educating Illinois*. Similar statements frame all planning documents at the University. The annual budgeting process in the Division of Academic Affairs exemplifies how institutional processes are designed to promote alignment of expenditures with the mission and goals of the University. Each spring colleges submit planning documents and budget requests for the coming year to the Office of the Provost. This is an extensive process involving public presentation of plans by each college dean. Each unit must follow instructions for preparing planning and budgeting documents that demonstrate how their objectives and proposed expenditures align with unit planning documents and *Educating Illinois*.

Sources

- Educating Illinois 2013-2018
- History of Educating Illinois
- Strategic Plan, Division of Finance and Planning
- Strategic Plan, University Advancement
- The Illinois Public Agenda
- Total University, Undergraduate, Academic Program Profiles, Fall 2014

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

Illinois State University's mission statement is articulated through numerous public documents, in print and online. The mission statement is part of the latest edition of *Educating Illinois*, approved February 2013 by the Board of Trustees. The mission statement and strategic plan address the instructional, research, and service missions of the institution and establish parameters for its scope and target constituencies.

[1.B.1] The mission is clearly articulated and widely disseminated.

The University's mission statement is readily available to the campus community through university web pages (e.g., the Office of the Provost) and widely distributed university documents. Information regarding the University's mission, vision, values, goals, and priorities is available via the Values and Goals section of the University home page.

The third section of the annual Academic Plan includes strategic plans for all seven colleges and the Graduate School. Each plan aligns with *Educating Illinois*. Specific goals for teaching and research are articulated in a strategic plan for teaching, a strategic plan for research, and an international strategic plan (see 1.B.2). Each planning document identifies the vision, mission, and values articulated in *Educating Illinois* as a guide for plan development.

[1.B.2] The mission is current and inclusive of all university emphases.

The University's mission statement was last revised by the Academic Senate in 2008 and reaffirmed by the campus community and Board of Trustees through adoption of *Educating Illinois* in February 2013. The mission statement explicitly refers to instruction, scholarship, and public service and the connections among them.

As the need arises, planning initiatives are commissioned to provide more detailed guidance than is included in *Educating Illinois*. Specifics regarding the future of instruction and scholarship at Illinois State are documented in a strategic plan for teaching (adopted 2011) and a strategic plan

for research (adopted 2012), while specifics regarding the internationalization of select university programs and operations are documented in an international strategic plan (adopted 2014). Other recent planning initiatives include the Master Plan for physical improvements (adopted 2011) and the Information Technology Strategic Plan (adopted 2011; a new 2015-2018 edition may be endorsed in spring 2015).

[1.B.3] The mission identifies constituents of university programs and services.

Educating Illinois expresses the University mission through its statement of vision, values, goals, and strategies. The vision identifies the residents of the region and state of Illinois as the primary constituents of the University but also envisions contributions by the University to the nation and world. Other university, division, college, and unit planning documents expand on *Educating Illinois'* vision, values, goals, and strategies to further define the purpose and constituencies of the institution.

Sources

- Home Page, Office of the Provost
- Information Technology Strategic Plan
- International Strategic Plan
- Master Plan
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Expression, A Strategic Research Plan
- Strategic Plan for Teaching
- Strategic Plans, Colleges and Graduate School, Academic Plan
- Values and Goals, Educating Illinois, Home Page

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

Through its vision and mission statements and its strategic plan, Illinois State University acknowledges its responsibility for serving and preparing students to succeed in a multicultural society. Diversity is a core value of the institution addressed in policies, procedures, programs, and services.

[1.C.1] Illinois State addresses its role in a multicultural society.

The University articulates its role in developing global citizens and in serving the residents of Illinois and beyond in *Educating Illinois* and in programs and services that align with *Educating Illinois*.

Diversity is one of five core values of the University. Illinois State affirms and encourages an informed respect for differences among students, faculty, and staff by fostering an inclusive environment (see 3.B.4). The University endeavors to create a varied and inclusive community in which all students, faculty, and staff are active participants in a global society characterized by civic engagement, respect for differences, and educational goals that celebrate diversity.

Multicultural issues are addressed beginning in the first semester of undergraduate education at Illinois State through the General Education program. One of four broad learning goals of the General Education program is for students to have gained knowledge of diverse human cultures and the physical and natural world. The Council on General Education has established a schedule for systematic, ongoing review of course syllabi to ensure that this and other learning goals are addressed in General Education courses (see 4.B.1).

Development of *Educating Illinois* and annual assessment of progress toward its implementation are key processes for regular and systematic consideration of the institution's role with regard to multiculturalism. In addition, the University periodically conducts in-depth analyses of its efforts to foster an environment of tolerance and inclusiveness for faculty, staff, and students. The most recent such effort was undertaken in 2009 by the Diversity Task Force appointed by then-President Al Bowman. The task force submitted its report to the president in April 2009 and submitted a follow-up report regarding progress toward achieving task force recommendations in July 2011. Achievements recognized in the status report include proactive methods for communicating and celebrating work of programs and individual faculty and staff members related to diversity. Continuing challenges identified in the report include establishing a diversity officer position for the institution, ongoing assessment of the campus environment, recruiting for

diversity among faculty and staff, and mentoring new faculty and staff members from historically underrepresented populations.

President Bowman's successor, Dr. Timothy Flanagan, proposed to create the positions of chief diversity officer and chief information officer at the cabinet level. Current president, Dr. Larry Dietz, deferred creating those positions when the possibility of additional cuts to higher education funding in the state was announced. Shortly after he took office in spring 2014, President Dietz authorized the position of assistant director within the Office of Equal Opportunity, Ethics, and Access to assist in the investigation and resolution of complaints filed on the basis of protected class and to steer university efforts to promote diversity and inclusion both in employment and student enrollment. The position was filled in August 2014.

[1.C.2] Processes and activities at Illinois State address human diversity.

Policies, processes, and activities at Illinois State reflect the University's attention to human diversity. The University seeks to foster an environment that recognizes individual and cultural differences through attention to diversity in its student body, faculty, curriculum, and cocurricular activities (see 3.B.4).

In its Equal Opportunity/Non-discrimination Statement and Policy the University affirms its commitment to equal opportunity in employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, order of protection, gender identity and expression, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, unfavorable military discharge, or status as a veteran. In planning for campus development, the University has adopted a statement regarding accessibility for persons with disabilities and has incorporated accessibility into its Master Plan.

In its Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy the University affirms its commitment to the right of free expression and an open exchange of ideas among students, faculty, and staff that stimulates debate, promotes creativity, and is essential to a rich learning environment.

The Office of Equal Opportunity, Ethics, and Access is responsible for monitoring diversity and resolving diversity-related issues among students, faculty, and staff. The office annually compiles an affirmative action plan to systematically examine employment and educational policies and practices to ensure they do not disadvantage any person on the basis of protected class. The office annually sends each academic unit a statement of underrepresented groups among its faculty to guide faculty recruitment and hiring by the unit during that academic year. The office works closely with the Office of Human Resources to monitor hiring policies and practices.

The Division of Academic Affairs assists academic units with their efforts to recruit for faculty diversity and retain those faculty members through sponsorship of the Recruitment Assistance Program of Faculty from Traditionally Underrepresented Groups. Since fiscal 2009 the program has assisted with recruitment and retention of 13 faculty members. The University also participates in the Diversifying Higher Education initiative sponsored by the Illinois Board of

Higher Education. That initiative provides scholarships to graduate students from underrepresented populations pursuing careers in higher education.

The Division of Student Affairs offers several services to support and advocate for students from underrepresented populations, including Diversity Advocacy, Disability Concerns, and Community Rights and Responsibilities. Through its Dean of Students Office, Student Affairs provides support services to 365 registered student organizations on campus (as of February 2015) including 36 organizations addressing ethnic concerns and 58 addressing social issues. Student Affairs staff has participated in intensive training regarding cultural inclusion and diversity.

The Division of Academic Affairs also sponsors services to support students from underrepresented populations. University College offers several academic support programs including the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, TRIO/Student Support Services, and the University Scholars Enrichment Program. In 2012 the Mennonite College of Nursing received a \$1.1 million federal grant with which the college provides financial, mentoring, and programmatic support to diverse students through its PROUD initiative.

Illinois State celebrates the diversity of its faculty and staff in several ways. The president and his spouse annually host a diversity appreciation reception for university employees. The Media Relations unit on campus publishes an electronic newsletter (*Identity*), which includes news of university programs, events, and issues related to race; ethnicity; the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community; persons with special needs; and other underrepresented groups. The University recognizes four faculty/staff affinity groups: AsiaConnect, the Association of Black Academic Employees, the Organization of Latino/a Employees, and the Triangle Association.

Sources

- Accessibility, Master Plan
- Affirmative Action Plan, 2014
- Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy
- AsiaConnect
- Association of Black Academic Employees
- Community Rights and Responsibilities
- Core Values, Educating Illinois 2013-2018
- Disability Concerns
- Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program
- Diversity Advocacy
- Equal Opportunity, Non-discrimination Statement and Policy
- Identity (Newsletter)
- Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation
- Organization of Latino(a) Employees
- PROUD, Mennonite College of Nursing
- Recruitment Assistance Program

- Registered Student Organizations, Ethnic
- Registered Student Organizations, Social
- Triangle Association
- TRiO Program
- University Scholars Enrichment Program

1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

Illinois State University embraces its role as a state-enabled and state-assisted institution dedicated to providing quality, affordable public education to the residents of Illinois and beyond. The University continues to honor its roots as a teacher preparation institution through its emphasis on quality instruction informed by research, scholarship, and creative activities and enhanced by service. In furthering its mission the University engages external constituencies, primarily locally and regionally but also nationally and internationally, regarding issues of mutual interest and concern.

[1.D.1] Illinois State recognizes and honors its public obligation.

Illinois State has adopted the identifier "Illinois' first public university" as a reminder of its founding in 1857 by act of the Illinois General Assembly to prepare teachers to work in the common schools of the state. The identifier is included in the official university logo as a visual reminder and reinforcement of the public obligations of the institution. While the educational mission of the University was expanded in 1964 beyond teacher preparation, actions and decisions of university leaders have continued to reflect an understanding of the public obligations of the University in all programs and services.

The relationship between the University and the people of Illinois through the Illinois General Assembly is reiterated in the Illinois State University Constitution. Public obligations of the institution are articulated in *Educating Illinois*, in its vision and mission statements, values, goals, and strategies. Emphasis on civic engagement is echoed in the Legislative Branch Bylaws of the Student Government Association.

University business is conducted publicly by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor with advice from and consent of the Illinois Senate. Interaction between university and state officials is frequent through participation by university officials in meetings and hearings before the General Assembly and Illinois Board of Higher Education and through involvement in state-sponsored initiatives. The president of the University meets regularly with leaders of the other 11 public universities in the state to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Illinois State supports *The Illinois Public Agenda*, the strategic plan for higher education in the state (see 1.A.2). Every academic program offered by the University must further one or more goals of the state strategic plan. Alignment of existing programs with the plan is monitored through the program review process, while alignment of new programs with the plan is monitored through the program proposal process.

[1.D.2] Education is the preeminent responsibility of Illinois State.

Education is the foremost responsibility of Illinois State, as articulated in the authorizing legislation of 1857 and reiterated in subsequent statutes. The latest (110 ILCS 675/20, “the Illinois State University Law”) states that “the object of Illinois State University is to offer such courses of instruction, conduct such research and offer such public services as are prescribed by the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University or its successor ...” The *Illinois State University Constitution* affirms “dedication [of the University] to the teaching-learning process through which it serves its students, the body of scholars, and the general public.”

[1.D.3] Illinois State engages with and is responsive to its external constituencies.

The importance of Illinois State’s engagement with external constituencies through mutually beneficial initiatives is articulated in *Educating Illinois*. The plan emphasizes increasing collaborative partnerships.

Illinois State maintains strong ties with governmental bodies in its host communities. The president and university administrators meet periodically with area mayors, council members, and municipal staff to explore matters of mutual interest. The mayor of the Town of Normal and mayor of the City of Bloomington address the Board of Trustees each July regarding municipal initiatives that may impact and involve the University. One of the largest collaborative initiatives during the last decade is redevelopment of Uptown Normal, which serves as a gateway to the University and provides goods and services to university students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The University leases office space in a new Uptown Normal building, makes extensive use of the new Marriott hotel and convention space, and has relocated University Galleries from campus to Uptown Station/City Hall. Other university-local government collaborations include a \$500,000 contribution by the Town of Normal to the Hancock Stadium expansion and assistance to entrepreneurs through services of a small business incubator.

Illinois State maintains strong ties with business and industry in its host communities and region. Business and industry leaders serve on numerous academic program advisory boards at the University to help guide the curriculum and provide cocurricular opportunities for students. Some corporations contribute financially to programs and services across all units of the University while many others target programs within a particular discipline. In 2013, for example, the State Farm Companies Foundation pledged \$1.9 million over two years to support programs in all six academic colleges, intercollegiate athletics, and campus-wide minority recruitment initiatives. That contribution followed a \$1.8 million contribution in 2011. More than 75 corporations and organizations annually contribute to the Katie School of Insurance and Financial Services to support research, scholarships, and cocurricular activities in the College of Business. In 2007 the University dedicated the Caterpillar Integrated Manufacturing Laboratory

in Turner Hall that serves students in the STEM disciplines. Caterpillar Corporation contributed \$1.2 million toward construction of the laboratory, while the ABB Group contributed robotics. The University gives back to the business community by preparing students for work in businesses and industries in Illinois and beyond. Numerous units at the University work with local businesses to provide professional development opportunities for their employees.

Illinois State maintains strong ties to local residents and organizations. University administrators and faculty members serve on non-profit organization boards, and students volunteer for local programs and services. Residents of Bloomington-Normal, McLean County, and Central Illinois participate in numerous events, activities, and services sponsored by the University, including partnerships and initiatives that promote and celebrate diversity.

While most residents of the immediate region served by Illinois State live in urban areas with populations of 125,000 or more, geographically the region is predominately rural. Access to digital information services by rural residents has been problematic due to the high cost of providing such services across large distances. In 2010 Illinois State assumed leadership in addressing this issue. The University was awarded \$17.6 million in state and federal funding to facilitate construction of a fiber optic network to bring high-speed Internet connectivity to rural communities in six central Illinois counties. More than 100 organizations representing education, public safety, healthcare, government, business, libraries, and other sectors have partnered with the University on the project. The network became operational in summer 2013. The University has joined with the Town of Normal, City of Bloomington, and Heartland Community College as partners in the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network Limited Liability Company organized to assume responsibility for the new network.

Students are active in the community through the American Democracy Project, services and events facilitated by the Involvement and Leadership unit of the Dean of Students Office, and involvement in registered student organizations dedicated to service. Students also serve the community through their work in practicum assignments and graduate assistantships hosted by local organizations and businesses. Faculty members contribute to sectors of the regional, state, and national economies through their service in professional and trade associations.

The University provides numerous specialized professional services to residents of the region and state through units affiliated with its academic departments/schools. Examples include the Psychological Services Center and The Autism Place (Department of Psychology), the Eckelmann-Taylor Speech and Hearing Clinic (Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders), the Illinois Small Business Development Center (College of Business), and the Autism Spectrum Institute (College of Education). The University also serves communities of interest through its 11 state-authorized research and service centers.

The College of Education places more graduates in Illinois teaching positions than any other university and offers teacher preparation services throughout the state. The college engages with its external constituencies in at least three unique ways.

The College of Education has entered into Professional Development School (PDS) partnerships with school districts throughout Illinois at all levels of P-12 teacher preparation, including two

partnerships in early childhood, seven in elementary (four of those with bilingual opportunities), four at the middle level, and three at the secondary level.

Through its Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline project, the college partners with the Chicago school district and community development organizations in the city to prepare students to teach in the district and to be active community members.

In its home community, the College of Education provides elementary and secondary education to area youth through its two laboratory schools, Thomas Metcalf School and University High School. Their enrollments are legislated through the Illinois School Code at 390 and 610 students, respectively. The laboratory school system at Illinois State is one of the oldest (dating to 1857) and largest in the nation.

Sources

- American Democracy Project
- Autism Place
- Autism Spectrum Institute
- Caterpillar Integrated Manufacturing Laboratory
- Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network
- Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline
- Ecklemann-Taylor Speech and Hearing Clinic
- Educating Illinois 2013-2018 Public Obligations, Civic Engagement, and Partnerships
- Events, Activities, and Services for the Community
- Hancock Stadium
- Illinois Small Business Development Center
- Illinois State University Constitution, University-State Relationship
- Involvement and Leadership, Dean of Students Office
- Katie School of Insurance and Financial Services
- Legislative Branch Bylaws, Student Government Association, Civic Engagement
- Professional Development School
- Promoting and Celebrating Diversity in the Community
- Psychological Services Center
- Registered Student Organizations, Service
- Research and Service Centers
- Small Business Incubator
- State Farm Contribution to Illinois State University, 2013
- Thomas Metcalf School
- University Galleries
- University High School
- Uptown Normal, History of Redevelopment

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

Strategic planning provides a strong foundation for programs and services at Illinois State University. Since its inception in 2000, *Educating Illinois* has served to unify the efforts of the many largely decentralized units on campus toward a common vision and mission. Substantial efforts have been made to align all functions of the institution with *Educating Illinois* by aligning the vision, mission, and goals of campus units with those of *Educating Illinois*.

The current edition of *Educating Illinois* is scheduled for review during the next Higher Learning Commission accreditation review cycle. A fifth edition of the plan may then be developed in response to changing needs and conditions following similar processes designed to promote involvement of all faculty, staff, students, and communities of interest.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Integrity is among the institutional core values articulated in *Educating Illinois*. Illinois State University strives for an environment characterized by stewardship, collaborative decision-making through shared governance, and the highest levels of academic quality and integrity. Numerous policies and procedures have been adopted at the state and university levels to guide actions of university trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff in comporting themselves ethically and with integrity.

Integrity in financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary systems

Integrity in university systems and operations is monitored through the university compliance program and through internal and external auditing.

The University Compliance Program was established in 2013 in response to growth in the number and complexity of laws and regulations affecting university operations. Coordinated by the Compliance Working Group, the program is intended to promote adherence to local, state, and federal laws and regulations as well as personal accountability and ethical conduct. The working group prioritizes compliance risks, provides guidance and feedback regarding compliance implementation, assesses and reports progress regarding key compliance areas, and monitors emerging compliance issues.

The Office of Internal Auditing performs audits of campus units based on a schedule approved by the president. Internal audits are intended to help units determine whether they have appropriate and effective internal controls to ensure the integrity of their operations.

External audits of university finances and of compliance with state and federal regulations are commissioned annually by the State of Illinois Office of the Auditor General. External audit reports are reviewed by administrators, trustees, and the Legislative Audit Commission of the Illinois General Assembly.

Policies and processes for governance

The governing structure of the University and the rights and responsibilities of each university stakeholder are set forth in the *Illinois State University Constitution*. The document addresses the actions of students, faculty, administrators, the Academic Senate, and the Campus Communication Committee.

The composition, powers, and duties of the Board of Trustees are defined in Illinois state statutes. Policies for performance of board functions and delegation of certain responsibilities to the president are set forth in the *Governing Document of the Board of Trustees*. The document includes statements regarding academic freedom, shared governance, individual rights, freedom of information, and ethics.

The Academic Senate, the primary governing body at Illinois State University, is composed of faculty, staff, and students elected by their colleagues as well as administrators. The Academic Senate has seven standing committees composed of Senate members, including the Faculty Caucus, which provides oversight and recommendations related solely to faculty matters. In addition, 17 standing external committees composed of persons who are not Senate members report to the appropriate internal Senate committees. Proceedings and actions of the Academic Senate are guided by the *Bylaws of the Academic Senate of Illinois State University*. A supplement to the bylaws describes the membership and charges of Senate committees.

A memorandum of understanding dated January 1999 clarifies the respective roles of the Board of Trustees and the Academic Senate. The Board of Trustees has ultimate legal authority regarding university matters but defers to the faculty in matters pertaining to academics, faculty affairs, and education. If the board chooses to modify or reject any formal faculty recommendation, the president is to communicate its reasons to the Academic Senate.

Policies and processes for administration, faculty, and staff

Standards for professional conduct of executive officers, faculty, staff, and any other individuals employed by or acting as agents of Illinois State University are set forth in the Code of Ethics. Fair treatment of all personnel regardless of protected class is addressed in the Equal Opportunity/Non-discrimination Statement and Policy and the Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy.

Adherence to ethics, non-discrimination, and anti-harassment policies and procedures is monitored by the Office of Equal Opportunity, Access, and Ethics. The director serves as the university ethics officer. The officer monitors annual completion by all university employees of state-mandated online ethics training and crime reporting training. The officer collaborates with the (state of Illinois) Office of the Executive Inspector General (OEIG) to investigate alleged violations of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act by university employees. From fiscal 2006 through fiscal 2014, the ethics officer investigated 41 alleged ethics violations. In seven cases, alleged violations were corroborated and disciplinary action was taken.

University Policy and Procedures address responsibilities, appointment, compensation, and evaluation of academic deans; administrator search and selection policies; and policies for evaluating department chairpersons, school directors, deans, and the president.

Policies and procedures related to tenure-line faculty performance, including provision for equitable treatment of all faculty members, are set forth in Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) Policies. Issues regarding academic freedom as well as ethics violations not covered by the Office of Equal Opportunity, Access, and Ethics are monitored by the Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance Committee.

Academic integrity in research, scholarship, and creative expression is addressed through two university policies. Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities sets forth procedures for fact-finding and adjudication of alleged research and scholarly activity misconduct by administrators, faculty, students, and staff. Significant Interest Disclosure addresses significant financial conflicts of interest in relationship to sponsored projects involving research, education, and university service. The Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies is charged with ensuring compliance with both policies, while the rights and welfare of human subjects participating in research investigations are protected by the Institutional Review Board. Other policies related to integrity, efficacy, and safety in research and scholarly activities include Biosafety (5.3.7), Classified Research, Security of Information Technology Resources and Systems, Hazardous Waste, Intellectual Property, and Radiation Safety.

The Ombudsperson Council is available to assist university employees regardless of classification with professional problems and concerns before they necessitate formal investigation or action by one of the adjudicators named above. The council assigns one of its members to review, recommend, interpret, or refer. The ombudsperson does not advocate for any individual nor does the ombudsperson adjudicate disputes or alleged policy violations.

Sources

- Academic Dean Responsibilities, Appointment, Compensation, Terms, and Evaluations (
- Administrator Evaluation Policies
- Administrator Search and Selection Policies
- Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy
- Biosafety
- Bylaws of the Academic Senate
- Classified Research
- Code of Ethics
- Crime Reporting Training
- Equal Opportunity, Non-discrimination Statement and Policy
- Ethics Training
- Faculty Academic Freedom Ethics and Grievance Policy
- Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure Policies
- Governing Document of the Board of Trustees
- Hazardous Waste Management Procedures

- Illinois State University Constitution, Governing Structure
- Institutional Review Board
- Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities
- Intellectual Property
- Internal Auditing
- Legislative Audit Commission
- Memorandum of Understanding, Board of Trustees and Academic Senate
- Ombudsperson Council
- Radiation Safety
- Security of Information Technology Resources and Systems
- Significant Interest Disclosure
- State Officials and Employees Ethics Act
- Supplement to the Bylaws of the Academic Senate
- University Compliance Program

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

Illinois State University strives to provide complete, accurate information to the public. The university home page and second tier pages provide information intended primarily for the general public and prospective students, while the campus enterprise portal, branded My Illinois State, provides customized information to current students, faculty, and staff based on their status, courses, discipline, unit, and interests. Linked from the university home page, Quick Facts includes a comprehensive guide to student consumer information provided in compliance with the Higher Education Act and other applicable statutes. The guide consolidates in one location consumer information organized topically elsewhere on the university website.

