

Board Meeting
November 13, 2008

AUTHORIZE THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS GLOBAL CAMPUS
TO SEEK INDEPENDENT ACCREDITATION, OFFER BACHELORS AND
MASTERS DEGREES, CREATE AN EDUCATIONAL POLICY COUNCIL, AND
OFFER NEW DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS ON AN INTERIM BASIS

Action: Authorize the University of Illinois Global Campus to Seek Independent Accreditation, Offer Bachelors and Masters Degrees, Create an Educational Policy Council, and Offer New Degree and Certificate Programs on an Interim Basis

Funding: No New Funding Required

At its March 13, 2007 meeting, the Board of Trustees authorized the establishment of the Global Campus as a unit organized at the University level. The Board in its resolution, described the mission of the Global Campus as follows:

In collaboration with the Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield campuses, the University of Illinois Global Campus fosters the development and delivery of high-quality, Internet-based degree, certificate, and professional development programs on a large scale for nontraditional audiences. The Global Campus works with campus academic leaders and faculty to identify important high-demand education and service opportunities and to develop responsive programs that are delivered to audiences worldwide. In addition, the Global Campus works with the Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield campuses, and their continuing education units, to help build capacity for online teaching and innovation and to help infuse online technologies throughout the University's curricula.

The Global Campus was conceived as a partnership with existing University of Illinois colleges, departments and faculty to develop and deliver courses and degree programs. However, in the time period since establishment of Global Campus, there has

been an insufficient number of courses and programs developed and delivered through such partnerships. The Global Campus is constrained from directly developing and offering courses and degrees because it lacks independent accreditation to offer such programs.

Access to affordable high-quality degree programs is now a critical need in Illinois and the nation. Providing that access is central to the University's land-grant mission. However, the Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield campuses, which collectively enroll more than 70,000 students, lack the physical and financial capacities to address the rising demand for higher education in significant ways using the traditional methods of residential instruction. The Board of Trustees established the Global Campus to pursue a new and unique mission focused on expanding access to University of Illinois educational opportunities by offering scalable in-demand programs at affordable prices, primarily via the Internet. The initial academic programs in nursing and education were launched on January 2, 2008.

The Global Campus has implemented an effective infrastructure for creating and offering degree and certificate programs in partnership with colleges and departments on the residential campuses. This model works well to serve discipline-driven campus partners who are primarily interested in offering competitively priced professional degree programs. Unfortunately, Global Campus has not been able to develop a diverse program portfolio to serve students of modest financial means, who want bachelors and masters degrees in high-demand, career-enhancing disciplines at affordable prices. To fully achieve the access and affordability goals that the Board of Trustees established for the

Global Campus requires a new model enabling independent program development to complement the existing partnership model.

The President, with the advice of the University Senates Conference and the Chancellors, recommends that the University of Illinois Global Campus be authorized to seek independent accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, it is recommended that the President be authorized to issue diplomas conferring degrees to students completing programs of the Global Campus, based on the recommendation of Global Campus Educational Policy Council, by authority of the Board of Trustees.

In order to provide faculty oversight of educational policy matters, it is also recommended that an Educational Policy Council (EPC) be constituted for the Global Campus. The basic structure of the EPC, including its composition, shall be provided for in a constitution. The constitution and any amendments thereto shall be formulated and approved based on the principles listed in Article II., Section 1., of the *University Statutes*.

Because it may take several years for the Global Campus to achieve accreditation, it is recommended that the Global Campus be authorized to begin the development of new courses and degree programs under the sponsorship of one or more of the campuses, which would assume responsibility for them on an interim basis. While Global Campus is responsible for designing the new programs with oversight provided by the EPC, such programs will also comply with the sponsoring campus, University and Illinois Board of Higher Education academic oversight and approval processes. Students will be eligible

for degrees from the sponsoring campus while Global Campus pursues the accreditation process. When Global Campus achieves its accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, Global Campus would be authorized to offer independent degree programs of its own. However, students who are enrolled in the new programs at the time accreditation is achieved will be given the choice of receiving their degrees from the Global Campus or the sponsoring campus.

The board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.