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[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Local](#) > Strobel will chair UI presidential search

Strobel will chair UI presidential search

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An Urbana professor and university trustee will co-chair the nationwide search for a successor to President Robert Easter.

A trustee who chaired the last presidential search at the University of Illinois and a professor who led the group that led to the hiring of the Urbana chancellor will lead the nationwide search for a successor to President Robert Easter, who plans to retire in 2015.

Trustee Pamela Strobel, who received bachelor's and law degrees from the UI's Urbana campus, and Douglas Beck, professor of physics at Urbana, will co-chair the 19-member search committee appointed at a special board meeting Friday.

Strobel chaired the committee that recommended the 2010 hiring of Michael Hogan from the University of Connecticut.

Beck chaired the chancellor's search committee that led to the hiring of Phyllis Wise in 2011.

The committee will work with an outside search consultant to identify and screen candidates to replace Easter, whose term ends on June 30, 2015. A list of eight to 10 finalists will then be presented to the board, which hopes to name a new president by January to allow a smooth transition before Easter leaves office.

Members include three trustees; eight faculty members from the UI's three campuses; a student from each campus; a representative from the UI Alumni Association and one from the UI Foundation; an administrative officer; an academic professional; and a civil service representative.

The trustees are: Strobel, trustee since 2009 and former executive vice president of Exelon Corp.; Ricardo Estrada, trustee since 2011 who received his MBA from the Chicago campus and is now president and chief executive officer of Metropolitan Family



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Photo by: The News-Gazette
Pamela B. Strobel during the University of Illinois Board of Trustees meeting in the Illini Union in Urbana on Thursday, March 15, 2012.

Services in Chicago; and James Montgomery, trustee since 2007 who received his bachelor's and law degrees from the Urbana campus and is now a partner at the law firm of James D. Montgomery and Associates Ltd., Chicago.

Besides Beck, faculty members are Nicholas Burbules, professor of educational policy studies in Urbana; Roy Campbell, professor of computer science in Urbana; Sharon Graf, professor of ethnomusicology in Springfield; Barbara Ransby, professor of African-American studies and of gender and women's studies in Chicago; Jorge Villegas, professor of business administration in Springfield; William Walden, professor of microbiology and immunology in Chicago; and Julie Zerwic, professor of biobehavioral health science in Chicago.

Representing students are Jen Phillis, doctoral candidate in English in Chicago; Xavier R. Ramirez, senior in social work and Latino/a studies in Urbana; and Maya Rudder, sophomore in biology in Springfield.

Other members are Susan Koch, chancellor and vice president of the Springfield campus; Konstantinos Yfantis, manager of teaching and learning services with Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services (CITES) in Urbana; Darlene Kendall, financial analyst and planner with the physical plant on the Chicago campus; Stephen Van Arsdell, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Urbana and is retired senior partner of Deloitte and Touche LLP; and James Benson, former chair and life director of the UI Foundation Board of Directors, who earned his bachelor's degree from Urbana.