Programs

Links to information about academic programs at Illinois State are prominently located on the upper left side of the university home page. These include links to information about undergraduate majors and minors and graduate programs, including sample plans of study. More detailed information about graduate programs, including master's degree programs, doctoral programs, and non-degree graduate certificate programs, is available on the Graduate School website. Complete information about program admission and graduation requirements is available in the University Catalog, also prominently linked on the university homepage. The university website also includes information regarding the General Education program, the Honors program, and study abroad opportunities.

Requirements

A link to information about admission requirements and processes is prominently located at the top of the university home page. Information on the Admissions website is organized by student type: freshmen, transfer students, international students, graduate students, and students returning to Illinois State. Admission requirements are also stated in the University Catalog. Unique requirements of specific academic programs are described on the majors pages (noted above) and on department/school web pages.

Faculty and staff

Information about faculty and staff persons is available through the faculty/staff section of each college website (see Applied Science and Technology, Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, Fine Arts, Nursing, and Milner Library). Biographical information typically provided includes degrees earned, courses taught, publications and presentations, and research, scholarship, and

creative activities. A link to the faculty member's curriculum vita is often included. Faculty and administrative staff members are also identified in the University Catalog.

Costs to students

Illinois State addresses concerns regarding the cost of attending college through clear information about costs students can expect and through aggressive efforts to aid students through loans, scholarships, tuition waivers, grants, graduate assistantships, and employment (see Paying for College, Cost of Attendance, and Net Price Calculator). Pursuant to legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly in 2003 and amended in 2010, tuition and fee rates applicable to incoming undergraduate students are fixed for four years, allowing for long-term financial planning by students and their families. Some majors qualify for additional time based on the length of their program.

Each year about 80 percent of Illinois State University students receive financial aid. During the 2013-2014 academic year, financial aid received by all Illinois State University students totaled approximately \$245 million, of which approximately \$38 million was provided by the University. The institution annually employs about 6,000 students.

Control

Information regarding university governance is available on the Administration page of the university website, linked directly from the university home page. Links on the Administration page lead to information regarding shared governance bodies, administrative units, academic colleges, and key governing documents and policies. Board of Trustees meetings are advertised and conducted in compliance with the (Illinois) Open Meetings Act.

Accreditation relationships

Information regarding accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is also available on the Quick Facts page (see above). The HLC logo on the page links to the Statement of Affiliation Status for Illinois State University as it appears on the HLC website. Information about specialized accreditation is available on the Quick Facts page, on individual program websites, and in the accreditation section of the Office of the Provost website.

Sources

- Accreditation
- Administration
- Certificate Programs of Study
- Cost of Attendance
- Doctoral Degree Programs of Study
- Faculty and Staff, College of Applied Science and Technology
- Faculty and Staff, College of Arts and Sciences
- Faculty and Staff, College of Business

- Faculty and Staff, College of Education
- Faculty and Staff, College of Fine Arts
- Faculty and Staff, Mennonite College of Nursing
- Faculty and Staff, Milner Library
- Graduate Programs of Study
- Home Page, Illinois State University Website
- Majors Eligible for Five- or Six-Year Tuition Freeze
- Master's Degree Programs of Study
- My Illinois State
- Net Price Calculator
- Paying for College
- Programs of Study (Majors)
- Programs of Study (Minors)
- Public Act 096-1293, Limitation on Tuition Increase
- Quick Facts

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

Illinois State University is governed by a Board of Trustees established pursuant to Illinois state statutes. The board is to consist of seven voting members appointed by the governor with advice and consent of the Illinois Senate and one voting member who is a student chosen through a campus-wide student election. No more than four of the seven gubernatorial appointees may be affiliated with the same political party. Members must reside in the state.

State law sets forth the powers and duties of the board. One directs the board to adopt rules, regulations, and bylaws. The board has done so through adoption of its *Governing Document of the Board of Trustees* and the *Illinois State University Constitution*. Together, state statutes, the *Governing Document*, and the constitution guide a public institution responsible to the residents of the state of Illinois through its governor and General Assembly yet sufficiently autonomous to make independent decisions in the best interests of the institution.

[2.C.1] The Board of Trustees of Illinois State acts to preserve and enhance the University.

The *Governing Document* articulates an operating philosophy that describes broad values and principles through which the board is to govern. The document characterizes the board as "a steward for society that seeks to use university resources wisely" and emphasizes the importance of institutional planning.

Consistent with this philosophy the board has adopted a statement of its vision for the University. The statement acknowledges *Educating Illinois* as the guide to achieving its vision. The board annually adopts a statement of goals that reiterate support for *Educating Illinois* and identify contributions the board intends to make to further plan implementation.

Board actions, as documented in meeting agendas and minutes, continue to demonstrate commitment to preserving and enhancing the University. The board monitors implementation of *Educating Illinois* through annual progress reports and annually approves a five-year rolling

Academic Plan that includes five-year plans and annual objectives for each college. The board authorizes applications to the state for new academic programs, annually adopts an operating budget, and adopts plans that address specific aspects of university operations (e.g., the Master Plan for facilities).

[2.C.2] The Board of Trustees considers interests of internal and external constituencies.

Issues that come before the Board of Trustees typically have been vetted through appropriate communities of interest, as provided for in university governance documents. The Academic Senate plays a key role in this vetting process in its role as the “primary governing body” at the institution (per the *Illinois State University Constitution*). Academic Senate meetings provide a venue for public discourse by its members, which represent faculty, staff, and students. Any member of the university community may bring issues before the Senate. In addition, the Senate helps establish ad hoc committees with broad representation to advise the Board of Trustees on special matters (e.g., the 2013 presidential search committee).

To facilitate ongoing communication among the board, faculty, staff, and students, the *Governing Document* provides for a Campus Communication Committee comprising members of the Academic Senate, Administrative/Professional Council, Civil Service Council, and Student Government Association. Input from the committee is presented near the beginning of each regular Board of Trustees meeting.

The primary external constituency of the board consists of the residents of Illinois. University officials are in frequent contact with members of the Illinois General Assembly and staff of executive departments of the state on matters pertaining to budgets and legislation.

[2.C.3] The Board of Trustees preserves its independence from undue influence.

Independence of the board from undue influence is promoted through statutory restrictions and through the ethics statement of the *Governing Document*. Together, these restrictions and provisions are intended to minimize conflicts of interest and guide board members should conflicts arise. State statutes provide that trustees are to serve without compensation, shall not be employed in or appointed to any office or place under the authority of the board, shall not have interest in any contract made by the board, and shall not be an employee of the state. The document provides that activities of board members “shall be consistent with the principle that there shall be no conflict between the private interests of a public official or employee and his/her official duties.” The document sets forth guidelines for ethical conduct of board members. The student member of the board is selected through a student election process, removed from influence of the Governor and Illinois General Assembly. Thus, the Board of Trustees has and continues to maintain its independence from undue influence of internal and external constituencies, acting always in the best interests of the institution.

[2.C.4] The Board of Trustees delegates day-to-day management and oversight of academic matters.

State statutes empower the board to employ a president and all administrators, faculty, and support staff necessary to properly manage the institution. Through provisions of its *Governing Document* the board designates the president as the chief executive officer of the institution responsible for day-to-day management and administration and recognizes the faculty as having primary responsibility for academic matters. The *Governing Document* authorizes the president to hire and terminate employees; make final determinations regarding promotion, tenure, and sabbaticals; execute legal instruments within budget expenditures approved by the board; and approve certain capital projects, leases, and licenses.

Sources

- 110 ILCS 675
- Campus Communication Committee
- Ethics Statement, Governing Document of the Board of Trustees
- Governing Document of the Board of Trustees
- Illinois State University Constitution, Governing Structure
- Meeting Agendas, Board of Trustees
- Minutes, Board of Trustees
- Minutes, Board of Trustees (Campus Communication Committee)
- Operating Philosophy, Governing Document of the Board of Trustees
- Progress Reports, Educating Illinois
- Provision for the Academic Senate, Illinois State University Constitution
- Statement of Goals, Board of Trustees
- Statutory Restrictions on Reimbursement and Employment
- Vision Statement, Board of Trustees

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Commitment to freedom of expression and pursuit of truth is demonstrated through university policies and their enforcement.

The parent policy related to these matters is the Code of Ethics, which establishes standards of professional conduct for administrators, faculty, staff, and anyone else acting as an agent of the University (see 2.A). The code identifies academic freedom, intellectual honesty, and personal integrity as core values.

Additional guidance regarding academic freedom is provided by the Academic Freedom policy, which is based on the American Association of University Professors' definition of academic freedom (1940 policy with 1970 interpretive comments). The Academic Freedom policy and the Tenure policy were revised in 2012 and 2013 to make explicit the right of all employees at Illinois State to participate in shared governance and to speak on matters related to the functioning of the University, including its positions and policies, without fear of discipline. The revisions were initiated and recommended by the Academic Senate and approved by the president.

Related university policies include Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activity, regarding academic integrity in research, scholarship, and creative activities (see 2.A), and Involvement in Political Activities, which expressly permits faculty member involvement in political activities outside the classroom. Expectations regarding student conduct are addressed in the Code of Student Conduct, which is enforced through the Community Rights and Responsibilities unit in the Dean of Students Office.

Faculty Responsibilities to Students addresses free pursuit of learning by students. In an appendix to the Code of Ethics, the policy states that faculty members should encourage free pursuit of learning by all students and should exemplify the highest scholarly standards.

The primary means of enforcing academic freedom policies are the Faculty Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance policy and Proceedings in Faculty Academic Freedom, Dismissal, and Non-reappointment Cases. The policies provide for a Faculty Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance Committee (AFEGC) to review complaints from faculty about alleged violations of academic freedom and the code of ethics, including allegations that violations of those policies affected appointment, promotion, tenure, or evaluation decisions (see 2.A). AFEGC reports to the Academic Senate and consists of 31 faculty members elected by their peers. On average, AFEGC reviews one or two cases per year. Most disagreements are settled through mediation options available at the University.

Sources

- Academic Freedom
- Code of Ethics
- Code of Student Conduct
- Faculty Academic Freedom Ethics and Grievance
- Faculty Responsibilities to Students
- Involvement in Political Activities
- Proceedings in Faculty Academic Freedom, Dismissal, and Nonreappointment Cases
- Tenure Policy

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

With the freedom to express oneself and to pursue truth in teaching and learning comes the responsibility to conduct one's academic pursuits ethically and with integrity. Over several decades an effective system of oversight and support services has developed at Illinois State University unique to the institution. Through its system of shared governance, the University has adopted policies and procedures to promote honesty and integrity in all academic pursuits, including research, scholarship, and creative activities, involving students and faculty. Numerous programs and services have been implemented to proactively guide students and faculty in ethical research practices and use of information resources. This system of oversight and support services is ever evolving to accommodate changes in the institutional environment, scholarship and scholarly communication, and technology.

[2.E.1] Illinois State acts to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice.

The *Illinois State University Constitution* sets forth rights and responsibilities of university administrators, faculty, staff, and students, including the responsibility to adhere to standards of professional ethics in research, scholarship, and creative activities. Numerous campus policies and programs provide oversight and support services to ensure adherence to those standards.

Oversight

The Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies is the primary unit responsible for oversight of research, scholarship, and creative activities to ensure their integrity. Within that office, Research Ethics and Compliance oversees responsible conduct of research, human subject research, vertebrate animal research, and conflicts of interest. It also assists with oversight of biosafety and radiation safety.

Research Ethics and Compliance facilitates mandatory training in the responsible conduct of research through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) based at the University of Miami. Illinois State is a subscribing member of the initiative. Online CITI course content includes human research subjects, laboratory animals, export controls, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and responsible conduct of research. In addition, face-to-face

training in research safety is provided for principal investigators, staff, and students by the Environmental Health and Safety unit on campus.

The Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities policy addresses fabrication of data, plagiarism, abuse of confidentiality, falsification, deliberate violation of regulations, property violations, retaliation, and failure to report observed major offenses (see 2.A). Oversight of the policy is the responsibility of the Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. Between August 2009 and December 2014 the office facilitated two formal proceedings regarding alleged research misconduct and investigated approximately 10 cases that did not lead to formal proceedings. The associate vice president also monitors compliance with the Significant Interest Disclosure policy, which requires investigators to disclose significant financial interest that may present a conflict of interest in relation to research or scholarly activities supported by funds external to the University (see 2.A).

The Intellectual Property policy addresses protections and incentives to encourage the discovery and development of new knowledge and its transfer for the public benefit (see 2.A). The policy also guides generation of revenue for the University and the creators. Oversight of patents and copyrights is the responsibility the Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, while oversight of trademarks is the responsibility of the Vice President for University Advancement. The Classified Research policy provides that the University will not enter into any contract that requires approval of any outside person or agency prior to publication or dissemination of research results (see 2.A).

Research involving human subjects, animals, or biohazards must be conducted in compliance with relevant federal and state regulations as well as policies and procedures adopted by the University. Adherence to the policy and procedures manual for protection of human subjects is monitored by the campus Institutional Review Board (see 2.A). The board reviews approximately 375 research proposals each year. Every department/school has one or more representatives who complete Institutional Review Board training. These representatives assist the board by conducting first-level reviews of proposals emanating from their departments/schools. All key personnel are required to complete CITI training.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee oversees use of animals in research and teaching at the University. On average, the committee reviews 20 protocols each year. Use of animals must comply with the campus animal care and use policy and handbook.

Research involving biohazards, including hazardous infectious diseases and recombinant DNA, must adhere to standards adopted by the Institutional Biosafety Committee, overseen by Environmental Health and Safety in accordance with federal regulations. Environmental Health and Safety also oversees radiation safety (see 2.A) and chemical safety in research.

Faculty members are charged with instructing their students and staff in appropriate and ethical research methods. Student research conducted for classes or independent study is subject to the same guidelines as research conducted by faculty. Additional provisions regarding student conduct in research and scholarly practice are outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

Investigations of alleged violations of the code are coordinated by the Community Rights and Responsibilities unit of the Dean of Students Office.

Support services

Research and Sponsored Programs, a unit of the Division of Academic Affairs, has developed internal procedures to ensure compliance in grant submissions and oversight. The office is also charged with supporting research through technical assistance, dissemination of information regarding grant opportunities, and assistance with grant-funded projects. The University Research Council advises Research and Sponsored Programs and other campus units regarding research policies, procedures, and support. Research coordinators from each of the seven colleges are members of the council. They provide insights regarding research training and support needs in their units and disseminate information to their college colleagues regarding policies and procedures, training opportunities, and support services.

Faculty research support services are numerous and varied. They include services on the campus level and services on the college level. Research and Sponsored Programs facilitates a travel award program that enables faculty members to meet with funding agencies to discuss prospective research grant applications. The office also facilitates recognition of faculty research through several faculty research awards. Each college offers research grants to its faculty on a competitive basis. Other types of support includes, but is not limited to, travel funding, discipline-specific research training, statistical consulting, and grants to cover page costs assessed by publishers.

[2.E.2] Students at Illinois State are guided in the ethical use of information.

The Code of Student Conduct defines plagiarism and acts of dishonesty and establishes procedures for addressing alleged instances of them. The policy on Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources and Systems defines legal and ethical use of campus technology and establishes procedures for appropriate-use violations.

A goal of the General Education program at Illinois State is for students to develop personal and social responsibility, allowing them to demonstrate ethical decision making. An information literacy module that includes instruction in using information ethically and legally has been incorporated into speech and writing courses in the General Education program. Research methods courses, required in most academic programs on campus, build on this training by providing discipline-specific instruction on appropriate source paraphrasing and citation. Graduate students are required to complete pertinent CITI courses (see 2.E.1) prior to commencing thesis or dissertation research. Through technology help clinics during Welcome Week, students entering Illinois State are oriented to campus technology and receive assistance configuring their devices to interact with campus systems. The clinics cover content of the Technology Quick Start guide. The guide includes a section about copyright, illegal downloading, and legal alternatives to file sharing.

During the 2004–2005 academic year Illinois State received 501 complaints from entertainment industry corporations or associations alleging use of university telecommunications networks to

access multimedia files in violation of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. To proactively address the problem the University launched a Digital Citizen Project in January 2007. The project was intended to reduce illegal piracy by students, address ethical and legal issues through education, and create a legal digital media service for Illinois State students. To raise awareness of the issue, students are now required to acknowledge and agree to the policy on Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources and Systems (see above) before they may register for classes. Primarily by constraining multimedia downloading on the residence hall telecommunications network, but also through increased publicity and training regarding legal access to multimedia files, the number of industry complaints decreased to 63 during the year ended June 30, 2014.

[2.E.3] Illinois State enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Policies regarding academic honesty and integrity among faculty members are reviewed in 2.E.1.

Academic honesty and integrity among students is addressed in the Code of Student Conduct. Enforcement of the code is the responsibility of the Community Rights and Responsibilities unit of the Dean of Students Office. Alleged violations of academic honesty and integrity provisions are first handled at the course and department levels. Cases not resolved there are referred to Community Rights and Responsibilities, which facilitates the student disciplinary process. Cases not successfully mediated by that unit are heard and decided by the University Hearing Panel. The panel may require students deemed in violation of the student code to complete an educational activity or community service project. The panel may also issue sanctions, including probation, suspension, or dismissal. Decisions of the panel may be appealed to the Student Appeals Board. In 2013-2014 Community Rights and Responsibilities investigated 4,080 alleged student code violations, of which 206 related to academic dishonesty. In 169 of those cases, the student was judged to be in violation and was sanctioned.

Sources

- Animal Care and Use Handbook
- Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources and Systems
- Chemical Safety
- Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami
- Digital Citizen Project
- Environmental Health and Safety Section
- Information Literacy Module
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- Institutional Biosafety Committee
- Institutional Review Board Policy and Procedures Manual
- Plagiarism, Academic Dishonesty, Code of Student Conduct
- Programs and Services Supporting Faculty Scholarship
- Research Ethics and Compliance
- Student Appeals Board
- Technology QuickStart Guide

- University Hearing Panel
- University Research Council

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

Fostering an environment characterized by ethical and responsible conduct is an ongoing effort at Illinois State University and the shared responsibility of all members of the university community. The manner in which board members, administrators, faculty, students, and staff comport themselves daily impacts the integrity and perceived integrity of the institution. Most importantly, their conduct sets an example for the students who are the heart of the institution. Part of the student learning experience is making independent decisions. Supports are in place to help guide students in making ethical and responsible choices.

Compliance with laws and regulations affecting university operations becomes more challenging as their numbers and complexity increase. The newly established University Compliance Program will continue its work within the institution to maintain university compliance with all applicable statutes and codes and to promote ethical and responsible conduct by all members of the Illinois State community.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

Illinois State University offers 71 baccalaureate, 42 master's, 8 certificate, 1 specialist, and 10 doctoral programs. Each of these programs is appropriate to higher education with respect to learning goals and student performance expectations. Quality and learning goals of programs offered at multiple locations or via multiple modes of delivery are consistent across locations and modes. Appropriate and consistent rigor and quality are achieved and maintained through multiple or embedded processes that together promote an environment of continuous improvement.

[3.A.1] Courses and programs at Illinois State are current, and required performance levels are appropriate.

Illinois State uses several internal processes for maintaining appropriate rigor and currency of its courses and academic programs. Illinois State also has numerous academic programs subject to review by external entities. Both internal and external processes are dynamic and iterative.

Review of course and program proposals

The process of creating and revising courses and programs at Illinois State is necessarily lengthy to ensure input and feedback from faculty at the department/school, college, and university levels. The process is typically initiated at the department/school level by faculty members responsible for and most familiar with the discipline. Proposals are typically reviewed first by

the department/school curriculum committee provided for in department/school bylaws and are subject to review and approval by the department chairperson/school director. Proposals are then reviewed by the appropriate college curriculum committee as provided for in college bylaws and are subject to review and approval by the college dean.

Proposals related to teacher preparation programs receive further review by the Council for Teacher Education. Proposals for courses intended to meet general education requirements are reviewed by the Council on General Education.

Undergraduate course and program proposals are reviewed by the University Curriculum Committee (UCC). Policies and procedures, including general expectations of student performance at the 100, 200, and 300 course levels, are published on the UCC website.

Graduate course and program proposals are reviewed by the Graduate Curriculum Committee in accordance with policies and procedures published on the Graduate School website.

At each level of the course review process, course syllabi are reviewed to ensure they include student learning outcomes consistent with university guidelines. Review of course proposals ends with either the University Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

Program proposals require additional approvals, by the Academic Senate, Board of Trustees, and Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). The proposal form prescribed by IBHE includes curriculum and course descriptions as well as a description of student learning outcomes assessment.

Review of student learning outcomes assessment plans

Each degree and certificate program at Illinois State maintains a student learning outcomes assessment plan. While these plans necessarily differ by discipline, common elements include target performance levels and methods for assessing their achievement. Through implementation of their assessment plans, faculty members systematically gather evidence regarding student performance and then use the information to modify student learning goals, course content, and program content and structure.

All academic units are asked to submit information annually regarding assessment plans for their programs, including a description of data that have been collected and how data have been used to identify program improvements (see 4.B.3). Feedback is then provided by the Assessment Advisory Council, a university-wide committee with faculty representation from each college and with staff representation from University Assessment Services. In addition, a comprehensive review of academic program assessment plans and practices is conducted by University Assessment Services and the Assessment Advisory Council in conjunction with the program review process (see below).

Program review

Program review at Illinois State is conducted in compliance with state statutes and with regulations promulgated by IBHE. Statutes require review of each degree and certificate program at Illinois public universities at least every eight years.

The program review process at Illinois State spans two years. During the first year the student learning outcomes assessment plan is reviewed and revised through a process described in the Process for Review of Academic Assessment Plans. Aspects of the plan reviewed include appropriateness of student learning outcomes and methods and tools used to evaluate them. During the second year of program review, program faculty members complete an extensive program self-study using results of student assessment as well as other available information. Required self-study content includes an evaluation of the program curriculum and a report of findings from the latest specialized accreditation review, if applicable. Programs are also asked to respond to findings and recommendations for program improvement resulting from the previous program review.

Specialized accreditation

Of 273 sequences offered by Illinois State (as of July 2014), 139 are accredited or approved by specialized accreditors. These sequences include teacher preparation programs, which are subject to annual review and approval by the Illinois State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board.

Alumni feedback

Procuring feedback from program completers is another means of evaluating program currency and appropriateness. Each May University Assessment Services surveys persons who graduated from Illinois State one and five years prior. For example, the 2014 survey solicited feedback from the classes of 2013 and 2009. The survey was completed by 855 alumni (9.0 percent response rate; see survey instrument and results). Of responding alumni who pursued another degree after leaving Illinois State, 95 percent indicated that their Illinois State program adequately prepared them for their subsequent academic endeavors. For alumni entering the workforce after graduation, 90 percent indicated that their degree adequately prepared them for their career path. The annual survey is supplemented by alumni surveys conducted by many academic units and by exit surveys conducted by some programs.

