

Purpose

Illinois Public Act 85-283 requires all public institutions of higher education to report annually to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) on their plans and efforts to improve the participation of underrepresented groups: minority, female, and disabled students and staff. The IBHE, in turn, is required to report each January to the Governor and General Assembly on the effectiveness of institutional plans. This report is based on the March 1999 Guidelines for Updating Annual Reports on Underrepresented Groups in Higher Education prepared by the IBHE.

Major Events and Initiatives

This year's report highlights several areas identified as "policy themes." The policy themes for underrepresented students are: strengthen institutional planning, provide early academic support, provide opportunities in the areas of higher employer and societal need, and improve the college environment. The policy themes for female students are: improving the campus environment for women, and providing opportunities in the areas of higher employer and societal need. The policy theme for students with disabilities addresses the need to improve campus access. The policy themes for faculty and staff are: strengthening campus planning, improving the campus environment, and providing opportunities in the areas of higher employer and societal need. A strong University service mission for students, faculty, staff, and the State of Illinois is reflected in the following initiatives:

UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Undergraduate representation for African American increased from 5.8% in 1988 to 7.3% in 1998; transfer rates for African American students increased from 1.0% in 1988 to 3.3% in 1998. Undergraduate representation for Hispanics also increased from 3.1% in 1988 to 5.3% in 1998; transfer rates for Hispanic students increased from 2.0% in 1988 to 3.2% in 1998.

From 1988 to 1998, graduate and professional representation for African American students has increased or remained the same: Law, 4.4% to 11.0% in 1998; Veterinary Medicine, 0.3% in 1988 and 1998; and Graduate Programs, 1.9% to 3.4% in 1998. For Hispanic students, representation has also increased in the past decade: Law, 2.9% to 8.1% in 1998; Veterinary Medicine, 0.6% to 1.6% in 1998; and Graduate Programs, 1.4% to 2.6% in 1998. Combined enrollment in 1998 for graduate and professional African American and Hispanic students was 6.7% compared to 3.4% in 1988.

Strengthen Institutional Planning

Since the formation of an ad hoc Undergraduate Academic Advising Committee in 1996, the campus has been engaged in a number of projects designed to improve undergraduate academic advising. These include: