

**NEW UNITS OF INSTRUCTION, PUBLIC SERVICE,  
AND RESEARCH AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

**Submitted for:** Action.

**Summary:** This item requests approval of one degree program and two centers at three public universities.

**Action Requested:** That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the following:

Governors State University

- Bachelor of Arts in Economics in the South Metropolitan Region

Northern Illinois University

- Center for P-20 Engagement in the Fox Valley Region

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Center for Sustainable Environment in the Prairie Region



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**NEW UNITS OF INSTRUCTION, PUBLIC SERVICE,  
AND RESEARCH AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

By statute, the Illinois Board of Higher Education is responsible for approving new on-campus and off-campus units of instruction, organized research, and public service, and units of administration proposed by public university governing boards. The Board's approval criteria, defined in rules adopted for administering the statute, address university mission, academic control, faculty and staff, support services, financial resources, student demand, curriculum, statewide need, and congruence with Board policies and priorities. In addition to the approval criteria in rules, each new program was reviewed for its contributions to the goals of the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*, which sets forth new priorities to guide Illinois higher education. Staff recommendations are based on analyses of application materials and responses to staff questions, and, for advanced degree programs, recommendations of external consultants.

**Governors State University**

**Proposed Program Title in Region of Authorization:** Bachelor of Arts in Economics in the South Metropolitan Region

*Projected Enrollments and Degrees:* Governors State University has projected that approximately 15 students will enroll in the first year, most of them full time, increasing to about 35 students by the third year and annually thereafter. It is projected that approximately 12 degrees will be awarded in this program in the fifth year. If student demand for the program continues to grow beyond the fifth year of implementation, more degrees will be awarded.

**Background**

Governors State University (GSU or the University) requests authority to offer the Bachelor of Arts in Economics (BA-E) in the South Metropolitan Region. The proposed BA-E program will focus on preparing students with a professional degree to enter analyst-level positions with quantitative skills, such as cost-benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness fields applicable to regional, as well as national job markets. Graduates will be well prepared to assume positions in government, community, and business organizations or pursue advanced study in business and a variety of professional fields, including economics. A similar program, the Bachelor of Science in Economics (BS-E), was approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in April 2013. The previously approved BS focuses on advanced mathematical economics with an emphasis on preparing students for graduate study in the discipline, while the proposed BA program pairs the study of economics with another major or minor, creating a more interdisciplinary experience for students.

## Need

*1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically justified based on the educational priorities and needs of the citizens of Illinois; B) The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and units of instruction, research or public service.*

The social, economic, and educational needs of the University's service region are significant. With the stated mandate of acting as a catalyst for the region, Governors State University is addressing these needs through its Academic Master Plan and the proposed degree. The BA-E proposal is grounded in the assumption that leaders in all sectors, especially those in business and finance, rely on economists to provide critical information on macro and micro projections of economic growth, develop analyses of various industries and sectors, weigh the costs and benefits of investment opportunities, evaluate the effectiveness of public and private initiatives, and provide data for others to utilize in making social and economic decisions. These critical skill areas make economists invaluable to the standard fields in industry, finance, government, education, and other areas of business and civic life. In addition, more areas of specialization are opening to economists, especially in the areas of health, forensics, financial economics, predictive analytics, and law, both nationally and internationally. Projections from the Illinois Department of Employment Security for the period 2010-2020 show growth of 5 percent in the field. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has placed the growth of total economist positions at 6 percent between 2008 and 2018. The proposed program at GSU will educate students who are prepared to enter these professional arenas.

### ***The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success***

The proposed BA-E degree program will address the following goals of *The Illinois Public Agenda*:

*Goal 1: Increase Educational Attainment.* The University's service region represents some of the most disadvantaged and under-served areas in Illinois. The 2010 Census points to a dramatic decline of Chicago's African-American population due, in large part, to a migration to the city's southland region. Thus, the University is in a position to further *The Illinois Public Agenda's* goal of reducing achievement gaps in race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. African Americans make up 37 percent of the University's student population, Hispanics eight percent, minorities 47 percent, and women 69 percent. As the University transitions to a traditional four-year college in 2014, its ability to further the attainment of a college degree among these underserved populations will significantly increase. The proposed degree program, coupled with established support services for adult learners and returning students, will allow community college students interested in this field to continue their studies regionally at GSU. As noted in *The Illinois Public Agenda*, although Illinois is close to the national average for associate's-level degree completion, it falls far short of the national average for bachelor's-level degree completion. The BA-E program will provide GSU students clear paths toward degree completion. Additionally, it will allow the dual degree program that the University has initiated in cooperation with its regional community colleges to be more fully utilized. This program is recognized nationally.

*Goal 2: Ensure College Affordability.* Governors State University is one of the most affordable universities in Illinois. Historically it has had among the lowest costs for graduate programs, in comparison to higher costs for undergraduate programs. With the inclusion of freshmen and sophomores these relative costs will decline, especially if there are high-demand

programs such as those proposed to attract these students. This increased cost-efficiency will make public higher education more affordable for the taxpayer as well as the student at GSU.

*Goal 3: High Quality Credentials to Meet Economic Demand.* The College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) is currently accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) and has been accepted into candidacy for initial accreditation with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). AACSB accreditation should increase the competitive advantage of the University's business and economics students in the market place.

*Goal 4: Integration of Educational Research and Innovation Assets.* The capstone course in the BA-E program is centered on an undergraduate research project in economics. This high-impact practice fosters student collaboration with faculty in the research endeavor and will further a culture of undergraduate research within the University.

