

Southern Illinois University – Board of Trustees

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ANNUAL EVALUATION LETTER

July 1, 2026

Dr. Dan Mahony
President
Southern Illinois University System

Dear Dr. Mahony,

I am pleased to provide this annual evaluation letter summarizing your performance for the fiscal year 2025-2026. Your leadership across the SIU System continues to be exceptional, reflecting a deep commitment to the institution's strategic direction, collaboration, and service to the university community.

The following outlines your progress and accomplishments across the strategic goals set for this period:

1. **Strategic Plan Implementation:** Your ongoing dedication to the SIU System strategic plan has continued to foster vital collaboration across the system. The upcoming annual report, slated for the July BOT meeting, highlights numerous milestones achieved under your direction. Furthermore, your proactive approach in surveying key stakeholders to systematically revise and extend the strategic plan through 2031 ensures that the system's long-term vision remains collaborative and robust ahead of its presentation to the Board of Trustees in December 2026.
2. **Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) Efforts:** You have significantly advanced ADEI and retention initiatives across the system, yielding remarkable successes. Under your leadership, fall-to-fall retention for domestic students at SIUE exceeded 80% in fall 2025, successfully closing the equity gap for Black/African American students from 58% three years ago to 80%. Spring 2026 retention also grew systemwide by 2.5–3%. Faculty members have participated in professional development opportunities. Your participation with Vice President Caldwell in national conference presentations and publications contribute to advances in institutional priorities throughout the system.

3. **Relations with State and Federal Officials:** Your regular engagement with legislators and state officials has been highly productive, particularly as you serve as the convenor of the Illinois public university presidents/chancellors' group. Leadership tours for legislative staff, a highly successful SIU System Day at the Capitol, and strong student civic mobilization through the "Salukis in Springfield/Cougars at the Capitol" and "Women in Leadership" events have significantly enhanced SIU's political capital. Your continued participation regarding the equitable public university funding formula and key legislative bills have positioned the system well. This advocacy yielded immediate financial benefits in the state budget, including a 1% general appropriations increase plus the release of 2% from last year, an additional \$300,000 for programs at the Southwest Illinois Justice and Workforce Development Center, a \$3 million DCEO grant to combat flooding challenges in the American Bottom region, and the critical release of \$8.4 million for the new greenhouse at SIU Carbondale.
4. **Fiscal Health and Collaboration:** Your fiscal stewardship has culminated in a major milestone, with Moody's upgrading the SIU System credit rating for the fourth consecutive year. Moody's specifically cited sustained improvements in enrollment, financial performance, and the strength and stability of your leadership as core drivers for the upgrade. Notably, SIUE has eliminated its structural budget imbalance, and SIUC's operational budget is currently projecting a balanced budget for FY2026 due to deliberate expense reduction. Your work with the new CFO to streamline cross-campus coordination will continue to safeguard the system against broader economic headwinds.
5. **Enrollment Growth Support:** Your systemwide support of enrollment growth has sustained positive, long-term momentum. Despite severe federal policy headwinds that caused a drop in international enrollment across the board, SIUE achieved a stellar 7.7% overall enrollment increase in fall 2025 (surging from 11,893 to 12,813 students) and had international students not declined SIUC would have had an increase in the fall of 2025. Combined, the campuses reached an enrollment of 24,595 compared to 23,404 in fall 2023. Early indicators for fall 2026 demonstrate upward trends for both freshmen/transfer enrollment and retention.
6. **Fundraising Success:** Fundraising engagement has broken system records. SIU Carbondale has raised a phenomenal \$467 million toward its \$500 million campaign goal, with this year's estimated fundraising reaching an all-time record high of \$52 million—over 20% higher than the previous record in FY2024. This success translated directly into student support, with the Foundation providing a record \$6.6 million for scholarships. Furthermore, the SIU Day of Giving raised over \$5.7 million, while SIUE's "One Day, One SIUE" set an institutional record by bringing in approximately \$3.2 million.
7. **Employee Support and Professional Development:** Your commitment to employee development remains a hallmark of your administration. Advisory committees have

continued to meet regularly to bolster systemwide collaboration and employee recognition. Over the last four years, 1,786 staff members have benefited from leadership training initiatives. Additionally, your innovative spring 2026 partnership with NASH and Google secured 500 free "Grow with Google" workforce credential licenses, with 181 learners already enrolled. Additionally, your support of the CBIZ salary study and subsequent adjustments at SIU Carbondale underscore your ongoing dedication to equitable compensation.

8. **Leadership Searches:** You have demonstrated outstanding judgment in completing key leadership searches to build a resilient administrative team. Following the smooth transitions of Evonne Thompson (Internal Audit) and Justin Oates (Financial and Administrative Affairs), you actively partnered with Chancellor Lane to successfully conclude the high-profile search for the Dean and Provost of the SIU School of Medicine, hiring Dr. Ian Martin. Your commitment to assisting Dr. Martin's transition and the imminent completion of the Director for the Institute for Rural Health search ensure leadership stability across crucial sectors.
9. **Regional Impact:** Your oversight has greatly expanded SIU's positive impact on the Southern Illinois region. Supported by targeted state appropriations, the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) secured a \$3 million DCEO grant to address flooding in the American Bottom region, alongside a \$1.5 million DCEO grant to partner with the NAACP East St. Louis Chapter to establish Clean Energy Contractor Incubator hubs in East St. Louis and Alton. Additionally, the Institute for Rural Health successfully deployed a comprehensive community-based roadmap focusing on workforce development, academic pathways, a research network, and clinical services.
10. **Public Profile and Reputation:** You have successfully elevated the public profile of the SIU System through diversified media outreach. Following a strategic transition to utilizing outside support, the system has successfully broadened its reach via annual strategic updates, targeted Board communications, social media, and the expansion of the system podcast into a multi-platform video option. Your active presence and leadership in elite national forums like NASH, APLU, AAC&U, and the Alliance for Higher Education continue to solidify SIU's reputation across the broader higher education landscape.
11. **Campus Presence and Connection:** Your personal visible commitment to staying connected with campus life remains exceptional. You maintained a regular, physical presence across the campuses for approximately 80 days this year, translating to more than 135 days away from Springfield when combined with national advocacy travel. Teaching an undergraduate honors class in the fall semester, with plans to repeat it next fall, highlights your unique and commendable dedication to staying connected with the student experience and core academic mission.

Dr. Dan Mahony

July 1, 2026

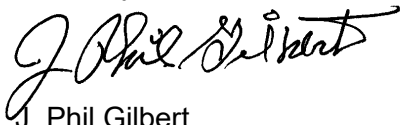
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12. **Board of Trustees Communication:** You continue to maintain exemplary, transparent, and proactive communication with the Board. By coordinating separate individualized briefings for critical issues and keeping an open line of communication with leadership, you ensure the Board remains fully synchronized with all legal, audit, and fiscal updates.

President Mahony, your performance this past fiscal year has been exemplary. Marked by strategic foresight fiscal resilience and an unwavering commitment to regional and systemwide collaboration the SIU System continues to thrive under your outstanding leadership. I

I look forward to your continued leadership in the coming year.

Sincerely,



J. Phil Gilbert
Chairman of the Board of Trustees
Southern Illinois University

The signature below indicates the employee has had an opportunity to review this annual evaluation letter. The employee should feel free to attach to this letter any written response which is necessary for further explanation or detail.


Employee

July 1, 2026

Date