

Assurance Argument
Illinois State University - IL

Review date: 10/28/2024

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

Illinois State University's practices, policies, and regulations reflect a commitment to ethical and responsible conduct. The University works to ensure its students, faculty, and staff have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and understand what it means to operate ethically and with integrity. Illinois State strives for transparency in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions, establishing and following policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Illinois State's Governing Document of the Board and Trustees and University Policies and Procedures (UPP) serve as the guiding framework from which Illinois State operates. The *Governing Document* outlines the Board of Trustees' structure and role as well as Illinois State's administrative structure, and it provides guidance to the University's response to state and federal laws and regulations. It also grants the UPP's development and implementation to administration, faculty, and staff. The University's Office of General Counsel monitors the *Governing Document* and UPP and provides support when revisions are needed. Compliance with the UPP is the responsibility of every Illinois State student and employee.

Illinois State University operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

[2.A.1]

As outlined in 1.A.1, Illinois State University's operations are guided by the mission statement that is developed and adopted in accordance with shared governance processes. The mission statement is a foundational element of the strategic plan that is regularly reviewed by campus leadership and shared governance groups. The Strategic Planning Task Force folded the mission statement review into its overall strategic planning process when developing *Excellence by Design*. The task force revised the mission statement based on feedback from campus partners

and tailored its form to industry best practices. Its most recent approval by the Academic Senate was in February 2024 and by the Board of Trustees in May 2024.

As a public university, Illinois State University is subject to all state and federal laws. The Board of Trustees' composition, powers, and duties are defined in State of Illinois statute. Its *Governing Document* sets forth policies for performance of its functions and delegation of certain responsibilities to the president. That document, which includes Governing Statutes, Bylaws, and Policies and UPP, provides a framework and guidance for university administration and employees and establishes standards of integrity and ethical behavior.

Additionally, the *Illinois State University Constitution* sets forth the University's governing structure and the rights and responsibilities of each university stakeholder while addressing the actions of students, faculty, administrators, the Academic Senate, and the Campus Communication Committee. The Board of Trustees approved the current version on October 20, 2017.

Faculty elected by their colleagues make up the Academic Senate, the primary governing body of Illinois State. Students, administrators, and staff also serve on the Academic Senate and its 10 standing committees. The Faculty Caucus, one such committee, oversees matters related solely to faculty. The Senate and its standing committees also oversee the work of 14 standing external committees that include non-senators. The *Bylaws of the Academic Senate of Illinois State University* guide its proceedings and actions and have been revised over 10 times since the 2015 HLC review to better address university trends, issues, and initiatives (e.g., establishment of a Textbook Affordability Committee).

A memorandum of understanding dated January 1999 clarifies the respective roles of the Board of Trustees and the Academic Senate. The Board of Trustees has ultimate legal authority regarding university matters but defers to faculty in matters of academics, faculty affairs, and educational issues related to student life. If the board chooses to modify or reject any formal Academic Senate recommendation, the president is to communicate the reasons to the Senate.

[2.A.2]

Policies and procedures have been adopted at the state and university levels to guide actions of Illinois State trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff in comporting themselves ethically and with integrity. All of these policies and procedures are available to the public and campus via the policy website. Illinois State community members are expected to conduct themselves with the highest standard of integrity and ethics within all financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary operations.

The University Compliance Program cultivates compliance awareness and encourages the University community to conduct business with the highest standards of honesty and integrity. The program coordinates, monitors, and, when possible, enhances the ability of Illinois State to meet its compliance responsibilities. Program components include goals, a compliance policy adopted by the Academic Senate, a network of 35 compliance-managing units, and a process for university community members to report compliance concerns. The Compliance Program is led

by the Office of General Counsel, which serves as Illinois State's legal adviser in matters concerning internal and external constituencies, and Internal Audit/Ethics. Additional leadership is provided by the Information Security Office and the Office of Risk Management.

Financial functions are guided by state and federal regulations, Illinois Board of Higher Education policies, the *Governing Document of the Board and Trustees*, and UPP. The vice president for Finance and Planning ensures the institution's fiscal and financial integrity by establishing and monitoring internal budget and control policies, managing the external audit, establishing investment strategies, and managing the University's credit ratings. Finance and Planning includes the Budget Office, University Comptroller, and Human Resources.

General Fiscal Policies, which enhance the integrity of Illinois State's fiscal operations, include budget management, receipt and disbursement of all university funds, budget officers, expenditure/contract authority, and internal control and internal auditing. Budget Office policies include operating budget, budget transfers and adjustments, and position funding changes.

All purchases must be made in accordance with the *Governing Document of the Board and Trustees*, UPP 7.3, Illinois Procurement Code (30 ILCS 500), and Chief Procurement Officer for Higher Education rules. The Purchasing Office leverages technology to streamline purchasing processes while ensuring appropriate regulations have been followed. University policies outline specific levels of approval required and procedures to be followed based on the purchase type and amount. These procedures ensure that procurement processes are completed in an ethical and timely manner.