### **Comparable Programs in Illinois**

The University's proposed BA-E program reflects standards in the field and will provide an experience comparable to that of other area universities but at a lower cost. The program is designed to provide a pathway for students who plan to pursue advanced study in business, finances, and other related fields of economics. Additionally, with GSU's dual degree program linking to local community colleges, current students may also position themselves to enter the job market directly upon completion of the undergraduate degree.

### **Mission and Objectives**

*1050.30(a)(1): A) The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with the mission of the college or university; B) The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with what the unit title implies.*

Upon completing the BA-E program, students will be able to: (1) explain the role of supply and demand in a market economy and the necessary conditions for market economies to function well; (2) discuss efficiency advantages of a market system and the role of prices in achieving efficiency criteria based on Pareto's Criteria; (3) identify the costs and benefits of a global economy; (4) explain the role of government; fiscal, monetary, and stabilizations policies; the Federal Reserve, fractional reserves, and interest and exchange rates; (5) demonstrate an ability to define and analyze economic problems using algebraic and statistical methods; (6) demonstrate the ability to apply a wide range of economic problems and effectively demonstrate the results in both written and oral communication; (7) explain how voluntary exchange is mutually beneficial and demonstrate how specialization and trade based on comparative advantage can increase social welfare; (8) explain the effects of economic events on measured financial performance of firms; and (9) demonstrate the ability to use statistical/econometric analysis in the development and presentation of an economic research project.

The proposed program is consistent with the purpose, goals, objectives, and mission of the University. The requested degree title is congruent with the corresponding degree program objectives and curricula.

## Curriculum and Assessment

*1050.30(b)(1): A) The caliber and content of the curriculum must assure that the objectives of the unit of instruction will be achieved. B) The breadth and depth of the curriculum must be consistent with what the title of the unit of instruction implies. C) The admission and graduation requirements for the unit of instruction must be consistent with the stated objectives of the unit of instruction. D) Institutions must show the capacity to develop, deliver and support academic programs. Procedures and policies that will assure the effective design, conduct and evaluation of the degree program under the academic control of the institution must be developed. Assessment plans must demonstrate that the institution has identified clear and appropriate program and student learning goals and has defined appropriate outcomes. Appropriate data must be collected and may be requested by the Board to show the level of student learning that has occurred as a result of participation in the institution's programs of study. E) Degree programs must meet [appropriate] requirements.*

### Admission Requirements

Admission to the proposed program will be based on admission to the University. First-year applicants must have attained a high school diploma with a minimum 2.75 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale and must have achieved a minimum ACT score of 18 (or SAT equivalent). Prospective transfer applicants for admission to the proposed program must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 out of 4.0 in 60 hours of transferrable credits from a regionally accredited institution and must have earned the associate degree.

### Curriculum

The Bachelor of Arts in Economics degree program requires students to complete 120 semester credit hours, including 40 hours of general education courses, 14 hours of electives, 12 hours of economics core courses covering the usual span of quantitative economics curricula as well as an economics capstone course, and 12 hours of economics selectives. In addition, students must complete 15 hours of business core courses and 12 hours of additional CBPA requirements including two business statistics courses, one computer literacy course, and one course in business communications. Students in the BA-E program will learn to use qualitative, quantitative, and empirical methods to solve a wide range of problems applicable to the private, public, and non-profit sectors and communicate to stakeholders using the language of economics. GSU students in the proposed program will also be able to choose a second major or a minor in science, math, computer science, psychology, finance, entrepreneurship, or political science, among many other options. The BA-E degree is designed to provide a collaborative program of study with an interdisciplinary orientation based on the student's interest and career path.

BA-E graduates will be prepared to directly enter the workforce as cost estimators, financial analysts, financial managers, insurance underwriters, loan officers, management analysts, and positions associated with consumer behavior. Graduates will be able to apply their degree to work in the fields of sociology, political science, public administration, and public policy research. In addition, students will be prepared to enter graduate degree programs in economics and other related fields of study.

### Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning in the BA-E program will be assessed based on the identified program objectives. The primary assessment tools will include course-level term papers, tests, homework

assignments, and scores on the Test of Understanding College Economics. The program includes a capstone project which serves as a summative assessment of student learning. This capstone is an integrated research project that requires students to identify an economic problem, develop testable hypotheses, conduct related background research, acquire and analyze data, and present the findings.

#### Program Assessment

The program will be entered into the CBPA's regular, internal four-year review cycle by the Assurance of Learning Curriculum Management and Assessment Committee. All degree programs are reviewed regularly within the college by faculty to ensure curriculum is current, aligned with student learning outcomes, and offered in delivery formats that meet students' needs. Consistent with IBHE requirements, the University will submit to the IBHE a progress report on the BA-E program at the end of the third year of operation. The report will summarize key areas of accomplishment by the faculty and any remaining challenges, as well as how each challenge will be addressed. In addition, the program faculty will participate in the University's eight-year program review process to assess the programs using multiple measures including evaluation of faculty teaching by students, the level of faculty research and scholarship, awards and honors, retention and graduation rate of students in the programs, and the levels of alumni and employer satisfaction. Also, the faculty will use measures such as the percent of graduates admitted to graduate and professional schools and the percent of graduates employed in occupations closely related to the field of study. Summaries of the program review, including the program's strengths and weaknesses, as well as steps to be taken to improve the program, will be submitted by the University to the IBHE with summaries of other programs reviewed in the same cycle.

#### Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

*1050.30(a)(4): A) Facilities, equipment and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computational equipment) necessary to support the high quality academic work in the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained; B) Clinical sites necessary to meet the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service; C) Library holdings and acquisitions, owned or contracted for by the institution, that are necessary to support high quality instruction and scholarship in the unit of instruction, research and public service, are conveniently available and accessible, and can be maintained.*

#### Technology and Instructional Resources

Facilities that will support the program include dedicated University classrooms, especially "smart" classrooms, and other learning spaces such as the academic computer center, lecture halls, and laboratories. Students will be able to take online or web hybrid courses and have full online access to the University's library, writing center, and student resources. Online students are eligible to access all on-campus resources that on-campus students use.

Students in the BA-E program will have access to statistical and/or econometric software as provided by the University via the Academic Computing Center (ACC). The ACC currently provides statistical software such as SAS, IBMSPSS, and Minitab. In addition, students will be able to purchase discounted student versions of EViews or STATA to provide for their statistical/econometrics software needs.

GSU's Academic Resource Center provides a range of student support services including the following: a counseling center, access services for students with disabilities, business and computer science tutoring, math, statistics, and science tutoring, and the writing center. In addition, GSU provides other student services and support, such as campus computing, career services, distance learning, and the Latino Center for Excellence.

## Library

The library's collections are sufficient for the newly approved BS-E and the proposed BA-E degree program. For the BA-E, the library's collection includes ABI Inform Global, Business Core, Business Source Premier ProQuest, and specifically for Economics, JSTOR. Most of the critical resources are in the form of periodical journals. Additional library resources not in the University's collection will be obtained through the interlibrary loan system consisting of the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois with over 70 Illinois academic libraries to which the University's main library is a member.

## Faculty and Staff

*1050.30(a)(3): A) The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure that the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are met.*

The BA-E program will be administered by faculty in the CBPA. All full-time faculty in the program will hold a terminal degree in the relevant field. The BA-E program will be staffed only by full-time faculty. These same faculty members will support the BS-E program as well.

## Fiscal and Personnel Resources

*1050.30(a)(5): A) The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are sufficient to ensure that the faculty and staff and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction, research or public service can be acquired and maintained; B) Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are based on supportable estimates of state appropriations, local tax support, student tuition and fees, private gifts, and/or governmental grants and contracts.*

No new state resources are required to establish this program. Existing academic departments in the college have the needed resources. The BA-E program has been planned with three faculty lines. Currently, there are two full-time faculty in the CBPA who will teach in the program. Plans are under way to hire an additional full-time, tenure-track faculty member by Fall 2014. Program and tuition revenue will be used to fund this position.

## Accreditation and Licensure

*1050.30(b)(3): Appropriate steps shall be taken to assure that professional accreditation needed for licensure or entry into a profession as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction is maintained or will be granted in a reasonable period of time.*

*1050.50(a)(1) Three years after approval of a new program, the institution shall provide a program progress report to the Board as part of the institution's annual report. The third year progress report shall describe the institution's performance in meeting program objectives and show where any improvements are necessary. The placement of a program in voluntary temporary suspension will not negate the requirement of submitting a third year progress report.*



*1050.50(a)(2)(C) Requirement for Programs in which State Licensure is Required for Employment in the Field: In the case of a program in which State licensure is required for employment in the field, a program can be found to be in good standing if the institution is able to provide evidence that program graduates are eligible to take the appropriate licensure examination and pass rates are maintained as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction. If there is no such evidence, the institution shall report the program as flagged for review.*

Neither a specialized accreditation nor licensure/certification of graduates is required. The proposed economics degree program is grounded in standards from the AACSB and the American Economic Association. The CBPA, which will administer the BA-E program, is accredited by ACBSP and has been accepted into the initial accreditation process with AACSB International with a goal of AACSB Accreditation in 2015. The University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

### **Program Information**

*1050.30(b)(2)(A) The information the institution provides for students and the public...(B) The information listed in subsection (b)(2)(A) shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment and shall be included in the institution's catalog of programs.*

Detailed admission and program descriptions submitted as part of the application provide information regarding University policies, fees, and related requirements necessary to enable prospective students to make an informed decision to enroll in the programs. Identical information will also be available on the University's website and in the University's catalog.

**Staff Conclusion.** The staff concludes that the Bachelor of Arts in Economics degree program proposed by Governors State University meets the criteria to implement the Board of Higher Education Act (110 ILCS 205/et.seq.) as set forth in 23 Illinois Administrative Code, Ch. II, Section 1050.30, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education policies pertaining to assessment and accreditation or licensure.

### **Northern Illinois University**

**Proposed Center Title in Region of Authorization:** Center for P-20 Engagement in the Fox Valley Region

*Projected Enrollments and Degrees:* This proposal is for a new organized research and public service center, the Center for P-20 Engagement, not a degree program. As such, projections of student enrollments and degrees awarded are not relevant to this proposal. However, the Center will play an important role in promoting and contributing to the research, teaching, and public service mission of the University, particularly in areas related to teacher education, the quality of school district outcomes, and more student success in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

### **Background**

The Northern Illinois University (NIU or the University) requests authority to establish the Center for P-20 Engagement on campus in the Fox Valley Region. The Center is designed to support the central mission of Northern Illinois University to promote and facilitate excellence and engagement in teaching and learning, research and scholarship, creativity and artistry, and outreach and public service. The three primary objectives of the Center are: coordination of

NIU's P-20 programs and services, leadership in P-20 partnerships, and management of the portfolio of P-20 engagement activities. All projects of the Center must meet the following criteria: align with the University's mission and strategic plans, involve two or more colleges at NIU and external partners, and contribute significantly to the Center's objectives.

Nine essential affiliates of the Center already exist, and they are working together under the mission and priorities of the Center and NIU. They are: Center for Child Welfare and Education; Center for Economic Education; Econ Illinois; Illinois Interactive Report Card; Illinois Shared Learning Environment; Professional Development Schools; Regional College Readiness Partnership; STEM Outreach; and The Virtual Lab School. Some of these units, such as the Center for Economic Education, have existed for a long time.