[3.A.2] Level-appropriate learning goals are clearly articulated at Illinois State.

Broad learning goals for programs at Illinois State are articulated by course level through documents maintained by the University Curriculum Committee and Graduate Curriculum Committee. Learning goals for specific programs are articulated through student learning outcomes assessment plans. (see 3.A.1).

In addition to meeting requirements of their chosen program of study, undergraduate students must meet requirements of the General Education program. In 2011 a task force was established to evaluate the program and recommend changes to its mission, goals, and learning outcomes.

Changes were approved by the Academic Senate April 10, 2013, and the revised program was first implemented in fall 2014 (see 3.B.1).

[3.A.3] Program quality and learning goals at Illinois State are consistent across delivery modes and locations.

State and university policies require consistency in program content and quality regardless whether a program is delivered face-to-face or via distance learning and regardless whether a program is offered on or off campus. Compliance with this requirement is promoted through processes described in 3.A.1. See sample syllabi from each unit: undergraduate face-to-face and online, graduate face-to-face and online.

Illinois State operates under authority granted by the Illinois General Assembly. Any degree program or certificate program requiring 18 or more credit hours must be approved by IBHE before the University may offer it. Criteria for IBHE approval are promulgated in the Illinois Administrative Code. The code sets forth requirements for distance education programs and provides that “demonstration of student learning and program outcomes [shall be] ... consistent regardless of program delivery method.” The code also provides that Illinois public universities must receive prior IBHE staff approval before offering any academic program at off-campus locations outside their IBHE-designated home region. One purpose of this requirement is to provide a means for IBHE to promote consistency in program quality across locations.

Federal regulations require institutions of higher education to obtain approval from the home state of an out-of-state student before enrolling that student in an online course. Illinois State has filed documents and obtained authorizations to serve students in most states through distance education. In 2014 the Illinois General Assembly approved legislation authorizing IBHE to participate in a state authorization reciprocity agreement to streamline this approval process. The goal of reciprocity is to improve access by students nationwide to distance education programs and to reduce administrative costs incurred by states and universities. As of late 2014 IBHE was drafting procedures for Illinois universities to participate in the reciprocity program.

Illinois State has adopted policies and programs to further consistency across delivery modes and locations. Its credit hour policy provides that credit hour requirements for distance education courses are to be “consistent with the standards of courses offered through face-to-face instruction” and that all definitions and standards apply equally to courses offered on and off campus.” Its distance education policy provides that programs offered face-to face and via distance education or at on-campus and off-campus locations should have a single assessment plan that applies to all modes and locations.

Since completion of a distance education report in December 2009, the University has invested more than \$1 million to train 197 faculty members to offer fully online courses (DART Online). To qualify for the training program, faculty members must be nominated by their academic unit and have selected a course they intend to teach online. The training is based on Quality Matters standards to ensure that distance education programs meet or exceed the academic rigor of traditional formats.

Compliance with these requirements and policies is monitored through program approval and program review processes. Through its review of applications for new programs to be delivered in whole or part via distance education, the IBHE staff and board seek evidence of compliance with state regulations regarding technologically mediated instruction. Illinois State has had one such application approved by IBHE, in 2012 for a new Doctor of Nursing Practice program. Similarly, IBHE staff seeks assurances of program consistency across locations when it reviews requests from the University to operate outside its home region. Illinois State has had several such requests approved in recent years. After distance education and off-campus programs have been approved, they are subject to the same program review guidelines as all other academic programs at the institution.

Sources

- Academic Program Inventory
- Additional Locations
- Alumni Survey and Results, 2014
- Assessment Advisory Council
- Authorized Programs by Higher Education Region
- College Curriculum Committees
- Council for Teacher Education
- Council on General Education
- Credit Hour Policy
- DART Online
- Department-School Curriculum Committees
- Distance Education Policy
- Distance Education Programs
- Distance Education Task Force Report
- Graduate Curriculum Committee
- List of Specialized Accreditors with ISU Status
- New Program Proposal Form, Illinois Board of Higher Education
- Policies and Procedures, Graduate Curriculum Proposals
- Policies and Procedures, Undergraduate Curriculum Proposals
- Process for Review of Academic Assessment Plans
- Program Review Guidelines
- Quality Matters
- Specialized Accreditation Letters and Reports
- State Authorization, Distance Education and Professional Practice
- Syllabi, Graduate, Face-to-Face
- Syllabi, Graduate, Online
- Syllabi, Undergraduate, Face-to-Face
- Syllabi, Undergraduate, Online
- University Assessment Services
- University Curriculum Committee

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

Consistent with its mission, Illinois State University offers a comprehensive array of undergraduate programs and select graduate programs in areas of specialized expertise. Courses and programs at Illinois State are ever changing to remain current, relevant, and appropriately rigorous. General education, the foundation of undergraduate education in all disciplines, was recently revised to simplify the program from the student perspective, promote timely graduation, expand instruction outside the classroom, and further incorporate human and cultural diversity. All academic programs have student learning outcomes assessment plans that articulate learning goals and guide collection of data for program improvement. Faculty at Illinois State is guided by a balanced teacher-scholar model through which faculty members incorporate research, scholarship, and creative activities into their teaching and involve graduate and undergraduate students in original and collaborative scholarship.

[3.B.1] General education at Illinois State aligns with the university mission, educational offerings, and degree levels.

Undergraduate students constitute about 85 percent of the University's enrollment. Accordingly, general education plays a prominent role in the University and is reviewed periodically to ensure that its goals, structure, and requirements align with the University's mission, vision, goals, and strategies. The General Education program is designed to provide students in all 71 undergraduate programs with a broad, common educational foundation.

Through the latest General Education revision (see 3.A.3), program goals have been revised and reorganized into four broad categories that closely align with the university vision: knowledge of diverse human cultures and the physical and natural world, intellectual and practical skills, personal and social responsibility, and integrative and applied learning. Expanded emphasis in General Education on cocurricular activities aligns with the university vision of providing learning experiences inside and outside the classroom. Structural changes include reduction of credit hours from 42 to 39, reorganization of content from three to two tiers, and better alignment with the Illinois Articulation Initiative (see 4.A.3).

The Council on General Education (see 3.A.1) ensures alignment of individual general education courses with goals of the program. All courses to be included in the General Education program are reviewed and approved by the council in addition to being reviewed and approved through department/school, college, and university curriculum committees.

Transfer students constitute approximately one-third of students new to the University each fall. About 80 percent of them matriculate from community colleges. To effectively serve transfer students and promote their timely graduation, the General Education program deems students transferring to Illinois State with a baccalaureate-oriented associate's degree as having met general education requirements. A transfer student lacking an associate's degree may count courses taken at a community college or other four-year college toward general education requirements if the student participated in the Illinois Transferable General Education Core Curriculum.

[3.B.2] Information regarding general education at Illinois State is broadly disseminated. The program uses the LEAP framework to provide students broad knowledge and essential skills.

The General Education program at Illinois State is designed to provide students a broad foundation of study upon which to build an undergraduate education regardless of the discipline they choose to pursue. Specifics about the program are described in the Undergraduate Catalog (pages 49-55) and in the general education section of the university website (see 3.B.1).

[3.B.3] Students at Illinois State engage in scholarly inquiry and develop transferable skills.

Engaging students in modes of inquiry and scholarly creativity appropriate to their chosen discipline is a component of all programs at Illinois State. The University emphasizes collaboration between students and faculty in scholarship and its dissemination on the graduate and undergraduate levels. Processes including specialized accreditation and program review are in place at the University to assess effectiveness of its programs in these areas and to improve efforts accordingly.

Inquiry and scholarly creativity

Pursuit of learning and scholarship is a core value of Illinois State. *Educating Illinois* establishes a goal of increasing scholarship activities among Illinois State students and increasing the number and percentage of faculty members mentoring students engaged in scholarship.

Consistent with university governing policies, the manner in which students learn about and engage in modes of inquiry and scholarly creativity is the responsibility of program faculty. In many programs students are required to complete one or more research courses. In other programs scholarly inquiry is a component within other courses. At the graduate level students are involved in research, scholarship, or creative activities outside the classroom. A point of pride at Illinois State is the extension of those same collaborative student-faculty research opportunities to undergraduate students when appropriate and feasible.

Many undergraduate degree programs require students to present original scholarship to their program peers through capstone experiences. The annual research symposium provides opportunities for students to share their work with students and faculty in other academic units. Students also have opportunities to co-publish and co-present results of collaborative faculty-student scholarship (see 3.B.5).

Milner Library plays an integral role in engaging students in original inquiry and creative works. Library faculty members collaborate with program faculty to develop information use and fluency skills (research, citation, finding and using information) through group and one-on-one instruction. Faculty from the library, School of Communication, and Department of English collaborate to teach students enrolled in two required general education courses how to conduct college-level research for speeches and papers. Information literacy training continues in discipline-based courses through collaborative librarian/classroom faculty instruction sessions. In a typical year more than 600 such sessions are held reaching more than 15,000 students.

Preparing students for a competitive, diverse, and changing environment

Educating Illinois has also established a goal of preparing students to excel in a globally competitive, culturally diverse, and changing environment. This is accomplished in part through focus on developing transferable skills and providing transferable experiences. The General Education program has been designed to develop core competencies in communication and problem-solving, logical and quantitative thinking, and understanding and appreciating varying perspectives. Programs in the disciplines focus on transferable skills while preparing students for the work environments they are likely to encounter upon graduation. Students practice these skills through internships, clinical experiences, and study abroad opportunities.

Assessing program effectiveness

Program effectiveness is assessed using processes described in 3.A.1. A key first step is inclusion of learning goals in assessment plans compiled and implemented by every program on campus including general education. Programs affiliated with specialized accrediting associations incorporate related accreditation standards when developing their plan.

In their program review self-study reports, faculty members are asked to describe experiential learning experiences and collaborative efforts with library faculty to develop information fluency skills. Graduate level faculty members also address student participation in research, scholarship, and creative activities. Undergraduate and graduate programs are asked to describe and assess changes in the discipline and field, student demand, societal need, and institutional context.

[3.B.4] Education at Illinois State recognizes human and cultural diversity.

Human and cultural diversity is one of five core values of Illinois State. The University encourages respect for differences by incorporating diversity in its curriculum; seeking to increase diversity among students, faculty, and staff; increasing civic engagement and service learning opportunities; and implementing a plan to enhance globalization of campus and curriculum.

Diversity in the curriculum

Undergraduate students must complete at least one course in global studies. Students choose from courses in the cultures and traditions of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and indigenous peoples. In these courses students explore cultures from a comparative perspective and are exposed to primary writings and artifacts. Students not satisfying the global studies requirement through a course in their major are encouraged to choose a global studies course to meet the general education social sciences requirement.

Numerous plans of study at Illinois State are directly related to diversity including, but not limited to, anthropology; languages, literatures, and cultures (including courses in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish); international business; and sociology. The Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline project at Illinois State has undertaken a unique initiative to infuse diversity into the curriculum of teacher preparation programs. The project helps instructors of courses required for teacher education majors add urban and/or diversity issues and experiences to course content.

Diversity among students

To help develop Illinois State as a culturally diverse place of learning, the University aggressively recruits students from underrepresented populations. The University offers qualified graduate students diversity tuition waivers and international tuition waivers and promotes numerous private scholarships such as the Ada Belle Clark Welsh Scholarship and the Donald F. McHenry Fellowship. Academic programs are asked to address diversity in their program review self-studies by defining the concept of underrepresented populations as it relates to their discipline and addressing commitment of the program to increase the number of students in those groups if applicable.

Once enrolled, students from underrepresented groups are assisted by Diversity Advocacy, a unit of the Dean of Students Office, and by targeted retention programs in University College. Both units are charged with helping students from underrepresented populations find their way at the University through a variety of resources, programs, and services.

Since the last accreditation review, the number of students at Illinois State (on campus, excluding non-resident aliens) self-identifying with underrepresented populations increased 80.5 percent, from 2,209 in fall 2004 to 3,988 in fall 2014. The number of Hispanic (any race), Black/African-American, and Asian students increased 179.0 percent, 16.6 percent, and 32.0 percent,

respectively. Students from underrepresented populations increased from 10.8 percent to 19.7 percent of the student body.

Diversity among faculty and staff

Diversifying faculty and staff is also a priority at Illinois State. The University maintains and aggressively implements its Affirmative Action Plan, which establishes goals for employment of minorities, females, individuals with disabilities, and veterans.

To promote diversity among teaching faculty, the Office of the Provost provides supplemental funds to assist units with successful recruitment and retention of faculty from underrepresented groups. The office also assists units with expenses related to hiring international faculty. The University participates in the state-facilitated Diversifying Higher Education initiative, which provides financial aid to graduate students from underrepresented populations who pledge to work at Illinois institutions of higher learning upon graduation.

Since the last accreditation review, the number of departmental faculty members at Illinois State self-identifying with underrepresented populations has increased 54.4 percent, from 103 in fall 2004 to 159 in fall 2014. Departmental faculty members self-identifying as Hispanic (any race), Black/African-American, or Asian increased 72.2 percent, 53.6 percent, and 35.8 percent, respectively. Departmental faculty members from underrepresented populations comprised 12.8 percent of departmental faculty in fall 2014 compared to 9.5 percent in fall 2004.

Among employees in all other classifications, the number self-identifying with underrepresented populations increased from 207 to 295 (or 42.5 percent) from fall 2004 to fall 2014. Employees in those classifications self-identifying as Hispanic (any race), Black/African-American, or Asian increased 70.3 percent, 22.6 percent, and 73.9 percent, respectively. Employees from underrepresented populations comprised 12.3 percent of all employees in fall 2014 compared to 9.8 percent in fall 2004.

Civic engagement and service learning

Illinois State offers numerous academic programs and cocurricular activities intended to expose students to different cultures, engage students locally, and prepare them to be engaged citizens in their communities after graduation.

Undergraduate students in any major may complete the minor in Civic Engagement and Responsibility (see pages 64-65, Undergraduate Catalog). The minor provides students opportunities to study and perform civic engagement in their communities. The minor offers a concentration for teacher education majors interested in pursuing careers in high-need urban schools (see pages 64-65 of the Undergraduate Catalog). The Stevenson Center coordinates graduate sequences in applied community and economic development for students enrolled in the applied economics, political science, or sociology masters programs. An ACED sequence will be available to kinesiology and recreation students beginning May 2015, and an ACED sequence has been proposed in the anthropology program. Students enrolled in any one of

the sequences complete an 11-month professional practice with either the Peace Corps or a non-profit organization in the United States.

Cocurricular activities include those sponsored by the American Democracy Project, which promotes civic engagement and discussion of social issues through projects such as the Fell Hall Call to Action and the Social Issues Fair. Other civic engagement opportunities available to students include Bring it Back to Normal (service projects in Bloomington-Normal), Alternative Breaks (volunteer projects during winter, spring, and summer breaks), and mentorship initiatives (that match pre-service teachers with students in local and Chicago high-needs schools). University College is piloting local implementation of the international Human Library project, intended to reduce prejudices and increase cross-cultural understanding by exposing new students to human diversity in Bloomington-Normal. Student-led cultural and civic engagement opportunities include activities of 36 registered student organizations related to ethnic issues and 58 organized to address social issues.

Globalization of campus and curriculum

International programs at Illinois State are coordinated by the Office of International Studies and Programs (OISP). The office facilitates study abroad opportunities in 72 countries and welcomes students and faculty from other countries, thereby enriching the learning environment for Illinois State students.

In 2014 Illinois State adopted an international strategic plan to guide further globalization of campus and curriculum through 2018. A first step in plan implementation is developing a university-wide infrastructure to support internationalization. Specific actions include streamlining processes for students and faculty members coming from and going to other countries, providing professional development related to internationalization of the curriculum, and implementing a mechanism for reporting international activities.

Illinois State has committed to doubling the number of undergraduates studying abroad over the next five years. To further that goal, OISP has established the Generation Study Abroad New Program Initiation Grant, through which grants are offered to departments/schools for establishment of new study abroad options. In 2014-2015 OISP awarded grants for development of study abroad options in Brazil, China, South Korea, Peru, and Morocco.

[3.B.5] Faculty and students at Illinois State are active in research, scholarship, and creative activities.

Illinois State strives to contribute to new knowledge through research, scholarship, and creative activities in which all students, faculty, and staff members are encouraged to participate. The work of faculty members at Illinois State is guided by a balanced teacher-scholar model that values faculty contributions as facilitators of learning and creators and discoverers of knowledge and information. Among the strategies in *Educating Illinois* for providing a supportive, student-centered educational experience is increasing student participation in research at the

undergraduate and graduate levels, in part by increasing the number and percentage of faculty members mentoring students conducting research, scholarship and creative activities.

Faculty research, scholarship, and creative activities

Scholarship standards for tenured and tenure track faculty members are addressed through Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) Policies on the university, college, and department/school levels. The primary review of faculty scholarship occurs at the department/school level by a committee of faculty peers most familiar with the discipline. Scholarship standards are established in each department/school by faculty vote and are published in department/school faculty status policies. Types and volume of activities deemed acceptable for tenure or probationary tenure status vary across academic units.

Faculty members must receive appointment as a member of the graduate faculty to teach graduate-only courses. Qualifications for full membership include active participation in research and significant publications in the field or significant contributions to the applied and creative arts.

Details regarding faculty scholarship, service, and recognition are included in the evidence file organized by college. Reflecting differences across disciplines with regard to the nature of scholarship, the content and format of the reports vary.

In light of flat state appropriations for higher education and lower federal and state appropriations for research in many disciplines, external funding for research, scholarly, and creative activities has been an ongoing priority and challenge for faculty at Illinois State. From Fiscal 2007 through Fiscal 2014, the number of external funding requests submitted annually by Illinois State faculty averaged 317. The number and value of grant awards averaged 226 and \$22.4 million, respectively. In Fiscal 2014, 253 external grant requests submitted by Illinois State faculty were funded, representing 80.3 percent of submissions that year. Both figures are eight year highs.

Student research, scholarship, and creative activities

Every academic program at Illinois State includes one or more components designed to help students learn and practice scholarship appropriate to the discipline. Faculty members model appropriate scholarship practices for students by incorporating their research into their teaching, and they mentor students conducting their own original scholarly and creative activities. Students have opportunities at the graduate and undergraduate level to collaborate on faculty-led research outside the classroom.

In 2014-2015, 46 percent of graduate students at Illinois State received assistantships with full tuition waivers. In addition to allocations for those students, \$835,825 has been allocated to colleges to provide full or partial tuition waivers to students not receiving assistantships. That amount is 73 percent higher than the allocation at the time of the last accreditation review. Some graduate students receiving assistantships and/or tuition waivers are assigned to collaborate on

faculty-led research. These collaborations may lead to journal publications and conference presentations co-authored by student(s) and faculty member(s).

Two campus units, the Center for Mathematics, Science, and Technology and the Julia N. Visor Academic Center, have joined in a project funded by the National Science Foundation to increase the number of STEM-discipline graduates from populations historically underrepresented at Illinois State. Through the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, students work on research projects with faculty in the STEM fields. The program provides financial assistance to both students and faculty mentors for participation in research and in designated research conferences.

Graduate and undergraduate students are encouraged by their faculty mentors to present or publish their original scholarship and creative activities. The largest venue for students to share their work is the research symposium held each spring. The 2014 symposium included 142 presentations (individual and group) by graduate students and 132 by undergraduate students. Students from 26 of 35 departments/schools participated, and 122 faculty members served as research mentors. The Graduate School offers grants to help students present at the symposium and at refereed conferences or juried exhibitions either before or after the symposium.

Fine arts students have additional channels through which they can showcase their work. In a typical year, the College of Fine Arts sponsors about 75 music recitals, 10 student theatre/dance performances, and 20 student art exhibitions.

Sources

- Abstracts, University Research Symposium, 2014
- Academic Program Changes
- Ada Belle Clark Welsh Scholarship
- Affirmative Action Plan, 2014
- Alternative Breaks
- American Democracy Project
- Applied Community and Economic Development Sequences
- Bring it Back to Normal
- Capstone Experiences
- Department-School Faculty Status Policies
- Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program
- Diversity Advocacy
- Diversity Tuition Waiver
- Donald F. McHenry Fellowship
- Employment by Race-Ethnicity, 2004 and 2014
- Enrollment by Race-Ethnicity, 2004 and 2014
- Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure Policies
- Faculty Scholarship, Service and Recognition, College of Applied Science and Technology
- Faculty Scholarship, Service and Recognition, College of Arts and Sciences

- Faculty Scholarship, Service and Recognition, College of Business
- Faculty Scholarship, Service and Recognition, Mennonite College of Nursing
- Faculty Scholarship, Service, and Recognition, College of Education
- Faculty Scholarship, Service, and Recognition, College of Fine Arts
- Faculty Scholarship, Service, and Recognition, Milner Library
- General Education Program
- Generation Study Abroad New Program Initiation Grant
- Grant Requests and Awards
- Hiring International Faculty-Staff
- Human Library
- Illinois Articulation Initiative
- Illinois Transferable General Education Core Curriculum
- International Strategic Plan
- International Studies and Programs
- International Tuition Waiver
- Internships
- Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation
- Mentorship Initiatives
- Recruitment Assistance Program
- Registered Student Organizations, Ethnic
- Registered Student Organizations, Social
- Research Symposia
- Scheduled Performances and Exhibits, College of Fine Arts, 2012-2013
- Study Abroad Programs, Illinois State University Sponsored
- Study Abroad Programs, Illinois State University Sponsored
- Urban Education Courses, Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

Planning, budgeting, and personnel policies at Illinois State University ensure that faculty and staff members are sufficient in number, appropriately credentialed, adept at their work, current in their areas of expertise, and accessible to students as needed. The University maintains a 19:1 student-faculty ratio by allocating sufficient resources for instructional capacity while maintaining enrollment within a target range. The University hires tenure track and non-tenure track faculty members, which promotes continuity in programs while providing flexibility to shift instructional resources as needs change. A sufficient and appropriately qualified team of student support personnel is also vital to providing a quality, small-college experience. Numerous professional development opportunities are available to faculty and staff members to help them hone their skills and remain current with changes in higher education instruction and administration.

[3.C.1] Illinois State has sufficient faculty to carry out its instructional mission.

Illinois State has sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified faculty members to carry out the instructional mission of the University, including teaching and curriculum oversight, oversight of faculty credentials, and assessment of student learning. Continuity among faculty is promoted by the tenure system at the institution. Budget and program review processes ensure sufficient faculty resources are provided.

Despite flat or declining state appropriations, Illinois State has been able to increase the number of faculty members at the institution through strategic allocation of existing resources, measured increases in tuition and fees, and cost savings. In fall 2014 the University employed 1,247 faculty members (1,004.7 FTE) in academic units compared to 1,103 (929.2 FTE) in fall 2005. This represents a 13.0 percent increase by count and an 8.1 percent increase by FTE. Of those 1,247 faculty members, 708 held tenured or probationary tenure status (56.8 percent) and 539 (178 full-time and 361 part-time) held non-tenure track status (43.2 percent) . A subject of continuing discussion is the appropriate balance between the number of tenure-line and non-tenure line faculty members in light of existing and projected resources.

