

COST AND EFFECTIVENESS

Undergraduate tuition and fees in the state of Illinois have been skyrocketing in recent years; meanwhile, graduation rates remain disturbingly low.

COST AND EFFECTIVENESS

Instructional vs. administrative spending	P
Trends in in-state undergraduate tuition and fees	F
Annual in-state undergraduate tuition and fees as a percentage of median household income	F
Baccalaureate graduation rates for first-time, full-time freshmen	F
First-year retention rates for first-time, full-time freshmen	P
Ratio of new programs to closed programs	I
Performance as a criterion for funding	F

OVERALL GRADE: F

FOUNDED IN 1995, ACTA IS A NATIONAL EDUCATION NONPROFIT dedicated to academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability in higher education. This report card is one of a series of publications on higher education designed to provide independent analysis for education leaders, policymakers, and trustees.

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. This report marks the Institute's first focus on Illinois' system of higher education.



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For the People

A Report Card on
Public Higher Education in Illinois

Executive Summary

FOR THE PEOPLE: A REPORT CARD ON PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS takes a close look at the state of higher education in Illinois, offering a Pass or Fail grade in four key areas of the public's interest: what students are learning; whether the marketplace of ideas is vibrant; how the universities are governed; and what a college education costs.

Our report card finds that 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.

PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS

General Education	F
Intellectual Diversity	F
Governance	
University of Illinois System	F
Southern Illinois University System	F
Cost and Effectiveness	F

GENERAL EDUCATION

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 REQUIREMENTS BY INSTITUTION

Institution	Comp	Lit	Lang	Gov/ 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	√						√
	P	F	F	F	F	F	P

OVERALL GRADE: F

INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY

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.

KEY INDICATORS OF INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY

Offering Different Perspectives, Competing Ideas, and Alternative Claims of Truth	F
Teaching Students to Think Critically	F
Offering a Safe Learning Environment for Students	P
Ensuring Professional Responsibility in the Classroom	F

OVERALL GRADE: F

GOVERNANCE

The **University of Illinois** Board of Trustees has recently been plagued with 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.

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.

BOARD STRUCTURE AND TRANSPARENCY OF OPERATIONS

	UI	SIU
Names and contact information of board members publicly available and easily accessible	F	F
Board meets frequently	P	P
Board members attend regularly	P	P
Effective board size	P	P
Periodic review of bylaws and/or policies	P	F
Pre-service training and/or professional development	F	F
Transparency of board activities and actions	I	P
Functioning committee structure	F	P
Executive Committees	P	P
Involvement in presidential search committees	F	F
Renewal of presidential contracts based on regular evaluation	I	F
Development of a long-range plan	P	F

BOARD ACCOMPLISHMENTS

	UI	SIU
Actions to improve academic quality	F	F
Actions to assess student learning	F	F
Actions to control costs and increase efficiency	F	I
Avoiding the rubber stamp	I	F

OVERALL GRADE, UI SYSTEM: F

OVERALL GRADE, SIU SYSTEM: F