

## Overview of Representation

The University of Illinois at Springfield's enrollment of minority students as a percentage of all students decreased from 11.0% in Fall 1997 to 10.5% in Fall 1998. African-American students numbered 320 (7.4% of total enrollments) in Fall 1998. The range of African-American enrollments during the 10-year period from 1989 to 1998 was 227 in 1989 (5.7%) to 343 (7.4%) in 1996. Hispanic students numbered 49 (1.1%) in Fall 1998, down from 58 (1.3%) in Fall 1997 but still more than twice the 25 (0.6%) students in 1989.

Almost two-thirds of undergraduate students and nearly three-fifths of graduate students at UIS are female. Among undergraduate students in Fall 1998, 63.8% were female, essentially unchanged from the 63.9% the year before. Among graduate students, however, 59.7% were female, 0.8% higher than the 58.9% reported in 1997. Female students represented 61.8% of total undergraduate and graduate enrollments.

Of 10 new permanent faculty members hired for AY99-00, four are female. Two of these are in fields where women have traditionally been underrepresented – computer science and management information systems. In addition, a fifth female was hired as a visiting instructor for the computer science program. Two of the female faculty are Asian; all other new faculty are white. Considering non-returning faculty from AY98-99, the net result of this year's hiring was the addition of one woman with permanent faculty rank, while the number of men on the faculty decreased by five.

UIS had 165 faculty members for AY98-99. There were 52 full professors (43 male, 9 female), 67 associate professors (42 male, 25 female), and 41 assistant professors (19 male, 22 female). The other five faculty members held positions such as instructor.

African-American and Hispanic students received 12.2% of graduate assistant placements in AY98-99. These groups comprised 8.9% of all graduate students at UIS.

African-American students represented 26.1% of the first cohort (N=23) for the doctor of public administration program at UIS initiated in Fall 1998.

Tables A through G provide institutional data on students, staff, and faculty from underrepresented groups.

■ ■  
African-Americans represented 26.1% of the first cohort for the doctor of public administration program at UIS.  
■ ■

## Major Initiatives for FY99

This year's report represents a departure from previous years in that the IBHE has asked institutions to consider policy themes when selecting items to appear in the report. This approach offers more detailed information on areas identified as having long-standing concern or as being particularly important for making improvements in student and staff representation.

### Activities to Support Minority Populations at UIS

Policy themes for minority representation for which UIS has major initiatives to report are 1) to strengthen institutional planning, 2) to provide support programs early and throughout education, and 3) to improve the college environment.

**Strengthen Institutional Planning.** UIS monitored minority enrollment as students registered throughout the spring and summer of 1998 and was aware that fewer minority students were registering for the fall. This decline was one of the major topics at UIS' annual meeting with administrators, deans, directors, and key staff members to discuss issues related to underrepresented groups on campus. Participants were concerned about the reversal of its ten-year trend toward increased minority participation and discussed plans to prevent a recurrence. The meeting produced several outcomes, which follow. It should be noted that while the last two bulleted activities do not exclusively target members of underrepresented groups, recruitment of members from these groups should benefit from the enhancements.

- UIS did not have adequate recruiting staff to attend several major minority recruiting events during FY98. To address this situation, a recruiter of Hispanic descent and one of African-American descent have been hired to fill existing positions, and a search is underway to fill a newly approved recruiter position.
- The overall enrollment decline at UIS was greater among graduate students (4.4%) than undergraduate students (1.6%), indicating that an increase in recruitment at traditional feeder colleges (e.g., Lincoln Land Community College) could not be the complete solution to the problem. UIS addressed this area of concern by holding receptions in each of its colleges last spring for potential graduate students and by adding five graduate recruiting fairs to the recruitment staff schedule.
- The number of applications for public internship graduate assistantships – a significant recruitment tool – is down overall, due in part to an increased number of graduates accepting job offers immediately after completion of their baccalaureate degrees. UIS, however, has been working to increase its applicant pool by raising the graduate assistant stipend over three years to a more competitive level and by developing a process that allows more effective timing of assistantship offers.

