

Aug. 6, 2009

## **University of Illinois Statement on Admissions Commission Report**

From the University of Illinois Board of Trustees and Administration:

The University of Illinois is grateful to the Admissions Review Commission for the important service it has performed for this University and for the state. From the time Governor Pat Quinn appointed this Commission, our goal has been to assist in every regard. We provided more than 10,000 pages of documents and made approximately 45 witnesses available for interviews and public testimony. We are pleased that the Commission's work reflects that cooperation.

The University is committed to correcting problems with the admissions process. Effective immediately, we are moving forward with several significant changes to the University's admissions process, all reflecting three key principles: The process must be fair to all applicants, the process must be transparent, and the process must offer equality of access.

To that end, the applicant tracking system known as "Category I" ends immediately, and the office for Governmental Relations is specifically prohibited from having any role in admissions. In addition, University President B. Joseph White will convene next Wednesday a meeting of University-wide campus leadership, senior admissions officers and faculty governance leaders to consider, plan and implement a firewall around the admissions process by:

- Drafting a Code of Conduct for Admissions that explicitly states that improper influence will not be tolerated, and all University admissions will be based solely on criteria laid out in written admissions policies;
- Ensuring that all admissions policies and processes are clearly and completely detailed in all materials available to applicants, including online;
- Drafting and articulating a clear appeals policy;
- Creating a central and transparent means of handling all inquiries about the status of a student application. This process must respect applicants' right to have their applications materials treated confidentially; and
- Launching a year-long review to examine the effectiveness of these changes and determine whether other steps should be implemented as well.

It is anticipated these policies will apply to applications and admissions in the fall of 2009 and winter of 2010. As we review and digest the Commission's report and recommendations released today, we may institute additional measures to ensure that our key principles of fairness, transparency and access are met.

It is critical that the University guarantee the integrity of its admissions, and the Administration will work with leaders of our three campuses to do so. The new policies will drive that and will make University leadership accountable. The composition of the Board of Trustees is a matter Governor Quinn will address. The entire University community is committed to working with Trustees as we work together to regain the public trust.

The University of Illinois is rightfully acknowledged for its academic excellence and leadership. Our faculty members include world-renowned leaders in their fields, doing important research that breaks new ground. Our students are among the brightest from Illinois and beyond. Our alumni are leaders in business and government around the nation. We believe that, by taking the appropriate actions today, the University will emerge even stronger and continue to build on its many strengths as an academic and research institution.

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The University of Illinois is a world leader in research and discovery, the largest educational institution in the state with almost 70,000 students, 24,000 faculty and staff, and campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. The U of I awards more than 18,500 undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees annually.