The Property Control Department controls the University's fixed assets in accordance with Title 44: Government, Contracts, Procurement and Property Management. Subtitle D: Property Management; Part 5010: Marking, Inventory, Transfer and Disposal of State-owned Tangible Personal Property. Fixed assets are defined based on criteria developed in the State Property Control Act (30ILCS 605) and adhere to Illinois Department of Central Management Services regulations. Property control procedures are outlined in the UPP. Some of the department's functions include establishing and maintaining asset inventory records, maintaining tagging systems and a regularly updated equipment database (over \$500), conducting annual equipment inventories, reporting to the state, and managing surplus equipment.

The Office of Internal Auditing provides independent, objective assurance and consulting activities that add value to and improve university operations. The office brings a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes and to improve outcomes. While this office reports administratively to the president, it has a direct reporting line to the Board of Trustees to ensure independence and proper consideration of audit findings and recommendations. Internal Auditing, established in the Internal Audit Charter, has authority to have full, free, and unrestricted access to all university information and personnel to perform audit activities. It conducts reviews of campus unit operations based on a presidentially-approved schedule. Internal audits help units determine whether they have appropriate and effective internal controls to ensure the integrity of operations, and the resulting reports are distributed to audited units' and Illinois State's management. Senior leadership also receives an *Internal Audit Annual Report*, which provides a

summary of the fiscal year's internal audit activity. Internal Audit presents annually to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees, which provides general oversight of internal and external auditing functions. Those functions include reviewing annual audit plans, internal audit summaries, and external audit findings. Audit Committee Reports are part of the Board of Trustees' meetings and are included on its agenda.

State of Illinois Office of the Auditor General External annually commissions audits of university finances and compliance with state and federal regulations. The Legislative Audit Commission, along with university administrators and trustees, reviews those external audit reports. Each year, the commission reviews all state agencies' audits and calls before it representatives of agencies with significant audit findings. Illinois State has not been called to appear before the commission in the last decade.

Illinois State's investment policy is referenced and disclosed annually in the *Financial Statement* notes. *Investment Reports* are posted monthly on the Cash Management website. The University's Investment Committee meets quarterly to review investment activity. Illinois State has received continued assurance of its strong fiscal position through its bond ratings from S&P Global Ratings and Moody's Investors Services, which upgraded the University's issuer and Auxiliary Facilities System (AFS) bond ratings from Baa2 to Baa1. S&P Global Ratings affirmed Illinois State's already solid A- rating with a positive outlook on bonds issued for the University by the Board of Trustees in March 2023. The rating is based on Illinois State's continued strong enrollment and financial health.

Two university policies address academic integrity in research, scholarship, and creative expression. Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities sets forth procedures for fact-finding and adjudication of alleged research and scholarly activity misconduct by administrators, faculty, students, and staff. Significant Interest Disclosure addresses financial conflicts of interest in relationship to sponsored projects involving research, education, and university service. Additionally, certain employees must disclose Statement of Economic Interests, Secondary/Outside Employment, and Financial Conflict of Interest related to research.

The associate vice president for research and graduate studies ensures compliance with policies, and the Institutional Review Board protects the rights and welfare of human subjects participating in research investigations. Other policies related to integrity, efficacy, and safety in research and scholarly activities include Biosafety, Classified Research, Security and Confidentiality of Data and Information, Hazardous Waste, and Radiation Safety. The Intellectual Property Policy governs the ownership of inventions, discoveries, copyrights, and other creative works resulting from university employees' activities.

The Code of Ethics, Code of Ethics: Professional Relationships, and the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act set forth standards for the professional conduct of executive officers, faculty, staff, and any other individuals employed by or acting as agents of Illinois State.

The Equal Opportunity/Non-discrimination Statement and Policy, Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy, and supplemental policies and procedures referenced in the Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination Policy address the fair treatment of all personnel, regardless

of protected class. A Protection of Minors Policy ensures a safe and secure environment when faculty, staff, and students have direct contact with minors while involved in university-related activities. In 2018, the president appointed a task force to examine best practices in scheduling and using university facilities after First Amendment concerns arose at some universities. The task force works with Academic Senate on policy changes as areas of concern are identified. Additional institutional policies related to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), anti-nepotism, and Title IX include Student Records, Policy on Security of Information Technology Resources and Systems, Family Relationships, Amorous Relations in a University Setting, and Americans with Disabilities Act Policy have been addressed.

The University Ethics Office (Ethics), Office of Internal Audit, and the OEOA collaborate with several other units to educate the campus community on university policy and, as applicable, to investigate and resolve policy violations. These units, and others across campus, provide general support and guidance related to ethics and integrity. The campus community can file concerns or complaints, anonymously if preferred, through EthicsPoint ISU system. Managed by Ethics and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access, the reporting system is available on Illinois State's Safe Redbird App. Illinois State encourages employees to report concerns, and the Whistleblower Policy protects employees who, in good faith, report alleged wrongful conduct or violations of university policies, laws, regulations, or rules.