Teaching and curriculum oversight

Most tenure track faculty members teach two or three courses during both the fall and the spring semesters. Full-time non-tenure track faculty members typically teach three or four courses each semester. The student to faculty ratio varies across departments. For example, the ratio for nursing programs is lowest due in part to the experiential nature of nursing instruction and to specialized accreditation standards. The ratio for departments that teach many large-section introductory courses (e.g., mathematics) is higher than the average.

Oversight of faculty credentials

Faculty credentials are established by faculty members on the department/school and college levels. Oversight of individual faculty performance is provided through evaluation, salary, promotion, and tenure reviews conducted by peer review committees. It is primarily through the ASPT system of granting promotion and tenure that continuity of faculty is achieved at Illinois State.

Faculty members teaching graduate-only courses must be members of the graduate faculty. Qualifications for membership and oversight of graduate faculty credentials are described in the Graduate School bylaws.

Qualifications for non-tenure track faculty members are established on the department/school and college levels working with the Office of Human Resources. Qualifications vary by discipline and instructional needs (see 5.A.4).

Assessment

Tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty members participate in assessment of student learning outcomes in accordance with assessment plans developed by each program. Assessment plans are established on the program level by the faculty members instructing in those programs. Assessment work is typically overseen by assessment or curriculum committees on the department/school level. Curricular changes recommended by the committees based on assessment results are subject to approval by faculty in the department/school before the changes can proceed through curriculum review processes described in 3.A.1.

Processes for ensuring sufficiency of faculty resources

Each department/school works with their college office each year to prepare an annual report/budget planning document for submission to the Provost's Office. One component of the document is a report on personnel levels and, if deemed appropriate, a request for new faculty positions. Each college dean presents the college request in a meeting open to the campus community each spring (March 31 and April 1 in 2015). Decisions regarding new positions are subsequently made by the Provost in consultation with deans and division administrators.

In their program review self-study reports, faculty members describe and analyze faculty support for their program and identify faculty needs. These reports are consulted at various points in the budgeting process to guide proposals and decision-making. Specialized accreditation standards may also factor into allocation requests and decisions.

The ability to provide sufficient numbers of faculty to support an academic program is a key issue in requests for new or significantly revised programs. Before a program proposal moves beyond the department/school level, the program submits a financial implication form to the Provost's Office addressing adequacy and sustainability of faculty support for the program. The proposal may proceed to college-level review only upon confirmation by the Provost that resources will be sufficient to support the program.

[3.C.2] Instructors at Illinois State are appropriately credentialed.

Credentials of instructors at Illinois State are monitored primarily through the ASPT system in the case of tenure track faculty and department/school hiring policies in the case of non-tenure track faculty members. In addition, the Graduate School and academic departments/schools maintain requirements for faculty members teaching at the graduate level.

In accordance with ASPT policies (see 3.B.5), an applicant for a tenure track faculty position must have the terminal degree appropriate to her or his field. The terminal degree is established by faculty on the department/school level. The doctorate is the established terminal degree for most programs on campus. Candidates for tenure track positions are also evaluated for their records in scholarship and service. Hiring qualifications in some programs are guided by specialized accreditation standards.

General qualifications for non-tenure track instructors vary by classification and are established in Non-Tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation (3.3.4). Qualifications vary by position based on the discipline and instructional needs. Instructors are required to have earned a degree at least one level higher than the degree level they are hired to teach.

Graduate School bylaws provide that courses restricted to graduate students may be taught only by faculty members with graduate faculty status. To qualify for graduate faculty status with full voting rights in Graduate School matters, a faculty member must have full-time tenure or tenure track employment, possess adequate training or education including the appropriate terminal degree, actively participate in scholarship appropriate to the discipline, provide evidence of effective teaching at the graduate level, demonstrate the ability to supervise theses and

dissertations, and be involved in activities recognized or commended by an appropriate professional organization.

[3.C.3] Illinois State regularly implements faculty evaluation policies and procedures.

Educating Illinois supports investment in high-quality faculty by recognizing, rewarding, and promoting the balanced teacher-scholar model (see 3.B.5). The faculty evaluation process is the primary venue through which this is accomplished. Parallel processes are in place for tenure track faculty and non-tenure track faculty.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty

Evaluation of tenured and tenure track faculty is guided by Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion and Tenure (ASPT) policies adopted by the Faculty Caucus of the Academic Senate. ASPT policies provide general guidance related to performance evaluation and salary incrementation. The policies require evaluation of all tenure track faculty members annually in January. Evaluations are conducted on the department/school level in accordance with ASPT policies adopted by department/school faculty that expand upon but are consistent with university ASPT policies. (see 3.B.5)

Evaluations are conducted by faculty status committees typically chaired by the department chairperson/school director and composed of three or four additional members elected by department/school faculty. The result of these evaluations is a determination whether the faculty member meets established standards.

Faculty members meeting performance standards are eligible for salary increases if funds are otherwise allocated by the University for them. Salary increases are determined by criteria set forth in department/school ASPT documents and include both a pay raise component for meeting performance standards and for exceeding performance standards.

Performance evaluations provide tenure track faculty members formative feedback and are a critical factor in promotion and tenure decisions. ASPT policies provide for a system of faculty appeals to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all faculty members.

ASPT evaluation policies and procedures are not static. The University Review Committee facilitates a comprehensive review of the University's ASPT policy document every five years, although changes may be made to the document at any time by vote of the Academic Senate Faculty Caucus. Comprehensive review of the current ASPT policy document is underway at this time.

Non-tenure track faculty

Evaluation of non-tenure track faculty is provided for in Non-Tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation policy (see 3.C.2). Evaluation of negotiated non-tenure track faculty is further addressed in the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Association collective bargaining agreement. Per both the policy and the bargaining agreement, full-time non-tenure

track faculty members are to be evaluated annually. Each college has discretion regarding how evaluations are to be conducted and by whom. In some units the department chairperson/school director or his/her designee conducts the evaluations.

The American Association of University Professors recommends use of peer-evaluation panels to evaluate non-tenure track faculty, and some units at Illinois State have adopted that practice. Expanded use of peer-evaluation panels may be considered when the policy is next reviewed by the Academic Senate (tentatively scheduled for 2017-2018).

[3.C.4] Processes and resources at Illinois State assure that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept at teaching.

Processes and resources are in place at Illinois State for assuring that tenure track and non-tenure track instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles. These include hiring and evaluation policies and professional development opportunities.

Hiring and evaluation

Ensuring that instructors are current in their discipline and qualified to teach starts with effective hiring processes. These are described in 3.C.2. All faculty members in the hiring unit are typically involved in the hiring process through opportunities to meet and comment on candidates and, for some, service on search committees. In this way candidates are vetted by faculty members most familiar with the discipline and most knowledgeable about the skills the successful candidate will need to succeed.

ASPT policies require that annual performance evaluation for tenured and tenure track faculty members include assessment of teaching, service, and scholarly/creative productivity. The policies further provide that materials upon which faculty members are evaluated shall include student evaluations of teaching performance. Student evaluations are performed according to department/school policies and procedures. Many units use the IDEA evaluation instrument. Student evaluations are also incorporated in the evaluation of non-tenure track faculty members.

Professional development

Educating Illinois articulates a culture that values and promotes excellence in teaching. Among the strategies intended to achieve that vision are increasing professional development offerings designed to help faculty deliver high-quality educational experiences.

As a former Normal school, Illinois State has a long and proud history of promoting excellence in teaching. That tradition was bolstered in 2002 through endowment by Dr. K. Patricia Cross, a scholar in the field of higher education, of the Cross Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL). This is believed to be the first and only university-wide endowed chair in SoTL in higher education in the nation. The Cross Chair conducts SOTL research and facilitates innovation and research in teaching and learning by others on campus through consulting, workshops, writing circles, grants, and publications.

The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) offers numerous teaching development grants (e.g., DART Online; see 3.A.3) as well as teaching and technology workshops, learning communities, and professional development circles. CTLT also facilitates third-party midterm chats with students on behalf of instructors seeking to improve the learning experience in their courses. CTLT sponsors a teaching and learning symposium each January. The symposium provides faculty members opportunities to share innovations in instruction and assessment with their colleagues. The number of registered participants at the symposium has increased from 156 in 2006 to 413 in 2015. At the symposium CTLT announces its Path to Excellence Award, which recognizes units for their participation in CTLT professional development activities. Candidates for the 2014 award collectively completed 7,693 professional development hours during the prior year. The award winning academic unit devoted 25.8 hours per full-time-equivalent faculty member that year toward professional development sponsored by CTLT.

Scholarly activity is important for faculty members seeking to remain current with changes in their field. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) (see 2.E.1) has numerous programs and services to assist faculty members with their research, scholarly, and creative endeavors. These include help preparing grant applications, financial support for faculty research, travel funds to visit prospective grantors, cross-disciplinary grant development, a grant-writing mentorship program, publication and exhibit support, post-declination support, a cost-sharing support program, and a government relations program. The Office of International Studies and Programs offers travel grants to support individual or collaborative research, scholarship or creative activity of an international character, development of courses with an international perspective, and faculty facilitation of student trips.

Each department/school and college annually recognizes one or more faculty members for excellence in teaching and excellence in scholarship. In addition, the University Teaching Committee annually recognizes teaching excellence campus-wide through its University Teaching Awards, while the University Research Council annually bestows University Research Awards.

[3.C.5] Instructors at Illinois State are accessible to their students.

Individualized attention is a core value of Illinois State. Faculty Responsibilities to Students provides that faculty members should be available to students outside the classroom. This ordinarily means “posting and observing a reasonable number of regular office hours during which the faculty member will be available for student conferences.” Additional appointment times mutually convenient to students and faculty are to be made available when student schedules conflict with regular office hours (Faculty Handbook, page 9).

Each department/school is charged with establishing its own policies regarding faculty availability to students. Consequently, means of accessing faculty vary by discipline, course structure, course content, and course delivery method. The recommended syllabus structure posted on the University Curriculum Committee website includes contact hours, office hours, and location. Many instructors use course management software (ReggieNet) to post course content and communicate with students.

Of the 855 alumni from the classes of 2009 and 2013 completing the 2014 alumni survey, 87 percent indicated that faculty members were often or very often accessible both inside and outside the classroom. Seventy-nine percent indicated that faculty members often or very often provided timely feedback on student performance.

[3.C.6] Providers of student support services at Illinois State are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported.

Recruiting and retaining a high-quality, diverse staff is a key strategy for providing a supportive and student-centered educational experience. Appropriate qualifications for student support services personnel at Illinois State are ensured through hiring processes managed by the Office of Human Resources (see 5.A.4).

Tutors

Most tutoring services at Illinois State are centralized through the Julia N. Visor Academic Center, a unit of University College. During a typical semester tutoring services are provided by about 70 undergraduate tutors and supplemental instruction leaders, volunteer academic coaches, one practicum student, and three honors students fulfilling their service learning requirements. The center also has about 50 undergraduate tutors and 15 undergraduate teaching assistants in its developmental math program. The Visor Center has adopted qualifications for content tutors, writing tutors, and supplemental instruction leaders. Coordinators meet with tutors regularly for training and updates. University College achieved level 1 International Tutor Training Program Certification from the College Reading and Learning Association in 2014 and is working toward level 2.

Financial aid specialists

Assistance with college financing is provided by seven counselors in the Office of Financial Aid. The office has standardized its staff qualifications based on national guidelines. Candidates for a financial aid advisor position must have a bachelor's degree, with a master's degree preferred.

Academic advisors

As of December 2014, Illinois State employed 60 full-time and 85 part-time academic advisors. An undergraduate academic advisor candidate must have a bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred) with at least two years of professional advising experience or demonstrated equivalent. Academic advising at Illinois State is decentralized on the department/school level for students at the sophomore level or higher (see 3.D.3).

Cocurricular activities coordinators

Most cocurricular activities at Illinois State are coordinated through the Dean of Students Office. Services of the office are administered by coordinators, each with a master's degree in student affairs, college student personnel administration, or a related field. The office provides an

extensive professional training and development program that includes cultural competency learning outcomes.

Sources

- Academic Advisors
- Alumni Survey and Results, 2014
- Annual Report and Budget Documents, Academic Affairs
- Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology
- Collective Bargaining Agreement, Non-Tenure Track Faculty
- Cross Chair
- Cultural Competency Learning Outcomes, Dean of Students Office
- Departmental Faculty (Counts and FTE), 2005 and 2014
- Faculty Credentials, Graduate School
- Faculty Responsibilities to Students
- Financial Implication Form
- Graduate School Bylaws
- International Tutor Training Program Certification
- Julia N. Visor Academic Center
- Non-Tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation
- Path to Excellence Award
- Position Description, Coordinator, Dean of Students Office
- Position Descriptions, Academic Advisors
- Position Descriptions, Financial Aid
- Professional Growth and Development Policy, Financial Aid
- Student-Faculty Ratio by Academic Unit
- Tenure-Line Faculty, All Colleges
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Applied Science and Technology, Part 1 of 2
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Applied Science and Technology, Part 2 of 2
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences, Part 1 of 5
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences, Part 2 of 5
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences, Part 3 of 5
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences, Part 4 of 5
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences, Part 5 of 5
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Business, Part 1 of 4
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Business, Part 2 of 4
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Business, Part 3 of 4
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Business, Part 4 of 4
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Education, Part 1 of 2
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Education, Part 2 of 2
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Fine Arts, Part 1 of 2
- Tenure-Line Faculty, College of Fine Arts, Part 2 of 2
- Tenure-Line Faculty, Mennonite College of Nursing
- Tenure-Line Faculty, Milner Library
- Tutor Qualifications, Julia N. Visor Academic Center

- University Research Awards
- University Review Committee
- University Teaching Awards

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

Illinois State University aspires to provide a supportive environment that places all learners at the center of teaching and scholarship through programs and services characterized by individualized attention. Every faculty and staff member contributes to this environment. The University strives to provide holistic support services responsive to student needs, including learning support, academic advising, and personal development. The University strives to maintain the infrastructure and resources faculty and staff need to provide high quality educational experiences.

[3.D.1] Illinois State provides support services responsive to student needs.

Understanding student needs is critical to designing effective support services. The Office of Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis (PRPA) has annually published data regarding student demographics and performance in its University FactBook and Graduate School Data Book and provides customized data reports upon request. University Assessment Services administers the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement to incoming students to learn about their prior academic and cocurricular experiences and their expectations for their first year in college. Many units periodically study student needs in their areas of responsibility and evaluate existing programs and services to identify ways to improve their effectiveness. Understanding changing student needs and designing programs and services responsive to them is an ongoing priority and challenge.

Most Illinois State undergraduates are traditional students, i.e., younger than 25 years old and enrolled full-time on campus. The graduate student body is split almost evenly between full-time and part-time students with the majority enrolled on campus. Undergraduate students receive academic support primarily through programs of University College (3.D.2) and individual

academic units and receive out-of-classroom support primarily through the Dean of Students Office, Student Health Services, Student Counseling Services, University Housing Services, and other units within the Division of Student Affairs. Graduate student support services are provided primarily by academic units and the Graduate School.

Illinois State has extensive orientation programs for new students to inform them about available support services. New undergraduate students and their families attend a two-day orientation in the summer (Preview) and a multiple-day orientation program prior to the fall semester (Welcome Week). Graduate students are oriented to their academic program and support services through their department/school.

Illinois State provides specialized services to groups of students with unique needs and concerns. Services for several such groups are described below.

First-generation college students

A significant percentage of incoming freshmen are first-generation college students, i.e., students whose parents are not college graduates. Among the 2,016 first-year students participating in the most recent Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (administered in summer 2012 with an 89.2 percent response rate), 33.3 percent reported that neither their mother nor their father completed a four-year degree. This is an increase from 29.5 percent in summer 2009. The University has dedicated significant resources to programs intended to ease the transition to college for first generation college students. One is TRiO, a program sponsored by University College for first-generation students who desire additional, personalized support. Another is a mentoring program called Mentoring, Academics, Scholarship, and Achievement Initiative sponsored by the Dean of Students Office and University College.

Transfer students

Transfer students typically constitute 30 percent or more of new undergraduate students. In fall 2014, for example, 34.5 percent of new undergraduates had transferred from another institution of higher education. The need to improve services for transfer students was recognized in 2007–2008 when updating *Educating Illinois*. Service improvements made since then include open houses and orientation sessions specially designed for transfer students, including an abridged version of Welcome Week held prior to the spring semester, and a new chapter of Tau Sigma, the national honorary for transfer students. Personalized assistance for transfer students once they arrive on campus is offered through transfer student services in the Dean of Students Office and through transfer specialist advisors in University College.

Multicultural and LGBT students

Between fall 2004 and fall 2014, the number of students from groups historically underrepresented at Illinois State increased 80.5 percent. Students declaring Hispanic (any race) ethnicity increased 179.0 percent. By fall 2014, 19.7 percent of Illinois State students self-identified with one or more historically-underrepresented groups (see 3.B.4 for details).

Diversity Advocacy, a unit within the Dean of Students Office, sponsors cultural and diversity education programming, mentoring, and advising and support for multicultural registered student organizations including the Asian Pacific American Coalition, Association of Latin American Students, Black Student Union, and Pride (LGBT).

Veterans

The Office of the University Registrar coordinates services for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, reservists and National Guard members, and their families. In 2012–2013 Illinois State opened a study center in Moulton Hall dedicated for use by veterans. University College has assigned an advisor to work with veterans and offers a special section of the First Year LinC seminar specifically for them. In recognition of its services to veterans, Illinois State has been included on the 2015 list of Military Friendly Schools published by Victory Media. The designation is awarded to the top 15 percent of colleges, universities, and trade schools in the country that are supporting educational pursuits of veterans.

Other groups for which specialized support services are provided include non-traditional students, off-campus students, international students, and students with disabilities.

[3.D.2] Illinois State offers course placement services and extensive academic support programs.

Illinois State offers individualized programs and services designed to help students succeed academically. These include assessment of student preparedness for purposes of placement in appropriate courses and provision of academic support appropriate to each student's needs.

Course placement services

Proficiency examinations are offered in most 100-level courses and in a limited number of 200-level courses. Students passing exams receive credit for previously-acquired knowledge and are allowed to enroll in advanced courses. Students may also receive course credit or exemptions through participation in the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and the Advanced Placement Program. (See pages 45-46 of the Undergraduate Catalog).

Students entering the University with an ACT math score of 26 or lower (or SAT math score of 619 or lower) take the COMPASS Math Placement Exam. Students scoring below college level are required to enroll in developmental math courses (see Developmental Math Lab) or retake the placement exam.

The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures offers online placement tests to help students majoring in French, German, or Spanish decide which of several introductory courses is most appropriate given their language skills. Tests are optional, and results do not block or permit enrollment in any given course. The tests are also freely available to students in other majors who plan to take a foreign language class.

Students who decide they can benefit from more intensive help with writing skills may enroll in a special section (ENG101.10) of the required beginning writing course. The section meets five days per week instead of three and includes lab sessions led by a writing consultant.

Illinois is one of 13 states participating in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Through PARCC, high school students in Illinois will be tested in mathematics and English language arts/literacy to gauge students' readiness for post-secondary education. Statewide administration of PARCC is scheduled to commence in spring 2015. During the next few years Illinois State will monitor PARCC to inform a university decision whether PARCC will be used for admissions and/or placement decisions.

Academic support programs

Campus policy provides for out-of-class support for students from their instructors through regular office hours and consultations by appointment (see 3.C.5). Students desiring additional support may participate in programs and services of one or more specialized campus units depending on their circumstances.

University College

Most academic support services at Illinois State have been consolidated in University College to facilitate ease of access by students and cross-program referrals by faculty and staff. Students access most University College programs and services through its Julia N. Visor Academic Center. Center programs include tutoring and weekly study groups for many required courses, study skills workshops, a first-year seminar (LinC) designed to assist students with their transition to the University; and academic coaching. Undergraduate students on academic probation are required to enroll in Project Success, designed to help students set academic goals, become aware of campus services, understand probationary policies, and ultimately return to good academic standing.

Honors program

The Honors program promotes exceptional learning for high ability students. The program has been substantially restructured in the last two years to provide students options for learning beyond traditional honors sections. Students may customize a project with an instructor in a non-honors course, participate in honors independent study or research, join a discussion experience revolving around a unique topic, and/or participate in a short-term, faculty-led study abroad experience. In fall 2014, 1,137 students were participating in the Honors program.

Athletics

Academic services for student-athletes are provided collaboratively by the Karin Bone Athletics Study Center and University College. Study center services include a year-long program to help freshmen and transfer student-athletes adjust academically to the University, review of academic progress reports, tutoring services, and life skills support. University College services include academic advising, major selection, and education about NCAA academic rules.

These efforts have contributed to an increase in the six-year graduation rate for scholarship student-athletes, which reached a five-year high of 72 percent with the fall 2006 cohort. That rate exceeded the six-year graduation rate for all students who entered the University that fall (71 percent). The NCAA gauges academic success of student-athletes with its graduation success rate, which accounts for student-athletes who transfer their eligibility from one institution to another. The graduation success rate at Illinois State has consistently exceeded the aggregate rate for all Division I athletes. Several sports at the University set team record grade point averages in 2013-2014.

[3.D.3] Academic advising at Illinois State is appropriate to its programs and student needs.

Academic advising at Illinois State is provided largely by faculty and staff members on the department/school level. Communication and training protocols are in place to keep advisors current regarding campus policies and programs and to ensure consistency in their interpretation and application.

Incoming undergraduate students and several other special populations receive advising services through University College during their freshman year. Adoption of the University College model of advising has allowed Illinois State to provide consistent and specialized services to all freshmen with their transition to college life. University College advisors are trained to match students' evolving educational objectives and potentials with appropriate majors.

After they have earned 24 credit hours and have declared a major, students are connected with advising staff in their programs of study. Advisors in the academic departments/schools are most familiar with programs, courses, and policies of the unit and with the disciplines and professions for which students in the unit are preparing. Most departments/schools have professional advisors to work with their students. In several departments, faculty members serve as undergraduate advisors on a part-time basis.

On the graduate level, advising services are typically provided by faculty members serving as graduate program coordinators in their units. The Graduate School provides guidance to graduate advisors through its Graduate Coordinators' Orientation Manual.

An ongoing challenge related to decentralization of advising services is assurance of high quality and consistent services across all advising units. For advising on the undergraduate level, this issue is addressed through the Academic Advising Council. The council serves as a forum for communication and a facilitator of professional development. Graduate program coordinators, most of whom advise students, meet monthly during the fall and spring semesters.

In 2009 and 2010 the Assessment Committee of the Academic Advising Council conducted focus groups and a campus-wide survey to solicit feedback from students regarding advising at Illinois State. While results indicated about 80 percent student satisfaction with advising sessions, the results also suggested a need to enhance communication across academic units to smooth student transitions from advising services in one unit to another. The Advising Council has provided a forum for doing so.

