

For the People



A Report Card on Public Higher Education in Illinois

American Council of Trustees and Alumni
with Illinois Policy Institute

For the People

A Report Card on
Public Higher Education in Illinois

American Council of Trustees and Alumni
with Illinois Policy Institute

October 2009

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by the staff of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, primarily by Sandra Diaz, Heather Lakemacher, and Charles Mitchell, in conjunction with the Illinois Policy Institute. ACTA especially thanks IPI's director of education policy, Collin Hitt, for his assistance.

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni is an independent non-profit dedicated to academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability. Since its founding in 1995, ACTA has counseled boards, educated the public, and published reports about such issues as good governance, historical literacy, core curricula, the free exchange of ideas, and accreditation in higher education. ACTA has previously published *Show Me: A Report Card on Public Higher Education in Missouri*, *Shining the Light: A Report Card on Georgia's System of Public Higher Education*, and *Governance in the Public Interest: A Case Study of the University of North Carolina System*, among other state-focused reports.

The Illinois Policy Institute is an independent think tank dedicated to researching and advancing public policies that promote liberty in all levels of government. Founded in 2002, the Institute has actively advocated for greater efficiency and transparency from governments at the state and local level. The Institute's research and commentary on public education have appeared in publications such as the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Sun Times*, and *Education Week*. This report marks the Institute's first focus on Illinois' system of higher education.

For further information, please contact:

American Council of Trustees and Alumni

1726 M Street, NW, Suite 802

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202.467.6787; 888.258.6648

Fax: 202.467.6784

www.goacta.org • info@goacta.org

Illinois Policy Institute

802 South 2nd Street, 2nd Floor

Springfield, IL 62704

Phone: 217.528.8800

Fax: 217.528.8808

www.illinoispolicy.org • collin@illinoispolicy.org

Contents

	1
INTRODUCTION	
	5
CHAPTER I GENERAL EDUCATION	
	11
CHAPTER II INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY	
	17
CHAPTER III GOVERNANCE	
BOARD STRUCTURE AND TRANSPARENCY OF OPERATIONS	
BOARD ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
	39
CHAPTER IV COST AND EFFECTIVENESS	
	51
APPENDIX A SELECTION CRITERIA FOR CORE COURSES	
	53
APPENDIX B STUDENT SURVEY DATA	
	59
APPENDIX C STUDENT SURVEY METHODOLOGY	

Introduction

ILLINOIS IS THE LAND OF LINCOLN. In this great state, Lincoln got his start as a lawyer and a politician. It is also here that he developed his ideas about education—the subject of this report card—which he called “the most important subject which we, as a people, can be engaged in.” In his 1832 Address to the People of Sangamon County, Lincoln outlined his vision for a practical and general education in which “every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions.”

Lincoln uttered those words two decades before any state made school attendance compulsory and three decades before he signed the Morrill Land Grant Act, which led to the founding of the University of Illinois. He also went on, of course, to write the Gettysburg Address, where we find his memorable formulation that government in this country is “of the people, by the people, for the people.”

Nowhere is that maxim of Lincoln’s more true than with our state universities, which receive special privileges—whether federal land, as in the time of the Morrill Act, or the student loans, scientific research grants, and tax exemptions we see today—in the expectation that they will fulfill their purpose “for the people.” Given that special obligation, it is surely proper to check on how they are doing. As public institutions, they have a responsibility to provide Illinois taxpayers—particularly students and their parents—an excellent education at an affordable cost.

That is why in the following pages we ask: Are they doing this? In exchange for the support and autonomy they receive, are they living up to the public trust? Too often, our answer is a resounding no. At the most basic level, the course on which Illinois’ public universities find themselves is unsustainable. Costs are rising too quickly, and quality is not high enough.

Specifically, our study focuses on four key areas of the public’s interest: what students are learning (the curriculum), whether the marketplace of ideas is vibrant (intellectual diversity), how the universities are run (governance), and what a college education costs (affordability). We examine ten four-year, state universities that represent more than 90 percent of Illinois’ four-year public university enrollment and reflect a range of institutional types. In the most recent year for which figures are available, these institutions collectively enrolled

over 185,000 students and made expenditures totaling over six billion dollars. Applying a common educational benchmark—64 percent—we offer Illinois a Passing or Failing grade on each point.

The first section focuses on **general education**—those courses completed usually within the first two years of a bachelor’s degree program, to ensure a common intellectual background, as well as college-level skills critical to workforce participation. Illinois’ public universities have notably weak core curricula. None of the institutions we surveyed requires students to take a broad survey of U.S. government or history, literature, or economics. Most also do not require a genuine, college-level mathematics course. This cries out for the attention of trustees, faculty, and administrators. Nowhere is this truer than at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which compares poorly to other institutions in the state and to similarly high-profile universities in other states.

In the second section, we focus on **intellectual diversity**, a value that lies at the very heart of the educational enterprise. In the simplest terms, intellectual diversity means the free exchange of ideas. And according to a scientific survey of students we commissioned, it is in trouble in Illinois. Students unambiguously report violations of professional standards—including perceived pressure to agree with professors’ views in order to get a good grade—and exhibit an unsettling lack of awareness of their rights and how to ensure those rights are respected. Many institutions across the country have taken responsible action in recent years to guarantee intellectual pluralism, including the University of Missouri System. The University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University should join them.

The third section turns to **governance** and actions by the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University boards of trustees—two groups that have made headlines lately. These board members are responsible for the academic and financial well-being of the institutions they oversee and for safeguarding the public interest. Regrettably, it appears the concerns that emerged from the so-called “clout” scandal at the University of Illinois were only the beginning.

Our examination of board minutes and other publicly available materials suggests that, in matters of transparency and many other critical areas, trustees at both the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University have not been performing according to best practices. It is vital that the governor and the taxpayers of Illinois demand that these trustees turn over a new leaf—always putting the public interest first—and there is ample opportunity to do so. The University of Illinois now has almost an entirely new board and is seeking a new system president; SIU is also seeking a new leader for its Carbondale campus.

Lastly, we take a look at **cost and effectiveness**. The cost of a college education in Illinois is spiraling out of control, with no end in sight. Data reported to the federal government show massive increases in tuition and fees in recent years, outstripping inflation by over 50 percent. Tuition and fees are also increasing much more quickly than families' incomes. And as the preceding paragraphs make clear, the state is not getting more for all of that money.

As policymakers evaluate funding, they should consider first whether the institutions have taken the internal steps needed to increase productivity and reduce wasteful spending and unnecessary costs. They should also demand that any further increases in cost be matched by improved quality and performance. Students, parents, and taxpayers deserve nothing less.

Are students learning the things they need to know? Is there a healthy exchange of ideas? Are the trustees upholding the public trust? Are taxpayers getting a good value for their money? These are the kinds of questions to which the people of Illinois deserve answers. Sadly, while there are bright spots, the answers we have uncovered are not acceptable. Illinois receives an F in each of the four categories.

The purpose of this report is not to be punitive but to be constructive and address ways higher education in Illinois can be more accountable and transparent. Only by grappling with the real challenges they are facing—showcased in the information and data provided in the following pages—can Illinois' state universities give their students the education they need, be truly accountable to the public they serve, and live up to the vision Lincoln himself advanced. There is no time to waste.

Anne D. Neal
President
American Council of Trustees and Alumni

CHAPTER I:

Overall Grade	GENERAL EDUCATION
F	Institutions do not have strong general education requirements. Students in Illinois can graduate without ever having taken college-level mathematics or broad introductions to literature, U.S. government or history, and economics.

“GENERAL EDUCATION” OR THE “CORE CURRICULUM” REFERS to required undergraduate courses outside the student’s specialization or major. Traditionally, these courses have been subject to two limits. First, they are relatively few in number, and second, they are general in scope. These courses—usually completed within the first two years of a bachelor’s degree program—are supposed to ensure a common intellectual background, exposure to a wide range of disciplines, a core of fundamental knowledge, and college-level skills in areas critical to good citizenship, workforce participation, and lifelong learning.

To assess the state of general education in Illinois, we looked at the three campuses of the University of Illinois system, the two campuses of the Southern Illinois University system, and the individual campuses of Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University. These institutions represent not only the geographic breadth of the state but also the vast majority of undergraduate students who are enrolled at Illinois’ four-year public universities. Using the most recent online course catalogs for the universities, we examined whether these institutions (or, in some cases, the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences or BA degree) require students to take general education courses in seven key subjects essential to a strong liberal arts education: Composition, Literature, Foreign Language, U.S. Government or History, Economics, Mathematics, and Natural or Physical Science.

In order to be counted, the subject in question must be required, not optional. Many colleges around the country give the appearance of providing a core curriculum because they require students to take courses in several subject areas other than their major—the so-called “distribution requirements.” However, within each subject area, it is not uncommon for students to have dozens or even hundreds of courses from which to choose—many of them

narrow or frivolous. Therefore, to be counted in this report, a course must be a true general education course—broad in scope, exposing the student to the rich array of material that exemplifies the subject. Furthermore, if a qualifying course was one of several options that also included unqualified courses, the institution did not receive credit for the subject. For further details on the criteria used, please see Appendix A.

After researching the institutions, we assigned a Passing (P) or Failing (F) grade for each subject. Every Illinois graduate should be guaranteed exposure to all of the broad areas outlined above; however, if a majority of institutions (six or more) required the subject in question, a grade of P was awarded to the state. If five or fewer of the institutions surveyed required the subject, a grade of F was assigned.

On the whole, the state of Illinois earned an F, with over half of the schools surveyed requiring only one or two of the seven core subjects and just two institutions (the University of Illinois at Chicago and Illinois State University) requiring a majority of them.

GENERAL EDUCATION	
Composition	P
Literature	F
Language	F
U.S. Government or History	F
Economics	F
Mathematics	F
Natural or Physical Science	P
OVERALL GRADE	F

In comparison, when ACTA examined neighboring Missouri in 2008, five out of the seven universities surveyed required four or more of the core subjects—earning the state a P.

All of the public institutions surveyed in Illinois received credit for their Composition requirement. More than half also require Natural or Physical Science. However, only three received credit for Foreign Language, and not a single institution received credit for Literature, U.S. Government or History, or Economics.

