



FISCAL YEAR 2021 PLANNING DOCUMENT

Educate Connect Elevate, 2018-2023

By acting on the Mission, Values, Directions, Objectives, and Actions of *Educate Connect Elevate*, the Stevenson Center will advance the University's and its own mission to provide a quality educational experience and service to communities throughout the world.

From *Educate Connect Elevate, 2018-2023*:

- The Stevenson Center's curriculum "Supports student learning through a seamless integration of curricular and co-curricular activities...."
- The Stevenson Center serves "...the region, state, nation, and world through its commitments to responsible stewardship, meaningful civic engagement, cultural enrichment, and the development of global citizens."

Like Illinois State University, one of the Stevenson Center's core values is civic engagement. The Center:

...prepares students to be informed and engaged global citizens; ethical leaders who will craft, promote, and further positive goals for the betterment of society. The University promotes active learning experiences through which students gain an awareness and understanding of civic engagement as a lifelong responsibility.

Symbiotically, the Stevenson Center educates students through their service to communities; we serve communities through the work of our students, staff, and faculty.

I. MAJOR OBJECTIVES

These objectives flow from our 2016 IBHE Program Review process and our 2018 Strategic Planning process.

- A. Ensure Stability of Graduate Programs and Cultivate Leaders to Positively Impact Communities: Our first priority is making sure our Peace Corps Fellows and Applied Community and Economic Development Fellows Programs are strong. We will focus on recruitment and placement of 12-13 Fellows per cohort. These experienced development professionals will populate the courses of our affiliated departments; they will be teaching assistants and mentors in Illinois State's undergraduate classrooms. These students will serve local community agencies and organizations elsewhere in the

US. Recruitment efforts include diversifying cohorts, being more balanced between Peace Corps and ACED Fellows, and improved branding--such that it plays to our strengths. We will continue to adapt the placement process such that it remains effective for students, hosts, and staff while navigating shifts in state and federal policy. More frequent and deeper contacts with alumni will be integral to both recruitment and placement efforts. The Curriculum Committee will determine the best timing for more substantive updates to the ACED sequence. The students emanating from this curriculum provide service to communities throughout the country. They become leaders in community/economic development.

- B. Continue to Raise Awareness about Peace Corps and AmeriCorps: The Peace Corps Prep Program will continue to fulfill its potential. As the first certificate holders begin their service, we will remain in touch with them and connect them with students on campus. Over 40 students are enrolled; engagement levels vary. A core group of Prep students continues to build the RSO, Friends for Peace, to actively support each other and raise awareness on campus. While there have been some events, we would like to provide more opportunities for these students to interact with our graduate students, with perhaps a joint project between the two RSOs. A related goal is to develop the capacity for more individual engagement with Prep students who may need it. We continue to have AmeriCorps Members with the Center and in Student Affairs.
- C. Raise Research Profile: We explicitly embrace the goal of expanding scholarly engagement between students and faculty. Increasingly, our students are publishing with faculty and solely (4 articles in the last three years alone). Faculty bring students into applied research, like that for McLean County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; graduate students assist, and the work often leads to capstone projects and theses. These are publishable manuscripts. In sum, we seek to "increase the number and quality of opportunities that engage students in research with faculty" (ECE IV.B.2).

II. PERMANENT FUNDING REQUESTS

- A. Graduate Student Stipends: A competitive financial package is key to graduate student recruitment and stronger graduate programs (ECE I.A.4). Historically, the Center received General Revenue funds for two graduate assistants in each of its three founding degree programs. Under previous administration of the College of Arts and Sciences, those funds did not increase for five consecutive fiscal years, despite raises in stipends. Including the expected 2% increase to stipends in Fiscal Year 2021, the

shortfall between the permanent amount and that needed to fully fund two graduate assistants in the three founding degree programs is **\$10,955**.

- B. General Revenue for Stevenson Center Staff: Along with talented students, the Stevenson Center brings money to Illinois State University. The Center's current administration inherited \$114,000 in debt from its previous administration and painstakingly recovered that amount over a 10-year period. We have brought in \$2.7 million in graduate student stipends and operating funds.