Leadership of the Center already consists of a partnership between the Office of the Provost and the Division of Outreach, Engagement, and Information Technologies. Direct involvement of the Vice President for Outreach, Engagement, and Information Technologies and the Deputy Provost shows the University's executive commitment to the importance of the activities and objectives of the Center. Other campus leaders such as the Coordinator of STEM Outreach, the Director of Community College Relations, and the Coordinator for the Center for Economic Education are important partners in the Center's programs. Historically, deans have been active advocates for coordination of multiple units to reduce duplication and increase the impact of the University's P-20 initiatives. To increase efficiency and effectiveness, local school districts in the University's region are involved in the planning and implementation of projects of the Center.

As summarized below, the services of the Center are in demand from local and regional school districts as well as community organizations committed to improving K-12 school outcomes in many areas, including STEM fields. It is reported their expressed needs consistently exceed the capacity of the Center and their requests require frequent consultation on strategic priorities among the Center's collaborating leaders. As such, the Center has much room to grow to address the unmet needs.

NIU has significant investment in disciplines related to P-20 programs. For example, it currently offers more than 130 degree programs with 50 of them in STEM fields and 13 degree programs in education, including seven of them in secondary teacher education. All together, the University offers 134 degree programs and certificates.

## **Need**

*1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically justified based on the educational priorities and needs of the citizens of Illinois; B) The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and units of instruction, research or public service.*

The Center for P-20 Engagement has already demonstrated its commitment to addressing the P-20 issues and challenges over the years by responding to needs at local and regional levels as well as state needs based on some of the goals and priorities of *The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*. Consistent with its mission, the Center convenes regular meetings with NIU faculty and a broad cross-section of educators across the region to discuss their specific needs and priorities. In addition to annual meetings, the Center consistently involves local and regional superintendents in its projects and partnerships. Local educators and NIU administrators and faculty bring requests for programs and services to the Center. In the past year, for example,

these included creating five summer camps for 170 Title I students from Rockford high schools, developing the Huntley High School Medical Careers Academic partnership, and convening social service providers with the contributions of faculty in four NIU colleges to develop a network of support for children who are victims of trauma.

The Center participates in other state level initiatives related to college and career readiness and in the Illinois Pathways Initiatives to establish STEM Learning Exchanges. Information on economic and workforce development issues support the development of activities that respond to identified needs. Examples of the expressed needs are from: local and regional superintendents for more of the University's Professional Development Schools for new teachers who typically perform in their classes with quality comparable to those of second and third year teachers; school districts seeking to align their curricula with the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards requests for keynote speakers to inspire teachers to work on the alignment; administrators of elementary and middle schools to address their needs for language arts teachers' professional development in science to meet the new standards; and local education leaders who need more Online Professional Development modules provided by NIU's The Virtual Lab School. More than a dozen new modules being created will be pilot tested in Fall 2013.

### ***The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success***

The proposed Center for P-20 Engagement does and will address Goal 4 of *The Illinois Public Agenda*, "Better integrate Illinois' educational, research, and innovation assets to meet economic needs of the state and its regions." This goal is addressed through the Center's mission related to the new P-20 priorities that require research and public service programs and activities to address growing needs, including meeting Common Core requirements and better programs to address the STEM needs of NIU's local and regional school districts. To some extent, Goal 3, "Increase the number of high-quality post-secondary credentials to meet the demands of the economy and an increasingly global society" is also addressed by regularly involving teacher education students and their faculty members at NIU to increase the number of individuals with high quality credentials.

### **Comparable Institutes and Centers in Illinois**

Currently there is no center or institute with a similar mission at any of the public universities in the state. However, Illinois colleges and universities that offer teacher education degree programs have some functions and programs that are similar to those of the Center.

### **Mission and Objectives**

*1050.30(a)(1): A) The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with the mission of the college or university; B) The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with what the unit title implies.*

As stated at the beginning of this application summary, the mission of this Center is to facilitate and promote successful implementation of the University's P-20 programs and services to increase and improve the coordination of NIU's P-20 activities, leadership of P-20 partnership and collaboration, and management of the portfolio of P-20 engagement activities. The mission is guided by the Center's imperatives to: preserve, strengthen, and extend NIU's teaching and learning programs and services; develop a strategy for investing in multidisciplinary scholarship

and artistic clusters; strengthen and extend NIU's regional, state and national impacts; and make NIU an institution of "first choice" for faculty, students, and staff in its region.

To increase its efficiency and effectiveness, the Center involves appropriate leaders on campus and in the region by (a) establishing shared commitment to multi-college grant proposals and to partnership with key stakeholders locally, regionally, and beyond; (b) involving the participation of the Center's nine affiliates, including the Illinois Interactive Report Card, Illinois Shared Learning Environment, Professional Development Schools, STEM Outreach, and the Virtual Lab School; and (c) making agreements with the seven members of the NIU P-20 Council (a vice president, a deputy provost, and five deans) to coordinate and manage 25 to 30 university-wide projects yearly. These help the Center address its mission and meet its objectives.