In spring 2014 the Assessment Committee surveyed first-year students regarding their advisement experiences. Ninety-four percent of respondents indicated that their advisor provided a supportive advising environment; 89 percent rated the accuracy of information provided by their advisor as good, very good, or excellent; and 92 percent rated their advisor's knowledge of academic policies as good, very good, or excellent. The Advising Council will use the many open-ended comments shared by survey respondents to further improve advisement in coming years.

[3.D.4] Illinois State provides infrastructure necessary to support effective teaching and learning.

Maintaining infrastructure and resources necessary to adequately support effective teaching and learning has been an ongoing challenge during the last decade, particularly in an environment of stable or declining state financial support for higher education. Through careful budgeting, strategic use of reserves and bonded indebtedness, private contributions, and public/private financing models, Illinois State has been able to complete numerous facility and technology upgrades and maintain library services and resources.

Facilities

Within the past decade the University has upgraded most classroom spaces on campus and all housing complexes. The University has renovated Watterson Towers, Manchester-Hewett, and Tri-Towers student housing complexes; replaced the Cardinal Court housing complex; demolished Dunn-Barton and Walker residence halls to accommodate the new Student Fitness Center; and decommissioned the Atkin, Colby, Hamilton and Whitten housing complex. Other projects completed include collocation of the offices of Admissions and Financial Aid through renovation in Hovey Hall, a new east side of Hancock Stadium, renovation of Student Health Services, a new electrical distribution system in Milner Library, construction of a clinical simulation laboratory for the Mennonite College of Nursing, and numerous energy conservation measures.

Projects under construction or being planned include rehabilitation of College of Fine Arts instructional and performance spaces, revitalization of Bone Student Center, and replacement of the heating system in Felmley Hall. Work authorized by the Board of Trustees but not yet underway includes enhancement to laboratory areas in Felmley and Turner halls, development of a research center and a new home for the Honors program, and remodeling in Milner Library.

The Master Plan articulates a plan for physical development of the campus through 2030. The plan envisions organizing the campus into eight discrete districts defined by geography and function. The plan recommends construction of 19 new facilities, renovation of 32 facilities, and improvement of utilities infrastructure.

Technology

The Information Technology Strategic Plan sets forth strategies for providing information technology infrastructure, services, and enterprise applications to support achievement of goals

and strategies articulated in *Educating Illinois*. Chief projects include upgrades to the campus learning management system, installing or upgrading instructional technology in all scheduled learning spaces, and replacement of aging mainframe technology.

Between 2011 and 2013 the University replaced the WebCT/Blackboard online learning management system with a customization of Sakai, branded ReggieNet. The primary purpose of the change was to provide campus faculty with a more robust system for delivery of online-only and blended online/face-to-face courses. More than 500 faculty members were trained by the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) in pedagogically-appropriate uses of ReggieNet. As of spring 2015, 203 faculty members had completed or were enrolled in an intensive CTLT workshop series (DART Online) on designing quality online courses using ReggieNet and other technologies. Approximately 80 percent of all courses at Illinois State utilize ReggieNet in some way.

In fall 2013 the University allocated \$1.7 million for the first phase of a classroom technology enhancement project to implement a minimum unified classroom technology standard. The initial set of 155 classrooms identified for improvement as part of this project was completed in fiscal 2014. In the second phase (Fiscal 2015), teaching technology that has reached either technological or supported end of life will be replaced. Updating technology will be an ongoing challenge in coming years as audio/visual technology continues a headlong rate of change to higher resolution digital imaging.

In 2011 the University began a five-year, estimated \$22.5 million LEAP Forward Initiative to modernize academic information infrastructure, segments of which date to 1982. By the end of the project, 44 mainframe applications will have been replaced with hybrid cloud-based integrated systems. The initiative will have a profound impact on the institution by enabling information integration, reducing duplication across units, and allowing faculty, staff, and students to complete tasks more rapidly.

LEAP Forward is being implemented in segments: the student information system, business intelligence tool, housing and dining, payment gateway, identity and access management, customer relationship management, and interaction hub. Each phase involves building and testing data, training subject matter experts on the new systems, and moving data from the mainframe to the new environment. Migration of the student information system began in fall 2014, with Admissions using the system live to process applications for fall 2015 enrollment. In spring 2015, functions of the Registrar's office, student accounts, financial aid, advisement, and student records are scheduled to go live in the system. The mainframe is scheduled for decommissioning in late 2015.

Library services and resources

Milner Library provides faculty expertise and resources to support instruction and research in all programs at Illinois State. Library faculty subject specialists are assigned to work with each academic unit to facilitate integration of library resources and services into the curriculum and to ensure that resources purchased or leased by the library are those most needed to support research, scholarship, and creative activities. Library faculty and staff members also provide

group and individualized instruction through class sessions, in-person and virtual reference service, and consultations. Milner Library has approximately 1.6 million print volumes, access to 38,000 online journals and 2,500 print journals, and 48,000 multimedia titles. Through the I-Share consortium of 85 Illinois academic libraries, students and faculty at Illinois State have free access to approximately 38 million items, with daily delivery to Illinois State from other institutions.

[3.D.5] Illinois State guides students in the effective use of research and information resources.

Illinois State aspires to enhance and support rigorous and innovative undergraduate and graduate programs, in part through continued development of library resources and services to meet evolving information, research, and learning needs of students. The Illinois State approach to teaching effective use of information resources involves collaboration between academic program and library faculty in designing and implementing information literacy instruction.

Tiered instruction for undergraduate students begins during freshman year with research modules embedded in two required general education courses. Transfer students receive research orientation during welcome programs held prior to the fall and spring semesters. More advanced, discipline-specific information literacy training typically occurs in introductory research courses. The course instructor and library subject specialist for the discipline often collaborate to deliver in-class training. The instructor or librarian may provide a research guide for the subject or course. The course instructor provides out-of-class guidance through office hours, and the librarian is available for one-on-one consultations. The library also provides research instruction through its reference services, typically available 12–14 hours per day and delivered in person and via telephone, email, chat, and text.

Graduate students receive similar information literacy training through faculty/librarian collaboration, although graduate student training typically emphasizes specialized information resources. Incoming graduate students in many programs are oriented to the library at the beginning of the fall semester and receive information literacy instruction in the research methods course required in their program.

Sources

- Academic Advising Council
- Academic Advising Survey, Spring 2014
- Academic Advisors
- Academic Services, Illinois State Athletics
- Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement
- Compass Math Placement Exam
- DART Online
- Dean of Students Office
- Developmental Math Lab
- Diversity Advocacy

- Enrollment Reports, Fall 2014
- First Year Writing Courses (ENG 101.10)
- Foreign Language Placement
- Graduate Coordinators' Orientation Manual
- Graduate School Data Book, August 2013
- Honors Program
- Information Technology Strategic Plan
- International Student Services
- I-Share
- LEAP Forward (Technology Infrastructure Initiative)
- Master Plan
- Mentoring, Academics, Scholarship, and Achievement Initiative
- Military Friendly School
- Non-Traditional Student Services
- Off-Campus Student Services
- Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
- Preview Freshman Orientation
- Report on Assessment Activities, August 2011
- Research Guides (Course)
- Research Guides (Subject)
- Services for Students with Disabilities
- Student Counseling Services
- Student Health Services
- Student-Athlete Graduation Rates
- Subject Specialist Librarians
- Transfer Students Services
- TRiO Program
- University College
- University Fact Book Fall 2014
- University Housing Services
- Veterans Services
- Welcome Week

3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

The educational environment at Illinois State University is enriched through cocurricular opportunities integrated with the curriculum. The environment is also enriched through mission-articulated emphases on diversity, small-college atmosphere with large-university opportunities, academic rigor, and community service/civic engagement.

[3.E.1] Cocurricular programs at Illinois State contribute to the educational experience.

Cocurricular learning is emphasized in *Educating Illinois* as a means of enhancing the quality of the educational experience at Illinois State. This emphasis is based on scholarship of teaching and learning that consistently emphasizes the positive impact that a full range of cocurricular experiences can have on the educational experience.

Illinois State students are engaged in cocurricular activities at a higher rate than students at comparison institutions, according to results from the most recent National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Sixty-eight percent of Illinois State freshmen responding to the 2013 NSSE survey indicated that they participate in cocurricular activities in a typical week, compared to 58 percent of freshman respondents at other Carnegie class institutions and 64 percent at other Great Lakes public institutions. Seventy-one percent of Illinois State seniors indicated that they participate in cocurricular activities in a typical week, compared to 37 percent of senior respondents at other Carnegie class institutions and 54 percent at other Great Lakes public universities. Ninety-three percent of Illinois State seniors responding to the survey indicated that Illinois State encourages its students to attend campus activities and events, compared to 67 percent of senior respondents at other Carnegie class institutions and 86 percent at other Great Lakes public institutions.

Cocurricular learning opportunities at Illinois State are numerous and include university-wide programs and programs offered at the academic unit level.

Programs at the university level

Cocurricular learning is an integral element of the General Education program that impacts undergraduate students in all academic programs at Illinois State. Through the design and

delivery of general education, the University is committed to seamless integration of curriculum and cocurriculum that engages students, extends beyond the classroom, and broadens student perspectives. This integration will be achieved in coming years as courses intended to meet general education requirements are reviewed and approved by the Council for General Education.

The American Democracy Project is a unique campus-wide initiative intended to promote civic and political engagement among students. The project works toward curricular changes that incorporate such engagement and toward building lasting connections between faculty and communities leading to opportunities for civic involvement integrated with the curriculum. Through the American Democracy Project course redesign initiative, nearly 40 courses have been redesigned to incorporate civic engagement concepts, ideas, and projects.

The Division of Student Affairs sponsors cocurricular activities that serve students across all academic units. Its Student Affairs Council provides a venue for units within the division to communicate and plan. The voice of students in program selection and planning is ensured through the Student Affairs Student Advisory Council. Division units implementing cocurricular activities and services include Bone Student Center, Campus Dining, Campus Recreation, the Career Center, the Dean of Students Office, Disability Concerns, Health Promotion and Wellness, Student Counseling Services, Student Health Services, and University Housing Services. The Division of Student Affairs has developed an extensive approach to evaluating its cocurricular activities (see 4.B.2).

Each fall and spring semester the Office of the President sponsors a speaker series intended to expose the campus community to a broad range of perspectives. Speaker selection is guided in part by *Educating Illinois* goals.

Programs at the academic unit level

Cocurricular opportunities at the academic unit or program level are extensive and varied. They include discipline-based student organizations, unit- or program-sponsored guest speakers, practica, internships, and professional networking events. Many units and programs have advisory boards or councils to assist with curriculum design and delivery, including cocurricular activities. Council members typically include practitioners, prospective employers, and alumni.

For cocurricular experiences at either the university or academic unit level to effectively enhance the learning experience, they must be thoughtfully designed and integrated with the curriculum, and their effectiveness must be assessed. Cocurricular activities in degree programs are evaluated through the program review process. As the revised General Education program is implemented, means of assessing the cocurricular element of the program will be devised and implemented. Meanwhile, assessment plans will be developed and implemented for all other cocurricular programs that do not yet have one.

[3.E.2] Illinois State demonstrates its claims regarding contributions to the educational experience.

Key concepts in the Illinois State mission statement include small-college atmosphere with large-university opportunities, high academic standards, diversity, and community service/civic engagement. These concepts are emphasized as characteristics of an Illinois State education when recruiting students. The University is able to document the veracity of these claims.

Small-college atmosphere/large-university opportunities

Illinois State annually enrolls approximately 20,000 students in 131 majors and 273 sequences. Despite its size, Illinois State maintains a student to faculty ratio of 19:1, with some programs as low as 9:1. Eighty-nine percent of classes have fewer than 50 students, and 72 percent have fewer than 30. Learning communities and affinity groups also help promote a small college atmosphere. Students may choose to reside in one of 18 themed living-learning communities within university residence halls. Communities of interest are facilitated by 364 registered student organizations. Numerous programs and activities, such as first year seminars help undergraduate students with their transition to college.

High academic standards

Illinois State is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as meeting national standards for delivery of quality post-secondary education and complying with Federal regulations. All academic programs offered by the University are subject to review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. In addition, 139 of 273 sequences at Illinois State are accredited or approved by specialized accrediting bodies.

Retention and graduation rates at Illinois State consistently rank second among Illinois public universities (second only to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). The latest fall-to-fall retention rate for first-time-in-college undergraduates (fall 2013 to fall 2014) was 81.1 percent. The latest six-year graduation rate for first-time-in-college undergraduates (fall 2008 cohort) was 71.5 (see 4.C.1 for details).

Illinois State continues to rank among the highest quality post-secondary institutions in the country. In 2014, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Illinois State 74th among public universities (up from 81st in 2013 and 83rd in 2012). Rankings are based on academic reputation, student retention and graduation rates, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources, and alumni giving.

Diversity

Illinois State offers numerous opportunities for students to experience diverse cultures and perspectives and strives to provide more. The University seeks high quality students from all race, ethnic, and economic groups. Nearly 4,000 students at Illinois State self-identify with one or more race/ethnic groups historically underrepresented at the University. Numerous cocurricular programs expose students to diversity both on campus and beyond (see 3.B.4). As a

result of these efforts, 90 percent of seniors responding to the 2013 student engagement survey indicated that the University encourages contact among students from different backgrounds. Ninety-five percent reported having had discussions with persons of a different race or ethnicity during their senior year, 97 percent with persons of a different economic background, 95 percent with persons having different religious beliefs, and 96 percent with persons having different political views.

Community service/civic engagement

Through numerous programs and activities, Illinois State students continue to be involved in their communities. Each year Illinois State students complete approximately 11,000 service hours through participation in alternative winter and spring breaks. Seventy-three percent of seniors responding to the 2013 student engagement survey indicated that at least one of their courses at Illinois State included a community-based project. Fifty-five percent reported being involved in community service or volunteer work in a typical week.

Illinois State has received numerous honors for its integration of community service, service learning, and civic engagement into the curriculum. The University is one of 92 nationwide participating in the Lead Initiative on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. Illinois State was the first university to receive the New York Times Political Engagement Project Program of Excellence Award for its work on the American Democracy Project. The graduate community and economic development program coordinated by the Stevenson Center is ranked in the top 10 nationally for its work placing graduate students in Peace Corps assignments.

In his 2014 State of the University address, President Larry Dietz called for establishment of a Center for Civic Engagement at Illinois State. The center would coordinate campus activities that connect students with leadership and community service opportunities, expand those opportunities, and work toward great integration of them into the curriculum.

Perhaps the ultimate judges whether Illinois State has made good on its claims are its graduates. Ninety-seven percent of the alumni responding to the 2014 alumni survey indicated that their Illinois State experience helped develop their understanding of diversity. Ninety-two percent indicated that their experience helped them develop their citizenship. Sixty-nine percent rated the quality of their education at Illinois State above average or superior to the quality of education received by their peers at other institutions.

Sources

- Advisory Boards and Councils
- Alumni Survey, 2014 (Diversity, Citizenship, Quality)
- American Democracy Project
- Bone Student Center
- Campus Dining
- Campus Recreation
- Career Center

- Dean of Students Office
- Disability Concerns
- Health Promotion and Wellness
- Lead Initiative on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement
- National Survey of Student Engagement
- National Survey of Student Engagement, Seniors, Civic Engagement
- National Survey of Student Engagement, Seniors, Diversity
- Peace Corps Recognition, Stevenson Center
- Political Engagement Project Program of Excellence Award
- Rankings, U.S. News and World Report
- Speaker Series
- Student Affairs Council
- Student Affairs Student Advisory Council
- Student Counseling Services
- Student Health Services
- Themed Living-Learning Communities
- University Housing Services

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

During the coming years, Illinois State University plans to continue its approach to promoting high quality education through individualized attention, high academic standards, diversity among students and faculty, and community and civic engagement.

Illinois State will work to maintain its overall student/faculty ratio at 19:1 through prudent enrollment management and allocation of sufficient resources for instructional capacity. The University will continue to use its program review process to ensure that degree programs are appropriately rigorous and current and will encourage faculty to seek specialized accreditation when it is available in their disciplines. Faculty research is essential to the quality of education at Illinois State. Support structures will be periodically reviewed, and modified as appropriate, to most effectively assist faculty in seeking external research funding.

During the last decade, Illinois State has nearly doubled the percentage of students from groups historically underrepresented at the institution. The University will remain vigilant in that regard. Efforts to increase diversity among faculty and staff and to maintain an environment of inclusion will continue, with a goal of mirroring diversity in the student body.

Illinois State is nationally recognized for its efforts to extend learning beyond the classroom through curricular and cocurricular opportunities. The University seeks to expand such learning by providing more opportunities related to civic and political engagement and by increasing participation in professional practice. The University also seeks to double the number of undergraduate students studying abroad within the next five years.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

The quality of the educational experience at Illinois State University is the responsibility of all members of the university community led by the faculty members who design and deliver the curriculum, assess student performance against established student learning outcomes, and modify the curriculum accordingly. Ongoing program review and improvement is taken seriously at Illinois State rather than viewed as an exercise to comply with state mandates. Specialized accreditation is voluntarily sought by programs when it could benefit students and provide another means of maintaining program quality. Internal processes and procedures are in place to accommodate course and program changes while maintaining appropriate academic rigor. The University continues to develop a systematic means of documenting and reporting graduate success.

[4.A.1] Illinois State maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

The program review process is mentioned numerous times in the Criterion 3 argument (see 3.A.1), reflecting its importance at Illinois State. Numerous programs of study at Illinois State are also regularly reviewed through specialized accreditation processes.

State-mandated program review

The state of Illinois mandates program review and provides guidelines for its implementation through regulations promulgated by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). Illinois State annually submits an eight-year program review schedule to the IBHE for its review. Any deviation from the eight-year requirement must be approved by IBHE.

IBHE regulations allow Illinois public universities considerable flexibility with their program review guidelines. Consistent with its shared governance philosophy, Illinois State has adopted a program review process led by its faculty. Reviews are conducted by the Academic Planning Committee, an external committee of the Academic Senate (i.e., the committee reports to the Academic Senate but most of its members are not senators). The committee is facilitated by the Office of the Provost.

Program reviews result in recommendations that serve to inform the department/school, college, and University on decisions regarding resource allocation, staffing, program focus, admissions standards, curricular content, and other matters. The Academic Planning Committee provides these recommendations in summative reports published in the annual Academic Plan and submitted to the Academic Senate, Board of Trustees, and IBHE. The committee often identifies some recommendations as needing immediate attention from program faculty. Accordingly, the committee may request submission of interim reports prior to the subsequent eight-year review.

The program review process at Illinois State is dynamic. Self-study guidelines are reviewed at least biennially to ensure their alignment with priorities in *Educating Illinois*.

Specialized accreditation review

Half of all sequences offered at Illinois State are accredited or approved by specialized accreditation bodies. These bodies ensure compliance with generally accepted educational standards for the disciplines they monitor. (see 4.A.5)

[4.A.2] Illinois State carefully evaluates all credit that it transcripts.

Policies and procedures are in place at Illinois State to evaluate all credit it transcripts. University staff conducts degree audits for each student before authorizing graduation. The University has adopted policies for assuring quality of transfer credit and for awarding credit for prior learning.

Degree audits

The Evaluation Services unit within the Office of the University Registrar evaluates credit earned by students prior to including the credit on the official student transcript and authorizing graduation. Undergraduate students submit their graduation application to Evaluation Services via MyIllinoisState, the campus portal, while degree audits for graduate students are facilitated by graduate school coordinators.

Transfer credit

See 4.A.3.

Credit awarded for prior learning

Credit for prior learning is awarded by Illinois State in accordance with Transfer of Credit from Other Institutions. The University generally does not award credit for life or work experience, but it does award undergraduate credit by examination and for military experience.

Undergraduate students may receive up to 18 credit hours toward general education and graduation requirements by earning passing scores of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) general examinations. Students earning passing scores on CLEP subject examinations may also receive credit. Departmental proficiency examinations are offered in most 100-level and some 200-level courses. Exam content and standards of performance required for receiving credit are established by the department/school offering the course. The University also grants credit through the Advanced Placement Program of the College Entrance Board and through the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program of the International Baccalaureate Organization. Students who have served at least one year of active military duty and received an honorable discharge may receive six hours of elective undergraduate credit. Credit is accepted for DANTES subject standardized exams and military CLEP exams that fall within university CLEP guidelines. (see also Undergraduate Catalog, pages 45-48)

Credit awarded for experiential learning

Illinois State awards credit for experiential learning if successfully completed through credit-bearing courses. Examples include student teaching required in all teacher preparation programs, internship and professional practice courses available in all colleges, and clinical experiences. Credit for experiential learning is evaluated on the department/school level.

[4.A.3] Credits transferred to Illinois State are carefully evaluated.

External transfer students graduating from Illinois State between 2010 and 2014 on average transferred 58.5 credit hours to the University. To ensure quality of undergraduate transfer credits, Illinois State participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). Located on the Illinois State campus, the initiative is intended to facilitate transfer of undergraduate students between Illinois colleges and universities while assuring equivalency and rigor of courses for which transfer credits are awarded. Illinois State agrees to award credit for a package of general

education courses completed at any IAI participating institution in lieu of its own general education requirements. Illinois State also awards credit for individual courses taken at other Illinois colleges if those courses are equivalent in learning objectives, content, and rigor to those at Illinois State. Equivalency is determined by one of 18 discipline-based or seven general education panels composed of faculty members at institutions across the state. As its courses are modified, Illinois State submits applications for equivalency reviews to the appropriate IAI panel. In a typical year Illinois State submits approximately 20 such applications.

Study abroad courses are reviewed and articulated by trained evaluators working with program faculty. Evaluators then place these course articulations into a database linked to the student information system and used by the degree audit system. Two evaluators are trained to review international transcripts, including conversion of semester hours and grading scales.

Graduate students may transfer up to nine credit hours from another college or university for use in meeting requirements of a master's degree at Illinois State. Such transfer is subject to limitations published in the Graduate Catalog, recommendation of the enrolling department/school, and approval of the Graduate School.

[4.A.4] Illinois State faculty maintains oversight of academic standards and faculty qualifications.

In accordance with principles of shared governance, faculty at Illinois State maintains and exercises authority over programs and courses offered by the institution to ensure their quality and appropriate rigor. Faculty members are also responsible for ensuring appropriate credentials of their peers. Multiple-level processes provide for thorough vetting of course and program proposals and for evaluating faculty.

Oversight of courses and programs

Processes for vetting course and program proposals are described in 3.A.1.

The undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees provide guidance regarding general performance expectations at different course levels to ensure consistency and appropriate rigor across all programs. Using an online submission system, faculty members proposing new or revised courses are asked to describe prerequisites and enrollment restrictions, course content, learning goals, assignments, learning resources including texts, and evaluation methods. Courses available for both graduate and undergraduate credit must include an additional component for graduate credit at the time of submission. Course proposals are posted for review by all faculty members on campus to solicit feedback regarding the potential impact on other courses and programs. Program proposals describe admission and graduation requirements, include a sample plan of study, and are typically accompanied by individual course proposals. Faculty members proposing courses or programs are also asked to consult with the appropriate library subject specialist to ensure availability and adequacy of research resources and services to support student learning.