The state of mathematics general education in Illinois is also problematic. Although every institution that we surveyed claimed that students must fulfill a Mathematics or Quantitative Reasoning requirement, only four actually require

a genuine college-level math course. At one school, students may fulfill the Quantitative Reasoning requirement with courses in music. At another, students are allowed to take a “writing-intensive” course to fulfill the Mathematics requirement. And at three others, math and science courses are combined into one distribution category, so math courses are actually optional. In contrast, more than half of the 100 leading colleges and universities that ACTA recently examined for its nationwide report *What Will They Learn?* require that students take at least one college-level math course in order to graduate.

It is worth noting that Illinois’ flagship public university, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, does not compare well to its peers across the country. UIUC requires only two of the core subjects in our survey, whereas half of the 60 major state universities in *What Will They Learn?* require four or more. Those with stronger requirements than UIUC include Purdue University, the University of Iowa, Michigan State University, the University of Minnesota, the University of Missouri, Ohio State University, and the University of Arkansas. Furthermore, UIUC does not compare well to the other public institutions we surveyed in Illinois—requiring fewer of the core courses than the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Illinois at Springfield, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and Illinois State University—or to the University of Chicago, which receives a high grade in ACTA’s *What Will They Learn?* report.

All told, the Illinois public institutions surveyed perform at a disappointing level—averaging no more than two core requirements. As a consequence, students at Illinois’ public universities can graduate with major gaps in their education and without the broad-based, coherent body of knowledge essential for life after college. This problem deserves the immediate attention of Illinois trustees, faculty, administrators, policymakers, parents, and taxpayers.

The following table summarizes our research.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS BY INSTITUTION

Institution	Gov/						
	Comp	Lit	Lang	Hist	Econ	Math	Sci
University of Illinois System							
Urbana-Champaign	√		√				
Chicago	√		√			√	√
Springfield	√					√	√
Southern Illinois University System							
Carbondale	√					√	√
Edwardsville	√						
Chicago State University	√						√
Eastern Illinois University	√						√
Illinois State University	√		√			√	√
Northern Illinois University	√						
Western Illinois University	√						√
GRADES	P	F	F	F	F	F	P

Notes:

UI-Urbana-Champaign: No credit given for Mathematics because music and science courses may satisfy the Quantitative Reasoning requirement. No credit given for Natural or Physical Science because such courses as “How Things Work” and “Human Reproduction and Society” may fulfill the Natural Sciences and Technology requirement.

UI-Chicago: No credit given for U.S. Government or History because students may choose from a wide range of narrow courses in several different departments to satisfy both the Understanding U.S. Society and Understanding the Past requirements.

UI-Springfield: No credit given for Literature because courses in history and philosophy may satisfy the Humanities requirement. No credit given for U.S. Government or History because the U.S. Communities requirement may be satisfied by narrow courses.

SIU-Carbondale: No credit given for U.S. Government or History because the Diversity in the United States requirement may be satisfied by narrow courses.

SIU-Edwardsville: No credit given for Foreign Language because study at the intermediate level is not required. No credit given for Mathematics because math courses are only an option in the Skills Courses. No credit given for Mathematics or Natural or Physical Science because the subjects are folded into

the Natural Sciences and Mathematics area of the Introductory Courses and the Natural Sciences and Mathematics area of the Distribution Courses. Students may elect one and not the other.

Chicago State University: No credit given for Foreign Language because study at the intermediate level is not required. No credit given for Mathematics because courses with little college-level math content may satisfy the Mathematics requirement.

Eastern Illinois University: No credit given for Literature or Foreign Language because both subjects are only options within the Humanities and Fine Arts requirement. No credit given for Mathematics because courses with little college-level math content and a writing-intensive course may satisfy the Mathematics requirement.

Illinois State University: No credit given for U.S. Government or History because the Middle Core United States Traditions requirement may be satisfied by narrow courses.

Northern Illinois University: No credit given for Mathematics because courses with little college-level math content may satisfy the Core Competency in Mathematics requirement. No credit given for Mathematics or Natural or Physical Science because the subjects are folded into the Sciences and Mathematics Distributive Studies Area. Students may elect one and not the other.

Western Illinois University: No credit given for Literature or Foreign Language because both subjects are only options within the Humanities and Fine Arts requirement. No credit given for Mathematics because the Core Competency in Mathematics course has little college-level math content. Additional math courses are folded into the Natural Sciences and Mathematics requirement and may be avoided.

CHAPTER II:

Overall Grade	INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY
F	While students at major Illinois universities generally feel free to speak their minds outside the classroom, they do not report an atmosphere conducive to a robust exchange of ideas inside the classroom.

“IN ANY EDUCATION OF QUALITY, students encounter an abundance of intellectual diversity.”¹

In 2006, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)—a respected national organization of which both the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University systems are members—issued a statement making that assertion.

In order to experience intellectual diversity, the AAC&U explained, students should be exposed to “new knowledge, different perspectives, competing ideas, and alternative claims of truth.” They should learn to think critically—so that they understand “the inappropriateness and dangers of indoctrination... see through the distortions of propaganda, and...[can] assess judiciously the persuasiveness of powerful emotional appeals.”²

To make this possible, the AAC&U maintains that students “require a safe environment in order to feel free to express their own views.” They “need the freedom to express their ideas publicly as well as repeated opportunities to explore a wide range of insights and perspectives.” And as part of this process, the AAC&U noted, faculty play a critical role in helping students to “form their own grounded judgments.”³

These sentiments are not new. In 1940, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) wrote in its Statement of Principles that faculty “should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter

1 Association of American Colleges & Universities, “Academic Freedom and Educational Responsibility,” a statement from the Board of Directors (2006), 2.

2 Ibid, 2-3.

3 Ibid.

which has no relation to their subject,”⁴ and its 1915 Declaration of Principles is even more to the point:

The teacher ought also to be especially on his guard against taking unfair advantage of the student’s immaturity by indoctrinating him with the teacher’s own opinions before the student has had an opportunity fairly to examine other opinions upon the matters of question, and before he has sufficient knowledge and ripeness in judgment to be entitled to form any definitive opinion of his own. It is not the least service which a college or university may render to those under its instruction, to habituate them to looking not only patiently but methodically on both sides, before adopting any conclusion upon controverted issues.⁵

Illinois’ flagship public university promises its students an open intellectual atmosphere. In the 2009-2010 *Student Code*, two senior administrators write:

Welcome to Illinois!...Illinois has always stood for the respect and dignity of all people and thought. We are the home of the widest interpretation of free speech and expression. We are the home of spirited debate along the confines of respect and civility.⁶

Similarly, Southern Illinois University Carbondale says in its *Student Conduct Code* that it “is dedicated not only to learning, research, and the advancement of knowledge, but to the development of ethical and responsible citizens. By accepting membership in SIUC, an individual joins a community characterized by free expression, free inquiry, honesty, respect for others, and participation in constructive change.”⁷

Yet in recent years, there has been controversy over whether Illinois’ public universities are honoring these commitments to the time-honored principles

4 American Association of University Professors, “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments” <http://www.higher-ed.org/resources/AAUP_1940stat.htm>.

5 General Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure (1915), 1 AAUP Bull 17 (1915), cited in *Freedom and Tenure in the Academy*, William W. Van Alstyne, Editor (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993), 402.

6 2009-2010 *Student Code*, University of Illinois, accessed 1 October 2009 <http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/Full_Code_web.pdf>.

7 *Student Conduct Code*, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, accessed 1 October 2009 <<http://policies.siu.edu/policies/conduct.html>>.

of academic freedom. In 2008, the University of Illinois system drew criticism for barring faculty, staff, and graduate employees from expressing support for political candidates through bumper stickers, pins, or t-shirts on campus, and preventing them from attending on-campus political rallies.⁸ At SIUC, there is a continuing debate over “free speech zones” and other policies governing expression.⁹ Another Illinois public institution, Governors State University, was the subject of a lawsuit that accused an administrator of censoring a student newspaper.¹⁰

But anecdotal evidence is only that. In order to get a more accurate picture of the intellectual environment at Illinois’ public universities, ACTA decided to undertake a scientific survey of those most able to attest to the level of intellectual diversity on campus—the students themselves. ACTA commissioned Pulsar Research, a national firm, to perform a survey of students at UIUC and SIUC—the largest campus in each public university system, respectively. The survey was administered in person in September 2009.

Students were asked to respond to a range of questions that correspond to four key indicators of intellectual diversity outlined by the AAC&U: offering different perspectives, competing ideas, and alternative claims of truth; teaching students to think critically; offering a safe learning environment for students; and ensuring professional responsibility in the classroom. In order to assign grades, we used a standard cut-off of 64 percent as a Passing grade. If fewer than 36 percent of students reported problems for each indicator, then Illinois received a P. If 36 percent or more reported problems, Illinois received an F for that indicator.

ACTA has used similar questions and grading standards for previous report cards on other states. The results for Illinois are summarized in the following table; full results and a methodology report are available in Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively. In addition, the survey included several questions relating to recent trends and events in higher education, both in Illinois and elsewhere. While many findings were interesting, they were not used for grading purposes.

8 “AAUP President Defends Faculty Political Speech Rights,” American Association of University Professors, 23 September 2008 <<http://www.aaup.org/NR/rdonlyres/DDD68E9B-C384-4198-B3F8-8E7E87E7E25/0/facultypoliticalspeechrights.pdf>>. This was ultimately reversed.

9 “Southern Illinois University at Carbondale: Free Speech Crisis Over Unconstitutional Policies,” The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, accessed 1 October 2009 <<http://www.thefire.org/case/774.html>>.

10 David L. Hudson, Jr., “Supreme Court asked to take up college-press case,” First Amendment Center, 20 September 2005 <<http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/news.aspx?id=15809>>.

Overall, the results are extremely troubling. Significant percentages of students reported course readings and panel discussions that are one-sided or unfair, professors injecting politics into class when it was not relevant, and pressure to agree with a professor's views—either on the topic at hand or on other issues—in order to get a good grade. Few students reported being aware of procedures in place to lodge a complaint about such concerns, and many reported that they would feel uncomfortable doing so even if they had a good reason. And while the results indicate that students believe they find a more open intellectual atmosphere outside the classroom, over a quarter of students believed that the student newspaper would get in trouble if it criticized the administration.

