

[Back to News](#)



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NEWS RELEASE

September 1, 2005

University of Illinois Responds to Katrina Disaster

*Affected students may attend classes;
Campuses support disaster relief*

Urbana, Il.—The University of Illinois today announced that among its Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, the university will accommodate Illinois students who attend college in the devastated area and allow them to minimize the impact of the disaster on their education.

The undergraduate and graduate students will be residents of Illinois enrolled in public and private colleges and universities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, Gulf Coast states where Katrina's path of destruction has disrupted virtually all normal activity for the foreseeable future. They will be allowed to attend any one of the three University of Illinois institutions for up to one year as non-degree students so that their educational plans can remain as close to on-track as possible.

University of Illinois Board of Trustees Chair Lawrence C. Eppley said the university was eager to respond to the disaster and Gov. Rod Blagojevich's call for Illinois colleges and universities to participate in the relief effort. "The full force of the storm struck 900 miles away, but its impact is felt by many families in Illinois," Eppley said. "The University of Illinois has the expertise, breadth and the flexibility across our campuses to assist in this crisis, and we are eager to do so."

Additionally, the university's online learning program will open available positions for hurricane-affected students and program officials are working with foundations to identify funding to increase online educational capacity nationwide. Also, in addition to helping coordinate student and staff volunteer assistance efforts, the university will provide first-response expertise—such as civil engineers, infectious disease and catastrophe recovery experts—to the stricken areas as it did following the 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001.

"Our hearts and our support go out to the victims of the hurricane, their loved ones and the millions of people who will spend years to come recovering from the devastation. University of Illinois students and staff are pitching in as part of the massive relief effort in every way imaginable," U. of I. President B. Joseph White said.

"One way our institution can play a role is to provide academic disaster relief for Illinois residents attending college in the hurricane zone who need to get on with their education," White said. "A college education is essential in today's economy. Students and their families sacrifice and make long-term plans to reach that goal. For some, a catastrophic event like Katrina can be a major barrier to achieving those plans."

White said chancellors and admissions officials of the university's three Illinois institutions—the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)—will coordinate the academic relief plan.

The U. of I. also will reach out to colleges and universities in the Gulf region to determine what additional assistance it can provide to those institutions, and will work with disaster relief efforts through national higher education organizations.

Students who wish to take advantage of the U. of I. stay-in-school relief plan should contact:

- At UIC, the Office of Admissions, (312) 996-0952
- At UIS, the Office of Admissions and Records, (217) 206-4847
- At UIUC, the Office of Admissions and Records, (217) 333-0302

Officials at each of the U. of I. institutions are exploring independent study options; methods of assisting stricken colleges and universities in replacing damaged library and research materials; accommodating students and faculty who might be called to active military duty in the hurricane relief effort; and supporting a wide range of volunteer and charitable disaster relief.

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