The University ethics officer oversees compliance with the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act and, in collaboration with the Illinois Office of the Executive Inspector General, investigates university employees' alleged violations of the Act and policy. Allegations are reviewed and investigated as appropriate, and disciplinary action is taken when necessary.

Illinois State has ongoing mandatory compliance training for all employees, including student workers. Ethics training includes Harassment and Discrimination and Crime and Incident Reporting Training. The University ethics officer monitors the annual Ethics Training completion data. OEOA manages annual Mandatory Reporting Training completion data (DCFS Training and Crime and Incident Reporting Training). Illinois State reports employee Ethics Training completion data to the state.

OEOA's primary areas of responsibility include oversight and enforcement of Illinois State's programs aimed at preventing, detecting, and responding to violations of policy as well as state and federal harassment and discrimination laws and statutes. OEOA is responsible for internal investigations relating to allegations of violations of the Anti-harassment and Non-discrimination policy; oversight of ADA policies and procedures; coordination of the University's affirmative action plan to integrate core values of diversity and equity into all aspects of recruitment, screening, and selection of qualified job applicants; advising on issues related to fostering an inclusive environment; and providing faculty, staff, students, and administrators with educational training and diversity resources.

Illinois State's policy, along with supplemental Human Resources training documents and a search committee procedure or handbook on Human Resources webpage, document hiring qualifications and processes for faculty and staff. Faculty Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) Policies describe policies and procedures related to tenure-line faculty

performance, including provisions for faculty members' equitable treatment. Faculty committees have done extensive work since the 2015 accreditation review to revise ASPT policies, resulting in 2017, 2019, and 2023 editions. Major revisions include four new articles regarding disciplinary actions (sanctions, suspensions, and dismissals) and a provision for an ongoing study of equity in the ASPT system. The Faculty Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance Committee (AFEGC) monitors issues regarding academic freedom and ethics issues not subject to OEOA oversight. The Academic Senate extensively updated policies related to that committee in 2018.

Human Resources provides university employees access to various UPP, including employee resources for faculty/staff, Faculty Handbook, Faculty Associate Handbook (including grievances), Graduate Assistant Handbook (grievances included), Student Handbook (Code of Student Conduct), Student-Athlete Handbook, and Lab School handbooks for Metcalf School and University High School.

Illinois State policies and procedures ensure that employees are treated fairly and ethically in their employment and with respect to their activities through grievances. Policies for civil service and Administrative/Professional employees, union contracts, and web resources document grievance resources. The ASPT policy and the Academic Freedom, Ethics and Grievance policy address academic employees.

Sources

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- 2.A.2.ProtectionMinors
- 2.A.2.PurchasingAndAccountsPayable
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- 2.A.2.ReportingComplianceConcerns
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- 2.A.2.Whistleblower
- 2.BoTGoverningDocument
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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

The University strives to provide complete, accurate information to the public. The Illinois State homepage and second-tier pages provide information intended primarily for the public and prospective students. The University also utilizes an A-Z directory and a search engine on its website to support ease of access to specific pages and information. Linked from the second-tier About page is the Consumer Guide, which complies with the Higher Education Act and is updated biannually. The guide consolidates consumer information from multiple locations on the University website. Information for current students, faculty, and staff members is provided through the password-protected enterprise portal (My.IllinoisState.edu) and is customized based on each user's status, discipline, courses, unit, and interests.

[2.B.1]

Academic program information is accessed from the homepage and from the second-tier Academics page of Illinois State's website. Information is provided about undergraduate majors, minors, and graduate programs, including sample plans of study. The website also outlines the General Education, Honors, and study abroad programs. Complete information about program admission and graduation requirements is available in the University Catalog, linked from the footer of all first- and second-tier university website pages. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (formerly University Curriculum Committee) and Graduate Curriculum Committee processes ensure that the catalog remains accurate and up-to-date. The accuracy of this information is confirmed at multiple levels, starting with the academic units, with final approval made by the associate vice president for undergraduate education and the Graduate School director for graduate programs.

Information about admission requirements and processes can be accessed from the Admissions section of Illinois State's website, linked at the top of the homepage, all second-tier pages, and many lower-tier pages. The Admissions landing page includes links to specialized admissions information for entering freshmen, transfer students, graduate students, international students, out-of-state students, military veterans, returning students, home-schooled students, undocumented students, visiting and non-degree seeking students, and students seeking a second bachelor's degree. Admission requirements are also set forth in the University Catalog. Illinois

State audits all degree sequences' academic requirements. Policy 2.1.9 lists baccalaureate degree graduation requirements.

Illinois State maintains a complete list of faculty members and their credentials on the Provost's Office website. The Human Resources Office ensures that applicants meet all minimum requirements, pass background checks, and meet state requirements for interacting with minors articulated in UPP 3.1.30 and 1.19. Since 2015, Illinois State has developed a database-driven platform to compile, archive, and standardize the presentation of faculty information on the University website.

