

NEWS RELEASE

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Trustees establish University of Illinois Global Campus

University to embark on major new online educational initiative

URBANA—The University of Illinois Board of Trustees at its regular meeting today (Tuesday, March 13) approved implementing a major new online education initiative to make largely Internet-based degree, certificate and professional-development programs available on a large scale.

The University of Illinois Global Campus is being organized as a unit on the university's system level. Global Campus will work with the Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield campuses to deliver online course offerings for non-traditional students, both in the state and worldwide. At the same time, the University will apply Global Campus technology and innovations in traditional residential-campus classes.

President B. Joseph White first raised the Global Campus concept as "a virtual university" in his September 2005 inaugural address. The three campuses' university senates reached agreement on the Global Campus Partnership Proposal in February.

"A Global Campus team has spent more than a year studying and planning how to deliver what I call the rich mix of online and in-person education of the future," White said. "The faculty early on endorsed the concept of expanding educational opportunity as part of the U. of I. land-grant mission.

"We've had a lively discussion on academic quality and education delivery, and the current form and organizational structure of the Global Campus is stronger by virtue of the University's shared-governance process."

Chester Gardner, former U. of I. vice president for academic affairs and an electrical and computer engineering professor, has led the Global Campus start-up team.

Gardner said that both the Internet technology and online instructional methods are currently sufficiently developed to deliver high-quality, affordable educational content and student

engagement.

"We have carefully analyzed the market and the successes and shortcomings of both non-profit and for-profit providers of online education," Gardner said. "We're convinced our information technology is robust, our timing is good and that we will succeed and add luster to the national and international reputation of the University of Illinois.

"We also plan to provide excellent and seamless customer service for our students by, for example, communicating admissions decisions within 48 hours and financial aid packages in 72 hours."

Gardner said the primary goal of the Global Campus is to extend a U. of I. education to many more people in a flexible and convenient format at an affordable price. Initial offerings are planned in high-demand areas such as baccalaureate degree completion and programs on K-12 teacher training, nursing and business. Classes will begin in 2008.

Gardner said Global Campus classes will be accelerated and last eight weeks (rather than on-campus 16-week classes). Global Campus students will incur lower costs than their counterparts on campus. Global Campus students also can work full-time and at the same time complete their online class work in the evenings and on weekends.

Global Campus will work with U. of I. colleges, departments and faculty to develop and deliver courses and programs under a master teacher-instructor model similar to residential classes at the University's three campuses.

Global Campus start-up costs and working capital will be funded largely through a line of credit. Some funds also will come from state-appropriated funds, gifts and the U. of I. operating budget. Financial projections show the initiative breaking even by 2011 and having a surplus in 2012.

White has said the most important goal and "moral obligation" of Global Campus is access to high-quality university education for those whose employment, family or other considerations make it impossible for them to enroll on campus. The eventual financial surpluses will serve as an important new revenue stream, particularly for providing competitive faculty salaries to recruit and retain the best and brightest faculty.

The University of Illinois is a world leader in research and discovery, the largest educational institution in the state with nearly 70,000 students, 24,000 faculty and staff, and campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. The U. of I. awards 17,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees annually. The University's \$3.6 billion budget for fiscal 2007 includes \$1.1 billion in direct appropriation and other payments from the State of Illinois, \$610 million in externally funded research and \$540 million in tuition income.

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Note: Additional information about the University of Illinois Global Campus is available at www.uigc.uillinois.edu at 5 p.m. today (Tuesday, March 13).

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