Oversight of faculty qualifications

General parameters for tenure track faculty qualifications are established in Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) Policies adopted by the Faculty Caucus of the Academic Senate. Discipline-specific standards are adopted at the department/school level by vote of the affected faculty members. Tenure track faculty performance evaluation and decisions regarding promotion and tenure are the responsibility of peer review committees provided for in department/school standards. Promotion and tenure applications are also reviewed by college faculty status committees and ultimately by the provost and president. Qualifications for appointment to the graduate faculty are determined by the Graduate Council (see 3.C.2).

General policies for non-tenure track faculty appointment and evaluation are set forth in Non-Tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation. Qualifications for specific non-tenure track positions are established by unit faculty based on the discipline and instructional need. The Office of Human Resources assists units with the hiring process. Evaluation of non-tenure track faculty is described in 3.C.3.

[4.A.5] Academic units and programs at Illinois State are recognized by specialized accrediting bodies.

Illinois State maintains specialized accreditation or approval through 45 associations or agencies, 43 of which accredit or approve academic programs or units (two non-instructional units, Student Health Services and Student Counseling Services, are also recognized by accrediting bodies). Some associations accredit entire academic units, while most accredit majors or plans of study within majors. Across all levels of accreditation, 139 of 273 sequences at Illinois State receive specialized accreditation or approval.

Specialized accreditation promotes academic rigor through application of discipline-based learning standards and qualifications for faculty and staff. In some disciplines specialized accreditation is a prerequisite for graduates to qualify for licensing or the right to take examinations required for professional practice.

[4.A.6] Illinois State uses multiple methods to evaluate success of University graduates.

Information regarding success of University graduates is collected at the university level on behalf of all academic programs. This information is supplemented by unit/program-specific data gathered at the unit level. University- and unit-level efforts continue to evolve and mature, partly in response to new federal requirements (e.g., the Student-Right-to-Know Act) but also as programs seek to incorporate graduate success metrics in their assessment methodologies.

University-level evaluations

The alumni survey administered annually by University Assessment Services to two graduating classes (see 3.A.1) includes questions designed to extrapolate employment rates, rates of admission to advanced degree programs, and earnings. The survey also probes graduates' perceptions regarding the value of their Illinois State education in achieving their educational

and career goals. Results are aggregated on the university and unit levels. A summary report is compiled annually and disseminated to units for their use in program planning and student learning outcomes assessment.

Unit- and program-level evaluations

While up to 1,200 graduates complete the annual alumni survey, the response rate on the unit or program level could be too small to extract meaningful direction for specific programs. In addition, the survey is purposely short and may not collect program-specific information desired by some units. Consequently, some units supplement the alumni survey with their own methods of connecting with alumni and documenting their success. Standard methods used by units and programs are described below. No program uses all of these methods; however, at least one technique is carried out at some level by all programs.

Of the 131 degree and certificate programs at Illinois State, 50 prepare students to pass licensing or certification examinations required to qualify for employment in their chosen profession. All six colleges offering credit-bearing courses have at least two such programs. Many of the 50 programs prepare students to pass multiple exams (e.g., teacher preparation programs). Academic units gather pass rates if made available to them by testing organizations. Pass rate reports from all units are then consolidated into a report published on the university website.

At least 11 of 34 degree-granting academic units administer alumni surveys to supplement data obtained through the university-wide alumni survey, with some units administering alumni surveys for more than one program. This practice is not uncommon for programs preparing for program review or specialized accreditation review. Most units solicit feedback from multiple graduating classes rather than just two, as is the case with the university-wide survey.

At least 15 of 34 degree-granting academic units administer exit surveys to students immediately prior to their graduation, with some units administering exit surveys in more than one program. These surveys are typically administered in capstone courses and seek information regarding student plans for employment and additional education. In spring 2014, deans of the six academic colleges endorsed a proposal to develop exit surveys for all programs. A pilot survey was administered by Mennonite College of Nursing to its summer 2014 graduates. The initiative has subsequently been suspended pending completion of the LEAP Forward technology infrastructure project (see 3.D.4).

All academic units at Illinois State engage with graduates through alumni events such as homecoming reunions. At these events faculty and staff gather anecdotal information regarding individual graduate successes. Other venues for doing so include unit and program advisory board meetings and alumni recognition events.

Future initiatives

A systematic review of student learning outcomes assessment plans in 2012 (see 4.B.1) documented the need in numerous programs to incorporate feedback from key stakeholders,

including alumni. Gathering such feedback is an ongoing challenge at Illinois State. The University is planning two initiatives to address this challenge.

One approach is to shift the focus of alumni survey efforts from the campus to the unit level, utilizing advantages of the largely decentralized approach used at Illinois State to evaluate graduate success. For many years units have exercised flexibility in gathering the type of information they deem most appropriate to their disciplines in the manner and at the time of their choice. Response rates at the unit level tend to be higher than rates for centrally-administered surveys, because graduates are familiar with faculty and staff members requesting information. University Assessment Services will inventory these unit-level approaches, in the process identifying commonalities and sharing best practices. Working with the Assessment Advisory Council, University Assessment Services will develop a plan for gathering a common data set on the unit level and then aggregating that data to the college and university levels.

A second approach, the Human Capital Initiative, involves collaborating with the Illinois Department of Employment Security to compile and track aggregate earnings and employment information for graduates one, five, and ten years removed from the University. The Office of the Provost and University Assessment Services plan to pilot this approach in spring 2015. If successful, this approach will allow the University to systematically track employment and earnings of alumni at the aggregate level over time.

Sources

- 23 Illinois Administrative Code 1050 (Program Review)
- Academic Planning Committee
- Alumni Events
- Alumni Survey and Results, 2014
- Alumni Surveys, Departments-Schools
- Connecting with Alumni
- Credit for Prior Learning
- Department-School Faculty Status Policies
- Exit Surveys
- Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure Policies
- Licensing and Certification Examinations
- List of Specialized Accreditors with ISU Status
- Non-Tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation
- Program Review Guidelines
- Program Review Schedule, 2014-2022
- Program Review Summaries, Academic Plan
- Program Review Summaries, All Programs and Centers
- Specialized Accreditation by Accrator and Program
- Undergraduate Program Measures, Total University (Credits Transferred)

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

Formalizing assessment as a component of all programs and services has been an ongoing initiative at Illinois State University since the last HLC review in 2005. For academic programs this initiative has progressed in phases. Program faculty first identified student learning goals and then selected methods and tools to evaluate student performance relative to them. As assessment plans matured, faculty attention shifted to implementing them and using results to improve student learning. Assessment has also been incorporated into many cocurricular programs and services.

The new Open Pathways accreditation process has provided Illinois State with a unique opportunity to further enhance student learning assessment. The University chose assessment as the focus of two quality initiative projects initiated in 2011 and completed in 2014.

[4.B.1] Creating and modifying assessment plans is an ongoing initiative at Illinois State.

Revised learning goals for the General Education program were adopted in 2013 by the Academic Senate when it approved General Education Task Force recommendations. In addition, assessment plans have been developed for each degree program. Plans are reviewed and, if necessary, modified annually. A comprehensive approach to assessment has been adopted by the Division of Student Affairs and by other support units. Assessment plans are also developed as needed for special cross-divisional initiatives.

General Education

The General Education Task Force revised general education goals and objectives through an iterative process informed by input from faculty and staff members provided at open forums and through other venues. One objective of the task force when revising goals was to offer a more concise framework for the program that could be more easily communicated and assessed. The

goals closely align with the Essential Learning Outcomes in the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative of the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

The General Education program is assessed using a multi-source, multi-method approach employing the institutional artifact portfolio as its centerpiece. Help designing this approach was the charge of one of two quality initiatives associated with the Open Pathways Cohort 2 assessment academy. An assessment academy team was organized on campus to assist with this effort. Design of the assessment plan was informed by prior experiences at Illinois State with artifact portfolios. In spring 2014, artifact collection and evaluation was tested in a general education natural science course. Full implementation of the General Education assessment plan began in fall 2014.

General education portfolio review involves the work of eight faculty panels, organized by course category, reviewing student work on a rolling schedule. Faculty members teaching courses in the category scheduled for review submit student work to the faculty panel assigned to that category for review against a rubric developed by the panel. The panel also reviews syllabi of courses in its category to ensure that general education learning goals are being addressed. Panels report their findings to the Council on General Education, which uses the reports to inform decisions regarding the general education curriculum.

Degree programs

Approaches to assessment in departments/schools at Illinois State have largely developed independently of one another, shaped to a large extent by idiosyncrasies of disciplines. In 2011 Illinois State initiated another quality initiative associated with the Open Pathways Assessment Academy to document the largely disparate approaches to assessment in degree programs, investigate faculty perceptions regarding assessment, and identify ways to better support faculty with assessment. An audit of assessment plans found that 65 percent of them had learning goals deemed "established" or "exemplary" based on a rubric developed by the Assessment Advisory Council. Fifty-seven percent of academic programs were systematically collecting assessment data, while 37 percent were improving in that area. The assessment academy committee concluded from the audit that, in general, assessment could be improved by incorporating feedback from key stakeholders and by using assessment results in decision making. Results of a faculty survey regarding assessment indicated that faculty members appreciate the value of assessment but are challenged to participate in assessment activities due to competing job responsibilities and/or lack of sufficient assessment expertise.

Infrastructure is in place at Illinois State to assist faculty members with their assessment plans. Departments/schools are asked to submit information annually regarding their assessment plans and outcomes (see 4.B.3). More intensive review of assessment plans occurs during the year prior to program review, through the Process for Review of Academic Assessment Plans. Both processes result in the Assessment Advisory Council and University Assessment Services providing formative feedback to program faculty.

In response to feedback received through the faculty survey mentioned above, professional development opportunities related to assessment have been expanded. These include a four-part

series in fall 2012 and repeated in fall 2014 focused on learning outcomes, direct and indirect evidence, and use of assessment results. A three-part series in spring 2015 focused on surveys, curriculum maps, and rubrics.

Cocurricular programs and services

Educating Illinois articulates a goal of increasing cocurricular opportunities available to students and developing and assessing student learning outcomes facilitated by those experiences to ensure their effectiveness. As with academic programs, development of assessment plans for cocurricular programs and services is an ongoing initiative at Illinois State. Some programs have assessment strategies that have been developed over many years, and some programs have assessment plans that are in earlier stages of development.

Of the four administrative divisions at Illinois State, Student Affairs has primary responsibility for cocurricular programs and services. The division has developed a comprehensive and systematic approach to assessing its many programs and services. Each of the 12 departments within the division has adopted intended outcomes and measures as well as strategies to use assessment results to improve programs and services.

The Division of Student Affairs offers professional development related to assessment of intended outcomes in its programs and services. Additionally, departments within the division benchmark best practices and assessment trends identified through national associations, peer institutions, institutional datasets, and the National Association of College Student Personnel Administrators' assessment and knowledge consortium.

[4.B.2] Assessment plans are routinely implemented at Illinois State.

Assessment plans are implemented by their respective units following schedules and using methods documented in the plans. Schedules and methods vary by unit and program/service.

General Education

The Council on General Education is responsible for facilitating assessment of student learning in the General Education program at Illinois State (see 4.B.1). The council is composed of faculty members appointed by colleges and confirmed by the Academic Senate, students elected by the Student Government Association, and several administrative staff members. The council reports to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate.

Degree programs

Student learning assessment plans for degree programs are implemented by faculty members directly responsible for the programs. The manner in which this is done and the tools used vary by unit and program. Some idiosyncrasies within colleges are described below.

Many programs in the **College of Applied Science and Technology** have adopted the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) teaching evaluation form. Data gathered from student responses are used in the faculty evaluation process, and aggregate data may be used in student learning outcomes and program assessment.

Programs in the **College of Arts and Sciences** are numerous and diverse, so commonalities in assessment across all 16 departments/schools are few. Humanities programs rely extensively on writing portfolios; physical sciences and mathematics programs use laboratory reports, field work, and mathematical problems; language programs have introduced oral language proficiency examinations conducted by external reviewers; and social sciences programs often include research papers and case studies in their assessment plans.

All undergraduate programs in the **College of Business** administer the Educational Testing Service Major Field Test for the Bachelor's Degree in Business in the capstone business strategy course. Business programs also share common rubrics. These tools allow for comparisons across programs.

The **College of Education**, as well as secondary teacher preparation programs in other colleges, uses state content and professional skills testing mandated by the Illinois State Board of Education. Student teachers also complete an edTPA portfolio, a nationally available performance assessment for which candidates submit evidence that demonstrates their proficiency across three domains: instruction, planning, and assessment. Candidates work through a complete instructional cycle, compiling contextual information about their classroom, lesson plans, examples of student work, written commentaries justifying their practice and professional reasoning, and 15-20 minutes of video demonstrating their ability to engage students in learning. In addition, within programs, several aspects of candidate performance are assessed with locally designed instruments: content knowledge, pedagogy, clinical practice, impact on student learning, and professional dispositions.

Assessment of student learning outcomes in the **College of Fine Arts** varies by major and sequence. Assessment plans typically include portfolios, exhibitions, or recitals.

Students in the **Mennonite College of Nursing** are assessed in part through licensing examinations and through clinical experiences. Candidates for the B.S.N. (pre-licensure sequence) take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses. Two certification exams are available to candidates for the M.S.N. (family nurse practitioner).

Assessment of **graduate programs** across all colleges is characterized by its focus on the culminating experience: the comprehensive exam, the thesis/dissertation, or the defense.

Assessment activities are usually led by the department chairperson/school director or the program coordinator working with an assessment or curriculum committee. Several programs have addressed sustainability of assessment by adopting cycles for collecting and reviewing data (e.g., assessing one goal, objective, or outcome each semester or academic year).

Several programs have developed curriculum maps that indicate which goal, objective, or outcome is addressed by which course. Some curriculum maps also identify specific course assignments used to gather student learning data. Some programs have developed rubrics to review and evaluate student course assignments with respect to goals, objectives, and outcomes. Other tools include student surveys or interviews at the time of graduation, surveys or interviews of internship supervisors or employers, and benchmarking exams.

Cocurricular programs and services

Student learning in cocurricular programs and services is assessed primarily through participant feedback surveys, interviews, focus groups, and reflection papers. In addition, sponsors document attendance and their personal observations regarding student engagement in the activities being assessed.

The Division of Student Affairs uses a hosted web-based service (Campus Labs) to store assessment data and benchmark assessment results with peer programs. Division staff uses the system to produce assessment reports and planning documents and to compile self-study reports.

The assessment plan developed and implemented to assess the first-year undergraduate experience at Illinois State is representative of the numerous assessment activities related to special cross-divisional programs. An ad hoc task force comprising 91 students, staff, and faculty members completed two studies of the first-year undergraduate experience, one focused on entering freshmen and the other focused on new transfer students. The studies were conducted following the Foundations of Excellence process developed by the Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The task force examined existing documents and department-specific assessments and conducted surveys of students and faculty members to ascertain their perceptions of the first-year undergraduate experience. A transition committee has been formed to develop strategies to implement recommendations in the task force final report.

[4.B.3] Assessment results are used at Illinois State to improve student learning.

With most programs and services now implementing student learning outcomes assessment plans, the current emphasis in assessment at Illinois State is interpreting assessment results and utilizing them to identify and implement program improvements.

General education

The revised General Education program at Illinois State is in its first year of implementation. While it is too soon in the life of the program to identify and implement program improvements, a process is in place and is being implemented for compilation of data by faculty panels and review of that data by the Council on General Education to plan program improvements (see 4.B.1).

Degree programs

Most assessment plans for degree programs identify a process and schedule for systematically reviewing assessment results. Programs are asked to annually report to University Assessment Services regarding any changes to their assessment plan, data that have been collected during the most recent assessment cycle, data analysis, and use of the analysis to improve student learning. Annual assessment reports are then reviewed by the Assessment Advisory Council, which provides each program written feedback. Program changes implemented based on assessment results are numerous and varied and include, among others, introducing new course content, modifying curriculum structure, and adding cocurricular opportunities.

Program review guidelines at Illinois State identify student learning outcomes assessment as a critical component of program review. Faculty members are asked to provide evidence in their self-study report that the assessment plan “provides for an ongoing, systematic, and methodologically sound process for evaluating student learning outcomes” and “evidence that program faculty and administrators are utilizing assessment results to identify and implement improvements to the program.” More specifically, the guidelines ask program faculty to describe the process used to analyze assessment data and identify program modifications and to report specific program modifications that have been made.

Cocurricular programs and services

Every two or three years the Division of Student Affairs selects areas of programming priorities with action items that align with *Educating Illinois*. Each of the 12 departments in the division compiles an annual improvement plan that describes specific actions the department will take in accordance with division priorities. Assessment results are used to identify division priorities and program improvements.

[4.B.4] Assessment methodologies used at Illinois State reflect scholarship of teaching and learning.

Assessment at Illinois State is consistent with broad principles articulated by higher education organizations and informed by scholars of teaching and learning. In addition, many programs and services follow standards published by organizations that focus on specific aspects of higher education or on specific disciplines.

Student learning assessment processes and methodologies at Illinois State reflect the nine principles of good practice developed under the auspices of the American Association for Higher Education. Among the authors of the principles is Dr. K. Patricia Cross who endowed the Cross Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at Illinois State. What and how programs at Illinois State choose to assess aligns with the vision and mission of the University (e.g., emphasis on academic rigor, cocurricular learning, diversity, and civic engagement). At the core of all assessment plans are student learning goals and processes by which programs help students achieve them. Multiple methods are used to assess, including evaluation of actual performance (e.g., through internships and practicum experiences). While assessment of a specific program is typically conducted by a committee of faculty and staff members responsible for the program,

feedback is sought from numerous constituencies (e.g., graduates and employers). Assessment is a dynamic process at Illinois State, as assessment strategies continue to be reviewed and refined.

Sources

- Annual Improvement Plans, Division of Student Affairs
- Annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Form, Spring 2015
- Annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Updates, Fall 2012
- Annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Updates, Fall 2013
- Assessment Academy Impact Report
- Assessment Academy Impact Report
- Assessment Advisory Council
- Council on General Education
- Essential Learning Outcomes
- Faculty Panels and Schedule, General Education Assessment
- Foundations of Excellence (First-year Experience)
- General Education Assessment Plan
- Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning
- Process for Review of Academic Assessment Plans
- Professional Development, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment
- Strategic Planning and Assessment, Division of Student Affairs
- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans, Part 1
- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans, Part 2
- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, Program Review Self-Studies
- Sustainability Plan, HLC Assessment Academy
- Test of General Education Artifact Collection and Evaluation

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

Retention, persistence, and completion rates are important metrics carefully monitored at Illinois State University. These metrics are also closely monitored by federal and state agencies and by specialized accrediting bodies. By act of the Illinois General Assembly, the Illinois Board of Higher Education has been charged with devising a system to allocate higher education funds based on performance in achieving state goals related to student success. Degree completion is one metric identified for inclusion in the system. Illinois State is well positioned to compete for performance-based funding as it has goals for retention and completion, follows methodologically-sound practices for collecting and analyzing retention and completion data, and uses data to make program improvements.

[4.C.1] Illinois State has ambitious yet attainable goals for retention, persistence, and completion.

Retention rates at Illinois State since the last accreditation review remained stable before declining slightly the last three years. Graduation rates have steadily increased, reaching an historic high for the University.

Retention

The fall to fall retention rate for first-time-in-college students was 85.0 percent at the time of the last accreditation review (percentage of students starting in fall 2004 and returning in fall 2005). The rate declined slightly, to 83.3 percent with the fall 2006 cohort, but then rose to a ten-year high of 85.1 percent with the fall 2010 cohort. Rates for the 2011, 2012, and 2013 cohorts were

82.3, 81.7, and 81.3, respectively. Rates for transfer students have remained stable in recent years, in the 80-82 percent range.

Trends in retention rates for both Hispanic and Black/African American students closely mirror the trend for all students (first-time-in-college) during the last decade. Rates for both groups declined from the 2004 cohort to the 2006 or 2007 cohort, rose to ten-year highs with the 2008 or 2009 cohort, and then declined again. The fall-to-fall retention rate for the 2013 cohort of Black/African American students was 71.8 compared to 73.5 with the 2004 cohort. The respective rates for Hispanic students were 74.6 (2013) and 80.4 (2004).

The fall to fall retention rate at Illinois State has consistently ranked second among Illinois public universities. The rate ranked 21st (tie) among 86 universities in the United States classified by Carnegie as doctoral/research universities (2012 data) and 149th (tie) among the 292 universities in the United States classified by Carnegie as doctoral/research, research very high, or research high institutions. Of the 14 Illinois institutions in the latter group, Illinois State ranked seventh (behind the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Loyola University, Illinois Institute of Technology, and DePaul University).

Graduation

The six-year graduation rate for undergraduate students at Illinois State (first time in college) reached 71.8 percent with the fall 2008 cohort, an historic high. The rate for the fall 1998 cohort was 62.2 percent and has steadily increased since. Six-year graduation rates for transfer students have also risen, to approximately 75 percent with the fall 2008 cohort.

Graduation rates for Black/African American students fluctuated during the last ten years but reached a ten-year high of 56.7 percent with the fall 2008 cohort, compared to 38.9 percent with the fall 1998 cohort. Graduation rates for Hispanic students have risen steadily, from 42.4 percent with the fall 1998 cohort to 62.3 percent ten years later.

As with retention rates, the six-year graduation rate at Illinois State has consistently ranked second among Illinois public universities during the last eight years. The difference between the Illinois State graduation rate and the highest rate has narrowed from 20 percentage points to 13 during the period. The six-year graduation rate for Illinois State ranked ninth among the 86 universities in the United States classified by Carnegie as doctoral/research universities (2006 cohort) and 94th (tie) among the 292 universities in the United States classified by Carnegie as doctoral/research, research very high, or research high institutions. Of the 14 Illinois institutions in the latter group, Illinois State ranked fourth (behind Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign).

Goals

The University aspires to return retention rates to 2008-2010 levels (85 percent) and to maintain historic high graduation rates (71 percent). The University also seeks to raise both retention and graduation rates for Hispanic and Black/African American students closer to the rates for all

students. The University has infrastructure in place to achieve these goals. Faculty, administrators, and staff across the institution are strongly committed to providing a student-centered educational experience characterized by individualized attention.

As costs paid by students for higher education continue to rise, time to degree becomes an ever more critical factor with regard to completion. The percentage of Illinois State University graduates completing their bachelor's degree in four years or less reached a six-year high of 64.3 percent in fiscal 2014. Further increasing that percentage is a key goal articulated in *Educating Illinois*. Strategies include implementing strategic curricular changes, increasing course scheduling options, and increasing the number of summer and semester break academic experiences. Another is to further increase the number of summer courses offered online, to benefit students who need to be away from campus. Such courses have been popular with Illinois State students. Summer-term distance education enrollment at Illinois State ranked second among all public or non-profit institutions in the state in 2013 (6,473 students).

[4.C.2] Retention, persistence, and completion data are collected and analyzed.

The Office of Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis (PRPA) compiles information regarding student retention, persistence, and graduation for reporting to internal units and external agencies. For the benefit of internal units and the general public, PRPA reports university-wide rates in its University FactBook published each fall and college and department/school rates on its website. Information regarding degrees conferred, degree type, and culminating experience is reported by PRPA for each graduate program in the Graduate School Data Book that has been published each fall.

