



Communicating Our Identity Part I: Departmental Distinctiveness and Excellence at Illinois State University

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of “Communicating Our Identity” is to help your department do the most effective job possible in 1) creating or enhancing its own unique identity by identifying specific programmatic strengths; and 2) communicating that identity as effectively as possible via departmental Web sites, brochures, newsletters, etc. These strategies can be used to enhance your department’s recruitment efforts.

“Communicating Our Identity” is based on *Educating Illinois: An Action Plan for Distinctiveness & Excellence at Illinois State University. Educating Illinois 2003-2010* builds on the values-based commitments and existing strengths and traditions of Illinois State University to suggest a vision for the future defined and endorsed by the campus community. The foundations of institutional prestige, academic rigor, and pride result from high-achieving, motivated students and accomplished faculty and staff at Illinois’ first public university.

The action plan rests on five core institutional values:

Individualized Attention: Providing the supportive environment characteristic of a small college through an innovative General Education program, strong student-faculty-staff connections, superior student services, and a focus on each student as an individual, with unique educational needs and potential. Illinois State is a campus dedicated to placing the learner at the center of teaching and scholarship.

Public Opportunity: Assuring students access to the educational, research, and service opportunities characteristic of a large university, including a wide range of high-quality programs, faculty mentors who are scholars and creative artists of repute in their disciplines, and the support of outstanding facilities, technologies, and library resources.

Active Pursuit of Learning and Scholarship: Working with students as partners in their educational development inside and outside of the classroom, so that students come to appreciate learning as an active and lifelong process; contributing new knowledge through research, creative artistry, and other forms of individual scholarship in which all students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to participate.

Diversity: Encouraging community and an informed respect for differences among students, faculty, and staff by fostering an inclusive environment characterized by ethical behavior and social justice that prepares students to be fully engaged participants in a global society; a diverse faculty and staff mentoring a diverse student population, enhancing pedagogical, research, and service functions.

Innovation: Supporting disciplinary excellence and personal growth of students, faculty, and staff through knowledge development and innovative applications in undergraduate and graduate study, pedagogy, research, creative activities, and public service.

Educating Illinois is a university-wide document that seeks to define and communicate Illinois State’s identity. It will position the institution to attract a diverse, high-achieving student body. Similarly, this departmental distinctiveness exercise will help your department define and communicate its unique strengths.