It is also notable that while Illinois students overwhelmingly knew that the First Amendment protects their free-speech rights (and, to a slightly lesser extent, those of their professors) on campus, they were largely unaware of a new Illinois law enacted to protect student press freedom.¹¹ Students also tended not to know whether their campuses had in place restrictive speech codes, which effectively ban certain types of expression—even though the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a free-speech watchdog organization, has judged that both UIUC and SIUC have such codes.¹²

11 Illinois General Assembly, “Full Text of SB0729,” 2007-2008 <<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?GAID=9&SessionID=51&GA=95&DocTypeID=SB&DocNum=729&LegID=28617&SpecSess=&Session=>>>.

12 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, accessed 1 October 2009 <<http://thefire.org/spotlight/codes/469.html>>; Southern Illinois University Carbondale, The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, accessed 1 October 2009 <<http://thefire.org/spotlight/codes/463.html>>.

KEY INDICATORS OF INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY

OFFERING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES, COMPETING IDEAS, AND ALTERNATIVE CLAIMS OF TRUTH**GRADE: F****QUESTION**

“On my campus, some courses have readings that present only one side of a controversial issue.”

RESULT

61.0 percent agreed

QUESTION

“On my campus, some panel discussions and public presentations on social or political issues seem totally one-sided.”

RESULT

50.2 percent agreed

QUESTION

“On my campus, some courses present social or political issues in an unfair or one-sided manner.”

RESULT

40.7 percent agreed

TEACHING STUDENTS TO THINK CRITICALLY**GRADE: F****QUESTION**

“On my campus, some professors use the classroom to present their personal political views.”

RESULT

52.6 percent agreed

QUESTION

“On my campus, there are courses in which students feel they have to agree with the professor’s social or political views in order to get a good grade.”

RESULT

31.1 percent agreed

QUESTION

“On my campus, there are courses in which students feel they have to agree with the professor’s views on the topic at hand in order to get a good grade.”

RESULT

44.3 percent agreed

QUESTION

“On my campus, some professors frequently comment on politics in class even though it has nothing to do with the course.”

RESULT

38.6 percent agreed

OFFERING A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS**GRADE: P****QUESTION**

“On my campus, there are certain topics or viewpoints that are off limits.”

RESULT

33.1 percent agreed

QUESTION

“Students feel free to state their social or political views through social media, such as Facebook or MySpace, without getting in trouble on my campus.”

RESULT

4.4 percent disagreed

QUESTION	RESULT
“On my campus, students feel free to state their social and political views outside the classroom without getting in trouble.”	9.1 percent disagreed

QUESTION	RESULT
“On my campus, the student newspaper is free to criticize the university administration without getting in trouble.”	28.1 percent disagreed

ENSURING PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE CLASSROOM	GRADE: F
--	-----------------

QUESTION	RESULT
“Do you know the procedure on your campus for lodging a complaint about social, political, or religious bias by a professor?”	87.0 percent said no

QUESTION	RESULT
“How comfortable would you feel lodging a complaint about social, political, or religious bias by a professor if you felt you had just cause?”	39.2 percent said uncomfortable or very uncomfortable

QUESTION	RESULT
“Do the student evaluation forms of the faculty at your campus ask about a professor’s social, political, or religious bias?”	76.2 percent said no

OVERALL GRADE: F

CHAPTER III:

Overall Grades	GOVERNANCE
University of Illinois Board of Trustees F	The University of Illinois Board of Trustees has recently been plagued by transparency and accountability problems; however, the replacement of nearly all of the former members gives the board an opportunity to refocus on improving academic quality and regaining the public trust.
Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees F	The Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees has also encountered transparency and accountability issues. It needs to be more engaged in matters of academic quality and in holding university officials accountable.

TRUSTEES MUST BE CARETAKERS of the public interest, ensuring that colleges and universities provide a high-quality education at an affordable price. They need to support their institutions, but also be prepared to question the status quo if necessary. Trustees need to work with the president and the administration but should also be able to exercise their authority independently. Even in a world of shared governance, it is ultimately the trustees who are invested with the responsibility for the academic and financial health of their institutions.

The purpose of lay governance in higher education is to bring the viewpoint of informed citizens to bear on the running of the university. However, it is often the case that lay boards do not live up to the promise of effective citizen governance. Some boards simply function as “rubber stamps” for administrative recommendations, while other boards are actively involved in working with administrators and other constituencies and are willing to exercise the authority needed to make tough choices.

The pre-eminence of our system of higher education can be ensured only if there is informed leadership from those who are vested with the financial and academic health of our colleges and universities—namely, college and university trustees. This section of the report examines the effectiveness of the governing boards of the two largest public university systems in Illinois, the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University systems.

This report comes at a time when higher education in Illinois—especially at the University of Illinois—is at a crossroads. Earlier this year, the university was embroiled in a public scandal involving a compromised admissions process, where students were allegedly admitted to the university based on political connections. In response, Governor Pat Quinn charged the Admissions Review Commission with investigating these claims, and the commission’s Report & Recommendations were scathing in their indictment of numerous senior administrators and trustees. The commission recommended that the entire board resign and that the new board conduct a thorough review of top administrators. As a result, over half of the board resigned, and the system’s president announced he would step down.

This presents the newly-constituted board with a tremendous opportunity to change direction and pursue real reform. But it would behoove the board to keep in mind that the problems with the university’s governance go further than admissions practices. In particular, transparency has been an issue, as the minutes for several meetings in 2008 took over a year to be posted online. Such delays are unacceptable for a public board that spends taxpayer dollars. The Illinois Auditor General also found several serious problems with respect to budgeting and financial accountability. In addition, the board should take a more proactive stance in favor of improving academic quality and enhancing affordability.

The Southern Illinois University Board of Trustees also faces significant challenges. During the review period, the board was caught up in several controversies involving alleged conflict of interest and plagiarism. But our analysis shows a board with other problems: a lack of engagement in improving academic quality, and a startling lack of transparency, particularly regarding the recent renewal of the president’s contract.

This section is divided into two parts. **Part I** examines the effectiveness of each board’s structure and the transparency of its operations, based on elements viewed as effective governance practices by such organizations as Independent Sector, ACTA’s Institute for Effective Governance, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Committee on Finance of the United States Senate. These metrics include: availability and accessibility of trustees’ names and contact information; meeting frequency; member attendance; board size; the board’s periodic review of its bylaws and/or policies; member engagement in professional development; transparency of the board’s activities and actions; the board’s committee structure including its use of an executive committee; the board’s role in presidential

searches and its assessment of the president and chancellors; and the board's involvement in the development and monitoring of a long-range plan.

Part II examines each board's actual outcomes with particular emphasis on system-wide academic quality and fiscal accountability. Elements examined include actions the board has taken to improve academic quality, assess student learning, and control costs. This part also examines whether the items brought by the administration to the board were ever rejected and whether action items ever received dissenting votes. Both criteria are designed to assess whether board members are asking questions and engaging issues thoughtfully as opposed to simply "rubber-stamping" administrative and staff recommendations.

To summarize, Part I examines how well the two boards are structured to do their work, while Part II examines what these boards have accomplished during a given period.

The analysis covers board actions from January 2007 to August 2009. Board meeting minutes, meeting materials, media documents, policies and bylaws, and other UI and SIU documents were consulted. We also wrote to the two institutions' board secretaries and invited them to submit information on board accomplishments and practices.

Grading is on a Pass/Fail basis. Each board received a Passing grade (P) if its formal actions demonstrated that good governance practices were being implemented. If not, then the board received a Failing grade (F). If the information available did not clearly indicate either, the board received an Incomplete (I).

PART I: BOARD STRUCTURE AND TRANSPARENCY OF OPERATIONS

The **University of Illinois** system is under the direction of a Board of Trustees that is composed of thirteen members, eleven of whom have official votes. Nine members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Illinois State Senate for six-year terms. Three members are student trustees elected by the students at each of the three campuses. One of the student members is designated by the governor to have an official vote on the board. The governor also sits on the board as an ex officio member. The board oversees three campuses—Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield.

The **Southern Illinois University** system is under the direction of a Board of Trustees, which oversees campuses in Carbondale and Edwardsville. The board consists of seven members, who are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the State Senate, and two student members—one from each campus—elected from the student body. One of the student trustees is designated by the governor as a voting member.

Governance

Element	Evaluation
Names and contact information of board members publicly available and easily accessible	To hold a board accountable, the public needs to know and have access to its members. ¹³
UI Grade: F	<p>University of Illinois System</p> <p>The website for the board contains the names, pictures, and extensive biographical information for each board member. However, the public cannot contact the trustees directly, as in other states, since communications are directed through the UI administrative offices.</p>
SIU Grade: F	<p>Southern Illinois University System</p> <p>The board website has the name, photograph, and biographical information of each member prominently posted. However, the public cannot contact the trustees directly, as in other states, since all correspondence for the board is directed through its executive secretary.</p>

13 Martin Anderson, *Impostors in the Temple* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1996), 202.

**Governance
Element**
Evaluation

Board meets frequently

A board should meet as often as necessary to conduct its business.¹⁴ While the necessary number of meetings to conduct business will vary, meeting regularly, at least quarterly, and calling other meetings as necessary, is a good general practice.

UI Grade: P
University of Illinois System

The board's bylaws provide for an annual meeting on the third Thursday of January. The board also holds regular meetings throughout the year, and the chair or any three members may call special meetings as deemed necessary. In 2008, the board met nine times (seven regular meetings and two special meetings), and in 2007 the board met six times (all regular meetings). It has met regularly throughout 2009.

SIU Grade: P
Southern Illinois University System

The board's bylaws provide for regular meetings at least quarterly during the calendar year. The board may schedule additional regular meetings, and the chair may call special meetings as needed. In 2008, the board met eight times (seven regular meetings and one special meeting), and in 2007 the board met nine times (seven regular meetings and two special meetings). It has met regularly throughout 2009.

14 *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice: A Guide for Charities and Foundations* (Washington, DC: Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, 2007), 13.

Governance

Element

Evaluation

Board members attend regularly

A board that meets to conduct business cannot be effective if a majority of the board members are not present or members fail to attend regularly.¹⁵

UI Grade: P

University of Illinois System

The board’s bylaws stipulate that a majority of the voting members of the board must be present in order to conduct business transactions. The bylaws do not establish the number of absences allowed for each board member or a process for removing members that do not meet attendance requirements. For the period reviewed, meeting attendance by appointed and student trustees averaged 96 percent with only one instance of a trustee attending remotely.

