



ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Illinois' first public university

Research, Scholarship and Creative Expression A Strategic Research Plan

MISSION

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY is committed to the creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge through scholarship, research and creative expression. These activities fulfill a solemn and longstanding obligation to the community at large by: i) furthering our understanding of the natural and physical worlds; ii) exploring human behavior and culture, past and present; iii) developing the organizational practices and technological innovations that power human and economic development; and iv) improving the quality of life through cultural enrichment. This we do while embracing students as active participants in a community of scholars, thereby facilitating a life-long, research-centered mode of learning that provides for a more informed and active citizenry to the benefit of society.

HERITAGE

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY was founded as a normal school in 1857, and its continuing reputation as one of the nation's premier universities in teacher education reflects this early heritage. More than 150 years later, Illinois State University has built on this educational legacy to become one of the leading comprehensive universities in the state of Illinois, as evidenced by a broad spectrum of undergraduate and graduate programs across all the major academic disciplines. Of equal importance, scholarship, research, and creative expression at Illinois State University are achieving a level of global prominence that the University's founders would have applauded.

The importance of research, scholarship and creative expression to the future success of Illinois State University is reinforced by the University's bold new strategic plan *Educating Illinois 2008-2014: Priorities for Illinois' First Public University*. One major goal of the plan is that "Illinois State University will demonstrate excellence in scholarship, teaching, and learning at the undergraduate and graduate levels." The plan also recognizes the synergy between teaching and research, noting that "academic excellence results in the acquisition, synthesis, and creation of new research knowledge that invigorates undergraduate and graduate education." This Strategic Research Plan, the University's first such plan, aims to be faithful to these ideals, and to provide a mechanism by which the goals and strategies of *Educating Illinois* as they pertain to research, scholarship and creative expression, can be put into practice.

VISION

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY features a culture where the interdependence between scholarship and teaching is carefully cultivated and highly valued. As articulated in *Educating Illinois*, "the University maintains strong, mutually reinforcing commitments to scholarship and to undergraduate and graduate education." Within this context, Illinois State University seeks to become a recognized leader in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge through outstanding research, scholarship, and creative expression.

VALUES

Community of Scholars

The word “university” comes from the Latin phrase *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*, referring broadly to a community of scholars. Illinois State University actively fosters a *community of scholars*, placing a premium on collaboration among faculty, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, undergraduate students, local practitioners, and other members of the Bloomington/Normal community in a variety of scholarly and creative endeavors.

Full Spectrum of Scholarship

We seek to foster a rich and diverse research culture that places a high value on the full spectrum of scholarship, research, and creative inquiry at Illinois State University including, but not limited to, basic and applied research, creative expression in all its forms, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation of Knowledge

The creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge distinguish the university from all other cultural institutions. Scholarship, research, and creative expression are essential elements of faculty life, and attest to the unique role of the university in our culture.

Strong Graduate Programs

Strong and vibrant graduate programs are indispensable to the success of a university’s research and scholarship mission and creative endeavors. We seek to strengthen and nurture graduate programs in a manner consistent with the values and expertise within the University. We recognize that graduate students often play a vital role as mentors to undergraduate scholars and as facilitators of the transition of these students from passive classroom learning to an active, research-centered mode of learning.

Excellence

We aspire to the highest level of national and international recognition of our scholarship, research, and creative expression that characterizes the best institutions, while maintaining our tradition of individualized attention to students that makes us unique, consistent with the values espoused in *Educating Illinois 2008-2014: Priorities for Illinois’ First Public University*.

GOALS

THE UNIVERSITY’S commitment to the creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge through scholarship, research, and creative expression can only be realized if faculty and administrators remain true to the core values articulated above and to the advancement of the goals enumerated below. We believe that Illinois State University is on a trajectory towards becoming a Public Ivy. We strive to attain no less than the kind of national and international recognition of our research, scholarship, and creative expression that characterizes the best institutions, without losing sight of our historical commitment to an individualized education for all our students.

GOAL 1: Raise the profile of Illinois State University’s research, scholarship, and creative expression on campus, across the nation, and around the world

- develop a plan to supplement start-up resources for recruitment of top scholars for faculty positions
- promote the increased diversity (broadly defined) of faculty and ideas
- establish a program to support both national and international travel for research collaboration and dissemination
- encourage and provide support for publication in leading scholarly journals across the disciplines

- develop a plan to make the products of our scholarship, research, and creative expression more accessible and available to the general public in order to raise public awareness of Illinois State University's accomplishments

GOAL 2: Increase broad support for research, scholarship and creative expression

- develop a strategy to facilitate participation in scholarship and consider flexible/differential teaching and research loads to be determined on a case-by-case basis by CFSCs, SFSCs, and DFSCs
- establish and support formal research mentorship programs in each of the Colleges
- develop a policy for post-doctoral fellows that recognizes their unique role in the university research environment
- establish programs designed to increase the involvement of undergraduates in research

GOAL 3: Strengthen facilities infrastructure to ensure that the full spectrum of scholarship, research, and creative inquiry is supported

- explore the feasibility of the establishment of a University Center for Research similar to CTLT
- promote inclusion of space and equipment for research when remodeling or constructing buildings
- pursue funding aimed at renovation and expansion of research facilities and laboratories (e.g. studio space, animal care facility)
- encourage targeted support of increased library resources including on-line databases that provide access to the products of our scholarship, research, and creative expression, from full-text publications and data sets to visual media and new media

GOAL 4: Increase level of external funding for scholarship, research, and creative expression

- promote recognition of grant proposal submissions and funding
- provide infrastructure support needed to increase external grant submission and funding
- work with University Advancement to identify sources of private support for research targeted to the needs of specific departments and programs
- work with our Congressional delegation to develop and promote federal initiatives and projects

GOAL 5: Increase interdisciplinary collaboration within the campus community, between academic institutions, and across the local community

- promote recognition of interdisciplinary and cross-institutional collaboration
- establish a leadership program that enhances faculty efforts to initiate collaborations
- explore the creation of research professorships
- develop a strategy for continued involvement by emeriti and adjuncts with active research programs

GOAL 6: Strengthen graduate programs

- support targeted expansion of graduate programs in emerging areas of expertise and excellence
- enhance recruitment of highly qualified and diverse students by regularly increasing stipends of graduate teaching assistants to levels that are competitive with peer institutions
- develop a plan to increase the number of graduate assistantships to allow the creation of research assistantships

GOAL 7: Increase support for intellectual property and technology transfer

- develop a transparent intellectual property policy and create a FAQ manual
- develop a technology transfer office
- explore opportunities for strategic relationships with external communities
- develop a long-term plan for electronic storage of scholarship, research, and creative expression
- explore the creation of a business incubator and, in the long term, a research park