



## Southern Illinois University System

ONE SYSTEM | MANY LOCATIONS | STATEWIDE IMPACT

### ANNUAL EVALUATION LETTER

July 14, 2022

Dr. Austin Lane  
Chancellor  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Dear Chancellor Lane,

I have reviewed the accomplishments on your annual evaluation. Based on that review, along with frequent interactions including our bi-monthly 1:1 updates, I am providing this formal annual review of your performance.

This review is organized around several themes contained within the goals in the SIU System and SIUC strategic plans. That said, please note these goals also overlap in many ways, so some of the accomplishments in one area could easily be included in another.

#### COVID

As was the case last year, one of the biggest challenges facing all universities was managing the impacts of the pandemic. I believe you definitely excelled in this area. First, you and your staff did an excellent job on communication using a variety of methods (open forums, timely emails, etc.). Consistent with this, one of the most positive results in the recent Campus Climate Survey was the degree to which people at SIUC felt informed related to COVID. Second, you worked with campus stakeholder groups, including represented employee groups, to implement plans to maximize student experiences, while not sacrificing safety. Third, you were able to implement the necessary testing requirements through partnerships at a minimal cost. Fourth, you worked with partners to promote and provide vaccinations to the campus community. Fifth, based on our analysis, all your efforts resulted in SIUC having very low infection rates and arguably making SIUC one of the safest universities relative to COVID during the last two years.

#### Strategic Plan

You successfully launched the new SIUC strategic plan that closely aligns with the SIU System strategic plan and the IBHE strategic plan. The goals and strategies in the plan will help SIUC move forward in a positive direction. You also developed a framework that will allow us to track our success in reaching the goals in the plan. Most importantly, I know you spent a great amount of time listening to various stakeholders to develop this plan, which is critical to its future success and which I believe was well worth that investment of time.

#### Enrollment

One of your previously stated goals, which is also a critical objective in the strategic plan, is to increase enrollment. Over the past two years, new freshman enrollment has grown 37% from Fall 2019 to Fall 2021 and it is on track to increase again in Fall 2022. I have not seen another university in the country with this level of success in enrolling new freshman, particularly during the pandemic. There are a

Office of the President  
Stone Center   Mail Code 6801   1400 Douglas Drive   Carbondale, Illinois 62901  
Phone: 618/536-3331   Fax: 618/536-3404

number of initiatives that have helped support this growth, as well as provide reasons to be optimistic about future growth. You have hired new leadership in enrollment management and developed an enrollment task force that has provided critical leadership. You have developed a number of new relationships and partnerships with school district leaders that has led to the large growth in enrollment from the Southern Illinois region and across the state. In fact, enrollment increases from Illinois new freshman exceeded 40% over the last two years. The Saluki Step Ahead transfer initiative, the MOU with the Community College Board, and the many community college partnerships SIUC has developed both in Illinois and in other states is a model program which should increase transfer enrollments for years to come. In addition, other new initiatives, such as the Saluki Commitment, the Saluki Transfer Commitment, the Seymour Bryson Scholars program, the partnership with SIH in nursing, and the partnership with Hope Chicago will provide financial and social support that will enhance both enrollment and retention. Finally, I recognize that your personal active engagement in recruiting students well exceeds the norm and I believe this too is having a positive impact.

#### **Financial Management**

The improvements in enrollment, along with increased state support, have helped the financial situation at SIUC. However, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge all of the work you and your team have done to control spending and target resources where they were most needed. The “Hold the Line Budget” approach has resulted in better decisions on spending. You addressed a long-term issue with the structural imbalance in the athletic budget, which involved both cost reductions and growth in revenue, and has resulted in a more positive outlook for SIUC athletics. You also revamped the scholarship distribution model in order to move the university to a reasonable approach toward tuition and fee waivers. Together, this has resulted in a much more positive financial position for the university based on multiple measures, both internal (unrestricted cash, etc.) and external (bond ratings). In addition, this has allowed us to begin addressing salary issues, both by reinstating regular salary increases for employees and addressing salary inequities between employees in the same roles.

#### **Fund Raising**

Another contributor to the improved financial position of the university is the increased fundraising by the SIU Foundation. The most recent year fiscal year was by far a record with over \$32 million raised, a 25.5% increase from the prior year. This included a record day of giving of over \$3.5 million. Even more impressive is that over the last 6 months, the SIU Foundation raised over \$19 million, which is better than all but three prior 12-month periods. This success has allowed the foundation to support a number of activities, including some mentioned elsewhere in this letter, and to provide approximately \$3.5 million in scholarships to students (a nearly 23% increase).

#### **Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

You have provided leadership to the ADEI efforts at SIUC through a number of activities, including your support of the system initiatives such as the Conversations of Understanding and the Campus Climate Survey. You have reinvigorated the Chancellor’s Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion and hired new leadership in this area that is critical for moving forward. I also recognize that you have made a strong effort to build relationships with schools and recruit students from areas with a large percentage of students of color, which is having an impact in making SIUC better reflect the composition of Illinois.

#### **Promoting SIUC**

In the past year, you developed a number of new initiatives to promote the university in very positive ways and have helped us connect with many of our alumni and friends. The takeover events in Chicago

and St. Louis, and the Southern Illinois Swarm, were very positive and well received. They combined connecting with alumni and friends and student recruitment in creative ways. I have also been impressed by the enhanced efforts to promote the positive news from SIU and believe the new marketing leadership has been beneficial to your campus and to the SIU System.

#### **New Leadership**

While I have mentioned it several times in this review, it is important to note the hiring of new leadership in several areas is having a positive impact across the campus and within the university system. Beyond those I mentioned, there have been new deans, new coaches, and new leaders below the vice chancellor level who are also contributing positively to the university. I look forward to working with the new vice chancellor in research and those who will be hired in the current searches.

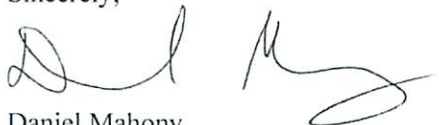
#### **Partnerships and Relationships**

While I have also mentioned partnerships and building positive relationships in several areas, I would be remiss if I did not expand on this area of strength. You have successfully built partnerships and relationships with key people and groups both inside and outside of the community. Beyond what was mentioned above, this has had other positive impacts, including the agreement of several new contracts with represented employees, new partnerships with the City of Carbondale, and activities to support students and employees. I also appreciate your personal involvement in community and local organizations.

As we look towards the next year, we will work together to develop an updated set of goals which will be completed by August 31, 2022.

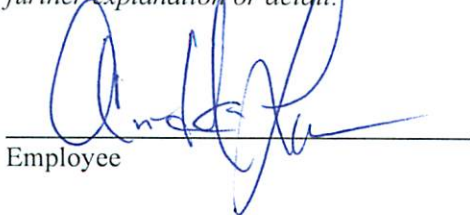
Again, congratulations on another very successful year. I look forward to working with you and your team in what I hope will be another successful year for SIUC and its many stakeholders.

Sincerely,



Daniel Mahony  
President  
Southern Illinois University System

*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  
Date