The mission and goals of the Center are consistent with and support the University's mission and priorities which in turn address the goals of *The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

*1050.30(b)(1): A) The caliber and content of the curriculum must assure that the objectives of the unit of instruction will be achieved. B) The breadth and depth of the curriculum must be consistent with what the title of the unit of instruction implies. C) The admission and graduation requirements for the unit of instruction must be consistent with the stated objectives of the unit of instruction. D) Institutions must show the capacity to develop, deliver and support academic programs. Procedures and policies that will assure the effective design, conduct and evaluation of the degree program under the academic control of the institution must be developed. Assessment plans must demonstrate that the institution has identified clear and appropriate program and student learning goals and has defined appropriate outcomes. Appropriate data must be collected and may be requested by the Board to show the level of student learning that has occurred as a result of participation in the institution's programs of study. E) Degree programs must meet [appropriate] requirements.*

Although the Center is not yet approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), it has numerous accomplishments, including:

- Since fiscal year 2009, there have been a growing number of NIU presentations and workshops at scholarly and professional conferences as well as meetings at the state and national levels. In fiscal year 2011 for example, there were 18 presentations and ten workshops by Center-affiliated faculty members;
- Active partnership with the Center's nine affiliate organizations at NIU that share mission and goals, and the involvement of the Center's P-20 Council consisting of a vice president, a deputy provost, and five deans;
- Collaborations with local and regional school district leaders to meet the needs of their schools, which currently exceed the capacity of the Center. For example, between 2008 and 2011, more than 100 high schools and NIU faculty and students participated in the Center programs, more than 400 hours of professional development were delivered, 57 NIU tutors worked with high school students in 685 tutoring sessions, and 22 high school teachers and NIU students developed a successful model for capstone clinical experiences;
- The STEM Outreach has engaged nearly 10,000 students, parents and teachers in activities such as the demonstration of standards-based classroom activities, after school

science clubs in high-minority middle schools, and activities in STEM labs. In the past three years, approximately 900 K-12 students and teachers participated in NIU learning activities for reading, science, and social studies involving about 500 NIU students from four colleges;

- The Center has increasingly become the “go to” place for external school district partners and clients to get support and needed resources; and
- During the last four years, the Center expended more than \$4 million in grant and contract awards for various collaborative activities, including the STEMfest underwriting and Regional College Readiness Partnership of IBHE. The entities awarding grants conduct their own evaluation of outcomes in addition to NIU’s assessments.

#### Assessment of Center Outcomes

The Center has an established set of assessment measures for its activities and outcomes generated through NIU’s strategic planning process and all major activities and projects meet rigorous accountability standards that must be demonstrated on an annual basis. Every project must show its connection with the strategic planning imperatives; articulate objectives, strategies and action steps to achieve them; establish timelines; and include an assessment plan. Internal evaluation of the Center includes a weekly staff meeting to review the status and assignments of projects and comprehensive briefing on major P-20 events, such as the STEMfest. Each fiscal year, summary reports are submitted to the President, the Provost and the NIU Board of Trustees. Evaluation by those external to the Center includes quarterly reviews of all major activities of the P-20 Council by senior NIU administrators. An annual review of outcomes is done by the Office of the Provost and periodic reviews of the outcomes are accomplished by the University’s Strategic Planning Committee.

Consistent with standard practice, the Center is expected by IBHE staff to submit a short progress report about its successes and any challenges it faces at the end of the third year of operation. Additionally, the Center is required to participate in the University’s eight-year program review process for all degree programs and IBHE approved centers/institutes. A summary of the review should be submitted to IBHE with summaries of other programs and centers/institutes reviewed in the same cycle.

#### **Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)**

*1050.30(a)(4): A) Facilities, equipment and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computational equipment) necessary to support high quality academic work in the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained; B) Clinical sites necessary to meet the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service; C) Library holdings and acquisitions, owned or contracted for by the institution, that are necessary to support high quality instruction and scholarship in the unit of instruction, research and public service, are conveniently available and accessible, and can be maintained.*

The Center for P-20 Engagement is housed within the Division of Outreach, Engagement, and Information Technologies and the University pays for the facilities, furnishings, and major equipment. In addition, the Departments of Physics, and Chemistry and Biochemistry supply extensive digital storage space for STEM Outreach at no cost to the Center.

## **Faculty and Staff**

*1050.30(a)(3): A) The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure that the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are met.*

The Center is currently managed by an Executive Director who is assisted by an Associate Director, an Assistant Director, and an Administrative Assistant. Together, they provide oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Center. In addition, the Center employs the NIU STEM Outreach Coordinator and Associate, a STEM Presentation Specialist, the NIU Center for Economic Education Coordinator, the Professional Development Schools Coordinator and the Assistant, and others.

The Center does not employ faculty to teach classes because they are employed by their respective academic departments. However, the Center provides stipends and course releases for 20 to 25 faculty and staff members annually. They are responsible for conducting projects funded through the Center's competitive grants. Also, they provide services for partnership projects, serve on project committees, and participate extensively in outreach and engagement programs and activities managed by the Center. As the Center grows and matures, it is expected the number and types of faculty and staff it will employ will grow commensurate with the size of the Center budgets.

## **Fiscal and Personnel Resources**

*1050.30(a)(5): A) The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are sufficient to ensure that the faculty and staff and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction, research or public service can be acquired and maintained; B) Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are based upon supportable estimates of state appropriations, local tax support, student tuition and fees, private gifts, and/or governmental grants and contracts.*

No new state resources are needed to fund the Center because it is and will be funded by University reallocated resources as well as funds from external sources. It is expected that in the future the Center will be awarded grants and contracts from federal agencies as the Center staff are involved in preparing grant proposals for STEM projects beginning this Spring.

The Center proposal indicates the budgets of the Center will grow from approximately \$585,900 in the first year increasing to \$593,000 in the fourth year. These funds will come primarily from internal reallocations and other sources such as fees, sales for services provided, and other grants and donations. In the past, grant funds were awarded to the Center by entities such as the American Physical Society, the DeKalb County Foundation, the E.E. Carter Foundation, and corporations. In-kind contributions from NIU colleges and departments and external partners contribute to the Center's successes.

It is estimated that 75 to 80 percent of the Center's budgets are for personnel costs for Center staff, project/program staff, and other personnel who provide leadership and assistance for the P-20 programs and services. Other expenditures costs are equipment, supplies, services and travel.

