

## Annual Evaluation

Michael Amiridis  
Chancellor, University of Illinois at Chicago  
Vice President, University of Illinois System  
December 14, 2020

Dear Michael,

I thank you for your input summarizing your activities and accomplishments over the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. I appreciate the detailed nature of your report and am very grateful for the time and energy you have put into preparing these materials. Your 8 goals, developed through a transparent and consultative university-wide process, are all most appropriate and it is clear from your report that you have made significant strategic progress in these important areas. I met with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee recently to get their comments on the past year of performance and can report that it was a very supportive discussion with regard to both you and your senior leadership team. I look forward to a conversation that covers the issues, plans and opportunities you described in your report as part of the annual evaluation cycle.

At the outset, I want to congratulate you on another year of strong and effective leadership and of significant progress at the University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC). It has been a significant year of accomplishments despite the hugely disruptive effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic that has required sacrifice, hard work, and very significant changes to virtually everything we do. UIC has managed to adjust successfully to the pandemic and has continued to provide a combination of excellent face-to-face and on-line educational components to our student body in a manner that emphasizes safety for faculty, staff, students and the external community.

In general, UIC continues to prosper under your optimistic, energetic, and engaging leadership style and your efforts to build an action-oriented leadership team have paid off. There is evident appreciation within the faculty for your consultative and communicative style, and for Provost Susan Poser and Vice Chancellor Bob Barish. You were given particularly high marks for your listening skills and your willingness to solve problems and attend sessions in departments and interact with all members of the UIC community and beyond.

Your strategy to augment enrollment is working well, with a fifth straight year of encouraging gains in the number of admitted students, as well as important increases in diversity of the student body. Reductions in first-time freshmen enrollments this year are of significant concern - but are hopefully temporary in nature and directly related to the effects of the COVID -19 pandemic on family decision making. We will watch carefully as this situation evolves.

UIC's enrollment gains have been highlighted in the media and this has contributed importantly to the evident high standing of UIC in both state and city leadership. The combination of tuition control and enrollment growth puts UIC in a state-wide leadership position. And the threshold, now reached, of 33,500 students puts UIC in a very special category as a unique, diverse research-intensive university, situated in a world city, with a principled land-grant mission. Your plan to increase international enrollment through a partnership with Shorelight Education and UIC Global is paying off with more than 1,500 students now attending. This has been a very

strategic and successful move. Congratulations to you and your team on this major accomplishment!

Morale has continued to improve since your arrival, despite some unfortunate and debilitating labor issues. You have participated actively in important system-wide discussions and have led the *Ignite UIC* philanthropic campaign, launched in October 2017, which is moving forward towards its ambitious goal, hopefully to be achieved in the next 2 years. The philanthropic campaign has exceeded the 3/4 mark towards its goal and you are acting expeditiously to improve the fundraising team in an appropriate fashion. Your recruitment and support for Tom Warmsley from the University of Michigan has been successful. Your ongoing work to build and staff a first-ever UIC Alumni Association program is moving forward with some considerable enthusiasm.

Your office has energetically re-envisioned priorities and processes, including initiation of the successful December Commencement ceremony and the co-branding campaign bringing East and West components closer together in outlook and collaborative function. You initiated a successful “state of the University” address, which serves to inform both internal and external stakeholders of progress towards shared goals. You have worked with the provost to support faculty recruitment and provide resources (from royalties) for the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. You continue to develop an appropriate national and international presence for UIC through your committee work and travel accomplishments (e.g., through APLU leadership, Chicago Council on Global Affairs, new partnerships in India and Ireland, etc.). I want to add that Provost Poser’s program of campus conversations is both very impressive and praiseworthy.

You have effectively managed tricky events and processes, such as a (small) number of critical ethics investigations and personnel issues, the nurses’ labor contract negotiations, and the complex discussions regarding urban innovation initiatives. You have built task teams to review and re-engineer strategic enrollment planning, racial injustice, student mental health, student academic programs, diversity activities, and faculty affairs, as well as the academic program review, dashboard and Board approval steps to keep the University on track in its core academic mission. The Advisory Board for UIHealth is important.

The acquisition of the John Marshall Law School is a major and historic accomplishment and a testament to careful and through planning and your “strategic patience”. The effort has clearly been a major success and will be of ever increasing importance in years to come. Congratulations on shepherding this effort through to a successful conclusion – a diplomatic coup as much as anything!

It is clear to all that UIC needs significant upgrades to its facilities and an aggressive program to deal with deferred maintenance challenges. I acknowledge your leadership in this regard and complement you on the facility augmentations that you have led. These include opening of the new modular engineering building and the shared dormitory/classroom facility openings. The recent successful funding of the Computer Design and Hospital expansion facilities have made this a “golden age” for UIC capital activities under your leadership after many, many barren years. Congratulations.

