

# Signature Programs at SIUC<sup>1</sup>

## University Graduate Council Recommendations

Early in his tenure<sup>2</sup> and more recently in his State of the University address,<sup>3</sup> Interim Chancellor Samuel Goldman indicated his desire to identify and highlight academic and non-academic programs and activities of excellence within SIUC. Referring to these programs and activities as Signature Programs, the Chancellor has asked the Graduate Council and other constituency groups to assist in determining how we should define Signature Programs.

In further discussing the idea of Signature Programs, Chancellor Goldman has indicated that there is no limit on the number of Signature Programs, but just as clearly by implication, he has indicated that not all programs will be eligible for the designation. The benefits of designation as a Signature Program are two. First, Signature Programs will receive higher visibility in University communications with the larger public. Second, Signature Programs are more likely to benefit from additional resources. In the Chancellor's own words: "I am absolutely committed to finding ways to provide additional resources for Signature Programs."<sup>4</sup>

With the Interim Chancellor Goldman's guidance in mind, the University Graduate Council set about developing a recommended set of criteria to be applied and procedures to be followed in the selection of graduate and professional programs and activities for designation as Signature Programs.

I. A **Signature Program** at the graduate or professional level at SIUC is one that excels in one or more of the following areas:

- A. *Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities*
- B. *Graduate/Professional Education*
- C. *Service to Others.*

Additionally, a Signature Program is *distinctive*. It may be unique; it may be a program or activity that is the only one of its kind in Illinois or the Midwest; it may combine non-traditional teaching or research methods to accomplish its goals; or it may be unusual in other positive ways.

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<sup>1</sup> These recommendations concern the process and criteria for the identification of Signature Programs related to graduate education and research. While much of the document might be applicable to undergraduate programs, non-academic programs or other activities considered 'programs' broadly defined, the development of the document was undertaken with the purview of the Graduate Council in mind.

<sup>2</sup> Comments by Interim Chancellor Samuel Goldman, Graduate Council Meeting, \_\_\_\_, 2008: Carbondale, Illinois.

<sup>3</sup> Interim Chancellor Samuel Goldman, "State of the University Address," September 16, 2008, Carbondale Illinois.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

II. **Evidence of Excellence** can take many forms (The list offered below is not exhaustive, nor are the items listed in order of importance). Generally speaking, the strength of evidence for excellence in an area increases when several methods of measurement concur.

A. Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities

1. Discipline-specific regional/national/international rankings
2. Awards received by the program or its faculty
3. Positions held by faculty in professional organizations
4. External funding
5. Patents, Publications, Performances
6. Professional reviews and/or citations of faculty activities
7. Participation in interdisciplinary activities

B. Graduate/Professional Education

1. Placement of recent graduates
2. Research, Scholarly, and Creative activities of current graduate students and/or recent graduates (see above)
3. Innovative approaches to graduate/professional education
4. Promoting interdisciplinary training for students
5. External funding targeted at educational mission
6. Successful recruitment and retention of well-qualified students

C. Service to Others

1. Programs sponsored for the general public, in regional schools, governments, or civic organizations.
2. Leadership positions held by faculty in organizations whose mission is to promote the economic and cultural development of our region
3. Collaborative activities with those outside the academic community

III. **Selection.** Those seeking recognition of a program or activity as a Signature Program must make application through the procedures outlined below.

A. Applications for designation as a signature program shall be submitted to the Signature Program Committee. The application will be organized as follows:

1. Introduction and Executive Summary
2. Evidence of Excellence in Research, Scholarly or other Creative Activity.
3. Evidence of Excellence in Graduate/Professional Education.
4. Evidence of Excellence in Service to Others.
5. Evidence of Distinctiveness.
6. Resource Constraints and Needs.
7. Conclusion.

B. Signature Program Committee. Programs ultimately selected as Signature Programs must receive the recommendation of the Signature Program Committee. The Signature Program Committee recommends programs or activities for designation to the Chancellor.

Committee shall have at least nine members and is comprised as follows: The Provost; the Vice Chancellor for Research; two representatives of the Faculty Senate; two representatives of the Graduate Council; two student representatives, one undergraduate and one graduate student, and the Director of University Communication.

C. The Chancellor shall make the final selection of programs for designation as Signature Programs from among those recommended to the Chancellor by the Signature Program Committee. The Chancellor shall also determine the amount and kinds of additional resources, if any, to be committed to the Signature Program.

III. Review. Signature Programs shall be reviewed at least once every seven years by the Signature Program Committee. The Committee may recommend to the Chancellor the continuance of the designation, the elimination of the designation, or recommend changes as a condition of continued designation.

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Excerpts from Chancellor Goldman's "State of the University Address"

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We will develop, in consultation with appropriate groups, a set of Signature Programs that we will showcase everywhere as outstanding, nationally recognized programs of SIUC. Our Automotive and Aviation programs, the Rehabilitation Institute and the Center for Autism (sic) Spectrum Disorders, and the School of Social Work exemplify Signature Programs.

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Our view of Signature Programs must be broad. It should also include programming on the service side of the University, such as what takes place in our Student Health Center. And it should not exclude athletics. As a society, we tend to define success in athletics by wins and losses. But there are other measures we should not lose sight of. Both our women's softball and basketball teams, for example, have outstanding team GPA's.

I welcome input from the campus community on how we should define Signature Programs. I am absolutely committed to finding ways to provide additional resources for Signature Programs.

Identifying Signature Programs is a conversation that we, as a campus community, need to engage in now.

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We will identify, develop, and vigorously promote a set of Signature Programs.