SIU Grade: P

Southern Illinois University System

The board’s bylaws require that a quorum (five voting members) be physically present at a meeting in order to conduct business. A member may attend via audio or video conference if unable to attend in person, although he or she needs to indicate the reason, and the other members must take a vote to determine whether or not it is permissible for the absent member to attend remotely. The bylaws do not establish the number of absences allowed for each board member or a process for removing members that do not meet attendance requirements. For the period reviewed, attendance at regular meetings averaged 88 percent, or 84 percent when only counting those members who were physically present at the meetings rather than participating via teleconference.

¹⁵ “Best Practices in University Governance,” expert testimony by ACTA’s Institute for Effective Governance at U.S. Senate Finance Committee Roundtable Discussion, March 3, 2006.

Governance**Element****Evaluation**

Effective board size

While there is no magic number for the size of a governing board, an effectively functioning board should generally be no fewer than seven or greater than 15.¹⁶

UI Grade: P**University of Illinois System**

The board has eleven voting members, as outlined previously. The size of the board is large enough to allow for meaningful committee work and substantial examination of issues.

SIU Grade: P**Southern Illinois University System**

The board has eight voting members, as outlined previously. The size of the board is sufficient to allow for committee work and in-depth discussion of issues.

Periodic review of bylaws and/or policies

Periodic review of bylaws and policies helps boards ensure that they are abiding by the rules they have set for themselves.¹⁷

University of Illinois System

Both the statutes and the general rules of the university outline procedures for amending university policies. According to the board website, the bylaws were last amended in May 2009, and the agendas and minutes indicate periodic revisions of the board's governing documents.

UI Grade: P**SIU Grade: F****Southern Illinois University System**

The board's bylaws, statutes, and policies show periodic revision and review. But major changes made during the period reviewed seem largely in reaction to public embarrassment caused by board or administrative conduct. Most notably, at its May 2009 meeting, the board approved a new Conflict of Interest Policy, after a Freedom of Information Act inquiry showed it had awarded several contracts in excess of \$100,000 to companies with which the board chair's company had done business. In addition, the board approved a Plagiarism Policy in May 2009 that was largely precipitated by allegations that SIU president Glenn Poshard had plagiarized parts of his doctoral dissertation.

16 "Ensuring Quality Trusteeship in Higher Education," expert testimony by ACTA at U.S. Senate Finance Committee Roundtable Discussion, March 3, 2006.

17 *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice*, 18.

**Governance
Element**

Evaluation

Pre-service training and/or professional development

Trustees should be oriented in their new role and receive expert advice from inside and outside the institution throughout their board service.¹⁸

UI Grade: F

University of Illinois System

According to the board’s bylaws, the Governance Committee “helps provide orientation assistance for new trustees, including a mentoring program for which the Board chair, in consultation with the committee chair, appoints mentors for new trustees.” The recent scandal over admissions practices at the University of Illinois has raised questions about the adequacy of the current orientation and training practices. The report from the Admissions Review Committee stated that the trustees “have not collectively demonstrated an inclination to affirmatively seek out ethics or other training that could have at least heightened their sensitivity to the admissions-related issues raised here.” The report specifically called for the formation of an Ethics Committee “with the responsibility to develop and administer an orientation and training program that requires all Trustees to annually certify that they understand and will abide by applicable rules of conduct.” It is apparent that the current system for training and professional development needs to be reassessed and revamped.

SIU Grade: F

Southern Illinois University System

The board’s bylaws and statutes are silent on orientation or professional development for trustees. In response to a telephone inquiry, the board’s executive secretary indicated that new trustees participate in a day-long orientation program consisting mainly of meetings with administrators and that the board sets up workshops for itself periodically. It also appears that some board members occasionally attend conferences, but there is no evidence that continuing regular professional development is expected or required.

18 “Best Practices in University Governance”; *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice*, 17.

Governance**Element****Evaluation**

Transparency of board activities and actions

The ability of the public to see how the board operates and what it is doing is a critical element to a board's success.¹⁹ Transparency helps the board communicate with the university community at large and build trust and confidence in the university's overseers.

UI Grade: I**University of Illinois System**

The board puts advance notice of its meetings on its website and has recently begun posting audio recordings of its meetings online, following an executive order from Governor Quinn. The board also posts the current fiscal year's Budget Summary in a prominent place on its website. Meeting minutes from May 2008 onward, however, were not posted online until September 2009—over a year after some of the meetings occurred. This failure to post public information in a timely fashion significantly undermines transparency. It should be noted that the newly-constituted board has been considerably more prompt in approving meeting minutes, indicating that there is a positive trend in favor of more open and transparent operations. This must continue.

SIU Grade: P**Southern Illinois University System**

The board gives advance notice of all of its meetings on its website and posts agendas for the executive sessions, regular meetings, and committee meetings. The website also has archived meeting minutes from 2004 to the present, including committee meeting minutes and agendas.

¹⁹ *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice*, 12.

**Governance
Element**

Evaluation

Functioning committee structure

For a board to conduct its work effectively and delve into issues in meaningful ways, it should have standing committees with specific roles and duties.²⁰

UI Grade: F

University of Illinois System

In addition to the Executive Committee, the board has a number of standing committees. All board members serve on all committees, and the board chair appoints one trustee to chair each committee for one year. The committees are as follows: Academic Affairs, Access, Athletics, Budget and Audit, Buildings and Grounds, External Affairs, Finance and Investment, Governance, Human Resources, Legal Affairs, Strategic Planning, Student Affairs, Technology and Economic Development, and University Hospital. Based on the board meeting materials, committee meetings generally convene during the course of the regular meetings while the entire board is present and consist primarily of hearing reports from various campus constituencies and approving agenda items. The lack of distinct working committees exploring and reporting to the board on specific issues inhibits in-depth examination.

SIU Grade: P

Southern Illinois University System

The board has an Executive Committee and four other standing committees whose members are appointed by the chair: the Academic Matters Committee, the Architecture and Design Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Audit Committee. With board approval, the chair may also appoint other special committees as needed. All trustees do not serve on all committees, and the committees meet regularly and separately from the full board. This structure is more likely to allow for in-depth examination of pertinent issues.

²⁰ “Best Practices in University Governance.”

Governance

Element	Evaluation
Executive Committees	<p>Executive Committees are typically responsible for developing meeting agendas, planning board activities, reviewing compensation and reappointments, and monitoring committee work. In some cases, they also act on emergency or other items when the full board cannot convene. Given the important issues the Executive Committee frequently addresses, it is important that it not represent a quorum so that its actions are not binding on the full board.²¹</p>
UI Grade: P	<p>University of Illinois System</p> <p>The Executive Committee consists of the board chair and two other board members who are elected to the committee. The Executive Committee has all the powers of the full board and meets on the call of the chair or any two members for transactions that are urgent and unable to be postponed until the next full board meeting. The three members do not represent a quorum of the board—which is good practice. The Executive Committee regularly reports its activities to the full board.</p>
SIU Grade: P	<p>Southern Illinois University System</p> <p>The Executive Committee consists of the board chair and two other board members who are elected to the committee. According to the board’s website, the Executive Committee has “authority to transact such routine business as may arise during the recess of the Board and to act for the Board in all matters of an emergency nature upon which immediate decisions are necessary for the present welfare of the University.” The three members do not represent a quorum of the board. All actions taken by the Executive Committee need to be reported in writing to the whole board at its next regular or special meeting, and they need to be recorded in that meeting’s minutes, although the full board does not have to ratify the actions.</p>

21 Ibid.

Governance**Element****Evaluation**

Involvement in presidential search committees

Selecting a president is a board's most important decision. While boards should seek input from higher education's varied constituencies, they should always maintain control over the search process and ultimately the candidates from which they will make their selection. Boards must remember that they hire, fire, and evaluate the chief executive and to delegate or abdicate their most important fiduciary duty is not good governance practice.²²

UI Grade: F**University of Illinois System**

The last time the University of Illinois system conducted a presidential search was in 2004. For this process, the board selected a search firm and authorized a 19-member “consultative committee” (whose composition was suggested by the University Senates Conference, a faculty group) to assist with the search. The secretary of the board, who is employed in the administrative offices, served as a liaison between the board and the committee, and the two groups met periodically to assess the progress of the search process. However, no board member participated in the deliberations of the consultative committee, its interview of candidates, or its selection of five finalists for the board's consideration. Since selecting a president is the most important action a board takes, the board's relative lack of involvement until the final stages of the process merits a Failing grade.

SIU Grade: F**Southern Illinois University System**

According to the board's bylaws, “at least one-half of the total membership of the Board shall be required for the initial selection of the President or the termination of the President's services. The Board shall set that officer's compensation.” SIU performed its most recent presidential search in 2005. While the board established itself as a Committee of the Whole for the process and chose the president from among the finalists, it delegated the screening of candidates and selection of finalists to a search firm and a 22-member Presidential Search Advisory Committee (PSAC) made up of various campus constituencies. A board member did serve as a liaison to the PSAC to oversee the “day-to-day activities of the search” but appears to have had a minimal role in selecting the candidates.

²² *Selecting a New President: What to do Before You Hire a Search Firm* (Washington, DC: ACTA's Institute for Effective Governance, 2004).

Governance**Element****Evaluation**

Renewal of presidential contracts based on regular evaluation

Regular evaluations of the president prior to compensation adjustments and contract renewals or reappointments are important to ensure that board goals are being achieved.²³

University of Illinois System

UI Grade: I

According to news reports, the contract for current University of Illinois president Joseph White provides for the board's periodic review of his performance to determine whether to extend his contract and how much to increase his salary. In November 2008, the board voted to extend President White's contract; however, the process was not transparent. Meeting minutes and agendas do not indicate how the board reached its decision or how it evaluated the president's performance. The president recently announced his plans to retire. Evaluations of his successor should be much more transparent.

SIU Grade: F

Southern Illinois University System

According to the board statutes, the board "conducts an annual evaluation of the president based upon a previously established statement of goals and objectives formulated by the president and agreed upon by the Board." The president is evaluated "in an individual session at a time designated by the Board chair," and the board sets the president's compensation on an annual basis.

While the board agenda for May 2009 included a presidential contract extension, minutes show that the extension was approved with no public discussion at the end of a meeting that included the adoption of a Conflict of Interest Policy and a Plagiarism Policy Guide—both of which had arisen in light of allegations of misconduct involving the president and board members. Although the board voted a five-year extension, meeting materials show that the only public announcement of the extension read, "Amendment to the Presidential Employment Agreement," with no other background material provided or elaboration on the process. On top of that, press accounts reported that board members promised the president a contract extension as early as 2008.