Illinois State addresses concerns regarding the cost of attending college through clear communication about expected costs and student financial supports like loans, scholarships, tuition waivers, grants, graduate assistantships, and employment (e.g., Cost of Attendance, Net Price Calculator). Tuition rates are approved by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the president and members of the cabinet. Pursuant to legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly in 2003 and amended in 2010, tuition and fee rates applicable to incoming undergraduate students are fixed for four years, allowing for students' and families' long-term financial planning. Truth in Tuition Public Act governs costs to attend Illinois State University. Some majors qualify for additional time based on program length.

In fiscal 2023, 81% of degree seeking students at Illinois State were awarded \$162 million in grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, the state government, or the institution. The average grant and scholarship aid per student was \$11,173. The institution annually employs approximately 6,000 students.

Governing structure and each university stakeholder's rights and responsibilities are set forth in the Illinois State University Constitution and on the website's Shared Governance and Administration page. Board of Trustees meetings are announced and conducted in compliance with the (Illinois) Open Meetings Act.

Information regarding Illinois State's Higher Learning Commission accreditation is available on the Accreditation website page (linked from the About page). The Accreditation page has an HLC logo that links to a current Statement of Affiliation Status for the institution as well as information about specialized accreditation.

[2.B.2]

Illinois State University is committed to the creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge through scholarship, research, and creative expression. The Office of Student Research embodies the University's first core value of Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship through its activities that facilitate, support, and highlight student research and creative innovation. Most undergraduate student research experiences are cocurricular or are part of experiential learning and are documented through course credit. Many creative activity experiences are part of the curriculum. In some disciplines, students present and publish outcomes of their work at local, regional, national, and international professional conferences and in discipline journals. Each year student research and creative activities are highlighted

through events like public concerts, performances, exhibitions, the Three-Minute Thesis competition, the University Research Symposium, Honor Societies (e.g., Phi Sigma and Phi Alpha Theta), and the Image of Research contest. Milner Library faculty and staff have created the digital online open-access archive ISU ReD to collect and provide access to the scholarly and creative work of faculty, staff, and students.

Illinois State's many community service and civic engagement opportunities are described in 3.B.3. Illinois State has received numerous honors for its integration of community service, service learning, and civic engagement into the curriculum. The University earned the American Association of State Colleges and Universities 2021 Excellence and Innovation Award for Civic Learning and Community Engagement. The Center for Civic Engagement embodies the University's commitment to community engagement, coordinating and documenting efforts on campus with the local community. In 2022, the center launched the Civic Engagement Fellowship to support its mission. The Stevenson Center provides students with opportunities to engage in public service and global understanding. AmeriCorps has declared Illinois State a School of National Service.

WGLT-FM, with call letters reflecting Illinois State's motto "We Gladly Learn and Teach," has operated as a radio station and public service of Illinois State University since 1966. WGLT became a National Public Radio (NPR) member in 1979 and has been affiliated with the School of Communication since 1997. In 2013, the station transitioned to primarily news and information. WGLT has a widespread community impact, reaching nearly 25,000 listeners weekly and 100,000 website users monthly.

Illinois State also provides several experiential learning opportunities that support students' educational experiences, including a broad range of internship programs. Additional opportunities include clinical experiences, themed living-learning communities, study abroad, and others offered through the Honors Program. For many academic programs, internships or related experiential learning experiences are required in the degree sequence. While these experiences vary in length, the service and outcomes are consistent and of high impact. For instance, within the School of Communication, internships are an integral part of the student experience, with more than 400 internships completed each year. Majors in agriculture who are studying horticulture and landscape management, as well as all other students, have access to the 23-acre Horticulture Center, where they can study and evaluate the importance of native prairie plants, gain experience in plant raising, and engage in faculty-mentored research. Housed within the School of Kinesiology and Recreation (KNR), the SMART Clinic provides advanced preventative, evaluative, and rehabilitative care to students and serves as a clinical rotation site and experiential learning opportunity for athletic training students.

The University has campus centers that create future entrepreneurs and individuals who will focus on improving economic development. The Stevenson Center has a renowned Applied Community and Economic Development fellow program, and the George R. and Martha Means Center for Entrepreneurial Studies provides a student startup competition and accelerator program to encourage new business creation and growth. Illinois State is working with the Illinois Innovation Network to create an innovation hub that is centered on the theme of Socio-Scientific Sustainability. Building on a brief collaboration with UNITE, a training, consulting,

and technology company, Illinois State created a Corporate and Foundation Relations Council to support corporate engagement and community partnerships such as the Connected Communities Initiative Program with OSF HealthCare. That program will bring together clinicians, faculty, and students to focus on health care ecosystem innovations.

