

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Chancellor

Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



REC'D FEB 04 2000

February 1, 2000

Mr. Steven D. Crow  
Executive Director  
North Central Association  
30 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602-2504

Dear Mr. Crow:

I am pleased that the evaluation team has recommended that the University's accreditation be continued for a full ten years and that it has reported that Illinois "easily meets or surpasses the General Institutional Requirements and the Criteria for Accreditation."

I note with satisfaction the evaluation team's summary that:

"The University has a world-class faculty who direct outstanding research and graduate programs; an outstanding record in recruiting, retaining and graduating outstanding graduate students; an institutional reputation that draws good undergraduate and graduate students who are satisfied with their education; a dedicated faculty and staff that, despite concerns about pay relative to peer institutions, provide a learning environment consistent with positive comments in Senior Surveys and the demands of a Research I institution; successfully enhanced faculty salary[ies] to more competitive levels; [and] an excellent program for prevention and resolution of personnel disputes."

That:

"The University has a focus on first year undergraduate experience through programs such as FYI, Discovery, Living Learning Communities, and Unit 1; implemented a wide range of programs to recruit, retain and graduate African American and Latino/a Students; [and] successfully initiated assessment of learning at the unit level."

And that:

"The University has world-class library collections; outstanding performing and visual arts facilities; premier academic resources and support for research computing, extending to all departments; [and] an excellent campus recreational system, including adaptive recreation."

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We agree with the need the team has identified to augment future financial resources for the University to remain competitive with its peers. While we are pleased with the success of Campaign Illinois, we acknowledge the need for additional state funding. We plan to work toward that end.

We also share the team's emphasis on the central importance of the University Library and its concerns about management and resource issues. We are confident that the new Director and the University will address these challenges successfully.

While we acknowledge that the use of the athletic symbol, Chief Illiniwek, has resulted in a controversy that has elicited strong emotions on all sides, we disagree with the team's emphasis on and apparent preoccupation with the athletic symbol. In light of the Board's recent actions, however, the University does not object to the written report and focused visit recommended by the team.

The Board of Trustees has expressed its concern about perceptions that it has not been open to dialogue on Chief Illiniwek. On January 13, the Board passed a resolution reaffirming its commitment to open dialogue about Chief Illiniwek and directed staff to suggest concrete actions that the University might take to foster dialogue. That process is underway, and we expect that an announcement will be made in the near future about some steps that will be taken to implement that resolution.

With the exception noted above, we have no significant reservations about the team's recommendation and ask that you use the readers' panel process to forward the team's recommendation unchanged.

Sincerely,



Michael Aiken  
Chancellor

cc: President James J. Stukel