

Approved by the Board of Trustees,
September 9, 2004

Board Meeting
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POLICY TO PRESERVE AND RECOGNIZE THE STATE'S AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE

WHEREAS, at its June 17, 2004 meeting, the Board of Trustees resolved to reach a consensus conclusion to the issue of Chief Illiniwek. In respect of that resolution and in recognition of the heritage of the State of Illinois and the culture and traditions of the American Indians, it is the board's belief that the University should pursue a solution that recognizes the heritage of the State and the culture and traditions of the American Indians; and

WHEREAS, many opinions expressed on the issue share a mutual concern for finding ways to preserve and celebrate the State's heritage and American Indian culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, an essential step toward reaching a consensus conclusion to the issue of the Chief is the establishment of a board policy that affirms that the core of the issue concerns the preservation and celebration of the State's heritage and American Indian culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, the University's Urbana-Champaign campus, the State of Illinois' great land-grant university, has long drawn on and paid tribute to the culture and traditions of the native people of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the State's name is a French transliteration of Illiniwek, a confederation of American Indian tribes that thrived throughout the State and the region; and

WHEREAS, the term Illini, taken from the State's name, has been used in referring to students, alumni, the campus' student newspaper since 1874, and later to its athletic teams; and

WHEREAS, the campus possesses rich collections of research materials and art works related to American Indian culture and traditions that attract scholars and students at all levels; and

WHEREAS, these resources provide the basis for education and appreciation of our State's heritage and American Indian culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of the State's heritage and American Indian culture and traditions is a fitting goal for the Urbana-Champaign campus; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has resolved to reach a resolution on the issue of the Chief through consensus; and

WHEREAS, a solution must best serve the University rather than particular interest groups;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in implementing a consensus solution, it shall be the policy of the University and the Urbana-Champaign campus that the State's heritage and its American Indian culture and traditions shall be preserved, affirmed, and publicly celebrated.