Some of these facility activities have been funded through a unique and creative public-private partnership for which you deserve much credit – I appreciate also the excellent partnership with CFO Ghosh in this regard. Your team has supported our efforts to gain legislative relief on

procurement and lease arrangements and to help advocate for a reliable annual state budget for UIC and the system.

The 2020 budget signed by Governor Pritzker contained several very important UIC components and we will need to work closely together to ensure optimal utilization of the capital aspects. The stress on the UIC budget due to the Pandemic, going forward however, is non-trivial and we will need to continue to work together to mitigate its impact through advocacy and careful stewardship of expenditures. We will talk about this when we meet.

You have managed a complex and fast-paced flow of materials in to and out from the Chancellor's office. You have led a revision of the University Master Plan and continue to develop and communicate the four strategic pillars: Student Experience and Success; Emphasis on Chicagoland; Impact and Reputation of Research; and An Entrepreneurial University. You are well positioned to work effectively with the mayoral administration. You have worked hard with alumni and your team to reenergize fundraising with some notable successes, though more needs to be done. You have used the Jonasson House effectively to engage donors.

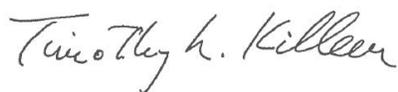
You have participated in the system-wide budget discussions that have allowed the University to continue its "affordability" posture during this time of budget stringency, by limiting tuition and fee increases for a sixth straight year. You have developed and implemented creative differential tuition rates, designed to build diverse enrollments across UIC's colleges and programs. This and other efforts have "set the tone" for our entire advocacy and renewal posture: one that is student-centered, empowering of our three universities, and responsive to important fiscal and historical drivers. These actions, including the budgetary transfers have been generally well received. In all this, you have been a trusted partner to the president and a principal shaper of the University System-wide (as well as UIC) strategy.

The healthcare enterprise is a very significant component of UIC and the U of I more generally, constituting approximately 25% of the total budget. You are to be congratulated for continuing to provide comprehensive health care services and keeping the hospital in "the black" through the period of the Illinois State budget impasse and the swirling policy discussions occurring nationally. Significant infrastructural and business model challenges remain and you are addressing these systematically. The strategic initiative to revamp the IT infrastructure is proceeding well, despite delays induced by the pandemic. You act expeditiously to learn from any "medmal" situations that may arise from time to time. Again, I welcome the new Advisory Board, and congratulate you and Bob Barish on its impressive membership roster and his strategic outlook.

Your hard work, your close respectful connections with your core campus and local communities, your analytical insight and experience, and your responsiveness to urgent calls on your time and expertise have all been important elements of the progress we have made this year, and you have certainly helped me in my role as president. I value highly our candid and numerous conversations and believe that we fundamentally share a common vision that is seen and appreciated by faculty and staff. I thank you for your participation in the system-wide enterprise risk management activities and complement you on the recent work on racial injustice, sexual misconduct prevention and response, as well as emergency preparedness.

I have a few thoughts and suggestions for the next few months. Some of these are fairly generic and repeated from last year. They are listed mostly to ensure we have a good discussion about higher education challenges as we go through the yearly evaluation.

1. We should work together closely to optimize recruitment of partners and outcomes for the Discovery Partners Institute and the Illinois Innovation Network (DPI/IIN) initiatives.
2. The philanthropic campaign is well into its prime period of performance and I share your sense of commitment and urgency on the need for significantly more effective fund raising and building out the UIC base for the future. I stand ready to work with you and appreciate our regular meetings to track and comment on progress. This remains an important priority.
3. Congratulations on the careful response to COVID and the detailed testing and other protocols that are in place.
4. The branding and marketing initiative for the system (through the work of 160/90) needs to be tailored carefully to augment and complement the efforts at UIC. Please work with me to help develop (and defend) a messaging platform that can benefit all components of our system.
5. The UIAA reform effort is now clearly bearing fruit. This will require your careful attention to optimize UIC alumni engagement. I look forward to further conversations about this and other important reforms.
6. Continue your efforts to engage more deeply with the rest of the University of Illinois System and provide the bridge to the urban-serving academic mission.
7. We are still not yet where we need to be in terms of diversity and inclusion - and the whole U of I system certainly faces challenges that need to be addressed. One priority remains to push to recruit senior Latino/a talent and to enlarge the African American student enrollment, as well as building up international enrollments. I know you are working effectively on all of these issues.
8. Please continue to work closely and collaboratively with me and the other University leaders to develop a truly aspirational implementation agenda in support of the strategic framework and your UIC strategy.
9. Michael – You have had another excellent year of accomplishment and are clearly greatly respected as UIC’s leader, both internally and externally! Keep up the great work! I have greatly enjoyed getting to know you and admire your analytical approach, your professionalism, sense of humor, and responsiveness. Congratulations and thanks!



12/16/20

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Timothy L. Killeen  
President

Date



12/16/2020

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Michael D. Amiridis  
Chancellor and Vice President

Date