Sources

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- 2.B.2.ClinicalExperiences
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- 2.B.2.Collaboratory
- 2.B.2.CommunicationsInternships
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- 2.B.2.ConnectedCommunities
- 2.B.2.Exhibitions
- 2.B.2.HorticultureCenter
- 2.B.2.ImageofResearchContest
- 2.B.2.InnovationHub
- 2.B.2.InternshipsPrograms
- 2.B.2.ISUReD
- 2.B.2.LivingLearningCommunities
- 2.B.2.MeansCenter
- 2.B.2.OfficeStudentResearch
- 2.B.2.Performances
- 2.B.2.PhiAlphTheta
- 2.B.2.PhiSigma
- 2.B.2.ResearchInformation
- 2.B.2.ResearchSymposium
- 2.B.2.SMARTClinic
- 2.B.2.StevensonCenter
- 2.B.2.StudentResearchPresentations
- 2.B.2.StudyAbroadExperiences
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- 2.B.2.UGResearchExperiences
- 2.B.2.UniversityResearchSymposium
- 2.B.2.WGLT
- 2.B.ConsumerGuide
- 2.B.ISUHomepage

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

Illinois State University is governed by a Board of Trustees, established pursuant to Illinois state statutes codified at 110 ILCS 675. Statutes provide for a Board consisting of seven voting members residing in the state and appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Illinois Senate. One voting student member is chosen by campus-wide student election. No more than four of the seven gubernatorial appointees may be affiliated with the same political party.

State statutes set forth the Board's powers and duties, including those to adopt rules, regulations, and bylaws. Together, the state statutes, the Board of Trustees Governing Document, and the Illinois State University Constitution guide a university responsible to the residents of Illinois through its governor and General Assembly, yet keep it sufficiently autonomous to make independent decisions in its best interests.

[2.C.1]

Initial training and continuing education are in place for the Board of Trustees. Incoming Board members participate in onboarding orientations in which they learn about the University and Board member responsibilities. They also meet one-on-one with upper-level leadership to gain insight into specific university programming and initiatives. Illinois State also offers a Trustee-in-Residence experience each semester, with trustees participating in a daylong immersive professional development program coordinated by a campus area of their choosing (e.g., colleges, divisions, Athletics). The Board follows required professional development leadership training guidelines, as outlined by the Illinois General Assembly, and the Open Meetings Act (OMA) Electronic Training requirement; members also attend the Association of Governing Boards Training at the National Conference on Trusteeship.

[2.C.2]

The Governing Document articulates the broad values and principles through which the Board is to govern, characterizing the Board as “a steward for society” that “seeks to use the institution’s resources wisely” and emphasizing the importance of institutional planning. Consistent with that emphasis, the Board adopts a five-year strategic plan that articulates the institution’s vision, mission, core values, strategic directions, objectives, and actions. Board actions, documented in meeting agendas and minutes, demonstrate commitment to preserving and enhancing Illinois State. The Board monitors the strategic plan’s implementation through a review of annual progress reports and annually approves a five-year rolling Academic Plan, which includes a five-year strategic plan and annual objectives for each college. The Board authorizes applications to the state for new academic programs, annually adopts an operating budget, and adopts plans that address specific aspects of university operations (e.g., the Master Plan for facilities).

[2.C.3]

Issues that come before the Board of Trustees are typically vetted through appropriate communities of interest, as provided for in university governing documents. As the institution’s “primary governing body”, the Academic Senate plays a key role in this vetting process. Academic Senate meetings provide a venue for public discourse by its members, who represent faculty, staff, and students.

To facilitate ongoing communication among the Board, faculty, staff, and students, the Governing Document provides for a Campus Communication Committee consisting of representatives from the Academic Senate, Administrative/Professional Council, Civil Service Council, and Student Government Association. That committee’s input is presented near the beginning of each regular Board of Trustees meeting. The Board of Trustees’ primary external constituency consists of Illinois residents. University officials are in frequent contact with Illinois General Assembly members and staff of executive departments of the State on matters pertaining to budgets and higher education legislation.

[2.C.4]

Board independence from undue influence is promoted through statutory restrictions and the Governing Document’s ethics statement, which minimize conflicts of interest and guide Board members, should conflicts arise. State statutes mandate that trustees serve without compensation, not be employed in or appointed to any office or place under the Board’s authority, not have interest in any contract made by the Board, and not be a state employee. The document provides that trustees’ activities “shall be consistent with the principle that there shall be no conflict between the private interests of a public official or employee and his/her official duties,” along with guidelines for trustees’ ethical conduct. The student member of the Board is selected through a student election, removed from governor and Illinois General Assembly influence.

[2.C.5]

State statutes empower the Board to employ a president and all administrators, faculty, and

support staff necessary to properly manage the institution. Through *Governing Document* provisions, the Board designates the president as the institution's chief executive officer responsible for day-to-day management and administration and recognizes the faculty as having primary responsibility for academic matters. The *Governing Document* authorizes the president to hire and terminate employees (delegated to campus constituencies through established processes); make final promotion, tenure, and sabbatical determinations; execute legal instruments within Board-approved budget expenditures; and approve certain capital projects, leases, and licenses.

