

# Educate • Connect • Elevate

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## ILLINOIS STATE

THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ILLINOIS' FIRST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

2018–2023



ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
*Illinois' first public university*

# A message

## FROM PRESIDENT DIETZ

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to present Illinois State University's strategic plan, *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State—The Strategic Plan for Illinois' First Public University 2018-2023*. This strategic plan is the embodiment of our culture of shared governance. Faculty, staff, students, and other campus stakeholders played an active role in developing this document. The new title for the plan emphasizes Illinois State's broad educational reach, while building on the strength of our long-standing strategic plan, *Educating Illinois*.

As it served as Illinois State's guiding document for nearly two decades, *Educating Illinois* went through several updates during its lifetime. As part of the periodic review process, I commissioned a 24-member task force to revise, update, and expand upon that plan. A great deal of thought, consultation, and input from campus stakeholders resulted in this new document.

*Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State* will serve as a practical guide for all units within the University for planning and resource allocation decisions. In a much larger sense, it will serve as the guiding document for Illinois State as it charts its future. I, along with the rest of the University community, look forward to educating, connecting, and elevating Illinois State University.

Respectfully,



Larry H. Dietz  
President, Illinois State University





# Introduction

Welcome to *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State – The Strategic Plan for Illinois’ First Public University*. Since the release of *Educating Illinois* in 2000, and with each iteration of our comprehensive strategic plan, Illinois State University has achieved remarkable success. We are a nationally recognized leader in higher education, with numerous indicators of our positive impact on our students and the world.

The University is now poised to build on these strengths by taking the bold steps needed to respond to 21st century needs, while remaining true to our history and identity. Illinois’ first public university was originally founded to meet 19th century needs for teachers. This modest normal school became a comprehensive institution of higher education in today’s technologically complex world—a world in which communication, discovery, and change occur at a pace unimagined by the founders of our “grandest of enterprises.”

Our plan for the University’s next chapter of excellence is based on extensive consultation with campus stakeholders. The plan highlights four Strategic Directions to organize the University’s efforts to maintain our strength and grow where opportunities arise to support student success and contribute to our disciplines, to the state of Illinois, to the nation, and to the world.

This strategic plan is written broadly, to provide guidance, not constraint. The Strategic Directions, and the Core Values they express, are central to the success of the University and its students. Our intention is to provide a framework for all university divisions, colleges, and units to unleash their creativity and identify the ways they will help move the University toward our collective Vision. Each unit—depending on its specific purposes,

strengths, and contexts—may at different times undertake initiatives that emphasize some Core Values and Strategic Directions more than others, while exemplifying all of them. Each division, college, and unit is charged to align its plan with *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State* to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of its contributions to student success.

A university-wide Implementation Team will coordinate accountability efforts and develop an assessment plan by which we will track our successes and identify where we need to do more or better. *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State* will be our roadmap as we attain higher levels of excellence in teaching, scholarship, and public service.

*Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State* strikes a balance between an ambitious pursuit of our community’s aspirations and the financial realities faced by any state institution. The plan provides a framework for the University to exhibit its characteristic financial discipline, while making the most of our finite resources in the service of our Mission and the advancement of our Vision.

This document is the result of extensive input from the campus community, including surveys, forums, and group discussions. The energetic engagement in this process from all university stakeholders—students, faculty, staff, alumni, community friends, and partners—is a reflection of the University’s current success and a harbinger of great things to come. Together, we will exhibit our shared Values, pursue our Strategic Directions, and realize our shared aspirations.



## Vision

Illinois State University will remain a national leader and be recognized worldwide for educating high-achieving, motivated students who seek an individualized and transformative experience at an institution that:

- Offers premier undergraduate and graduate programs that integrate emerging and innovative ideas with traditional knowledge and methods;
- Generates knowledge through high-quality scholarship (research and creative activities);
- Supports student learning through a seamless integration of curricular and co-curricular activities that actively engage students and broaden their perspectives; and
- Serves the region, state, nation, and world through its commitments to responsible stewardship, meaningful civic engagement, cultural enrichment, and the development of global citizens.

## Mission

We at Illinois State University work as a diverse community of scholars with a commitment to fostering a small-college atmosphere with large-university opportunities. We promote the highest academic standards in our teaching, scholarship, public service, and the connections we build among them. We devote all of our resources and energies to creating the most supportive and productive community possible to serve the citizens of Illinois and beyond.

# Core Values



## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Illinois State University affirms and encourages community and a respect for differences. The University fosters an inclusive environment characterized by cultural understanding and engagement, ethical behavior, and a commitment to social justice. The University supports a diverse faculty and staff who mentor a diverse student population. The institution endeavors to provide opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to participate productively in a global society.

## LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP

Illinois State University works with students as partners in their educational development so they appreciate learning as an active and lifelong process. The University contributes new knowledge through research and creative activities in which all students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to participate. Faculty members embrace a model that values their contributions as both teachers and scholars in a balanced way.



## RESPECT

Illinois State University fosters a culture characterized by mutual respect, a civil exchange of ideas, and a collaborative approach to problem-solving. Faculty, staff, and students acknowledge others' rights to express differing opinions; they listen to opposing views conscientiously; and, when disagreeing, they do so responsibly.

## COLLABORATION

Illinois State University community members work collaboratively to ensure the success of the University. They are dedicated to participating in shared governance, building on prior accomplishments, and making ongoing improvements. The University partners with business, industry, government, and educational entities to provide leadership in local, statewide, national, and international initiatives; expand service and outreach; and enhance financial support for instructional, scholarly, and service activities.



## INDIVIDUALIZED ATTENTION

Illinois State University provides a supportive environment that focuses on each student as an individual. The University immerses learners in teaching and scholarship, fosters academic and personal growth, recognizes unique educational aspirations, and values each faculty and staff member's contributions to student success.



## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Illinois State University prepares students to be informed and engaged global citizens; ethical leaders who will craft, promote, and further positive goals for the betterment of society. The University promotes active learning experiences, through which students gain an awareness and understanding of civic engagement as a lifelong responsibility.



## INTEGRITY

Illinois State University promotes an environment defined by the highest ethical standards. Leadership of the University is characterized by stability, adherence to shared values, collaborative decision-making, and accountable stewardship of all university resources. Teaching and learning, including research and creative activities, are conducted at the highest level of academic quality and integrity.

# I. Enhance Strength and Stability

## A) Ensure strong enrollment and student success

1. Maintain high-quality academic student profile and increase enrollment of transfer, graduate, international, underrepresented, and non-traditional students
2. Ensure attendance at Illinois State University is affordable and accessible for more students and their families through increasing financial support for student scholarships
3. Increase retention and graduation rates
4. Support quality and the accessibility of graduate programs by increasing the number and value of graduate stipends/assistantships, among other strategies

## B) Attract and retain exceptional faculty and staff

1. Increase the competitiveness of faculty and staff salaries
2. Maximize employee growth through learning and professional development opportunities
3. Foster a workplace culture that supports personal and community well-being

## C) Strengthen financial position

1. Diversify and augment revenue
2. Explore alternative business models and support structures
3. Enrich the culture of philanthropy

## D) Use best practices to continuously improve sustainability and institutional effectiveness

1. Review, update, and align university plans with *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State*
2. Increase collaboration across departments and divisions
3. Leverage data analytics to inform decision-making
4. Optimize space utilization and development to advance the University's mission
5. Ensure a safe and secure physical and virtual environment







## II. Foster Innovation

### A) Support academic program offerings to meet enrollment demand in current and emerging fields of study

1. Develop and support online and distance education programs where pedagogically appropriate and feasible
2. Facilitate the development and growth of interdisciplinary programs
3. Refine processes for the development of new academic programs

### B) Support advancement of research, creative works, and knowledge generation

1. Increase grant-writing activities and administrative support for scholarship

2. Enhance cross-disciplinary research and creative activities
3. Accelerate development and marketing of mission-consistent intellectual property where promising

### C) Enhance organizational infrastructure to support innovation and collaboration

1. Create more spaces that encourage collaborative research, teaching, and other learning activities
2. Further integrate curricular and co-curricular programs that prepare students for success
3. Utilize technological solutions that enhance productivity and creativity

# III. Nurture Diversity and Inclusion

## A) Enhance diversity of faculty, staff, and student populations across the inclusion spectrum

1. Provide access to, and increase awareness of, resources for the recruitment of diverse faculty, staff, and students
2. Increase and promote practices that aid in the retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students that include individuals from all backgrounds
3. Optimize support services for onboarding diverse faculty, staff, and students that include individuals from all backgrounds

## B) Invigorate the campus community by providing a welcoming and inclusive environment

1. Provide additional professional development toward cultural competency and inclusion
2. Create and invest in spaces that value and capitalize on diversity

3. Increase campus and community awareness of achievements and initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion

## C) Advance learning experiences that help faculty, staff, and students succeed in a global society

1. Increase the number of, variety of, and accessibility for students to participate in study abroad and international experiences
2. Increase the number of faculty in international collaboration and exchanges
3. Infuse diverse perspectives into the curriculum, co-curriculum, and other programs and initiatives
4. Increase the number of, and participation in, interdisciplinary studies and programs that explore diversity and global perspectives





