

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN:
INITIATIVE ON AGING**

**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF APPLIED LIFE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**

AGING INITIATIVE

2003 ANNUAL REPORT

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Aging Initiative Executive Committee

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1. The Initiative on Aging at UIUC:

In August 2001 the Colleges of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences; Applied Life Studies; Liberal Arts and Sciences; Medicine; and Veterinary Medicine at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign announced the establishment of the Initiative on Aging at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The vision of the Initiative on Aging is to build on existing strengths in the areas of research, education and outreach with the goal of developing a world-renowned program on aging at UIUC.

An Executive Committee was formed with representation from each of the five participating colleges. The Committee established a series of research, educational and outreach goals for the Initiative. Faculty were encouraged to join the Initiative in a series of electronic mailings. By April 2003, approximately 50 faculty and 20 post-docs and graduate students had joined the Initiative. More than twenty different departments are represented. Review of the Faculty and Student Directory reveals that a wide variety of different research themes related to aging and the aging process are present on campus. Examples of research themes with significant expertise already in place on campus are; Molecular Biology of Aging; Cognitive Function and Aging; Physical Activity and Successful Aging; Disability and Functioning in Aging; Legal and Ethical Issues and Aging; Assistive Technology and Aging; Images of Aging in the Humanities.

In February 2003, the Aging Initiative was Awarded \$200,000 in one time funds from the Chancellor's Cross-Cutting Research Investment Initiative.

2. Key outcomes of the first two years of the Initiative include;

- ❑ Developed and implemented a comprehensive web-based resource center for Aging related projects at UIUC (<http://aging.als.uiuc.edu/>).
- ❑ Identified key research themes already present on campus and compiled a directory of faculty researchers.
- ❑ Funded an incentive grant program designed to facilitate faculty submitting new major grant applications to government or private sources for the study of gerontological issues. Six incentive grants, of \$10,000 each have been awarded.
- ❑ Established a weekly colloquium lecture series with expert speakers external institutions and each of the participating colleges
- ❑ Compiled a comprehensive listing of undergraduate and graduate courses in areas relating to aging and the aging process. Links to each of the identified courses have been posted on the Initiative website.
- ❑ Organized and implemented an Annual Meeting with external speakers invited to address the faculty and students.
- ❑ Disseminated news releases pertaining to research and outreach activities are posted. Initiative members are notified of new items by e-mail.
- ❑ Developed a newsletter that was distributed at the weekly colloquium. The goal was to increase the visibility of Aging Research on campus and to facilitate increased contacts and collaborations among faculty members.
- ❑ Developed collaborations with local agencies that provide health care, educational and social services to older adults in the community.
- ❑ Local agencies have agreed to assist in identifying research participants and developing assistantship opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students.

- ❑ Established contacts with State agencies working in the area of aging.
- ❑ Convened an External Advisory Committee comprised of experts from research, education, government, and industry in order to advise us on the future direction of the Initiative on Aging.
- ❑ Established links and provided assistance to DHHS, Office of the Surgeon General, NCOA, and other federal and non-governmental organizations.

3. Phase Two – Extending the Aging Initiative (2003-2005):

As described above, the Aging Initiative made great strides during the first two years. We recruited participating faculty and identified their research and teaching interests. We provided incentive grants to seed the writing and submission of six extramural research proposals. We established a successful colloquium series, and we began to a process to identify the courses that will form the basis of a core curriculum for undergraduate and graduate students. The Aging Initiative Executive Committee has now considered ways to move the initiative to a higher level of research productivity and visibility as well as to develop additional educational and outreach plans.

In our initial budget request to the Provost and Chancellor (November 2002), we proposed an investment from central campus of approximately \$500,000 per year for a five-year period. Our goal was to use these funds to support the development of world class Institute on Aging which would coordinate aging-related programs across the campus, with particular emphasis on research, education and outreach.

Despite a very promising initial response from the Administration, it has become clear that the State and University budget is such that our initial proposal is no longer tenable. Accordingly, we have revised our plan to provide a stable base of funding for the Initiative for the next two years (see attached budget).

Our proposed budget combines the funds received from the Chancellor's Cross-Cutting Initiatives (\$200,000) with a greatly reduced annual investment from each of the participating colleges (\$5,000 per year). Our goal is to provide adequate support for the initiative for two years during which time concerted efforts will be made to secure external funds to support the initiative.

4. Key Activities planned for Phase Two of the Aging Initiative (2003- 2005):

New Activities:

- ❑ **Secure Funding from External Sources in Support of the Aging Initiative:** The Executive Committee will seek external support for the Initiative from Federal, State and private sources. Initial contacts have been established with Federal and State agencies. Senior faculty will be encouraged to submit proposals for center grants and other mechanisms of support. The Executive Committee will work closely with the Office of Development to identify potential private donors and to develop a portfolio of funding opportunities. Every effort will be made to coordinate this activity with other Chancellor's Cross-Cutting Initiatives.
- ❑ **Provide seed money in support of Program Project/Training/Center Grants:** Limited funds would be made available to senior faculty in support of Program Projects/Training and Center Grants in the area of aging. Successful applicants would be required to include funding for administrative support of the Aging Initiative into the proposals whenever appropriate.
- ❑ **Curriculum Development:** A curriculum committee will be established and charged with developing an undergraduate project based service-learning experience that is cross disciplinary, socially interactive, and community-based in nature.

- ❑ **Coordinate Campus Wide Interdisciplinary Programs:** We will partner with other Chancellor's Cross-Cutting Initiatives to develop interdisciplinary programs which will highlight areas of connectivity between and among programs from across campus. For example, in September 2003 we will partner with the Illinois Program for Research on the Humanities on a joint program examining the status of the emeritus in academia. We are also developing a collaboration that will examine implications of demographic change for the future of social security. Future collaborations in the area of humanities, arts and social sciences are envisioned.

Continuing Activities:

- ❑ Expand and continue to support comprehensive web-based resource center for Aging related projects at UIUC (<http://aging.als.uiuc.edu/>).
- ❑ Fund an incentive grant program designed to facilitate faculty submitting new major grant applications to government or private sources for the study of gerontological issues.
- ❑ Organize a weekly colloquium lecture series with expert speakers external institutions and each of the participating colleges
- ❑ Maintain a comprehensive database of undergraduate and graduate courses in areas relating to aging and the aging process.
- ❑ Organize an Annual Meeting with external speakers invited to address the faculty and students.
- ❑ Continue to disseminate news releases pertaining to research and outreach activities.
- ❑ Continue to publish a newsletter that was distributed at the weekly colloquium.
- ❑ Expand collaborations with local agencies that provide health care, educational and social services to older adults in the community.
- ❑ Expand contacts with State agencies working in the area of aging.
- ❑ Expand links and provided assistance to DHHS, Office of the Surgeon General, NCOA, and other federal and non-governmental organizations.