Sources

- 2.C.1.BOTLeadershipTraining
- 2.C.1.GoverningBoardTraining
- 2.C.1.OpenMeetingsAct
- 2.C.1.TrusteeInResidenceScheduleJones
- 2.C.2.BOTApprovesNewAcademicPrograms
- 2.C.2.BOTGoverningDocument
- 2.C.2.BOTMeetingMaterials
- 2.C.2.ECEAnnualProgressReports
- 2.C.2.NewAcademicPrograms
- 2.C.2.OperatingBudgets
- 2.C.2.PlansUniversityOperations
- 2.C.2.SampleOperationalAuthorizations
- 2.C.2.StrategicPlanUpdates
- 2.C.3.AcademicSenate
- 2.C.3.AcademicSenateCommittees
- 2.C.3.BOTMeeting
- 2.C.4.BOTGoverningDocument
- 2.C.4.BOTStateStatute
- 2.C.5.AcademicSenate
- 2.C.5.Administrators
- 2.C.5.CivilServiceCouncil
- 2.C.BOTMembership
- 2.C.BOTStatutes
- 2.C.ILCS
- 2.C.ISUConstitution

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Policies and their enforcement demonstrate the University's commitment to academic freedom, which is defined by the American Association of University Professors (1940 policy with 1970 interpretive comments). The Academic Freedom; Tenure; Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT); and Shared Governance policies make explicit the right of all Illinois State employees to participate in shared governance and to speak on matters related to the University's functioning without fear of discipline.

The primary means of enforcing academic freedom policies are the Faculty Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance policy and the ASPT policy. The policies provide for the Faculty Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance Committee (AFEGC) to review faculty complaints about alleged violations of academic freedom and the code of ethics violations, including allegations that violations of those policies affected appointment, promotion, tenure, evaluation, disciplinary, or dismissal decisions. AFEGC consists of 39 faculty members elected by their peers. From 2014-15 through 2022-23, AFEGC panels heard 34 cases. Most disagreements involving faculty members are settled through mediation options rather than heard and decided by panels.

The University's strategic plan, university policies, and their enforcement demonstrate Illinois State's commitment to freedom of expression and pursuit of truth. The Core Values of Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship; Individualized Attention; Equity, Diversity, Access, and Belonging; Collaboration; Community and Civic Engagement; Respect, and; Integrity establish a culture committed to these freedoms. The parent policy related to these matters is the Code of Ethics, which establishes standards of professional conduct for administrators, faculty, staff, and anyone else acting as an agent of the University. The code identifies academic freedom, intellectual honesty, and personal integrity as core values.

Illinois State demonstrates its commitment to freedom of expression via policies that establish content-neutral processes regarding space use. Policy 6.1.1 University Facility and Space Use establishes content-neutral procedures to evaluate requests to use university spaces. The University Event Review Committee evaluates all requests using a content-neutral rubric. Policy 6.1.13 Amplification establishes neutral time, place, and manner restrictions on university property use.

Other related university policies include Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activity and Involvement in Political Activities, which expressly permits faculty member involvement in political activities outside the classroom. The Statement on Responsible Conduct of Research acknowledges ethical principles from government agencies, if applicable. Student conduct

expectations are addressed in the Code of Student Conduct, which has been updated since 2019 and is enforced by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities.

Faculty Responsibilities to Students addresses students' free pursuit of learning. As an appendix to the Code of Ethics, it states that faculty members should encourage all students' free pursuit of learning and should exemplify the highest scholarly standards. The *Illinois State University Constitution* establishes students' freedoms of association, inquiry, and expression.

Sources

- 2.D.AcademicFreedomTenure
- 2.D.AmericanAssociationUnivProfessors
- 2.D.ASPT
- 2.D.CodeofEthics
- 2.D.CodeofStudentConduct
- 2.D.FacultyAcademicFreedomPolicy
- 2.D.FacultyPoliticalActivitiesPolicy
- 2.D.FacultyResonsibilitytoStudentsPolicy
- 2.D.FacultyRights
- 2.D.FreedomExpressionPolicies
- 2.D.IntegrityResearchScholarlyActivity
- 2.D.InvolvementinPoliticalActivities
- 2.D.OfficeStudentConductCommunity
- 2.D.Policy6.1.13.Amplification
- 2.D.SharedGovernancePolicy
- 2.D.StatementResponsibleConductResearch
- 2.D.UniversityEventReviewCommittee
- 2.D.UniversityFacilityandSpaceUse

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

With the freedom to express oneself and to pursue truth in teaching and learning comes the responsibility to conduct one's academic pursuits ethically and with integrity. Over several decades, an effective system of oversight and support services unique to the institution has been developed. Through its system of shared governance, Illinois State has adopted policies and procedures and implemented programs and services to promote honesty and integrity in all academic pursuits involving students and faculty, including research, scholarship, and creative activities. This system of oversight and support services is ever-evolving to accommodate changes in the institutional environment, scholarship and scholarly communication, and technology.