## **Accreditation and Licensure**

*1050.30(b)(3): Appropriate steps shall be taken to assure that professional accreditation needed for licensure or entry into a profession as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction is maintained or will be granted in a reasonable period of time.*

*1050.50(a)(1) Three years after approval of a new program, the institution shall provide a program progress report to the Board as part of the institution's annual report. The third year progress report shall describe the institution's performance in meeting program objectives and show where any improvements are necessary. The placement of a program in voluntary temporary suspension will not negate the requirement of submitting a third year progress report.*

*1050.50(a)(2)(C) Requirement for Programs in which State Licensure is Required for Employment in the Field: In the case of a program in which State licensure is required for employment in the field, a program can be found to be in good standing if the institution is able to provide evidence that program graduates are eligible to take the appropriate licensure examination and pass rates are maintained as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction. If there is no such evidence, the institution shall report the program as flagged for review.*

There is no specialized accreditation for centers and institutes in fields related to P-20 projects and services. However, the University is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Additionally, the Center is and will continue to work with degree programs offered by the University, particularly NIU degree programs that are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

## **Program Information**

*1050.30(b)(2)(A) The information the institution provides for students and the public...(B) The information listed in subsection (b)(2)(A) shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment and shall be included in the institution's catalog of programs.*

Information about NIU's Center for P-20 Engagement, including a summary description of the mission and objectives, structure and leadership, and assessment activities, will be published on the University's website, [www.niu.edu](http://www.niu.edu). Comparable information about the Center will be published in the University's catalogs and similar information about the Center may be available from the Division of Outreach, Engagement, and Information Technologies, and the Division of Academic Affairs upon request.

**Staff Conclusion.** The staff concludes that the Center for P-20 Engagement proposed by Northern Illinois University meets the criteria to implement the Board of Higher Education Act (110 ILCS 205/et.seq.) as set forth in the Board of Higher Education administrative rules (23 Ill. Adm. Code 1050.30), and the Illinois Board of Higher Education policies pertaining to assessment and accreditation.

## University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Proposed Center Title in Region of Authorization:** Center for a Sustainable Environment in the Prairie Region

*Projected Enrollments and Degrees:* This proposal is to establish a new organized research and public service center, the Center for a Sustainable Environment, not a degree program. As such, projections of student enrollments and degrees awarded are not relevant to this proposal. However, the Center has and will play an important role in promoting and contributing to the research, teaching, and public service mission of the University, particularly in areas related to environmental sustainability.

### Background

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC or the University) requests authority to establish the Center for a Sustainable Environment (CSE) in the Prairie Region. The Center was created to meet two interdependent primary objectives: to provide national and international leadership on sustainability by providing support for interdisciplinary education, research and education and to support the development and implementation of strategies for a sustainable campus environment. As summarized below under the Accomplishments Section, CSE is already a leader in the areas of energy, environment, and sustainability. It is a home of many internationally renowned experts in the areas of energy, water, food, climate change, and natural resources, among others. It will embrace and enhance the extensive work already underway on the campus. It will position itself in roles to facilitate, coordinate, and organize campus resources to capture and amplify the campus-wide strengths in sustainability, energy, and the environment.

In collaboration with the Office of the Chancellor and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, CSE will develop new initiatives for discovery and learning in the broad area of environmental sustainability, energy, and the environment, although it will not directly offer instruction and degree programs. The Center will: (a) organize teaching workshops to enable faculty members to incorporate environmental sustainability issues and new knowledge in courses they teach; (b) support multi-disciplinary research collaborations on campus because it is expected these efforts will equip UIUC to play a leadership role in responding to critical issues facing the US and the world; (c) support various efforts on campus to transform UIUC into a living-learning laboratory for sustainability; and (d) supervise and guide the activities of the Student Sustainability Committee responsible for investment of about \$1 million from student self-imposed fees. Additionally, the Center will provide oversight for fulfillment of the University of Illinois' commitment under the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, which includes implementation of an Illinois Climate Action Plan.

If approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), CSE will build upon the strengths of the University in many relevant academic areas including the existing: The Prairie Research Institute, originally called The Institute of Natural Resource Sustainability, and a number of degree programs including: the B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. in Geography; B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences; B.S. in Liberal Arts and Sciences in Earth, Society and Environmental Sustainability; M.S. and Ph.D. in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology; and M.S. in Environmental Sciences in Civil Engineering. The University has faculty experts in the areas of energy, environment, and sustainability research; and it works with 19 research centers and initiatives, such as Energy Biosciences Institute, Safe Global Water Institute, Social Dimensions of Environmental Policy, and Economic and Environmental Impacts



of Biofuels. Furthermore, the Center will work with many state and national organizations involved in environmental matters and issues. Some of them are: the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Department of Energy, and on campus, the Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact.

## **Need**

*1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically justified based on the educational priorities and needs of the citizens of Illinois; B) The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and units of instruction, research or public service.*

The proposed Center for a Sustainable Environment is needed in Illinois because energy, environment, and sustainability have been identified as some of the most pressing issues of the current time in the state and the nation. These topics were identified as high priorities on campus during the Visioning Future Excellence, a series of events with constituencies across all UIUC campus groups and external stakeholders, including alumni and corporate partners. As the flagship campus among Illinois public universities, UIUC has the ability—and indeed, the obligation—to educate both students and faculty and the general public about these issues and to devote resources to accelerate innovative discoveries for addressing them.

UIUC has campus-wide strengths in sustainability, energy, and the environment. These strengths are exhibited through disciplinary expertise, interdisciplinary collaborations, influential external partners, practical demonstrations, local-global connections between sustainability, environment, and human well-being. The Center will take advantage of these strengths and build on them by positioning itself in roles of facilitating, coordinating, and organizing campus resources to capture and amplify the campus-wide strengths in environmental sustainability.

