

Annual Evaluation

Susan Koch
Chancellor of the University of Illinois at Springfield
Vice President, University of Illinois System
Annual Evaluation
July 18, 2018

Dear Susan,

I thank you, once again, for your very thorough and thoughtful memo summarizing your activities and those of your University and campus during the past year. I particularly appreciate the clarity – and simplicity – of your stated priorities for the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) and your obvious enthusiasm and commitment to being an integral part of the larger University of Illinois system. Since you have had another excellent year of leadership and accomplishment, many of the comments below will be repeats from earlier evaluations!

UIS is in good hands. During the seven years of your leadership UIS has grown in enrollment and reputation and the campus has seen significant upgrades and has been the source of many excellent accomplishments. The growth of distance education expertise and impact, the building of a presence in downtown Springfield, the acquisition of a facility “on the water,” the exciting increase in enrollments that we are seeing this year, the tremendous progress in intercollegiate athletics (congratulations to all involved!) - and, of course, the new student union are all among the very exciting developments occurring on “your watch.” You have already built quite a legacy and it is truly wonderful to observe how you have been fully embraced by the Springfield community. Thank you for all your efforts!

You are also to be congratulated for your tenacity, forbearance and effort in weathering the (more than) two-year long budget impasse, without leaving irreversible damage to UIS. Clearly, a hit was taken to enrollments, due, in part to the impasse - but also, I suspect, to the negative effects of the ongoing national debate about immigration and student visas. I am very pleased to see the robust enrollment growth this year, particularly since you have made it such a priority and have worked very hard to create the successful new programs in, for example: nursing, Information Systems Security, and exercise science.

A major successful effort of yours this year has focused on building out the UIS leadership cohort, with exceptional, successful recruitments of a new provost, several deans, an associate chancellor for student affairs, an athletic director, and many other positions.

During the past year, you and your team worked to finalize a – first of its kind – negotiated collective bargaining agreement with the new UIS faculty union. This two-year process was very difficult and certainly engaged strong emotions, leading to a damaging strike that occurred just before the week of Spring final examinations. Your direct personal involvement into the process and your regular communications with staff, the negotiating team, and with the

president's office, helped diffuse this situation and has led to the broadly successful and fair outcome that we now enjoy. I appreciate just how much energy and commitment you expended on this effort and want to both acknowledge the favorable result and congratulate you on achieving a much-improved level of labor harmony within the faculty.

During this year, you had to deal with several difficult personnel issues, as well as with a tragic accident occurring after a concert on campus. You navigated these difficult matters extremely well. I acknowledge, in particular, your strong commitment to full dialog and communication with my office, as well as with the Board of Trustees as you dealt with these unpredicted events and issues.

Overall, Susan, this has been an excellent year of performance and I congratulate you once again and thank you for all the hard work!

You list many specific accomplishments in your report and I want to highlight some of them in my response. I want to start with the beautification of the campus, which has been great! The Abraham Lincoln statue (with the president portrayed as a younger man), the Shakespeare garden, and the wonderful, light-filled (as you aptly put it) student union - all serving as great iconic additions to the physical beauty of the UIS campus. These are truly legacy contributions. It is obvious that both faculty and students, as well as community members and donors have all been inspired by this work. Well done!

Your emphasis on fundraising has been successful and UIS is more than halfway to the ambitious goal of \$40M. The approximately \$6M in commitments for the student union (a large fraction of the planned \$8M) are exciting. With the start of the public phase of the fund raising campaign planned by the Foundation, I am confident of full success for this important, "signature" project. Your relationships with community members are strong and, I both enjoy and appreciate the monthly column that you write for the local newspaper. Your efforts to build a supportive community within Springfield are important.

Your leadership at the local, regional and national levels is significant: the top-fifteen status in the U.S. News and World Report ranking as a regional public university in the Midwest is great. Your participation in the leadership activities of the AASCU (American Association of State Colleges and Universities) and COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges) programs yields opportunities to help shape national higher education policy. The growth and quality of UIS Online are both remarkable features and assets of UIS and these offerings have clearly had national and international impact.