In 2014 the Office of the Provost, working with PRPA, introduced annual distribution of program-level datasets (called Academic Program Profiles) to all academic programs at the University. This was done in response to numerous requests from programs for more frequent distribution of the data. The reports provide longitudinal data to aid identifying trends and anomalies. The first edition was released in spring 2014, and the second edition was released in October 2014. This initiative continues to evolve as faculty provides feedback regarding their data needs and as the University introduces new business intelligence technology in connection with its LEAP Forward initiative (see 3.D.4).

Analysis and interpretation of retention, persistence, and graduation data is the responsibility of faculty and administration. Faculty members are asked to review program-level data annually and through the program review process. Faculty members also use the data for specialized accreditation reports.

[4.C.3] Units at Illinois State use retention and completion data to make improvements.

Retention and completion data are used at the university level and at the unit/program and service levels when identifying and designing program improvements. Program and service modifications vary from large-scale, campus-wide initiatives involving commitment of substantial resources and impacting large groups of students (e.g., student orientation programs)

to changes on the unit or service level which, while directly impacting smaller groups of students, significantly impact their success (e.g., curriculum changes).

University level

Improving undergraduate student retention rates is a core objective of the first-year experience at Illinois State. Since the last accreditation review, numerous changes have been made to student orientation and support programs intended to maintain and improve those rates, particularly among students from populations historically underrepresented in higher education such as first-generation college students. Welcome Week (see 3.D.1) has been modified to include programs for transfer students, and an orientation program (January Welcome Day) prior to the spring semester has been introduced to assist students entering the University at that time (802 in spring 2014). Specialized student support programs have been introduced, including First Year Learning in Communities, Success 101 Seminar, and Early Alert. The Foundations of Excellence initiative described in 4.B.2 is the most recent comprehensive review of the first year undergraduate experience at Illinois State. The task force has disseminated its recommendations for program changes, and a transition committee has been formed to develop strategies to implement those recommendations.

Student retention and completion is an ongoing priority of the Graduate School and graduate programs across campus. Graduate School initiatives to increase retention include professional development workshops to help students with their progress toward degree and post-degree professional life, including a Dissertation Boot Camp at which doctoral students receive individualized assistance with their research and writing.

Unit/program level

Faculty members are asked to analyze retention and completion data (provided in academic program profiles) and student learning outcomes assessment data (compiled by program faculty) and to report annually how the information has been used to make program improvements. Reports (annual assessment updates) are submitted each spring to University Assessment Services (changed in 2014-2015 from fall semester). Program review and specialized accreditation provide additional opportunities for review of and response to retention and completion data.

Faculty members in numerous degree programs have modified their curricula since the last accreditation review to reduce time to degree. Common changes include eliminating unnecessary course prerequisites, streamlining curricula as appropriate, delivering core courses online and/or during summer session, and increasing the frequency of course offerings. Common retention initiatives at the graduate program level include individualized program and career advising, delivery of programs to student cohorts, and provision of tuition waivers and graduate assistantships.

Service level

Retention, progress toward degree, and degree completion of each student are closely monitored by academic advisors. Advisors use a variety of methods to communicate with students and to track their progress toward timely graduation. University College advises all 3,600 freshmen, undeclared students, students enrolled in the University Studies (general studies) program, student-athletes, international undergraduate students, pre-professional students, and veterans. University College advisors routinely remind their advisees via email to register for classes in a timely manner to ensure enrollment in classes required for graduation. Additionally, University College administers the university policy that requires students to have declared a major (or have developed a satisfactory plan for acceptance into a major) by the time they have earned 75 credit hours. Retention and completion of all other undergraduate students are monitored by advisors within academic units. Individual programs are responsible for advising their graduate students, with each graduate program designating one or more faculty members for this role.

[4.C.4] Methodologies for data collection and analysis at Illinois State reflect good practice.

Processes and methodologies used at Illinois State University to collect and analyze data reflect commonly-accepted practices in information technology and institutional research. Illinois State has developed extensive information technology policies to guide administration of its enterprise data repository. The repository is used to store institutional data that inform university decisions and that are reported to external agencies in compliance with state and federal requirements. The policies were most recently updated in 2013 and are guiding replacement of information systems at the University through the LEAP Forward project (see 3.D.4). The policies provide for a Data Stewardship Council that oversees information technology activities at the institution.

Many of the data reports used to guide university operations are compiled by the Official of Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis (PRPA) within the Division of Finance and Planning. PRPA staff follows best practices published by the Association for Institutional Research. Unless otherwise directed, PRPA follows definitions and methodologies of the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System to ensure compliance with federal requirements and to enable longitudinal and institutional comparisons.

Sources

- Academic Program Profiles
- Distance Education Enrollments, Illinois Colleges and Universities
- Early Alert
- First Year Learning in Communities
- Graduate School Data Book, August 2013
- Graduation Rates
- Graduation Rates, Doctoral Research, Research Very High, Research High
- Graduation Rates, Doctoral Research
- Graduation Rates, Illinois Public Universities
- Information Technology, Data Stewardship Council

- Professional Development Workshops for Graduate Students
- Retention Rates
- Retention Rates, Doctoral Research
- Retention Rates, Doctoral Research Basic, Very High, High
- Retention Rates, Illinois Public Universities
- Success 101 Seminar
- Time to Degree
- University FactBook Fall 2014

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

Faculty-driven student learning assessment and program review processes as well as specialized accreditation reviews are used at Illinois State University to ensure that degree programs are appropriately rigorous, current, and consistently delivered regardless of venue. Illinois State faculty and staff have devoted considerable resources during the last decade to develop learning goals and assessment processes for every academic program and for many support services. The focus of student learning outcomes assessment in coming years will turn to systematic use of assessment data to guide program improvements. In addition, assessment in the revised General Education program will be implemented and modified as appropriate.

The program review process at Illinois State provides faculty with the opportunity for comprehensive, analysis of program effectiveness. The program review process will be re-examined in coming years, particularly the volume of work required of faculty to conduct a self-study and the appropriateness of the eight-year gap between reviews. Ways to better integrate student learning outcomes assessment and program assessment while reducing the reporting burden placed on faculty will be studied.

Documenting graduate success continues to be problematic for many units. The rate of response to the annual alumni survey is consistently too low to guide changes on the program level. The University will reexamine its current approach to gathering information regarding graduate success and will pilot new paradigms and methods, including the Human Capital Initiative.

Illinois State is proud of retention and graduation levels at or near historic highs for the institution. Achieving those rates has resulted from coordinated efforts across all programs and units. In coming years the University will work to maintain those rates, while working to increase both rates among groups historically underrepresented at the institution. The University will also seek to increase the percentage of graduates completing their program within four years of enrollment.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

In the decade since the last accreditation review, Illinois State University has faced fiscal challenges resulting from national and state economic downturns, which, in turn, have resulted in reductions of state appropriations for higher education in both current and real dollars. Illinois State has been able to meet these challenges through measured tuition and fee increases, strategic budgeting, and conservative borrowing. Other strategies include increased private giving and using the public/private partnership model to fund capital projects. In 2012 the University began a long-range planning process to ensure that fiscal challenges can continue to be met.

Tuition and fee increases

The nominal value of state appropriations for Illinois State University decreased 7.9 percent from Fiscal 2005 to Fiscal 2014, while the real value decreased 24.0 percent. In Fiscal 2005 Illinois State University received \$80,452,000 in state government tax funds (representing 28.8 percent of university revenue). Ten years later, in Fiscal 2014, the University received \$74,089,000 in state appropriations (representing 18.7 percent of university revenue).

To help offset the decline in state appropriations, the Board of Trustees, has increased tuition and fee rates per credit hour throughout the last decade an average of 7.8 percent per year

(undergraduate). Rates of increase have declined steadily, from 13.6 percent between Fiscal 2006 and Fiscal 2007 to a 10-year low of 2.0 percent between Fiscal 2014 and Fiscal 2015. University tuition and fees revenue received as a result of these rate changes increased from \$94,593,000 in Fiscal 2005 (33.8 percent of university revenue) to \$195,898,000 in Fiscal 2014 (49.4 percent of university revenue). This represents a 107.1 percent increase in the nominal value of tuition and fees revenue and a 70.8 percent increase in the real value. The impact of these rate increases on students has been mitigated in part by the practice of freezing rates for incoming students for four years (see 2.B).

Despite higher tuition and fees, Illinois State continues to be recognized nationally as a good education value. In 2014 *Money* magazine ranked Illinois State among the top 25 colleges in terms of educational quality, affordability, and alumni earnings. That same year Kiplinger's *Personal Finance* magazine ranked Illinois State among the 100 top values among public colleges and universities in the United States. Illinois State was one of only two Illinois institutions on the list.

Strategic budgeting

Illinois State has maintained a policy of carefully protecting its fiscal assets and spending them strategically. The University has used its reserves in recent years to pay vendors when the state of Illinois has been slow to release its appropriations.

As a result of these practices, net assets of the University have steadily increased, from \$274,483,000 as of June 30, 2005, to \$527,555,000 as of June 30, 2014 (a 92.2 percent increase). Unrestricted assets, i.e., assets available for any lawful purpose of the institution, increased from \$58,811,000 as of June 30, 2005, to \$221,372,000 as of June 30, 2014, (a 276.4 percent increase). Net operating revenues ratios throughout the last decade have remained positive, indicating that the University is living within its available resources. Between Fiscal 2005 and Fiscal 2013 the ratio ranged from 2.63 to 6.99. The ratio fell to 1.40 in Fiscal 2014 due to a one-time \$14 million asset transfer to the Central Illinois Broadband Regional Network (see 1.D.3). The ratio is expected to return to more normal levels in Fiscal 2015.

The University budget is developed using a modified incremental model, through which prior year expenditures provide a starting point for budget building but other factors are considered. These include unfunded federal and state mandates, new incremental funding, and strategic plan priorities.

To ensure availability of funds for tenure-line faculty where they are most needed, the Division of Academic Affairs maintains an Academic Impact Fund. When a tenure-line faculty position is vacated due to retirement or resignation, authority to fund the position reverts to the Academic Impact Fund rather than to the general fund. Academic units then work with their colleges to prioritize their faculty needs, and the colleges, in turn, request funding authorizations from the Office of the Provost. This process promotes ongoing review of tenure-line faculty needs across campus and allocation of limited funds to programs according to university, college, and unit strategic plans.

The Division of Finance and Planning and the Division of University Advancement follow a modified incremental budgeting model similar to the model described above. Budgeting in the Division of Student Affairs is connected to strategic planning on the department level. Each department establishes intended outcomes, key performance indicators, action steps, and assessment methods to determine whether key performance indicators are met. In building the annual budget, division leadership considers progress toward intended outcomes, actions still needed to achieve them, and any new outcomes identified based on emerging issues and trends.

Conservative borrowing

The University continues its long-standing policy of conservative use of debt. Debt service as a percentage of university expenditures remained below 5 percent throughout the last decade, reaching a 10-year low of 1.91 in fiscal 2014.

The ability to borrow funds for high-cost projects or multiple-year initiatives is limited by state law to self-supporting enterprises of auxiliary facilities systems (e.g., student residence halls, dining centers, and athletic facilities). Capital projects involving auxiliary systems facilities may be funded through issuance of revenue bonds and/or use of auxiliary operations reserves.

All other multiple-year initiatives are most typically funded using strategic budgeted carryover or by phasing projects (and project funding) over multiple years. The University also may issue certificates of participation. Recent projects funded using certificates include information technology enhancements and academic facilities improvements. Issuing certificates to fund projects is limited by state law and subject to approval by the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability.

The cost of borrowing money is significantly affected by debt ratings. The rating for the state of Illinois has been downgraded twice since the last accreditation review due to concerns about deficit spending. Illinois State University is rated separately from the state. The University has been able to maintain investment grade debt ratings of A3 from Moody's and A+ from Standard and Poor's because of conservative fiscal practices and healthy assets. However, both rating services report the outlook for Illinois public universities, including Illinois State, as negative to stable due to ongoing concerns about state finances and unfunded pension liabilities. This situation will be closely monitored in coming years by university officials.

Other strategies

The University continues to aggressively pursue private contributions through its Division of University Advancement. Fundraising productivity has increased from about \$10 million in Fiscal 2009 to more than \$19 million in Fiscal 2014. The number of alumni donors exceeded 10,000 for the first time in fiscal 2013.

On December 2, 2014, the University participated in Giving Tuesday, a worldwide day dedicated to generosity and giving back. During that day, donors made 1,152 gifts totaling \$331,402 to support scholarships and programs of the University.

The Illinois State University Foundation, an autonomous non-profit organization governed by volunteers, is responsible for stewardship of gifted funds. Foundation assets continue to grow through increased giving and investment gains. At the end of fiscal 2014, endowed funds were valued at approximately \$99.5 million, an increase of nearly \$41 million in six years. Planning is underway for the first university-wide fundraising campaign since the 1999-2005 “Redefining Normal” campaign.

In fall 2012 the University opened its Cardinal Court student housing facility, an 894-bedroom apartment complex intended primarily for sophomores. The facility is the largest capital project built at the University through a public/private partnership. The University entered into a 40-year lease with Collegiate Housing Foundation, which constructed the \$44.7 million complex in partnership with American Campus Communities.

Long-range planning

In 2012 then-President Al Bowman directed the Provost and the Vice President for Finance and Planning to collaborate with the campus community to develop a long-range financial plan that, if implemented, would ensure the continued quality, strength, and viability of the University. Four working groups were formed to gather information for the effort, and campus input was solicited via two open forums and a survey. Progress was delayed by the retirement of President Bowman and the resignation of his successor. President Larry Dietz re-formed the planning group shortly after taking office in March 2014. The group is expected to report its progress to the Academic Senate in 2015.

[5.A.1] Resources and infrastructure at Illinois State are sufficient to support university operations.

Fiscal and human resources

The budgeting process described above is used to allocate fiscal and human resources in amounts sufficient to support academic program delivery and support services. In the Division of Academic Affairs three additional funding mechanisms provide flexibility in responding to changing demands for academic programs.

The summer session budget is built starting with a permanent base amount, adding an increment to cover merit increases if instituted, and allocating a temporary supplement to departments/schools based on projected need. Funds are also allocated to design online versions of high-demand courses.

The full-cost recovery and contract course model is used to deliver courses and programs off-campus to students who would not otherwise enroll at Illinois State. This model is most often used to serve cohorts of practicing elementary/secondary school teachers requesting access to masters- or doctoral-level programs to improve their teaching and/or administrative credentials. The model has also been used for delivery of undergraduate teacher preparation programs, the off-campus M.B.A. program, and the RN to B.S.N. and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs. The full-cost recovery/contract model enables delivery of courses outside the regular academic

unit budget as long as incremental costs associated with course delivery are covered by incremental revenue.

A third financing mechanism is supplemental General Education funding. These funds provide departments/schools with supplemental resources to offer additional courses essential to student matriculation.

Physical and technological infrastructure

Support for physical and technological infrastructure is considered by the president and his cabinet (comprising the president, vice presidents, legal counsel, director of athletics, and chief of staff). Allocation of new university funds for these purposes is determined annually based on *Educating Illinois* priorities. The president and cabinet also make the final determination regarding priorities included in the university request for state capital funds.

The Capital Planning and Budget Team, which is composed of representatives from each division and shared governance constituency, annually recommends academic and non-academic capital priorities to the president and cabinet. The projects are ultimately recommended by the president to the Board of Trustees for its consideration when approving the annual request for state appropriations. Factors considered when identifying and prioritizing facilities projects include condition and utilization of space, programmatic needs, cost, and alignment with the Master Plan and *Educating Illinois*.

The Data Stewardship Council provides oversight for enterprise information technology activities. The council is charged with identifying priorities, overseeing data access, establishing performance metrics, and evaluating and monitoring progress on information technology activities. The council uses data-supported measurements, such as strategic fit and return on value, to prioritize resources for the many information technology requests from campus units. The council also uses the EDUCAUSE Core Data Service, which provides comparisons of information technology services across benchmark institutions.

Three key technology infrastructure initiatives underway at this time will impact technology services at Illinois State for many years (see 3.D.4). One is a \$1.7 million Classroom Technology Expansion Project, through which classroom technology is being upgraded and standardized. Another is the \$22.5 million LEAP Forward initiative, through which the 30-year-old mainframe computing system is being replaced with integrated hybrid cloud-based systems. A third key project involves upgrading the wireless network over a three year period at an estimated cost of \$2.1 million. The project will improve service to campus locations currently underserved by the network and will increase bandwidth.

[5.A.2] The resource allocation process at Illinois State protects educational programs.

Educating Illinois identifies delivery of quality educational programs as the core mission of Illinois State. Alignment with this core mission is a key criterion in the resource allocation process. This criterion helps protect educational programs from diversion of funds to activities that do not support the academic mission of the institution. Long-standing shared governance

structures and processes ensure that open discussion and debate among internal constituencies would need to occur before any such diversion could be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The University has no superordinate entity to which it could divert funds, as the University is a corporate entity separate from the state. In addition, by state statute, since 1996 tuition revenue has been retained by the University to fund its programs and services. Prior to 1996, tuition revenue was deposited into the state treasury and subject to allocation through the state appropriations process. That process, however, did not guarantee that all funds collected by the University would be returned to the University.

Key aspects of the budgeting process that help protect educational programs from elective resource allocations include use of modified incremental budgeting and funding faculty positions through the Academic Impact Fund (see 5.A). In addition, a hiring freeze applies to all civil service and academic professional positions in all divisions. Requests to fill positions in those classifications are scrutinized by division heads and the president to ensure that personnel funds are allocated where they are most needed.

[5.A.3] Institutional goals adopted by Illinois State are realistic.

The planning process through which *Educating Illinois* was developed was designed to ensure that goals and strategies set forth in the plan could be achieved in light of current and anticipated university resources and opportunities. The plan is intended to guide the University for five years, a period short enough that external and internal conditions are not likely to change appreciably and impede plan implementation. The plan is based on quantitative evidence and conservative projections compiled in an extensive environmental scan (see 5.C.4).

Since adoption of the first edition of *Educating Illinois* in 2000, divisions and units at the University have been encouraged to adopt strategic and tactical plans that align with the vision, mission, goals, and strategies of the University's strategic plan. This alignment has furthered adoption of plans that also are realistic and attainable. All colleges and many support units have now completed at least one planning cycle.

[5.A.4] Staff members in all areas at Illinois State are appropriately qualified and trained.

In fall 2014 Illinois State had 3,639 full-time and part-time employees. Of them, 1,411 were faculty members (including departmental, non-departmental, library, and lab school faculty) and 2,228 were support personnel. The University also provided part-time employment for approximately 6,000 students.

Illinois State has standards and procedures in place to ensure that candidates selected for employment are appropriately qualified. Hiring standards and procedures differ by job classification. Hiring in all classifications is facilitated by the Office of Human Resources. Illinois State also has professional development opportunities to help new employees acclimate to their positions and to help continuing employees hone their knowledge and skills.

Hiring standards and procedures

Tenure track faculty hiring is largely governed by Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure policies. In accordance with those policies, each department/school establishes its own qualifications for its faculty members, including qualifications for hiring, promotion, and tenure, based on standards of the discipline. Standards are documented in department/school faculty status committee policies adopted on the department/school level. Almost all tenure track faculty members hold the terminal degree in their discipline. Tenure track faculty members who do not hold the terminal degree include faculty members completing their dissertation.

Required and preferred qualifications for faculty positions are reviewed by a committee of faculty peers prior to posting an opening. The Office of Human Resources provides training to search committees at the time of job posting to ensure that application review and applicant interviewing are consistent with posted qualifications. Prior to actual hiring, Human Resources staff reviews official transcripts for the recommended candidate. In compliance with Illinois statutes, oral English proficiency of new instructors is verified.

To teach courses intended only for graduate students, a faculty member must be accepted as a member of the graduate faculty or be granted a course-specific waiver that must be renewed annually (see 3.C.2). In spring 2014, 95 percent of tenured or tenure track faculty members were graduate faculty members.

Non-tenure track faculty hiring is governed by the Non-tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation policy, the non-tenure track faculty bargaining agreement, and discretionary policies on the college and department/school levels. Each department/school establishes qualifications for its non-tenure track hires consistent with university policies and the bargaining agreement. Qualifications may vary depending on the class level at which the faculty member will teach. Illinois State adheres to a policy of hiring faculty members with either the terminal degree in the discipline or a degree at least one level higher than the program in which they will teach (e.g., teachers of undergraduate students must have at least a master's degree). As with tenure track faculty hiring, search committees receive training from Human Resources regarding their roles and oral English proficiency is verified.

Illinois State adheres to regulations and guidelines prescribed by the State Universities Civil Service System when recruiting and hiring civil service staff. The system has established classification, employment, and examination procedures which include class specifications, minimum qualifications, and examinations to ensure that staff is appropriately qualified. Prior to posting a civil service opening, Human Resources determines the classification and works with the hiring unit to identify additional preferred qualifications and supplemental questions. Exams are administered to applicants deemed qualified to test based on their application materials. Candidates are then referred for interviews based on exam scores.

Recruiting and hiring practices applicable to administrative/professional employees other than vice presidents, deans, and administrators in the Division of Academic Affairs are governed by university policies and procedures (Administrative Professionals) and by discretionary policies adopted on the unit level. Administrative/professional positions are classified by Human

Resources. Required and preferred qualifications are established by hiring units subject to approval by Human Resources. Search committees are trained and transcripts are reviewed by Human Resources. Oral English proficiency is verified by the hiring unit (for instructional hires).

Hiring practices applicable to vice presidents, deans, and administrators in the Division of Academic Affairs are set forth in Administrator Selection and Search Policies. The policies prescribe the composition of search committees, whose formation is the joint responsibility of shared governance groups and the university officials responsible for selecting the person to be hired.

Graduate assistant positions are classified and posted by Human Resources. Graduate assistants must meet qualifications established by the hiring unit and academic criteria of the Graduate School, including overall graduate grade point average and English language proficiency. Most units orient their teaching assistants to the classroom before their first instructional appointment.

Professional development opportunities

Illinois State cannot provide adequate professional development opportunities in the hundreds of scholarly disciplines taught and researched by its faculty. Discipline-based professional development opportunities for faculty members are instead sponsored by professional associations and societies external to the University. Through conferences, programs, and publications sponsored by such associations, faculty members engage in scholarly discourse. The University supports faculty participation in such endeavors by providing funding for travel and registration expenses. Policies regarding the level of such support vary by college and department/school.

The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) is the principal provider of professional development opportunities related to pedagogy. CTLT offers workshops, short courses, and consultations regarding instructional technologies and their appropriate pedagogical uses. The center annually hosts a symposium at which faculty members present their scholarship of teaching and learning and share best practices with their peers. Support for new faculty members in developing their research agenda and portfolio is provided by department/school and college research and faculty status committees as well as the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

The Office of the Provost sponsors several training opportunities for administrators. Each fall prior to the start of the academic year the office hosts a two-day administrators' retreat for deans, department chairpersons/school directors, and their staff. The retreat is also attended by Academic Senate leaders and the provost's administrative staff. Training opportunities continue through the Professional Development series, a program of afternoon workshops held throughout the academic year. The Leadership Initiative provides interested members of the university community opportunities to develop and explore their leadership potential.