Although there are many active individuals, teams, and campus organizations involved in efforts to address concerns about sustainability, an overarching framework is needed to coordinate their efforts by linking them to accelerate and highlight the sustainability, energy, and environmental programs on campus for the benefit of faculty, students, the community, and the state. CSE does and will serve society through (a) organizing forums for the exchange of knowledge on energy, environment, and sustainability; (b) engagement efforts to increase societal impact of sustainability-related research on campus and translate knowledge to make greater impact; and (c) interaction with leaders near and far in academia, government, industry, and not-for-profit organizations to identify and address the pressing needs.

## ***The Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success***

The proposed Center furthers Goal 4 of *The Illinois Public Agenda*, “Better integrate Illinois’ educational, research, and innovation assets to meet economic needs of the state and its regions.” This goal is addressed through the Center’s mission related to research and public service for targeted University communities, the state, and beyond. To some extent, Goal 3, “Increase the number of high-quality post-secondary credentials to meet the demands of the economy and an increasingly global society” is and will be addressed by regularly involving students in the Center’s research projects led by faculty and other scholars. These efforts contribute to the state’s growing need for high quality credentials awarded by UIUC and other Illinois higher education institutions.

## Comparable Institutes and Centers in Illinois

In addition to the UIUC's Prairie Research Institute, two other public universities operate two centers with more or less similar mission. They are Illinois State University's Center for Renewable Energy and Eastern Illinois University's Center for Clean Energy Research and Education. In addition, degree programs at public universities and other institutions with foci related to energy, environment, and sustainability have functions that more or less address these areas. The University has over a dozen centers/institutes and other initiatives that share the Center's goals and objectives. However, these centers, programs, and other initiatives collectively do not yet have the capacity to address sufficiently the enormity of current and future challenges related to energy, environment, and sustainability that face the state and the nation. Therefore, the Center functions are in great need.

## Mission and Objectives

*1050.30(a)(1): A) The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with the mission of the college or university; B) The objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are consistent with what the unit title implies.*

The proposed Center for a Sustainable Environment is designed to accomplish many objectives, including:

- Providing comprehensive information about the campus strengths and challenges in areas of energy, environment, and sustainability through creation of a user-friendly web-interface;
- Fostering interdisciplinary approaches to develop innovative research programs related to various aspects of energy, environment, and sustainability;
- Equipping students with the skills necessary to address sustainability challenges by the creation of undergraduate research programs in these areas;
- Supporting modification of existing courses to include modules related to sustainability;
- Utilizing the campus as a living-learning laboratory for sustainability by connecting the Center's learning and discovery mission with campus operations;
- Accomplishing milestones from the Illinois Climate Action Plan to meet energy, water, and waste reduction goals on time or ahead of schedule; and
- Securing external research funds to support work in sustainability, energy, and environment, and building endowment funds for the Center with the goal to match campus investment dollar-for-dollar with income from the endowment and other sources.

The mission and objectives of CSE are consistent with the mission of the University and they address the priorities of UIUC and Goals 3 and 4 of *The Illinois Public Agenda for Student and Career Success*.

## Curriculum and Assessment

*1050.30(b)(1): A) The caliber and content of the curriculum must assure that the objectives of the unit of instruction will be achieved. B) The breadth and depth of the curriculum must be consistent with what the title of the unit of instruction implies. C) The admission and graduation requirements for the unit of instruction must be consistent with the stated objectives of the unit of instruction. D) Institutions must show the capacity to develop, deliver and support academic programs. Procedures and policies that will assure the effective design, conduct and evaluation*

*of the degree program under the academic control of the institution must be developed. Assessment plans must demonstrate that the institution has identified clear and appropriate program and student learning goals and has defined appropriate outcomes. Appropriate data must be collected and may be requested by the Board to show the level of student learning that has occurred as a result of participation in the institution's programs of study. E) Degree programs must meet [appropriate] requirements.*

As summarized in the Background Section, UIUC has very significant investments in areas related to energy, environment, and sustainability but it has much room for growth to become even more effective in achieving the Center's mission. It has an endowment of \$2 million to meet some of CSE's budgetary needs. The Center is a home to many faculty experts related to the mission and objectives of the Center, including the 11 distinguished faculty members identified in the proposal. These faculty members and others have secured millions of dollars to fund research programs of the Center and their home units. In addition, the University has several programs and it participates in work on many subject matters related to energy, environment, and sustainability. Examples of the 19 centers/institutes and other units identified in the proposal are:

- Integrated BioEnergy Research Laboratory;
- Energy Bioscience Institute;
- Center for Alternative Fuels, Energy-Conversion Devices and Systems;
- Center for Advanced BioEnergy Research;
- Illinois Center for a Smarter Electric Grid;
- Geological Carbon Sequestration;
- Environmental Hydrology and Hydraulic Engineering;
- Safe Global Water Institute;
- Illinois State Water Survey;
- Center for Food Safety Engineering;
- Department of Atmospheric Sciences;
- Economic and Environmental Impacts of Biofuels; and
- Human Dimensions of Environmental Systems.

The Center partners and collaborates with many organizations at the state and national levels. Some of the ten notable examples of the partners are: the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Green Governments Coordinating Council, Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Department of Energy.

#### Assessment of the Center Outcomes

The Center has an established set of assessment measures for its activities and outcomes. It has a Steering Committee that provides advice about the development and implementation of major programs and projects. The Committee will be an interdisciplinary group of faculty, staff, and students who will represent various stakeholders on the campus. Its members will be appointed by the Chancellor and they will serve a three-year term, with the possibility for reappointment.