[2.E.1]

The *Illinois State University Constitution* sets forth rights and responsibilities of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, including the responsibility to adhere to standards of professional ethics in research, scholarship, and creative activities. Numerous campus policies and programs provide oversight and support services to ensure adherence to those standards.

The Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies is the primary unit responsible for oversight of research, scholarship, and creative activities to ensure their integrity. Within that office, Research Ethics and Compliance oversees responsible conduct of research, human subjects research, vertebrate animal research, and financial conflicts of interest. It also assists with oversight of biosafety and radiation safety.

Research Ethics and Compliance facilitates mandatory training in the responsible conduct of research through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) based at the University of Miami. Online CITI course content covers human research subjects, laboratory animals, export controls, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, responsible conduct of research, export controls, conflicts of interest, and research administration. In addition, the

Environmental Health and Safety unit provides research safety training for principal investigators, staff, and students.

The Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activities policy addresses fabrication of data, plagiarism, abuse of confidentiality, falsification, deliberate violation of regulations, property violations, retaliation, and failure to report observed offenses. Policy oversight is the responsibility of the Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. The associate vice president also monitors compliance with the Significant Interest Disclosure policy, which requires investigators to disclose financial interests that may present a financial conflict of interest in relation to research or scholarly activities supported by external funds.

The Intellectual Property policy addresses protections and incentives to encourage the discovery and development of new knowledge and its transfer for the public benefit. The policy also guides revenue generation for Illinois State and the creators. Patents and copyright oversight is the responsibility of the Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, while trademark oversight is the responsibility of the Vice President for University Advancement. The Classified Research policy provides that Illinois State will not enter into any contract requiring approval of any outside person or agency prior to publication or dissemination of research results, unless the Provost grants an exception in cases where the restrictions are relatively minor and are outweighed by important scholarly, scientific, or educational benefits.

Research involving human subjects, animals, or biohazards must be conducted in compliance with relevant federal and state regulations, as well as policies and procedures adopted by Illinois State. Adherence to policies and procedures for the use of human subjects is monitored by the campus Institutional Review Board (IRB), which reviews approximately 450 research protocols each year. All key personnel on these protocols must complete CITI training. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversees animal use in research and teaching, reviewing 20 protocols each year on average.

Research involving biohazards, including hazardous infectious diseases and recombinant DNA, must adhere to standards adopted by the Institutional Biosafety Committee, overseen by Environmental Health and Safety. That unit also oversees radiation safety, laser safety, and chemical safety in research.

Several university policies guide the financial aspects of research grants and contracts, including time and effort reporting, budget transfers, fringe benefit rates, and others. Illinois State has drafted the Responsible Conduct of Research plan, which incorporates required trainings for key personnel on federally funded research. Numerous other policies cover aspects of research, including data security, export controls, and working with minors.

General ethics policies pertaining to faculty at Illinois State University include the Code of Ethics; the Appointment, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) policy; and the Faculty Academic Freedom, Ethics, and Grievance policy. These policies include procedures for the reporting and review of potential ethical concerns. Illinois State University has also established a Compliance Program to cultivate compliance awareness at the University. A Compliant Hotline

(EthicsPoint) has been implemented in the Ethics Office to allow for the reporting of complaints; the Whistleblower Protection policy applies to any person who files a complaint.

There are many mechanisms for the reporting of potential misconduct. The IRB and IACUC are primarily responsible for enforcement of noncompliance associated with human subjects or vertebrate animal research.

Faculty members are charged with instructing their students and staff in appropriate and ethical research methods. Student research conducted for classes or independent study is subject to the same guidelines as research conducted by faculty. Additional provisions regarding student conduct in research and scholarly practice are outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Investigations of alleged violations of the code are coordinated by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities. Research conducted in the University Laboratory Schools is subject to additional policies. Visiting scholars to Illinois State are provided with additional details regarding ethics and compliance through the Visiting Scholars handbook developed by the Office of International Engagement.

[2.E.2]

Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP), an Academic Affairs unit, has internal procedures to ensure grant submissions and oversight compliance. The RSP outreach coordinator facilitates weekly Research Mobile Office Hours at various sites around campus. Illinois State also publishes the *Redbird Scholar* highlighting research activities. The University Research Council, composed of representatives from across the University, advises RSP and other campus units regarding research policies, procedures, and support. The council representatives provide insights regarding research training and support needs in their units and disseminate information to their colleagues regarding policies and procedures, training opportunities, and support services.

Faculty research support services are numerous and varied, including campus- and college-level services. RSP facilitates a travel award program enabling faculty members to meet with funding agencies or collaborators to discuss prospective research grant applications. RSP also facilitates recognition of faculty research through several awards. Each college offers research grants to its faculty on a competitive basis. Examples of other support includes travel funding, discipline-specific research training, and grants to cover page publication costs.