The campus developed the *University of Illinois at Springfield Academic Staff Handbook* during FY99 for distribution to faculty and academic professionals in the fall of 1999. The handbook is important for the purposes of this report in that it consolidates into a single reference important campus policies affecting members of underrepresented groups (i.e., policies on nondiscrimination and equal rights, affirmative action, sexual harassment). The handbook also provides current information on services for students, such as those provided by the Office of Minority Student Affairs, the Women's Center, and Disability Services.

The UIS teacher education faculty developed a plan to “recruit, retain, and graduate students from diverse economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds” (discussed later in this report).

**Provide Support Programs Early and Throughout Education.** In collaboration with the Springfield Urban League, the newly formed Springfield Public Educational Partnership (UIS, Lincoln Land Community College, and Springfield District 186) received a GEARUP award from the Department of Education to help guide disadvantaged students toward college, starting in the middle school grades. Funding for the first year of this five-year project is \$280,000. Over the five years, the project will receive more than \$2.3 million in federal funds.

UIS has two precollegiate support programs: Minority Student Support for Teaching (MSS) and Project Student, Teachers, and Parents (STP). MSS is discussed later in this report. Project STP is a collaborative effort with Lincoln Land Community College and Springfield District 186 designed to provide mathematics education for minority students in third through sixth grades. Seventy-eight students participated this year.

As one of two programs providing major financial assistance exclusively to minority students, the Minority Leadership in Public Service Program is a vital component of the campus' efforts to attract these students. Recruiting for the program this year, however, was largely unsuccessful. The campus is assessing its approach to the administration of the program and, although participation is expected to be low again for AY99-00, it is expected to improve thereafter.

UIS initiated its first formal mentoring program, the Minority Scholars Mentorship Program in the Spring of 1999. The program fell short of expectations, with only 8 of 20 slots being filled. Subsequent evaluation suggests three reasons for this difficulty. First, the grade-point average required for participation may have been unrealistically high. Second, the requirement that students live on campus limited the student pool on this largely nonresidential campus. Finally, the program needs to be promoted more aggressively. These and other findings will be taken into consideration for next year's program.

The mission of the Whitney M. Young Fellowship Program, which provides graduate assistantships to minority students, is being revised to include a community service component in the area of public affairs.

**Improve the College Environment.** As a step to improve the campus environment for members of underrepresented groups, the Diversity Task Force surveyed all minority students, international students, and students with disabilities to assess the current climate on campus. A sampling of white students was also included. Several findings from this survey merit further study. (The responses provided are unweighted.) While 98% of white males and 96% of white females agreed that the campus was sensitive to race/ethnic groups, only 80% of African Americans and 85% of other minority and international students agreed. Seventy-eight percent of whites as compared to 48% of African Americans found the racial climate on campus to be "relaxed," while 82% of whites as compared to 54% for African Americans found it to be "friendly." On the positive side, more than 85% of respondents in all categories indicated that they "feel comfortable/have sense of belonging" at UIS – 93% for white males, 85% for minorities. Similarly, if respondents from all categories could begin their educations again, more than 85% would re-enroll at UIS.

■ ■

The student body reconfirmed its long-standing confidence in African-American leadership by electing an African-American woman as the student trustee to the UI Board of Trustees.

■ ■

UIS hosted UIUC's Multicultural Student Leaders Institute this year. The institute is designed to bring together potential and current student leaders from campuses in the Midwest to share their leadership experiences.

The student body reconfirmed its long-standing confidence in African-American leadership on campus by electing an African-American woman as the student trustee to the UI Board of Trustees.

The Organization of Latin American Students provided leadership for the collection of 40,000 pounds of food, clothing, and medical supplies to send to the victims of Hurricane Mitch in Honduras. The Office of Minority Student Affairs assisted by serving as the contact point for the effort.

## Activities to Support Female Populations at UIS

Policy themes for female representation are 1) to emphasize opportunities in fields of high employer and societal need, and 2) to improve the campus environment.

***Emphasize Opportunities in Fields of High Employer and Societal Need.*** The Women's Center has taken the lead in addressing the difficulties and fears that women sometimes face when confronted with computer technology. The center has adopted a multifaceted approach to technology that includes both computer training and the use of a listserv. Benefits gained from the integration of technology into the mission of the Women's Center include enabling the campus' female staff and students to learn the Internet and other computer-related skills in a nonthreatening, woman-centered environment and providing information to geographically dispersed women. The listserv creates a community of networked women and enables the director to participate in the area women's community organizations. The center's work will be presented this summer at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers – Society on Social Implications of Technology at its annual symposium, which addresses women and technology this year.