In addition to this fiscal success, the Stevenson Center is an asset to Illinois State. Our Peace Corps and AmeriCorps programs have been used as a model for other universities. We are repeatedly told by faculty that our graduate students are some of the best on campus. They come from all over the country, and our 220+ alumni work all over the world. Peace Corps Prep is a campus-wide undergraduate program that helps the university recruit, motivate, and prepare students for careers. The Center also advances the scholarship of community and economic development and provides direct service to communities. For 25 years, our students, alumni, and staff have been ambassadors for Illinois State University through their service, locally and in far-flung communities. The Stevenson Center is the oldest of the three centers highlighted in the Carnegie application that helped the university achieve the Community Engaged Campus designation.

Staff achieved all the above—and more—without a permanent position. The Center does not have, nor has it ever had, a permanently funded position. Of the Fiscal Year 2020 funds we spend on personnel (\$135,434), General Revenue (\$41,477) accounts for 31% of staff costs. When one includes the large grants we have been awarded (over \$5 million), the percent of salaries and wages that is covered by General Revenue drops to 10-12% per year.

As a result, we continually grapple with stability and sustainability in ways that are detrimental over the long term. We deal with fluctuations in host organization funding, student circumstances, etc. Of course, all units on campus navigate uncertainty. They know at least their staff are covered. We do not.

To weather fluctuations, we scramble to build our own financial safety nets—in case something goes wrong with one recruitment season or one practicum placement season, or even just one placement. We have been good stewards and done a lot with little, just like the university overall. But there are consequences for operating this way

year after year, always cutting/saving for the next crisis, rather than looking ahead for ways to have a bigger impact and do more.

We have given serious consideration to our sustainability over time, and we need more General Revenue funding. We request an additional **\$31,500** (for personnel) on top of the \$41,477 we already receive. This amount is an accurate accounting of what it will take for the Stevenson Center to be sustainable and forward looking, long term.

- C. Director's Summer Salary: Thanks to the generosity of Academic Affairs, the Stevenson Center Director received 1.5 months of summer funding for each of the last ten years. *Thank you.* In support of the Stevenson Center's mission and students, the director works throughout the calendar year. One course release each semester is provided by the affiliated departments. The director secures external funding such that half of the summer is covered. We request that Academic Affairs provide permanent funds, covering the other 1.5 months of summer salary. For Fiscal Year 2020, the cost is **\$12,711** (\$8,474/month x 1.5 months).

III. REASSIGNED TIME REPORT FOR FY20

IV. STRATEGIC BUDGETED CARRYOVER

V. PROVOST ENHANCEMENT REQUESTS

- A. Graduate Student Stipends: A competitive financial package is key to graduate student recruitment and stronger graduate programs (ECE I.A.4). Historically, the Center received General Revenue funds for two graduate assistants in each of its three founding degree programs. Under previous administration of the College of Arts and Sciences, those funds did not increase for five consecutive fiscal years, despite raises in stipends. Including the expected 2% increase to stipends in Fiscal Year 2021, the shortfall between the permanent amount and that needed to fully fund two graduate assistants in the three founding degree programs is **\$10,955**. If not met with permanent funds, we request this amount in temporary PE funds.
- B. General Revenue for Stevenson Center Staff: Repeating the arguments above, we have given serious consideration to our sustainability over time; and we need more General Revenue funding. We request an additional **\$31,500** (for personnel) on top of the \$41,477 we already receive. This amount is an accurate accounting of what it will take for the Stevenson Center to be sustainable and forward looking, long term. We

understand this need may be met by enhancement funds until permanent funds are available.

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VI. SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONAL CAPACITY REQUEST

VII. REASSIGNED TIME REPORT FOR FY21

VIII. PERSONNEL REQUESTS—TENURE TRACK FACULTY

IX. PERSONNEL REQUESTS—TENURE TRACK FACULTY, NON-REAPPOINTMENT

X. PERSONNEL REQUESTS—NON-TENURE TRACK POSITIONS