23 *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice*, 15 and *Assessing the President's Performance: A "How To" Guide for Trustees* (Washington, DC: ACTA's Institute for Effective Governance, 2006).

Governance

Element

Evaluation

Development of a long-range plan

Trustees, working with university stakeholders, have a responsibility to clarify the mission, articulate the vision, and set broad strategic goals for the institution in achieving that vision. Once approved, the strategic plan should become the guiding plan that drives decision-making and evaluation processes.²⁴

UI Grade: P

University of Illinois System

Among the standing committees of the board is the Strategic Planning Committee, which is charged with “helping the University administration plan for the future in ways that will aid in developing the institution and in exploiting its strengths. This committee is also responsible for supporting actions that will implement such plans.” The last time the university formulated a strategic plan was between 2005 and 2006. The president of the university held a summit in March 2005 to draft the strategic framework, which was shared and discussed with the board. There was a second summit in June 2005 to refine the draft, which was then presented to the board, which provided additional input. The board has committed to implementing the strategic plan and discusses it periodically at meetings. There is a yearly progress report on the University of Illinois system website. While the trustees were not the principal drafters of the plan, their input and participation in the process warrant a Passing grade.

SIU Grade: F

Southern Illinois University System

We found no evidence of any strategic planning by the SIU board during the review period. It appears the most recent strategic planning process began in early 2002, when then-president James E. Walker convened a panel of higher education experts to “review the university’s current status and give advice on how to best prepare for the challenges of the 21st century.” The result was the *2020 Vision Committee Report*, which outlined several key goals and strategies for the university system. Apart from being briefed on the final report at the September 2002 meeting, the board’s participation in formulating and developing the strategic plan appears to have been minimal, and there is little evidence that the board has reviewed it since then. The 2020

²⁴ *Strategic Planning and Trustee Responsibility* (Washington, DC: ACTA’s Institute for Effective Governance, 2005).

**Governance
Element**

Evaluation

Vision Committee consisted almost entirely of people from outside SIU, with no board representation.

The Carbondale and Edwardsville campuses produced strategic plans prior to the review period. Again, the board seems to have been disengaged from the process, merely endorsing the finished Carbondale plan, *Southern at 150*, and a revised mission statement for Edwardsville. As one member of the SIU Emeritus Association commented in 2005, “there is a lot of strategic planning going on on the campuses but the Board never seems to plan strategically.”

PART II: BOARD ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Governance

Element

Evaluation

Actions to improve academic quality

UI Grade: F

University of Illinois System

During the period reviewed, the trustees were plagued with questions concerning accountability and academic integrity. Investigative reporting uncovered a long-standing practice by board members and administrators of advocating for the admission of politically well-connected students. News of the “clout list” undermined public confidence in the board and resulted in the creation of a special review commission by the governor. After extensive examination of the matter, the Admissions Review Commission severely admonished the board and urged the resignation of all members, as well as a review of top academic personnel.

While board members have been clearly interested in getting students into the university, the board has shown far less interest in what students receive once they get there. On matters concerning academic affairs, the board spends most of its time hearing reports and approving the establishment or termination of academic programs as recommended by the faculty and administration. As a general matter, minutes show the board spends relatively little time on questions regarding student learning such as general education, graduation rates, retention, or competency. While trustees did raise continuing concerns about the quality of academic offerings of the online Global Campus, there has been no comparable inquiry into the quality of academics on the traditional campuses.

Governance**Element****Evaluation****SIU Grade: F****Southern Illinois University System**

The board has an Academic Matters Committee, which is tasked with reviewing and recommending actions to the full board concerning education, including program reviews, planning documents, and the conferral of honorary degrees. Minutes show the committee spends most of its time during meetings listening to reports from administrators and faculty members. Such topics as student retention rates, accreditation, and quality assurance have been on the agenda, but do not appear to have resulted in concrete actions or recommendations by the board.

During the review period, plagiarism was a frequent issue of contention at SIU, as allegations of academic misconduct were leveled at several faculty members and university officials, including system president Glenn Poshard. The board subsequently passed a Plagiarism Policy, but only in the wake of the public controversy, and only after the university's committee reviewing the matter was criticized for failing to include members from outside SIU.

As a general matter, the board meetings are largely concerned with buildings and facilities, and do not reflect active trustee engagement in matters of academic quality and institutional accountability.

Governance**Element****Evaluation**

Actions to assess student learning

UI Grade: F

University of Illinois System

During the period reviewed, the board took no specific steps of its own to address student learning outcomes. Each of the three UI campuses has an office dedicated to assessing student learning and improving the quality of teaching—Urbana-Champaign houses the Center for Teaching Excellence, Chicago the Office of Programs and Academic Assessment, and Springfield the Assessment Task Force. However, there is no evidence in publicly available sources that the board has played a significant role in the establishment or ongoing activities of these centers.

As part of the university’s strategic planning process, several “Progress Indicators” were adopted in the individual campus plans, including student retention and graduation rates and student placement percentage, but the board had little direct involvement. Also, in the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Request, UI made several commitments to assessing student learning outcomes during the forthcoming year.

According to a study published by Education Sector,²⁵ the Illinois Board of Higher Education requires the publication of the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) or the university’s own undergraduate alumni surveys. However, as the study showed, the results of the alumni surveys are not always helpful in determining the quality of educational outcomes since they relate to personal perceptions; and it does not appear that the board regularly reviews or discusses them, in any event.

SIU Grade: F

Southern Illinois University System

There are some initiatives underway on SIU’s Carbondale and Edwardsville campuses when it comes to student learning. For example, both are participating in the nationally-normed National Survey of Student Engagement, Carbondale is participating in the Cooperative Institutional Research Program, and Edwardsville is a member of the Voluntary System of Accountability. Edwardsville’s strategic plan also calls for measuring student achievement using NSSE and surveys of alumni regarding their perception of their baccalaureate experiences. However, there is little indication that the board played an active role in initiating these assessment measures or that it reviews or discusses the results.

25 Chad Aldeman and Kevin Carey, *Ready to Assemble: Grading State Higher Education Accountability Systems*, Education Sector (Washington, DC: 2009), 56.

Governance**Element****Evaluation**

Actions to control costs and increase efficiency

UI Grade: F

University of Illinois System

One of the standing committees of the board is the Budget and Audit Committee, which is charged with providing oversight and ensuring accountability for the university's budget. Continuing issues with state-level audits and rising tuition rates, however, indicate that the board is not proactively working to control costs.

Recent reports from the state Auditor General suggest that the structure in place for addressing budget issues has not been adequate. The Fiscal Year 2008 Financial Audit report stated that "University policies for monitoring and reporting budget deficits and for limitations on transfers were ineffective or not complied with resulting in an accumulated budget deficit of \$125 million over a period of several years." The report recommended that the policies be revised for greater oversight of expenditure and budget issues.

The previous year's audit report had made similar recommendations, noting that "significant control over the University utility operations was with one individual." At the end of 2007, the university's chief financial officer suggested the creation of new budget reporting guidelines for the board, but the continuing auditing issues suggest that adequate corrective action was not taken.

On the positive side, administrative expenditures at UI make up a small portion of the overall budget, particularly in comparison with similar universities elsewhere in the country. Moreover, the university's Strategic Planning Framework provides for a "Resource Plan for Achieving Strategic Goals," which includes "aggressively cutting costs and streamlining the administrative structure" and "being creative in developing new revenue sources."

However, a recent internal study reported that most of the progress toward these goals has been made through tuition increases and "reallocation savings"—in other words, by raising tuition and shifting expenses around instead of by actually reducing costs. As discussed in Chapter IV of this report, tuition rates have increased by 50 percent or more at all three of the campuses in recent years, and yet, at its meetings, the board continues regularly to discuss raising tuition rates even more.

**Governance
Element**

Evaluation

In light of these issues, there appears to be significant room for improvement in terms of exercising effective oversight in budgeting and demonstrating a stronger commitment to keeping tuition rates low.

SIU Grade: I

Southern Illinois University System

While the board recently approved a program to extend in-state tuition rates to students from neighboring states, it has done so after a nearly 60 percent jump in in-state tuition and fees between 2002 and 2007 and amidst difficulties in maintaining enrollment levels. Moreover, SIU has recently embarked on an ambitious \$83 million campus building program, which is funded, to a great degree, by increased student fees.

SIU has, however, decreased its administrative spending, albeit in response to an Illinois Board of Higher Education request. Additionally, in May 2009, the board expressed concerns about rising costs. The trustees and the president rejected proposed tuition increases for incoming students of over 9 percent at Carbondale and over 11 percent at Edwardsville, demanding alternatives, and ultimately approved a series of fee increases and tuition increases of only 4.5 and 6 percent, respectively. For this promising focus, the board receives an Incomplete.

**Governance
Element**
Evaluation

Avoiding the rubber stamp

UI Grade: I

University of Illinois System

The board often combines multiple items under one vote. When it votes to adopt resolutions or to approve motions, most of the votes pass unanimously. A small minority of votes recorded abstentions; hardly any recorded “no” votes.

During the time period reviewed, however, there were notable examples of board engagement and questioning. The issue of whether or not to drop the Chief Illiniwek athletic mascot generated heated discussion among the trustees, and a motion attempting to save the embattled mascot failed—the only motion voted down during the time reviewed. Later, when the financial and academic problems connected with the Global Campus came before the board, it displayed a considerable level of engagement and questioning over the issue before ultimately resolving to phase out the program. These cases offer promising signs of the ability to avoid the rubber stamp.

SIU Grade: F

Southern Illinois University System

The board spends most of its time in meetings hearing reports, approving personnel changes, and voting on agenda items that usually have to do with facilities. For each proposal that comes before the board, there is a “Rationale for Adoption” and “Considerations Against Adoption.” During the review period, there were rarely any considerations offered against adoption, no motions were voted down, and most votes were unanimous. Fewer than ten motions recorded any nay votes at all, and most nay votes came from the student trustees. While the “pro/con” format for presenting proposals to the board is promising, it does not appear to have led to the engaged review and questioning that would help ensure a thorough vetting of the issues.

UI SYSTEM GRADE: F

SIU SYSTEM GRADE: F

CHAPTER IV:

Overall Grade	COST AND EFFECTIVENESS
F	Undergraduate tuition and fees in the state of Illinois have been skyrocketing in recent years; meanwhile, graduation rates remain disturbingly low.