The Campus Sustainability Council will provide CSE with strategic guidance to ensure that its activities are synergistic with other campus efforts in the area of sustainability. Current

membership of the Council consists of the Chancellor as the Chair, the Provost, Vice Chancellor for Research, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Director of Prairie Research Institute, Director of Facilities and Services, one dean, one faculty member, two student representatives, and the Director of the Center. The Council will participate in review and evaluation of the Center's major programs and projects on a regular basis.

Consistent with IBHE policies, the University will submit at the end of the third year of operation on behalf of the Center a short progress report documenting the Center's successes and any challenges that remain to be addressed. The Center is expected to participate in the University's eight-year program review process and to submit, via the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, a summary of the program review results including strengths of the Center and any problems that should be addressed in the near future.

### **Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)**

*1050.30(a)(4): A) Facilities, equipment and instructional resources (e.g., laboratory supplies and equipment, instructional materials, computational equipment) necessary to support high quality academic work in the unit of instruction, research or public service are available and maintained; B) Clinical sites necessary to meet the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service; C) Library holdings and acquisitions, owned or contracted for by the institution, that are necessary to support high quality instruction and scholarship in the unit of instruction, research and public service, are conveniently available and accessible, and can be maintained.*

The CSE is housed in the Natural Resource Building. The staff of CSE occupies four offices. This space includes a Director's suite (two rooms) which includes an office for the Director with reception area and work space prior to entering the Director's office, an office for the Assistant Director, and an office for student and part-time employees. There are conference rooms in the building that may be reserved as needed.

### **Faculty and Staff**

*1050.30(a)(3): A) The academic preparation and experience of faculty and staff ensure that the objectives of the unit of instruction, research or public service are met.*

The day-to-day operation of the Center will be managed by the Director who reports to the Office of the Chancellor which provides some resources to the Center. The Director is assisted by 1.5 FTE academic professionals and an Office Manager who aids in the development and implementation of the Center's initiatives in education, research, engagement and operations. In addition, the Center will support two graduate research assistants and occasional undergraduate employees. For education and research-related activities, the Center will be supported by the Offices of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Vice Chancellor for Research. Many faculty members, including the 11 distinguished faculty identified in the proposal will be affiliated with the Center to varying degrees depending on the level of their commitment to the Center at any specific time. They are members of the various centers/institutes and academic units whose mission and objectives are shared with the Center's mission and objectives. Many of the units are identified above as partners of the Center. As the Center's income increases from external grants and contracts after the first four years, more faculty, staff, and students will work for the Center.

## **Fiscal and Personnel Resources**

*1050.30(a)(5): A) The financial commitments to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are sufficient to ensure that the faculty and staff and support services necessary to offer the unit of instruction, research or public service can be acquired and maintained; B) Projections of revenues necessary to support the unit of instruction, research or public service are based upon supportable estimates of state appropriations, local tax support, student tuition and fees, private gifts, and/or governmental grants and contracts.*

No new state resources are needed to establish the Center for a Sustainable Environment because the Center has and will be supported by reallocated resources from the Offices of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Vice Chancellor for Research, external grant funds, and proceeds from its approximately \$2 million endowment. Securing external funds will be a top priority for the Center. To achieve this plan, the Director and staff will aggressively seek funds from private donors and foundations, as well as pursue major federal and corporate research funding opportunities.

For the next four years, it is projected the Center budgets will be approximately \$450,000 per year. Assuming that the Center's efforts to secure grant funds and donations will be realized, the budgets beyond the four years will be considerably greater than the current projections. More than one half of the projected annual funds will pay for personal services and personnel costs while the rest will pay for supplies, services, and equipment as the Center facilities are paid for by the University.

## **Accreditation and Licensure**

*1050.30(b)(3): Appropriate steps shall be taken to assure that professional accreditation needed for licensure or entry into a profession as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction is maintained or will be granted in a reasonable period of time.*

*1050.50(a)(1) Three years after approval of a new program, the institution shall provide a program progress report to the Board as part of the institution's annual report. The third year progress report shall describe the institution's performance in meeting program objectives and show where any improvements are necessary. The placement of a program in voluntary temporary suspension will not negate the requirement of submitting a third year progress report.*

*1050.50(a)(2)(C) Requirement for Programs in which State Licensure is Required for Employment in the Field: In the case of a program in which State licensure is required for employment in the field, a program can be found to be in good standing if the institution is able to provide evidence that program graduates are eligible to take the appropriate licensure examination and pass rates are maintained as specified in the objectives of the unit of instruction. If there is no such evidence, the institution shall report the program as flagged for review.*

There is no specialized accreditation for centers/institutes in fields related to energy, environment, and sustainability. However, all of the University's degree programs are covered by the University's accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

## Program Information

*1050.30(b)(2)(A) The information the institution provides for students and the public...(B) The information listed in subsection (b)(2)(A) shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment and shall be included in the institution's catalog of programs.*

Information about UIUC's Center for a Sustainable Environment, including a summary description of the mission and objectives, structure and leadership, and assessment activities will be published on the University's website, [www.uiuc.edu](http://www.uiuc.edu). Comparable information about the Center will be published in the University's catalogs and similar information about the Center may be available from the Offices of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Vice Chancellor for Research upon request.

**Staff Conclusion.** The staff concludes that the Center for a Sustainable Environment proposed by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign meets the criteria to implement the Board of Higher Education Act (110 ILCS 205/et.seq.) as set forth in the Board of Higher Education administrative rules (23 Ill. Adm. Code 1050.30), and the Illinois Board of Higher Education policies pertaining to assessment.

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolutions:

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants to Governors State University authorization to establish the Bachelor of Arts in Economics in the South Metropolitan Region subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.*

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants to Northern Illinois University authorization to establish the Center for P-20 Engagement in the Fox Valley Region subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.*

*The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign authorization to establish the Center for a Sustainable Environment in the Prairie Region subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.*