

Board Meeting
July 21, 2011

CLOSE INSTITUTE OF AVIATION AND ELIMINATE THE BACHELOR OF
SCIENCE IN AVIATION HUMAN FACTORS AND THE PROFESSIONAL PILOT
CURRICULUM, URBANA

Action: Close Institute of Aviation and Eliminate the Bachelor of Science in
Aviation Human Factors and the Professional Pilot Curriculum

Funding: No New Funding Required

The Interim Vice President, University of Illinois, and Interim Chancellor,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has recommended the closure of the Institute
of Aviation and the elimination of undergraduate academic programs, including the
Bachelor of Science in Aviation Human Factors and the Professional Pilot Curriculum.

The campus is proud of the Institute of Aviation's history and of the
contributions its employees, students, and alumni have made to the field of aviation and
to our University. Although the Institute degree programs were added relatively recently,
the campus has provided flight training since the mid-1940s. The Bachelor of Science in
Aviation Human Factors was added to the Institute in 1999, and the Masters of Science in
Human Factors was created in 2003. Notwithstanding this proposal to discontinue the
degree programs and to close the Institute, the campus is actively investigating ways to
keep flight training opportunities available for its students. Specifically, the campus is
engaged in ongoing conversations with other institutions of higher education regarding
how to support their possible interest in creating local flight training programs.

The campus has long examined how to support the Institute, its faculty, and students, while honoring our commitment to the broader student body, campus community, and the public. The campus has examined the Institute of Aviation within the context of our overall land grant mission and the changing financial picture of this University. Because of its high cost, declining enrollments, adverse impact on the campus academic profile, and the relative weakness of the Institute's connection to the central missions of the campus, it is in the best interests of the campus to close the Institute of Aviation and discontinue its undergraduate academic programs.

The Institute of Aviation is uniquely situated as being the smallest degree-granting unit and the academic unit with the highest cost-to-educate per undergraduate instructional unit on the Urbana campus. Using the methodology created by the Illinois Board of Higher Education to determine instructional costs, the Institute's instructional cost ratio of approximately \$1,200 per undergraduate instructional unit is nearly four times the campus average. Over the past decade, the Institute has seen a trend in declining applications and enrollments that corresponds to the nation-wide declining interest in aviation since 2001. Between 2002 and 2010, the Institute has seen decreases of 63 percent in applications and 52 percent in enrollment, enrolling only 34 freshmen in 2010.

Using the two key academic metrics of quality that the Board of Trustees has determined should be used to evaluate admissions, ACT score and high school rank, the Institute's freshman class has consistently been the lowest of any undergraduate-admitting unit. The academic profile of the Institute's freshman class improved

noticeably when its admissions target was reduced in 2008, but even with an enrollment target reduced to 30 students the Institute still retains its position as the admitting unit with the lowest profile.

Pursuant to Article VIII of the University *Statutes*, the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Academic Senate was sought regarding this proposal. On the Urbana campus, the Academic Senate delegates substantive review of such proposals to its Educational Policy Committee and Standing Rules of the Senate require that a faculty vote and public hearing occur when a proposal seeks the closure of an academic unit. The faculty vote (which included former faculty transferred to new tenure homes in August 2010, the President, Vice President/Chancellor, Provost, and the Director of the Institute) was as follows: two in favor of closing the Institute, four against closure, and three abstentions. The Educational Policy Committee received and considered public comment and feedback in the form of written submissions and at a public hearing on March 14, 2011. The Educational Policy Committee evaluated this matter at five meetings over the course of the 2011 Spring Semester.

After extensively reviewing the proposals, including review and debate of information submitted by the administration, the Institute, and the public, the Educational Policy Committee voted to support the proposals to close the Institute and eliminate the undergraduate academic programs. The vote of the Educational Policy Committee was as follows: nine in favor of the recommendations set forth herein, three against the recommendations, and one abstention. The Educational Policy Committee's recommendation to close the Institute and eliminate the undergraduate academic

programs was submitted to the Academic Senate, which voted 57 to 54 against the proposals. In light of the very close vote of the Senate and the broad support voiced for this proposal by the many bodies consulted as a part of the review of the Institute of Aviation (e.g., Council of Deans, *Stewarding Excellence @ Illinois* Steering Committee, *Stewarding Excellence @ Illinois* Campus Advisory Committee, and Senate and student leadership), it is appropriate and necessary to close the Institute and eliminate the undergraduate academic programs despite the absence of a favorable Senate majority vote.

The closure of the Institute, if approved by the Board, will be delayed until current students have had adequate time to complete their studies, which the campus anticipates will be at the end of Academic Year 2013-2014. During that time period, the campus will continue its active conversations with a local community college regarding its possible interest in creating a flight training program. The campus is committed to fully investigating avenues to support others' creation of a flight training program, including exploring the possibilities of a trial partnership with another institution during the next three years and the transfer of physical assets to facilitate the creation of such a program.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The President of the University concurs.