PRICES OF PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES across the country rose more rapidly between 1998–99 and 2008–09 than in the preceding decade, and tuition and fee levels at four-year public colleges increased 18 percent in just five years—after adjusting for inflation.²⁶ Faced with these increases, according to a 2009 survey by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 86 percent of people believe that students have to borrow too much money to pay for their college education.²⁷ On average, a family at the 20th percentile of income would have to spend 38 percent of their annual income²⁸ for one of their children to attend a public four-year college, compared with 13 percent in 1980.²⁹

According to the Lumina Foundation for Education, “Rising prices are the tip of the iceberg. The amount of money that colleges and universities spend to provide education to their students is rising faster than consumer prices and health care costs.”³⁰

With costs out of control, many question the effectiveness and cost management of the higher education enterprise. Four out of ten Americans surveyed consider waste and mismanagement a major factor in driving up higher education costs.³¹

26 College Board, *Trends in College Pricing 2008*, 11.

27 John Immerwahr and Jean Johnson, *Squeeze Play 2009: The Public's Views on College Costs Today*, a report prepared by Public Agenda for The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (Washington, DC: 2009), 7.

28 *Trends in College Pricing 2008*, 11 and 16.

29 The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *Losing Ground: A National Status Report on the Affordability of American Higher Education* (Washington, DC: 2007), 5.

30 Lumina Foundation for Education, *Hitting Home: Quality, Cost, and Access Challenges Confronting Higher Education Today* (2007), 3.

31 John Immerwahr and Jean Johnson, *Squeeze Play: How Parents and the Public Look at Higher Education Today*, a report prepared by Public Agenda for The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (Washington, DC: 2007), 23.

Given these numbers, it is imperative that higher education earn the confidence of the public in the use of funds.

This section examines the three campuses of the University of Illinois system, the two campuses of the Southern Illinois University system, and the individual campuses of Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University in terms of cost and effectiveness. The report takes a look at trends in spending and tuition and fee increases. It examines whether the ten universities are successful in graduating first-time, full-time freshmen. It also looks at whether the universities are successful in retaining full-time freshmen after their first year of study. In addition, this section evaluates the handling of unproductive programs and whether institutions use performance as a criterion in funding allocations.

The period of evaluation is generally five years; however, periods of measure may vary based on data availability and the specific measure. The most recent year for which data is available is generally 2007.

Grading is on a Pass/Fail basis. The following describes the various elements used to evaluate the universities and explains the grading criteria.

Instructional vs. administrative spending. This measure assesses the commitment of the institutions to instructional versus administrative spending. It examines instructional and administrative expenditures as a percentage of Educational and General expenditures (E&G) relative to the base year. The percentage change in instructional and administrative spending over the period is also examined. If the percentage increase in instructional spending was equal to or higher than the percentage increase in administrative spending—signifying that instruction was a priority—the universities received a Passing grade. If the opposite was true, the institutions received a Failing grade.

Trends in in-state undergraduate tuition and fees. This measure assesses the commitment of the universities to keeping tuition and fee increases at reasonable levels. If over the five-year period, tuition and fees increased at a rate equal to or less than the rate of inflation (using the Consumer Price Index), the institutions received a Passing grade. If, however, tuition and fees increased more rapidly than the rate of inflation, the institutions received a Failing grade.

Tuition and fees as a percentage of median household income. This measure indicates whether the universities have kept higher education affordable relative to median household income. If the percentage of median household income required to pay for tuition and fees decreased or remained

relatively unchanged from the base year, the universities received a Passing grade. Conversely, if tuition and fees required a greater percentage of a family's income, the universities received a Failing grade.

Baccalaureate graduation rates for first-time, full-time freshmen. This measure examines the current four- and six-year graduation rates for each institution. While ideally 100 percent of first-time, full-time freshmen should graduate in four years and certainly by six years, we have applied a 64 percent benchmark—a typical grading scale used to assess students' Pass/Fail rate. If less than 64 percent of students graduated in four or six years, the institution received a Failing grade. The national six-year baccalaureate graduation rate of 56.1 percent³² is unacceptable, and is not used as a standard for grading purposes.

First-year retention rates for first-time, full-time freshmen. This measure examines the percentage of first-time, full-time students enrolled as freshmen who continue the following year as sophomores. In effect, this is the first-year drop-out rate. It is an important measure for two reasons. First, remaining after the first year is an indicator that the student is more likely to complete his or her degree. Second, it can also suggest—especially to an institution that has a large drop-out rate after the first year—that the students were not sufficiently prepared (either academically or socially) to succeed. Both are important indicators for board members to examine. If the first- to second-year retention rates were less than 64 percent, then the universities received a Failing grade.

Ratio of new programs to closed programs. This is an efficiency and cost measure that attempts to assess how well the universities are monitoring program growth through approval and closure of new programs. If a university established twice as many or more programs than it closed, it received a Failing grade.

Performance as a criterion for funding. Rewards and incentives for good outcomes can lead to better results. This measure ascertains whether or not the universities use, either in part or fully, performance as a criterion for funding. If performance is used as a criterion, the institutions received a Passing grade. If not, they received a Failing grade.

32 Graduation Rates, NCHEMS Information Center for State Higher Education Policy Making and Analysis <<http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/?year=2007&clevel=nation&mode=data&state=0&submeasure=27>>.

Cost/Effectiveness**Element****Evaluation**

Instructional vs.
administrative spending

Grade: P

In 2002, spending on Instruction at the ten universities surveyed ranged from 36.7 percent to 56.4 percent of each university's respective Educational and General (E&G) expenditures. Spending on Administration in that same year varied from a low of 2.7 percent of E&G at UIUC to a high of 22.2 percent at Northern.

Five years later in 2007, the range of Instructional expenditures as a percentage of E&G had not changed significantly for the group as a whole; they varied from a low of 37.9 percent to a high of 56.7 percent. However, some individual universities saw increases of up to 10 percentage points in the Instruction category. Spending on Administration decreased for several universities during the same period—most notably Northern—bringing the range down to between 2.3 and 11.4 percent.

On the whole, four out of the ten universities increased the percentage of E&G that they spent on Instruction while also decreasing the percentage of E&G that they devoted to Administration. One university increased both Instructional and Administrative expenditures as a percentage of E&G, but the Instruction gains were larger. Three other universities decreased both Instructional and Administrative expenditures as a percentage of E&G, but the decreases in Administration were a larger percentage of the total Administrative expenditures than were the Instruction decreases in comparison with total Instructional spending. In all eight of these cases, funding Instruction appears to have been a higher priority than funding Administrative expenses, thus the Passing grade for the state as a whole.

INSTRUCTIONAL VS. ADMINISTRATIVE SPENDING

INSTITUTION		2002 Expenditures	2007 Expenditures	\$ Change	% Change	GRADE
University of Illinois System						
Urbana-Champaign	<i>Instruction</i>	\$377,044,847	\$482,172,725	\$105,127,878	27.9%	F
	<i>Administration</i>	27,586,170	35,533,766	7,947,596	28.8	
Chicago	<i>Instruction</i>	423,682,491	426,422,274	2,739,783	0.6	P
	<i>Administration</i>	26,696,895	23,770,244	-2,926,651	-11.0	
Springfield	<i>Instruction</i>	18,891,592	25,959,635	7,068,043	37.4	P
	<i>Administration</i>	3,863,332	5,057,985	1,194,653	30.9	
Southern Illinois University System						
Carbondale	<i>Instruction</i>	229,931,395	275,106,992	45,175,597	19.6	P
	<i>Administration</i>	36,234,858	32,849,828	-3,385,030	-9.3	
Edwardsville	<i>Instruction</i>	77,437,913	97,022,399	19,584,486	25.3	P
	<i>Administration</i>	14,584,593	16,358,286	1,773,693	12.2	
Chicago State University	<i>Instruction</i>	47,897,892	45,417,033	-2,480,859	-5.2	P
	<i>Administration</i>	11,608,745	8,903,062	-2,705,683	-23.3	
Eastern Illinois University	<i>Instruction</i>	69,476,279	88,946,126	19,469,847	28.0	F
	<i>Administration</i>	13,509,248	17,730,818	4,221,570	31.2	
Illinois State University	<i>Instruction</i>	117,667,141	136,452,084	18,784,943	16.0	P
	<i>Administration</i>	28,212,110	30,326,318	2,114,208	7.5	
Northern Illinois University	<i>Instruction</i>	130,332,865	181,385,768	51,052,903	39.2	P
	<i>Administration</i>	63,735,000	37,546,712	-26,188,288	-41.1	
Western Illinois University	<i>Instruction</i>	76,475,712	91,410,600	14,934,888	19.5	P
	<i>Administration</i>	19,240,500	15,747,422	-3,493,078	-18.2	

INSTITUTION		2002 as a % of E&G	2007 as a % of E&G	Change in % Points	% Change	GRADE
University of Illinois System						
Urbana-Champaign	<i>Instruction</i>	36.7%	37.9%	1.2%	3.3%	F
	<i>Administration</i>	2.7	2.8	0.1	4.0	
Chicago	<i>Instruction</i>	46.5	40.9	-5.6	-12.0	P
	<i>Administration</i>	2.9	2.3	-0.6	-22.1	
Springfield	<i>Instruction</i>	40.3	47.2	6.9	17.1	P
	<i>Administration</i>	8.3	9.2	0.9	11.6	
Southern Illinois University System						
Carbondale	<i>Instruction</i>	54.5	55.4	0.9	1.6	P
	<i>Administration</i>	8.6	6.6	-2.0	-23.0	
Edwardsville	<i>Instruction</i>	48.2	50.0	1.8	3.8	P
	<i>Administration</i>	9.1	8.4	-0.7	-7.1	
Chicago State University	<i>Instruction</i>	54.7	49.7	-5.0	-9.0	P
	<i>Administration</i>	13.3	9.7	-3.6	-26.4	
Eastern Illinois University	<i>Instruction</i>	56.4	56.7	0.3	0.6	F
	<i>Administration</i>	11.0	11.3	0.3	3.1	
Illinois State University	<i>Instruction</i>	49.6	48.9	-0.7	-1.4	P
	<i>Administration</i>	11.9	10.9	-1.0	-8.6	
Northern Illinois University	<i>Instruction</i>	45.5	55.3	9.8	21.5	P
	<i>Administration</i>	22.2	11.4	-10.8	-48.6	
Western Illinois University	<i>Instruction</i>	50.6	52.8	2.2	4.3	P
	<i>Administration</i>	12.7	9.1	-3.6	-28.6	