[2.E.3]

Standards for students' ethical use of information are set forth in the Code of Student Conduct, which defines plagiarism and acts of dishonesty and establishes procedures for addressing alleged instances of them. Standards for ethical and legal use of information technology and procedures for adjudicating alleged violations of them are set forth in the Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources and Systems policy. Students are guided in understanding and abiding by both standards through instruction and coaching at multiple points in their academic program. Even before attending their first course, all incoming students receive information about campus technologies and their ethical use at the summer orientation program.

Using information ethically and legally is proactively addressed with all first-year students in two General Education courses. An ethical communication module includes instruction in ethical standards in decision-making as well as principles associated with being ethical producers and consumers of information. As part of the module, students deliver oral presentations, and their ethical communication practices are evaluated. Two Milner Library webpages focused on ethics are integrated into another module within COM 110. Building on that training, research methods courses required by most academic programs and taken by students in their sophomore or junior year provide discipline-specific instruction on appropriate source paraphrasing and citation. The course instructor and the subject librarian, who works with the program's students and faculty, often team-teach those courses' information use and fluency sessions.

Students presenting their own research at the University Research Symposium must follow research compliance policies and ethical guidelines. The Graduate School and the Office of Student Research provide guidance on ethical conduct through outreach and training materials. Students working on IRB and IACUC protocols must complete CITI training appropriate to their level of participation. The Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs include information about ethical behavior.

[2.E.4]

Policies regarding academic honesty and integrity among faculty members are reviewed in 2.E.1.

The Code of Student Conduct addresses student honesty and integrity. Enforcement of the code is the responsibility of the Office of Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities. Alleged violations of academic honesty and integrity provisions are first handled at the course and department levels. Cases not resolved there are referred to Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities, which facilitates the student disciplinary process. Cases not successfully mediated by that unit are heard and decided by the University Hearing Panel, which is composed of students, faculty, and staff. The panel may require students deemed in violation of the student code to complete an educational activity or community service project. The panel may also issue sanctions, including probation, suspension, or dismissal, and its decisions may be appealed to the University Appeals Board.

Sources

- 2.E.1.ASPTPolicy
- 2.E.1.BiosafetyRadiationSafety
- 2.E.1.CITITraining
- 2.E.1.ClassifiedResearch
- 2.E.1.CodeofEthics
- 2.E.1.ComplaintHotline
- 2.E.1.ComplianceProgram
- 2.E.1.DataSecurity
- 2.E.1.EnvironmentalHealthSafety

- 2.E.1.ExportControls
- 2.E.1.FacultyGrievanceProgram
- 2.E.1.GrantContracts
- 2.E.1.GrantEffortReporting
- 2.E.1.GrantFringeBenefitsRates
- 2.E.1.GrantOthers
- 2.E.1.HealthInsurancePortability
- 2.E.1.HumanSubjects
- 2.E.1.IACUC
- 2.E.1.IntegrityResearchScholarly
- 2.E.1.IntellectualPropertyPolicy
- 2.E.1.IRB
- 2.E.1.ResearchChemical
- 2.E.1.ResearchEnvironmentalHealthSafety
- 2.E.1.ResearchInstitutionalBiosafety
- 2.E.1.ResearchLaser
- 2.E.1.ResearchStaff
- 2.E.1.SignificantInterestDisclosure
- 2.E.1.UniversityLabSchools
- 2.E.1.VisitingScholarHandbook
- 2.E.1.WhistleblowerProtection
- 2.E.2.CodeofStudentConduct
- 2.E.2.FacultyResearchSupport
- 2.E.2.RedbirdScholar
- 2.E.2.ResearchMobileOffice
- 2.E.2.ResearchSponsoredPrograms
- 2.E.2.RSPAwardsAndRecognition
- 2.E.2.UniversityResearchCouncil
- 2.E.3.CITITraining
- 2.E.3.GradSchool
- 2.E.3.InformationTechPolicy
- 2.E.3.ISUGradCatalog
- 2.E.3.ISUUndergraduateCatalog
- 2.E.3.MilnerLibraryEthicsGuides
- 2.E.3.OfficeStudentResearch
- 2.E.3.ResearchSymposium
- 2.E.4.UniversityHearingPanel

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

Integrity is a Core Value articulated in the institutional strategic plan. Fostering an environment characterized by ethical and responsible conduct is an ongoing effort and the shared responsibility of all members of the community. Illinois State expects board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students to act with integrity and provides guidance documents outlining responsible behavior and activities.

The evidence provided in this Criterion documents Illinois State's commitment to integrity and its efforts to regularly update policies and processes related to promoting appropriate behavior on behalf of all members of the Illinois State community. In support of these efforts, the University Compliance Program reviews, coordinates, monitors, and, when possible, enhances Illinois State's ability to meet its compliance responsibilities.

Sources

- 2.E.ISUCompliance