Professional development opportunities for civil service and administrative/professional staff include programs open to employees campus-wide and position-specific training. CTLT offers technology short courses on software and web-based applications commonly used by staff.

Human Resources periodically sponsors training programs (e.g., a 2013 workshop on hiring and budgeting systems). Examples of position-specific training include temporary foreman training in Facilities Management and Information Technology Infrastructure Library certification for information technology staff.

[5.A.5] Illinois State has well-developed budgeting and expense-monitoring processes.

Budgeting

As has been previously described, Illinois State has an effective budgeting process developed over many years. The process begins at the unit level and builds to the college, division, and university levels, ultimately concluding with approval by the Board of Trustees of an internal budget and state appropriations request.

Expense monitoring

Integrity, characterized by stewardship of university resources, is a core value of Illinois State. Accordingly, the University has developed and follows policies and procedures for monitoring university expenses, also developed over many years. These are codified in University Policies and Procedures (Fiscal Practices).

The Office of the Comptroller is responsible for oversight of university receipts and expenditures. The office works with unit fiscal agents responsible for expenditure of budgeted funds in their unit accounts in accordance with university policies. Each agent must ensure that expenditures are appropriate and within the established budget for the unit.

State law requires establishment by state agencies, including public universities, of internal and fiscal control systems. The president is responsible for compliance with this requirement. He must annually certify to the Illinois Auditor General whether university systems of internal control fully comply with state statutes.

The Office of Internal Auditing at Illinois State is responsible for assessing the adequacy of established internal controls. The office is independent of other campus units, as it reports directly to the president. Internal Auditing conducts regular reviews in accordance with a plan approved annually by the president. Audits may also be initiated by special request from an administrator or unit head.

Illinois State annually prepares financial statements in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board principles. These statements are audited by special assistance auditors retained by the State of Illinois Office of the Auditor General (OAG). In addition, OAG annually commissions an audit of university compliance with state and federal regulations. Results are reported in an annual compliance examination report. Reports since the last HLC accreditation review are publicly available on the Office of the Comptroller website.

Each year the Legislative Audit Commission appointed by the Illinois General Assembly reviews audits of all state agencies and calls before it for questioning representatives of agencies with significant audit findings. Illinois State has not been called to appear before the commission in the last decade.

Sources

- Academic Impact Fund
- Administrative-Professional Employees, Recruiting and Hiring
- Administrative-Professionals, Personnel Policies
- Administrator Selection and Search Policies
- Administrators' Retreat, Fall 2014
- Budget and Human Resources Workshop
- Cardinal Court
- Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology
- Certificates of Participation (LEAP Forward)
- Civil Service Employees, Recruiting and Hiring
- Collective Bargaining Agreement, Non-Tenure Track Faculty
- Compliance Examination, Fiscal 2014
- Current Funds Revenues by Source
- Debt Ratings
- Department-School Faculty Status Committee Policies
- EDUCAUSE Core Data Service
- Employee Counts, University Fact Book 2014
- Environmental Scan, Educating Illinois
- Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure Policies
- Financial Audit, Fiscal 2014
- Fiscal Practices, University Policies and Procedures
- Full-Cost Recovery and Contract Courses
- Giving Tuesday
- Graduate Assistant Handbook
- Graduate School Bylaws
- History of Educating Illinois
- Information Technology, Data Stewardship Council
- Kiplinger's Best College Values
- Leadership Initiative
- Legislative Audit Commission
- Money Magazine, The 25 Colleges that Add that Most Value
- Net Assets, Net Operating Revenues Ratios, Debt Burden Ratios
- Non-Tenure Track Faculty Classifications and Performance Evaluation
- Office of Internal Auditing
- Professional Development Series (Office of the Provost)
- State Universities Civil Service System
- Strategic Budgeted Carryover
- Summer Session, Fiscal 2014

- Teaching and Learning Symposium, 2015
- Technology Short Courses
- Tuition and Fee Rates

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

Illinois State University has governance and administrative structures, policies, and procedures in place to promote effective leadership and collaborative processes necessary for achievement of the institution vision and mission. These are described in the subcomponent narratives that follow.

[5.B.1] The Board of Trustees provides informed oversight of policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees provides high level oversight of university policies and practices and faithfully meets its obligations regarding financial and legal matters. The board is actively engaged in planning for and attending to future needs of the University.

The Board of Trustees meets regularly in public session following all relevant provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The board annually reviews and approves an internal budget; a state appropriations request; tuition rates, fees, and room/board rates; capital projects, contracts, and leases valued at \$500,000 or more; bond issues and certificates of participation; new academic programs; and an academic plan. The board also annually reviews an affirmative action plan, a report on promotion, tenure, and sabbatical decisions, and a report regarding oral English language proficiency of classroom instructors. The Audit Committee of the board reviews both internal and external audits.

To remain current with pertinent issues internal and external to the University, the board is regularly updated by the president and his staff and receives reports from shared governance organizations through the Campus Communication Committee. Each November the board holds a retreat to discuss current issues in higher education and review board and university goals for the year. Through the Trustee in Residence program each board member spends at least one day

each year in a major division or college to ensure ongoing familiarity with operations and programs of the unit. Board members regularly attend university functions.

The Board of Trustees is also engaged in university-wide planning processes such as development of *Educating Illinois* and the Master Plan. During development of such plans the board receives updates regarding the planning process. In the case of *Educating Illinois* the board receives a progress report each July, identifying accomplishments as well as additional work to be done.

As the primary body overseeing academics at the University, the Academic Senate also receives regular updates from university administration regarding university operations. The Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee and the Planning and Finance Committee of the Academic Senate review university fiscal practices and provide recommendations regarding establishment of funds and fund allocations.

[5.B.2] Illinois State employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies.

Policies and procedures for engaging internal constituencies in institutional governance can ultimately be traced to the Board of Trustees and its Governing Document. In it the board articulates its approach to governance, which involves delegating responsibility for day-to-day operations to the president and responsibility for academic matters to the faculty. The *Governing Document* describes the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students as “major and primary constituents of a total University organization and structure that remains mutually interdependent.” The document further provides for elected representative campus organizations to serve as the primary organizations for consultation at the institutional level.

In its *Governing Document* the Board of Trustees directs development of a university constitution that embodies “the principles and philosophies on which representative advice concerning the academic activities and programs of the University shall be provided to the decision-making processes of the University.” The constitution subsequently approved by the board establishes the Academic Senate as the governing body responsible for the academic area. The Academic Senate is charged with recommending policies and procedures to the president, who makes the final decision on them. These include, but are not limited to, policies related to admission and degree requirements, student life and conduct, evaluation of faculty members, protection of rights and privileges of university constituencies, self-governance, budgets, plans, and academic and administrative structure.

Policies and procedures approved by the president are codified in the University Policies and Procedures manual. Among the codified policies is the Code of Ethics, which articulates responsibility to and respect for shared governance as institutional values. Several policies in the manual provide specific direction for engagement of internal constituencies. These include policies regarding administrator, college dean, department chairperson, and school director search and selection and president, administrator, college dean, department chairperson, and school director performance evaluation. Another provides guidance in adjudicating alleged violations of academic freedom in the participation in shared governance.

Input of all internal constituencies into university governance is assured through the composition of the Academic Senate. Voting members include 29 tenure or tenure track faculty members, one non-tenure track faculty member, one faculty associate, 21 student members including the student body president, one representative of the Administrative Professional Council, and one representative of the Civil Service Council.

Student representation on the Academic Senate (38 percent) is the highest among any Illinois public university and among benchmark institutions. The student body also elects one student to serve as a voting member of the Board of Trustees. Student involvement in university governance is substantive despite the frequent change in student leadership as students matriculate. Student leaders facilitated a multiple-year effort to finance and construct the new Student Fitness Center, which opened in January 2011. More recently, student leaders have sponsored a proposal to limit scheduling of tests and projects during the week before final exams (“Success Week”).

The *Illinois State University Constitution* also provides for engagement of faculty, staff, and students on the unit level. Unit governance policies and procedures are codified in college or college council bylaws approved by faculty and the Academic Senate.

[5.B.3] Internal constituencies at Illinois State are involved in academic matters.

Illinois State has a long history of collaboration among administration, faculty, staff, and students in establishing university plans, policies, and processes. This has been true on the university, division, unit, and program levels. While involvement varies by issue, time, constituents, and other factors, the opportunity for involvement and collaboration is assured through a governance structure enabled by a set of interconnected documents and policies.

The heart of the University is its curriculum and the faculty members responsible for it. Illinois State has adopted a multiple-level review system (see 3.A.1) to ensure that faculty members drive curricular and program changes.

The Planning and Finance Committee of the Academic Senate annually recommends to the Academic Senate an institutional priorities report that identifies issues the committee believes should receive high priority for attention by the University during the subsequent academic year. The Academic Senate discusses the committee recommendations and approves a report for submission to the president. The president obtains feedback regarding the report from the four university vice presidents and then submits a response to the Planning and Finance Committee for further discussion and use by the committee in preparing its recommendations for the following year. The spring 2014 report from the Planning and Finance Committee identified the following priorities for 2014-2015: long-range financial planning and revenue diversification, highlighting high value rankings received by the institution, provision of resources at the department/school level including human capital investments and research support, and classroom technology.

Sources

- Administrator Evaluation Policies
- Administrator Search and Selection Policies
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Academic Plan 2014-2019
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Appropriated Budget Request
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Approval of B.A., B.S. in Fashion Design and Merchandising
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Certificates of Participation (LEAP Forward)
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Hovey Hall Roof Replacement
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Internal Budget
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Student Tuition, Fees, and Room and Board Rates
- Campus Communication Committee (
- Code of Ethics
- College-College Council Bylaws
- Educating Illinois Progress Reports
- Faculty Academic Freedom Ethics and Grievance
- Final Examinations and Success Week
- Governing Document of the Board of Trustees
- Institutional Priorities Report and Responses from Vice Presidents, Fiscal 2012-2013
- Institutional Priorities Report, Fiscal 2014-2015
- Provision for the Academic Senate, Illinois State University Constitution
- Report to Board of Trustees, Affirmative Action Plan
- Report to Board of Trustees, Oral English Proficiency
- Report to Board of Trustees, Promotion, Tenure, and Sabbatical Leave
- Retreat Minutes, Board of Trustees
- Student Representation, Academic Senates
- University Policies and Procedures

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

Illinois State University engages in systematic and integrated planning to guide its operations. The centerpiece of planning at Illinois State is *Educating Illinois*, to which all other plans link and from which all programs and services emanate.

[5.C.1] Resource allocations at Illinois State align with university priorities.

The Board of Trustees approves two budget documents each October: a request for state appropriations and an internal budget.

The request for state appropriations includes operating and capital development funds for the fiscal year beginning the following July 1. The request is based on *Educating Illinois* priorities, enrollment projections, and the prior fiscal year appropriation. Upon its approval by the board, the request is submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, which considers the request in developing its annual budget recommendations submitted to the governor and General Assembly.

The internal budget considered by the board in October guides expenditures during the fiscal year that began the prior July 1. The internal budget is based on prior year expenditures, *Educating Illinois* priorities, state revenue forecasts, enrollment projections, and unfunded state and federal mandates. To develop the internal budget, each college dean submits a budget request to the Office of the Provost in March and then presents the request in a public forum in early April. Deans are asked to explain how proposed expenditures align with *Educating Illinois*. Likewise, academic units reporting directly to the Office of the Provost and units in the three other divisions (Student Affairs, Finance and Planning, and University Advancement) are asked to justify their budget requests based on alignment with *Educating Illinois*.

[5.C.2] Assessment and evaluation, planning, and budgeting at Illinois State are linked.

Illinois State has developed internal planning processes in academic and support units that link assessment and evaluation with planning and budgeting.

Instructional units

The primary assessment and planning process used in academic units is program review (see 3.A.1 and 4.A.1). Findings and recommendations emanating from the program review process are used by programs, departments/schools, and colleges when proposing initiatives in their annual planning and budget reports submitted to the Office of the Provost. The provost and staff consult program review findings and recommendations when reviewing initiatives proposed by the colleges and use them to guide recommendations regarding allocation of personnel and funding.

Non-instructional units

Assessment, evaluation, planning, and budgeting processes of the Division of Student Affairs are described in 5.A. Enterprise Solutions Partners, a unit within the Division of Finance and Planning, assists support units in conducting business process reviews (see examples in 5.D.2). These reviews inform internal planning processes within the division. Similar processes are in place in the Division of University Advancement.

[5.C.3] The planning process at Illinois State involves internal and external constituencies.

Collaboration among internal and external university stakeholders is embedded in the culture at Illinois State. Stakeholders involved in planning processes vary depending on the scope of the plan and may include faculty, staff, students, alumni, annuitants, community leaders, employers, and concerned citizens. Constituencies may be engaged in the process through service on planning committees and advisory boards and through participation in open forums and surveys.

Planning processes routinely incorporate means of communicating with stakeholders regarding project status. Examples include project websites, progress reports, discussion boards, and listservs. Shared governance groups are represented on planning committees and are provided opportunities to review, comment on, and endorse plans prior to their adoption. The Campus Communication Committee, which reports to the Board of Trustees at each regular board meeting, provides yet another forum for consultation and collaboration among groups.

The planning process for *Educating Illinois* is representative of planning processes used to prepare other planning documents at Illinois State. Examples include the Master Plan (facilities plan), Foundations of Excellence (first-year experience), and this request for reaffirmation of accreditation.

[5.C.4] Planning at Illinois State is evidence-based.

Educating Illinois directly or indirectly guides all university operations. Goals and strategies of *Educating Illinois* are based on sound analysis of current and future institutional capacity and externalities such as need and demand for academic programs and trends in state funding. At the outset of the latest university strategic planning process, the Office of Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis (PRPA) conducted an in-depth environmental scan. The report resulting from the scan included information regarding students, faculty, and staff; university finances and financial aid; technology; facilities; alumni perceptions; and health and wellness.

Significant changes necessitating major revisions to *Educating Illinois* are unlikely to occur during the five-year term of the plan. Nonetheless, the strategic planning and implementation process anticipates the possibility of environmental changes. PRPA annually compiles a report regarding progress made toward strategic plan implementation. The environmental scan itself is regularly updated by PRPA to keep university leadership informed of changes in conditions impacting university operations.

The environmental scan is also used as a basis for other planning initiatives. Examples include the International Strategic Plan.

[5.C.5] Planning at Illinois State anticipates and accounts for emerging factors.

The environmental scan used in planning at Illinois State provides information about the past and present but also identifies and analyzes the potential impact of emerging issues and factors. The scan includes population projections, projections of higher education demand, and technology trends. The scan documents pending and anticipated legislation with potentially significant impacts on university operations.

Educating Illinois recognizes and responds to key trends identified in the environmental scan. Strategies in the current edition of *Educating Illinois* include increasing the number of international students enrolled at Illinois State and expanding support services for them, modernizing information systems and deploying a business intelligence environment to provide campus decision-makers with quicker access to the data they need, and enhancing technology infrastructure for classroom and scholarship activities.

In addition to the decennial environmental scan and annual updates, university staff continually monitors demographic, economic, political, and technological environments as tracked by respected organizations in the higher education community, including technological trends tracked by EDUCAUSE and enrollment trends reported by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. The University retains two legislative liaisons to monitor activity on the state and federal levels.

Planning for technology, demographic shifts, and globalization of the University are addressed in specialized plans that align with *Educating Illinois*. Work on technology is informed by an Information Technology Strategic Plan. The Enrollment Management and Academic Services unit is guided by a five-year enrollment plan. The International Strategic Planning Committee

has developed an International Strategic Plan for enhancing globalization of the campus and curriculum.

Sources

- Annual Report and Budget Documents, Academic Affairs
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Appropriated Budget Request
- Board of Trustees Resolution, Internal Budget
- Campus Communication Committee
- Environmental Scan, Educating Illinois
- History of Educating Illinois
- Information Technology Strategic Plan
- International Strategic Plan
- International Strategic Plan
- Planning Process, Foundations of Excellence
- Planning Process, HLC Reaccreditation
- Planning Process, Master Plan
- Strategic Plan 2012-2017, Enrollment Management and Academic Services

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

Self-study resulting in systematic improvement has long been valued at Illinois State. In the last 10 years, however, ongoing processes of assessment and program/service improvement have become more embedded in the institutional culture. This is due to public demand for greater accountability of public educational institutions, ever-faster changes in technology, and declining support for higher education necessitating ever more careful allocation of scarcer resources.

Expanded emphasis on planning and assessment at Illinois State led to adoption of the first comprehensive plan for the University, *Educating Illinois 2000–2007: An Action Plan for Distinctiveness and Excellence*, followed by plans for 2003–2010, 2008–2014, and 2013–2018. With adoption of each edition of *Educating Illinois* more attention has been placed on aligning university-level, unit-level, program-level, and service-level plans with the plan. In addition, processes have been deployed to assess performance in achieving goals and strategies and to use assessment and evaluation results to further improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability.

[5.D.1] Illinois State assesses and documents performance of its programs and services.

Before an institution can improve its performance it must be able to assess and express its past and current performance using appropriate and reliable metrics. Illinois State deploys several processes and tools for use in assessment and improvement.

University-level

The Office of Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis (PRPA) is charged with developing metrics and collecting data for use by all units at Illinois State. PRPA compiles much of this data in annual statistical reports for use by campus, unit, and program administrators, coordinators, faculty, and staff. The office also compiles and analyzes data for the environmental scan used in planning initiatives at the University.

Performance of the University is measured in large part through assessment of progress toward achieving goals articulated in *Educating Illinois*. Progress reports are compiled annually by PRPA and submitted to the Board of Trustees for its review in July. The reports provide quantitative and qualitative evidence of achievements and of initiatives yet to be realized.

Performance of university programs and services is assessed largely by documenting outputs; however, the manner in which program and services are delivered is critical. As state and federal regulations increase in number and complexity, institutional compliance has become a greater concern. A compliance working group has been formed to design an effective compliance program tailored to the needs and environment at Illinois State. Composed of faculty and senior administrators with key compliance obligations, the group has thus far developed a compliance program model and action plan. In coming years the plan will be deployed to begin assessing and documenting university performance in priority compliance areas.

Unit/service level – instructional units

Much of the data used to assess performance of academic programs is extracted, compiled, and disseminated by PRPA. This information includes enrollment and graduation trends, retention rates, student demographics, and faculty profile. PRPA compiles this data in program-level reports disseminated annually to departments/schools (see 4.C.2). Metrics are standardized across all undergraduate programs and all graduate programs, and university benchmark data are provided.

Program-level data document trends in student performance at a macro level; however, those metrics do not directly address student learning. Student learning outcomes assessment is conducted and documented at the department/school and program level by the faculty responsible for designing and implementing the curriculum (see 4.B).

Unit/service level – non-instructional units

Systematic assessment and documentation of performance is also a priority for non-instructional units. Each of the three non-instructional divisions at the University uses assessment processes and tools best suited to its mission and services.

Assessing the impact of cocurricular programs and services on student learning and success is a university priority articulated in *Educating Illinois*. The Division of Student Affairs has created an integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive approach for assessing outcomes across its 12 departments (see 4.B.1). Assessment methods include participant counts, participant feedback surveys, case manager and mentor evaluations, and analysis of recidivism rates. The Division of Finance and Planning compiles an annual report of progress toward achieving goals and priorities articulated in its division strategic plan. Similarly, the six units comprising the Division of University Advancement collect and document data on their performance. Metrics include alumni membership and involvement; contributions to the University by alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents, and friends; and planned giving.

[5.D.2] Illinois State uses assessment results to implement program and service improvements.

Assessment is a critical step toward improving institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability. Another is analyzing assessment results and then designing and implementing improvements. Units at Illinois State have done this for many years; however, during the last

decade greater emphasis has been placed on documenting the process, as explained in 4.B. Here are representative examples.

University-level

The July 2010 *Educating Illinois* progress report noted increased demand for student financial assistance. The University has subsequently instituted a Redbird Academic Scholarship program to provide annual merit-based awards. In Fiscal 2014 the University awarded \$2,266,202 in Redbird scholarship funds, and awards for Fiscal 2015 are projected at \$5,369,840 (sufficient to assist at least 1,300 students). The University has also increased funding for its Monetary Award Program supplement, known as the Illinois State University Access Grant Program. These are university funds used to supplement state grants for needs-based student financial assistance. University funding of its Access Grant Program increased from approximately \$4 million in Fiscal 2008 to approximately \$12 million in Fiscal 2015.

Unit/service level – instructional units

The program review process provides faculty members with the opportunity to assess effectiveness of academic programs and to identify actions to improve them. In subsequent self-study reports, eight years hence, faculty members describe progress made toward implementing those improvements and impacts they have had on program effectiveness and sustainability.

Actions taken by 24 academic programs since their 2004-2005 program review were reported in 2012-2013 program review self-studies. Reported actions include updating curriculum to remain current with changes in the discipline and reduce time to degree, increasing efforts to obtain external grants and contracts, increasing faculty diversity, and implementing enrollment management strategies. These and other changes are described in the 2013-2018 Academic Plan.

Unit/service level – non-instructional units

Business and technology practices are analyzed by Enterprise Solution Partners, a group within the Administrative Technologies unit, to identify problems and inefficiencies and to design, document, and monitor improvements. One example is introduction of electronic mailings to reduce or eliminate paper bills and tax forms in Student Accounts, saving up to \$147,000 in operating costs annually and providing better service to students. Another is automating admission application processing, reducing processing time by two thirds, saving approximately \$180,000 annually in personnel costs, and providing more efficient services to students.

Sources

- Educating Illinois 2000-2007
- Educating Illinois 2003-2010
- Educating Illinois 2008-2014
- Educating Illinois 2013-2018
- Educating Illinois Progress Reports

- Enterprise Solution Partners
- Environmental Scan, Educating Illinois
- Monetary Award Program Supplement
- Redbird Academic Scholarship
- Responses to Program Review Recommendations
- Strategic Planning and Assessment, Division of Student Affairs

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Summary

Illinois State University has structures and processes in place to achieve its mission of promoting the highest academic standards in teaching, scholarship, and public service. Institutional strengths include a culture of involvement and collaboration by all university constituencies and a shared desire to excel in meeting the needs of students. Illinois State has well-developed strategic planning processes to promote alignment of goals and strategies across university units and to guide allocation of institutional resources.

In coming years the greatest challenges facing the University will likely be fiscal. While appropriations in many other states have rebounded from the 2008 recession, the same has not happened in Illinois. The financial condition of the state is not expected to improve dramatically, and, consequently, state support of higher education will at best remain stable. The pool of high school graduates in the state is expected to decline before rebounding later in the decade. In addition, Illinois continues to be a net exporter of high school graduates to colleges and universities in other states, drawn in part by tuition rates at or below tuition rates in Illinois.

To meet these challenges, the University will complete the long-range financial planning initiative restarted this academic year. Elements of the plan are likely to include continued strategic use of assets and conservative use of debt, measured increases in tuition and fees, completion of a second comprehensive fundraising campaign to increase the university endowment, and use of the public/private partnership funding model when appropriate. In addition, greater efficiencies in university operations are expected to accrue from the new data storage, management, and information sharing system currently in development.

Sources

There are no sources.