You have successfully recruited Dennis Papini as the new UIS provost, following a rigorous national search, in which I participated at the interview stage. Dennis has already made an impact and is leading the development of the new "Strategic Compass" planning effort. I stand ready to support this important work in any way that might be helpful

I applaud your work in mentoring and staff development. You continue to nominate staff for awards and participation in development programs and I appreciated your listing many key UIS leaders and award winners by name in your materials. The new fund to support professional development of civil service employees is noteworthy, as is your suggestion of a system-wide approach to the recruitment of minority faculty: an area where all three universities lag. Staff mentoring and professional development efforts are more important than ever when aggressive reward systems of salary programs are not available. You make yourself regularly available to faculty and staff and have the kind of listening skills that are deeply appreciated by the smart and committed people at UIS. The partnership with UIC College and Nursing and Memorial Health System to provide a BSN option is working well, as is the productive research relationship with SIU School of Medicine in Springfield.

Your leadership, working with the local community and others, to incorporate the downtown business incubator into UIS and then to develop it into the first downstate "hub" for the Illinois Innovation Network truly represents a "leadership lived" contribution. This is important work that will expand over the next year. I appreciate all your efforts to involve UIS in system initiatives such as the IIN and Discovery Partners Institute (DPI). These efforts help bind our system together in productive ways, but they will also provide important opportunities to new generations of UIS students and faculty. Well done!

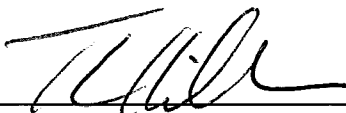
I thank you for your efforts with the Alumni Association reform that took place last year, leading to the new Alumni Alliance and a building up of the three University-specific Alumni Associations. You were pivotal to that sensitive transition moving forward, leading one of the key system-level committees. The "advancement model" that you pioneered at UIS continues to gain strength and will position the entire U of I system well for the upcoming campaign and the associated needs for better branding across our units (that you correctly highlight).

Your focus on facilities has led to much recent progress that should also be acknowledged. The new Child Protection Training Academy, upgrades to the Academic Success Center, new classrooms for the Exercise Science facility, and the new recreational facilities are all supportive of the student experience. The Innocence Project and the focus on ADA compliance upgrades are also important activities that demonstrate a commitment to social equity.

I have a few thoughts and suggestions for the next few months:

1. Your goals for next year are appropriate and, as always, focused on the three priorities of your strategy (enrollment, faculty and facilities). I greatly appreciate how you weave the Strategic Framework into your work, demonstrating effective alignment with our state-wide priorities.
2. Continue your efforts to engage more deeply with the rest of the University of Illinois System. Your voice in the 3+2 discussions on issues as wide ranging as advancement, budget planning, and alumni engagement is particularly valuable.

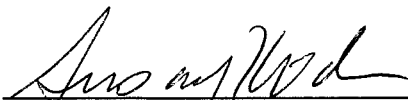
3. Continue to build and mentor your new leadership team. The Strategic Compass work provides an important opportunity for campus-wide deliberation,
4. Help the System develop the comprehensive multi-year master plan for capital facilities, requested by the Board. I know you are already working on this.
5. Your commitment to diversity and a safe and welcoming campus environment is exemplary, but we are not yet where we need to be (e.g., on faculty diversity, which is one of your prime concerns). Congratulations on your successful recruitment of one of the first cohort of distinguished faculty.
6. Please continue to work closely and collaboratively with me and the other Chancellors to develop an aspirational implementation agenda in support of the new strategic framework and as we continue the fundraising campaign. Many eyes are on the still relatively new 3+2 team and a sustained and visible level of mutual support will be important. I have learned to better appreciate how important leadership stability is in these turbulent times.
7. Congratulations, once again, on your well-deserved honorary degree from your Alma Mater!
8. Continue developing your various roles in national leadership activities.
9. Susan – I continue to greatly admire your vision, passion, drive and calm sense-of-purpose. You embody “leadership lived” for public higher education in ways that inspire our students, faculty, staff, and our important external constituents.



Timothy L. Killeen
President

Date

7/18/18



Susan Koch
Chancellor and Vice President

Date