OVERALL GRADE: P

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

Cost/Effectiveness

Element	Evaluation
<p>Trends in in-state undergraduate tuition and fees</p> <p>Grade: F</p>	<p>Inflation-adjusted tuition and required fees skyrocketed throughout Illinois during the five-year period examined. From 2002 to 2007, in-state tuition and fees jumped by an average of 56 percent, with no campus increasing rates by less than 42 percent and two campuses increasing rates by more than 70 percent. Thus, a Failing grade for each university and the state as a whole.</p>

TRENDS IN UNDERGRADUATE TUITION & FEES

INSTITUTION	2002	2007	% Change	GRADE
University of Illinois System				
Urbana-Champaign	\$6,645	\$9,966	50.0%	F
Chicago	6,452	9,748	51.1	F
Springfield	4,151	7,252	74.7	F
Southern Illinois University System				
Carbondale	4,879	7,795	59.8	F
Edwardsville	3,774	5,938	57.3	F
Chicago State University	3,984	7,138	79.2	F
Eastern Illinois University	4,933	7,035	42.6	F
Illinois State University	5,145	8,040	56.3	F
Northern Illinois University	5,521	7,871	42.6	F
Western Illinois University	4,911	7,411	50.9	F

OVERALL GRADE: F

Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education

Note: 2002 dollar amounts are expressed in 2007 inflation-adjusted numbers.

Cost/Effectiveness**Element****Evaluation**

Annual in-state undergraduate tuition and fees as a percentage of median household income

Grade: F

In 2007-08, annual in-state undergraduate tuition and required fees at all ten universities surveyed required a greater percentage of inflation-adjusted median household income than they did just five years earlier. In 2002-03, Illinois families could expect to pay an average of 11.8 percent of their household income for annual in-state tuition and fees; in 2007-08, an average of 14.9 percent of median household income was required. This represents an average increase of more than 25 percent for the five-year period, even after adjusting for inflation. Thus, a Failing grade for each university and for the state as a whole.

UNDERGRADUATE TUITION & FEES AS A PERCENTAGE OF MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

INSTITUTION	2002	2007	Change in		GRADE
			% Points	% Change	
University of Illinois System					
Urbana-Champaign	15.6%	19.0%	3.4%	22.0%	F
Chicago	15.1	18.6	3.5	22.9	F
Springfield	9.7	13.8	4.1	42.1	F
Southern Illinois University System					
Carbondale	11.4	14.8	3.4	30.0	F
Edwardsville	8.8	11.3	2.5	28.0	F
Chicago State University	9.3	13.6	4.3	45.7	F
Eastern Illinois University	11.5	13.4	1.9	16.0	F
Illinois State University	12.0	15.3	3.3	27.1	F
Northern Illinois University	12.9	15.0	2.1	16.0	F
Western Illinois University	11.5	14.1	2.6	22.8	F

OVERALL GRADE: F

Sources: Illinois Board of Higher Education and U.S. Census Bureau

Note: 2002 dollar amounts for tuition & fees and median income were based on 2007 inflation-adjusted numbers.

Cost/Effectiveness

Element

Evaluation

Baccalaureate graduation rates for first-time, full-time freshmen

Grade: F

Although universities are only required to report their six-year graduation rates to the U.S. Department of Education, eight out of the ten universities surveyed in Illinois have voluntarily reported their four- and five-year graduation rates for every incoming freshman class since 1997. This level of transparency is to be applauded.

However, the graduation rates throughout the state are not encouraging. Students who entered Illinois universities in 2001—expecting to graduate in 2005—were about evenly divided in 2007 between those who had earned a degree and those who had not. In the best case, more than 80 percent of 2001 freshmen at UIUC had graduated by 2007. But in the worst case, at Chicago State, the numbers were more than reversed: for every student who graduated within six years, there were five who did not. Seven out of the ten universities surveyed increased their percentage of six-year graduates during the period that was examined, but given how low the graduation rates remain, there is still a great deal of work to be done.

Overall, only two institutions—UIUC and Illinois State—graduated more than 64 percent of their 2001 freshmen by 2007. Since eight out of the ten campuses surveyed did not receive a Passing grade, the state as a whole receives a Failing grade.

Cost/Effectiveness

Element

Evaluation

BACCALAUREATE GRADUATION RATES FOR FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMEN

INSTITUTION	1996 COHORT GRADUATION RATE		2001 COHORT GRADUATION RATE		CHANGE IN % POINTS		GRADE
	4-Year	6-Year	4-Year	6-Year	4-Year	6-Year	
University of Illinois System							
Urbana-Champaign	56.5%	79.9%	62.6%	81.9%	6.1%	2.0%	P
Chicago	16.7	44.0	22.4	50.0	5.7	6.0	F
Springfield*	N/A	N/A	N/A	56.4	N/A	N/A	I
Southern Illinois University System							
Carbondale	17.1	38.6	24.0	45.7	6.9	7.1	F
Edwardsville	N/A	37.8	21.1	44.8	N/A	7.0	F
Chicago State University	N/A	17.8	N/A	16.2	N/A	-1.6	F
Eastern Illinois University	N/A	66.4	31.1	60.3	N/A	-6.1	F
Illinois State University	30.4	57.3	39.5	65.2	9.1	7.9	P
Northern Illinois University	25.2	51.3	26.0	52.3	0.8	1.0	F
Western Illinois University	29.0	50.7	33.2	56.6	4.2	5.9	F

OVERALL GRADE: F

Source: IPEDS

Note: Complete graduation rate data is not available for University of Illinois-Springfield because the campus did not become a full four-year institution until 2005. N/A = not available.

Cost/Effectiveness

Element

Evaluation

First-year retention rates for first-time, full-time freshmen

Grade: P

From 2002 to 2007, the percentage of first-time, full-time freshmen who returned the next fall for their sophomore year remained relatively constant for nine of the ten institutions surveyed. With the exception of UIS, all of the schools experienced minor fluctuations both up and down from year to year. Most of the fluctuations were only a percentage point or two.

At nine out of the ten institutions surveyed, more than 64 percent of the 2007 cohort of first-time, full-time freshmen returned for their sophomore year. Thus a Passing grade for the state.

FIRST-YEAR RETENTION RATES FOR FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMEN

INSTITUTION	2002 Cohort	2007 Cohort	Change in % Points	GRADE
University of Illinois System				
Urbana-Champaign	93.0%	94.0%	1.0%	P
Chicago	78.0	78.0	0.0	P
Springfield	79.0	67.0	-12.0	P
Southern Illinois University System				
Carbondale	N/A	70.0	N/A	P
Edwardsville	74.0	73.0	-1.0	P
Chicago State University	N/A	55.0	N/A	F
Eastern Illinois University	79.0	81.0	2.0	P
Illinois State University	83.0	83.0	0.0	P
Northern Illinois University	N/A	75.0	N/A	P
Western Illinois University	76.0	73.0	-3.0	P

OVERALL GRADE: P

Sources: IPEDS and Illinois Board of Higher Education

Note: Original data were reported without decimal places. N/A = not available.

Cost/Effectiveness**Element****Evaluation**

Ratio of new programs to closed programs

Grade: I

We could find no reliable data on how many degree programs have been closed in Illinois during the review period. Indeed, the Illinois Board of Higher Education was unable to produce a record of closed programs at the state's universities. In the interests of transparency and accountability, the institutions and the Illinois Board of Higher Education should keep track of such data and make it available to the public online, just as they do for new programs. Other states, such as Missouri, post information about new and closed academic programs on the higher education coordinating board's website.

Performance as a criterion for funding

Grade: F

It does not appear that the individual universities surveyed, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, or the Illinois legislature use performance measures to set funding levels, either for the universities themselves or for specific programs. Greater attention ought to be paid to performance during budgeting sessions, and institutions should consciously incorporate performance elements into their funding allocations. Thus, a Failing grade.

OVERALL GRADE: F

Appendices

APPENDIX A SELECTION CRITERIA FOR
CORE COURSES

APPENDIX B STUDENT SURVEY DATA

APPENDIX C STUDENT SURVEY
METHODOLOGY

Appendix A

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR CORE COURSES

Distribution requirements on most campuses today permit students to pick from a wide range of courses that often are narrow or even outside the stated field altogether. Accordingly, to determine whether institutions in fact have a solid core curriculum, we defined success in each of the seven subject areas outlined, as follows:

Composition

An introductory college writing class, focusing on grammar, style, clarity, and argument. “Writing-intensive” courses or seminars and writing for a discipline where the instructors are not from the English or composition department do not count if they are the only component of a writing requirement. Remedial courses and SAT scores may not be used to satisfy a composition requirement.

Literature

A comprehensive literature survey. Narrow, single-author, or esoteric courses do not count for this requirement, but introductions to broad subfields (such as British or Latin American literature) do.

Foreign Language

Competency at the intermediate level, defined as at least three semesters of college-level study in any foreign language, or three years of high school work, or an appropriate examination score.

U.S. Government or History

A survey course in either U.S. government or history, with enough chronological and topical breadth to expose students to the sweep of American history and institutions. Narrow, niche courses do not count for the requirement, nor do courses that only focus on a limited chronological period or a specific state or region.

Economics

A course covering basic economic principles, generally an introductory micro- or macroeconomics course taught by faculty from the economics or business departments.

Mathematics

A college-level course in mathematics. Includes advanced algebra, trigonometry, calculus, computer programming, statistics/probability, or mathematical reasoning at or above the intermediate level. Remedial courses or SAT Reasoning Test scores may not be used as substitutes. Symbolic or mathematical logic courses and computer science courses count, while linguistic courses or computer literacy courses do not, as the math content is usually minimal.

Natural or Physical Science

A course in astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physics, or environmental science, preferably with a laboratory component. Overly narrow courses, courses with weak scientific content, and courses taught by faculty outside of the science departments do not count. Psychology courses count if they are focused on the biological, chemical, or neuroscience aspects of the field.