## IV. Enrich Engagement

### A) Foster partnerships offering collaborative and mutually beneficial opportunities

1. Increase opportunities for alumni, community members, and other partners to create enduring connections that promote knowledge and resource sharing
2. Facilitate new partnerships with individuals, businesses, governmental entities, and organizations
3. Sustain and grow existing relationships with external stakeholders

### B) Involve more faculty, staff, and students in outreach, engagement, and research opportunities locally, regionally, and globally

1. Create awareness of opportunities for students to engage in research
2. Increase the number and quality of opportunities that engage students in research with faculty
3. Recognize, promote, and encourage civic engagement and service learning
4. Enhance the ability of members of the University community to engage with each other, internal and external resources, and university partners

### C) Deepen student engagement in activities that prepare them for lifelong learning and success

1. Support efforts to assess student career outcomes and placement in graduate and professional school
2. Integrate career development and readiness opportunities throughout the collegiate career
3. Expand and promote opportunities for engagement in professional development
4. Infuse campus culture with opportunities that cultivate students' understanding of, appreciation for, and commitment to, personal and community well-being
5. Enhance student connections with alumni and employer networks

## PLANNING AND CONSULTATION PROCESSES

President Larry Dietz appointed a 24-member Task Force to revise the University's strategic plan, *Educating Illinois 2013-2018: Individualized Attention, Shared Aspirations*. He charged the *Educating Illinois* Task Force to review and update the strategic plan, building upon the success the University has accomplished since the inception of the first iteration of *Educating Illinois*. The Task Force was further charged to consult with the campus community, be well informed regarding the internal and external environments, and develop a new strategic plan that sets forth a direction to further advance the University in coming years.

The Task Force sought input from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community through an online survey, open forums, and focused discussions. Groups consulted through the focused discussions phase include those listed. The Illinois State University Board of Trustees approved *Educate • Connect • Elevate: Illinois State* in May 2018.



Academic Advising Council  
Academic Senate - Faculty Caucus  
Administrative/Professional Council  
Admissions Tour Team  
Alumni Association  
Civil Service Council  
College of Applied Science and Technology Council  
College of Arts and Sciences Council  
College of Business Coordinating Team  
College of Education Council  
College of Fine Arts Council  
Department Chairs/School Directors Council  
Diverse Student Group  
Graduate Council  
Intercollegiate Athletics Leadership Team  
Mennonite College of Nursing Leadership Council  
Milner Library Faculty and Staff  
Student Affairs Council  
Student Government Association  
Student Leader Council  
University Research Council  
VP Finance and Planning Leadership Staff  
VP Provost/Academic Affairs Leadership Staff/Dean's Council  
VP University Advancement Leadership Staff



### TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Brian Beam, Executive Director; University Marketing and Communications (co-chair)

Hulda Black, Associate Professor; Marketing (beginning 8/1/17)

Rachel Calhoun, Director; Research, Advancement and Foundation Operations

Sam Catanzaro, Associate Vice President; Academic Administration, Policy, and Faculty Affairs (co-chair)

Febin Chirayath; Student Government Association

Jeff Clark; Chairs and Directors Council

Angela Engel, Director; Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis (co-chair beginning 8/1/17)

Laura Fox, Business Administrative Associate; University Police Department

Paul Garris, Distinguished Professor; Biological Sciences

Ron Gifford, Chair; Administrative/Professional Council

Jamillah Gilbert, Instructional Assistant Professor; Special Education

Rachel Hatch, Assistant Director; Media Relations

Susan Kalter, Chair; Academic Senate

Samantha Lewis, Student Government Association (beginning 8/1/17)

Yongmei Liu, Associate Professor; Management and Quantitative Methods (through 7/31/17)

Dwight Merilatt, Executive Associate Director; Intercollegiate Athletics

Blanca Miller, Assistant Professor; Mennonite College of Nursing

Danielle Miller-Schuster, Assistant Vice President; Student Affairs (co-chair)

Hannah Picciola, Student Government Association

Dean Plumadore; Civil Service Council (beginning 8/1/17)

Ajay Samant, Dean; College of Business, Dean's Council

Jennifer Sharkey, Associate Professor; Milner Library

Sarah Smelser, Professor; School of Art

Amanda Smith, Chair; Civil Service Council (through 7/31/17)

Deb Smitley, Senior Associate Vice President; Planning, Finance and Facilities (co-chair through 7/31/17)

Aslihan Spaulding, Professor; Agriculture

Lenford Sutton, Department Chair; Educational Administration and Foundations

Jack Whitsitt, Student Government Association (beginning 8/1/17)

Ani Yazedjian; Chairs and Directors Council

### TASK FORCE STAFF

Cheryl Fogler, Assistant Director; Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis





**ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Illinois' first public university*

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