

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Resolution on the First Year Experience at SIUC

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate is charged with representing the faculty in all colleges at Southern Illinois University; and

WHEREAS the faculty "is responsible for the educational functions of the university, including all matters of admission standards, curriculum, procedures of student instruction and evaluation, graduation requirements, and accreditation, except as otherwise provided by the Board of Trustees, state and federal law"¹; and

WHEREAS the University promised in its 1999 report to the Higher Learning Commission/North Central Accreditation that it was designing and implementing a first year experience; and

WHEREAS the University community as a whole recognizes the importance of retaining our students and ensuring their success at SIUC; and

WHEREAS the University is currently completing a self-study in partnership with the Foundations of Excellence of the Policy Institute on the First Year of College intended to design a comprehensive, intentional experience for its undergraduate students in their first year at SIUC; and

WHEREAS the SIUC Task Force, which comprises over a hundred faculty, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs professionals, and graduate and undergraduate students, is refining its recommendations and implementation plans for presentation to the Chancellor;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approves the following statement of First Year Philosophy:

Philosophy Statement Regarding the First Year Experience at SIUC

We believe that the First Year is a critical time in the lives of our students, and of their families. It is a time of transition from high school into college life, and a time for growth, transformation and holistic development. Living away from home can be unsettling for some students, just as others embrace their newfound independence. All, however, must acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and coping mechanisms required of the successful student. None should leave us without learning, experiencing engagement, and connecting to others. The First Year at SIUC begins a relationship between the student and our campus community, from our very first interaction.

We believe that first year students will rejoin us for a second year and more if they are successful and we help them feel a part of SIUC. For this to happen, SIUC must adopt and implement a strategically coordinated first year experience integrating a student-centered orientation that applies the principles of caring, cohesiveness and connectedness. First year programs and opportunities should purposefully support students in building academic competence, becoming information literate, encountering diverse viewpoints, forming good habits, gaining self-awareness, getting involved, and learning the value of service.

and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate encourages the Administration to support the program in ways that are consistent with the overall mission and values of the University.

FS0913

¹ SIUC Faculty Senate Bylaws I.B.a.ii, accessed March 3, 2009, at <http://www.siu.edu/~policies/policies/opffs.html>.