Appendix B

STUDENT SURVEY DATA

Conducted by Pulsar Research, a member of:



**American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Illinois Public Universities Survey
Total Sample
September 2009**

School

	Unweighted N	Weighted N	%
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	312	422	67.9
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale	309	199	32.1
Total Weighted N	621	621	100.0

Q1. Are you a Sophomore, Junior or Senior?

	n	%
Sophomore	187	30.1
Junior	182	29.2
Senior	252	40.6
Total	621	100.0

Q2. Students feel free to state their social or political views through social media, such as Facebook or MySpace, without getting in trouble on my campus.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.2
Disagree	26	4.2
Agree	304	48.9
Strongly Agree	290	46.7
Total	621	100.0

Q3. On my campus, students feel free to state their social or political views outside the classroom without getting in trouble.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	6	1.0
Disagree	51	8.1
Agree	329	53.0
Strongly Agree	235	37.8
Total	621	100.0

Q4. On my campus, there are certain topics or viewpoints that are off limits.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	88	14.1
Disagree	328	52.7
Agree	164	26.5
Strongly Agree	41	6.7
Total	621	100.0

Conducted by Pulsar Research, a member of:



**American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Illinois Public Universities Survey
Total Sample
September 2009**

Q5. On my campus, some courses present social or political issues in an unfair and one-sided manner.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	47	7.6
Disagree	321	51.8
Agree	196	31.6
Strongly Agree	56	9.0
Total	621	100.0

Q6. On my campus, some courses have readings that present only one side of a controversial issue.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	31	5.0
Disagree	211	34.0
Agree	324	52.1
Strongly Agree	55	8.9
Total	621	100.0

Q7. On my campus, some panel discussions and public presentations on social or political issues seemed totally one-sided.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	32	5.2
Disagree	277	44.7
Agree	263	42.3
Strongly Agree	49	7.9
Total	621	100.0

Q8. On my campus, some professors use the classroom to present their personal political views.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	68	10.9
Disagree	226	36.4
Agree	260	41.8
Strongly Agree	67	10.8
Total	621	100.0

Conducted by Pulsar Research, a member of:



**American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Illinois Public Universities Survey
Total Sample
September 2009**

Q9. On my campus, some professors frequently comment on politics in class even though it has nothing to do with the course.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	87	14.0
Disagree	294	47.4
Agree	204	32.8
Strongly Agree	36	5.9
Total	621	100.0

Q10. On my campus, there are courses in which students feel they have to agree with the professor's social or political views in order to get a good grade.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	137	22.1
Disagree	290	46.8
Agree	150	24.2
Strongly Agree	43	6.9
Total	621	100.0

Q11. On my campus, there are courses in which students feel they have to agree with the professor's views on the topic at hand in order to get a good grade.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	84	13.6
Disagree	262	42.1
Agree	219	35.3
Strongly Agree	56	9.0
Total	621	100.0

Q12. On my campus, some aspects of freshman orientation programs force students to reveal what they think about controversial social, political, or religious issues.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	134	21.6
Disagree	355	57.2
Agree	119	19.1
Strongly Agree	13	2.1
Total	621	100.0

Conducted by Pulsar Research, a member of:



**American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Illinois Public Universities Survey
Total Sample
September 2009**

Q13. On my campus, some aspects of freshman orientation programs tell students what they should think about controversial social, political, or religious issues.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	139	22.4
Disagree	349	56.2
Agree	117	18.8
Strongly Agree	16	2.6
Total	621	100.0

Q14. On my campus, the student newspaper is free to criticize the university administration without getting in trouble.

	n	%
Strongly Disagree	24	3.9
Disagree	150	24.2
Agree	343	55.2
Strongly Agree	104	16.8
Total	621	100.0

Q15. There are laws in some states that protect the right of student newspapers to criticize university administration without getting in trouble. Are you aware of any such laws in Illinois?

	n	%
Illinois has such laws	68	10.9
Illinois does NOT have such laws	14	2.2
Don't Know	540	86.7
Total	621	100.0

Q16. Some universities have 'speech codes' that restrict students' and professors' freedom of speech. Are you aware of any such policies on your campus?

	n	%
My campus has such policies	80	12.8
My campus does NOT have such policies	50	8.0
Don't know	492	79.1
Total	621	100.0

Conducted by Pulsar Research, a member of:



**American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Illinois Public Universities Survey
Total Sample
September 2009**

Q17. Do you believe the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees the following rights on your campus or not: Your right to freedom of speech?

	n	%
Yes	591	95.2
No	30	4.8
Total	621	100.0

Q17. Do you believe the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees the following rights on your campus or not: Your fellow student's right to freedom of speech?

	n	%
Yes	584	94.1
No	37	5.9
Total	621	100.0

Q17. Do you believe the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees the following rights on your campus or not: Your professor's right to freedom of speech?

	n	%
Yes	507	81.7
No	114	18.3
Total	621	100.0

Q18. Do you know the procedure on your campus for lodging a complaint about social, political, or religious bias by a professor?

	n	%
Yes, I know the procedure	67	10.9
No, I do not know the procedure	540	87.0
There is no procedure on my campus	13	2.2
Total	621	100.0

Q19. How comfortable would you feel lodging a complaint about social, political, or religious bias by a professor if you felt you had just cause?

	n	%
Very comfortable	120	19.3
Somewhat comfortable	258	41.5
Somewhat uncomfortable	180	29.0
Very uncomfortable	63	10.2
Total	621	100

Conducted by Pulsar Research, a member of:



**American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Illinois Public Universities Survey
Total Sample
September 2009**

Q20. Do the student evaluation forms of the faculty at your campus ask about a professor's social, political or religious bias?

	n	%
Yes	29	4.7
No	473	76.2
Don't Know	119	19.1
Total	621	100.0

Q21. How would you describe your views?

	n	%
Radical Left	21	3.4
Liberal	218	35.4
Moderate	244	39.6
Conservative	127	20.5
Ultraconservative	7	1.1
Total	616	100.0
No Answer	5	
Total	621	

Q22. What is your current major?

	n	%
Fine Arts	12	2.0
Humanities	56	9.1
Professional	281	45.6
Science	167	27.0
Social Science	85	13.7
Other	16	2.6
Total	616	100.0
No Answer	5	
Total	621	

Appendix C

STUDENT SURVEY METHODOLOGY



Illinois Public Universities Campus Climate Survey Report September 22, 2009

A project sponsored by:
American Council of Trustees and Alumni
www.goacta.org

Research conducted by:
Pulsar Research & Consulting: A Member of The Pert Group

Pulsar Research & Consulting was contracted by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) to conduct campus climate surveys with students at two of Illinois's largest public colleges. The foremost objective was to use a professionally-designed survey instrument that was similar to several previous studies conducted to gather quality information that would inform higher education policy.

Findings are based on a sample of sophomores, juniors, and seniors amassed through in-person data collection of 312 completed surveys at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and 309 at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Freshmen were intentionally excluded from this round of surveying, as it was too early in the school year for them to have yet formed experiential opinions.

Methodology

Questionnaire Design

The survey instrument was based on the instrument used in the 2004 ACTA survey of students at the top fifty colleges and universities in the United States, as well as instruments used in Missouri and Georgia in 2007. The instrument includes a series of questions on student perception of political and social issues on campus as well as demographics questions that were used to ensure the sample accurately represented the student population. The survey instrument was pre-tested to ensure the questions were properly constructed and understood by respondents.

Data Collection

Pulsar researchers have previously determined that in-person interviewing is the most effective method of interviewing large numbers of college students at a single institution. The method has the lowest level of coverage error and previous experiments revealed it to be an efficient and representative methodology.

Students were intercepted at various times of day and at several places of high student traffic on or adjacent to each campus to ensure randomness. Times of day ranged from 9am until 9pm for each school. A few examples of both indoor and outdoor places of high student traffic that could be utilized, depending on the school, included eateries, coffee houses, exercise facilities, student centers, and major walkways. The process took place for multiple days per campus until sufficient completed interviews were achieved. Respondents are guaranteed anonymity, as names and contact information are not recorded with the dataset.

Respondent Selection

Second stage sampling and respondent selection was accomplished through the following steps. After the selection of the individual schools, operations staff collected demographics, population statistics, and geographic maps for each school. Dormitory and other residential student data, as well as classroom buildings and other data germane to establishing traffic flow estimates were assembled. A list of preliminary sites was selected based on these estimates. Survey supervisors verified site suitability upon reaching each campus. They established flow at selected locations and verified that key traffic flow areas were not inadvertently omitted. Following the verification, a final selection of sites was determined and specific times and locations for a given target number of completes for each intercept location was selected based on the flow data gathered. Different times were used at each location, based on traffic flow counts. Data collection consisted of multiple days per school, depending on the size and complexity of the school. Sampling ratios at individual sites varied by traffic volume and school size to accommodate target completes. A ratio was established for respondent selection and every n th person was verbally asked the screening question of "Are you a student at (college)?" and a verbal follow up of "Are you a sophomore, junior, or senior?" The questionnaire repeated the undergraduate screening question. Refusals were replaced with the next available person. Data collection continued at each school until the total number of completes for the particular school were collected. Demographic questions were used to monitor potential bias on contact rates and did not reveal any issues.

Verification Methods

A systematic, multi-level verification process was used to ensure error rates were well within acceptable norms and provide assurance of high quality data. The numerous, rigorous quality control measures include, but are not limited to:

1) Manager Field Training

Data collection managers on this survey have all received extensive training and conducted multiple campus surveys. They have participated in extensive training that included mock interviewing, human subject treatment and other training.

2) Manager Verification

Every survey received by a manager is hand-checked so that questionnaires with potential problems, such as incompletes, incorrect class status, or erroneous data entries, are not included in their final submissions.

3) Data Cleaning Procedures

The dataset is further scrutinized for irregularities using statistical diagnostics. Further observations are removed from the dataset if incompletes, incorrect class, statistical irregularities, or other such items are present.

Weighting

Data was weighted to account for variance in enrollment between the two schools. Enrollment data was gathered from individual schools as well as from the National Center For Education Statistics' (NCES) restricted Peer Analysis System (IPEDS). Illinois data was weighted by school and class.

Weighting factors were as follows:

- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign = .44 to 2.50
- Southern Illinois University-Carbondale = .84 to 2.86

Sampling Error

Sampling error for 621 completed surveys is +/-4%



ACTA
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF
TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI

American Council of Trustees and Alumni
1726 M Street, NW, Suite 802
Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 1-888-ALUMNI-8 or 202-467-6787

Fax: 202-467-6784

Email: info@goacta.org • Website: www.goacta.org