Female faculty hires for AY99-00 in the computer science and management information systems programs will increase the presence of female role models on campus in high demand, technology-related programs.

Overall, UIS fares reasonably well in female representation in math and science disciplines. For the ten years from Fall 1989 to Fall 1998, the average annual percentage of female students in the B.A. in mathematical sciences program was 51%. Similarly, the average annual percentage of women in the B.S. in biology program was 56%. The campus' B.S. in chemistry and B.S. in computer science fared less well in the area of female representation, with average annual percentages of 32% and 28%, respectively. At the master's level for the same period, women represented a yearly average of 47% in the M.S. in biology program and 38% in the M.S. in management information systems program. The first cohort of UIS' M.S. in computer science program was 36% female.

***Improve the Campus Environment.*** The Women's Center initiated the WhistleSTOP campus safety program this year, which provides safety whistles to the campus, and assisted the Campus Police with the new UIS Rape Aggression Defense program.

The Cox Child Care Center on campus responded to the needs of families with children by expanding services to include after school and evening care for children aged 2-12, toddler care, and summer care for school-aged children. The center's sliding fee accommodates 40-45 families.

## Activities to Support Persons with Disabilities at UIS

The policy theme for students with disabilities is to improve the planning, delivery, and evaluation of services. The appointment of a full-time coordinator to UIS' Office of Disability Services this year should enhance and facilitate these activities.

Several opportunities for faculty and staff to acquaint themselves with disabilities issues were presented on campus. First, the Office of Disability Services has begun participating in new faculty orientation. Second, the office,



UIS is installing an adaptive technology computer lab to help students with disabilities function independently.



in conjunction with the Diversity Task Force, presented a workshop on providing services to students with disabilities to the campus and surrounding community. Finally, UIS hosted a faculty workshop on accommodating students with psychological disabilities.

UIUC, UIC, and UIS reached a reciprocity agreement that facilitates the transfer of disability documentation to ensure service continuity for students transferring between UI campuses.

An adaptive technology computer lab with three workstations will be available in the fall of 1999. The workstations will provide some of the most innovative technology available for students with disabilities. Training on the use of the new technology has also been arranged.

## **Focus Topics**

### **Workforce Preparation and Placement for Students with Disabilities**

*Note:* The Office of Disability Services is one of the campus' newest service units. Established in 1994, the office had been staffed by part-time personnel until this year when a director was hired. In the years since the office opened, staff have been working to identify its clientele, publicize its services, and standardize its procedures. No formal surveys have yet been done. UIS, however, offers the following anecdotal information reported by the staff of the office.

*Please describe the programs and fields in which students with disabilities have enjoyed success in securing appropriate entry positions.*

The Office of Disability Services has determined that the majority of UIS students with disabilities are enrolled in programs in human development counseling, history, psychology, and criminal justice. Staff have not yet had the opportunity to track student success in obtaining employment in these fields.

*Please describe programs in which students with disabilities have encountered difficulty in gaining entrance. What kinds of accommodations, if any, have and can be made to increase student success?*

Students have recounted difficulties in the computer science program due to a lack of adaptive technology and a perceived lack of faculty support. In the past the campus has used individual instructional assistants in computer science to help students in completing assignments. This arrangement, however, does not support a primary goal of the Office of Disability Services – to advocate that students become as functionally independent as possible. The campus' new adaptive technology lab, along with training conducted by the office, is expected to provide a more effective accommodation.

The perceived lack of faculty support is at odds with the office's experience with computer science faculty, who have worked diligently on strategies to help students with disabilities overcome obstacles. The campus hopes that the addition of the new lab will positively affect students' perception of the level of support available to them on campus.

*To what extent do students with disabilities enter programs/fields of high occupational demand such as allied health, computer science, etc. What obstacles, if any, exist to student entry into these programs and fields? What accommodations have and can be made to facilitate student success?*