

The Institute & its Units

The Institute and its Units

Because of its location in the state capital, the University of Illinois at Springfield has a special mission in public affairs. To fulfill its mission, the campus directs educational, research, and service efforts to help solve problems facing the state and nearby local communities. The Institute for Public Affairs is a primary vehicle through which the campus carries out these public affairs activities.

The Institute for Public Affairs (IPA) houses the Springfield campus's major public affairs units: the Center for Legal Studies, the Graduate Public Service Internship Program, *Illinois Issues*, the Illinois Legislative Studies Center, the Publication Unit, the Survey Research Office, the Television Office, and WUIS/WIPA. These units are coordinated by the institute's Central Office.

The institute employs a core administrative and support staff and additional staff to work on grant-funded projects. The institute also involves faculty from across the campus in institute activities and projects. Faculty working in the institute may hold permanent joint appointments with the institute and an academic program. Others may receive a temporary reassignment from teaching for a portion of their time to work on specific institute projects. Faculty may also be retained to work on grant-funded projects, either during the academic year or the summer. During fiscal year 1997, the institute employed 59 administrators and staff, 17 graduate assistants, and numerous extra-help and student workers. Forty-five faculty members were involved in a variety of institute activities throughout the year.



The IPA is a primary vehicle through which UIS carries out its public affairs mission.

The Institute's Central Office

The institute's Central Office serves as a point of contact for requests for institute consultation and services. It receives inquiries and requests for proposals and refers them to the appropriate institute unit. Projects that do not fit within the mission of a specific unit, or that involve more than one unit, are undertaken through the Central Office. For example, policy studies and program evaluations are conducted by the Central Office, which assembles interdisciplinary project teams of faculty and staff to design and implement them.

Center for Legal Studies

The Center for Legal Studies (CLES) focuses research and service efforts on state, regional, and national legal systems. Major areas of concern include criminal and juvenile justice, the courts and judiciary, alternatives to the courts, family and child welfare law, the legal rights of women and minorities, and health policy and the law. The center's fundamental objective—to contribute to a better understanding and improvement of the legal system in ways accessible to scholars, policymakers, practitioners, and the general public—is accomplished through many training, research, public service, education, and technical assistance projects.

Illinois Legislative Studies Center

The Illinois Legislative Studies Center's (ILSC) activities promote public understanding of and interest in legislative processes. Its focus is the Illinois General Assembly, but it also is interested in Congress and the legislatures of other states and nations. The center has a strong commitment to carrying out applied research projects and public affairs activities designed to educate students and political scientists and to inform the public of their roles as citizens.

ILSC faculty and staff write the *Almanac of Illinois Politics* and publish the *Guide to Lobbyists* biennially. The center provides editorial support for the periodical *Comparative State Politics*. In addition, the ILSC conducts annual legislative process and lobbyist training seminars and offers tailor-made seminars in areas such as Illinois politics, campaign finance, and administrative rule making.

The center's most prominent educational activity is administering the Illinois General Assembly's Legislative Staff Intern Program. This program recruits outstanding graduate students from across the nation and provides them the opportunity to serve with General Assembly leadership staffs or nonpartisan research agency staffs. Other educational components of the center are the private-sector program, which is a variable-length, graduate-level experience that places interns in private associations that interact with the General Assembly; the Zeke Giorgi Staff Intern Program, an extension of the Legislative Staff Intern Program; and the legislative applied study term for undergraduates.

Survey Research Office

The Survey Research Office (SRO) offers a full range of survey and data management services to campus and university units and outside clientele. The SRO specializes in services to governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Services include: research design; questionnaire development; sampling design and selection; data collection; data input and coding; computer and statistical analysis; and services related to the presentation of results (written reports as well as graphic and oral presentations).

Data collection activities consist of mail, telephone, and personal interview surveys. Telephone surveys are conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) by trained telephone interviewers.

SRO staff also engage in professional development activities, often presenting papers on data analysis and survey techniques to peers at meetings such as the Midwest Association of Public Opinion Research.

WUIS/WIPA Public Radio Station

WUIS/WIPA, the University of Illinois at Springfield's public radio station located at 91.9 and 89.3 on the FM dial, serves more than 350,000 residents in central and west-central Illinois. It is affiliated with National Public Radio and Public Radio International. The broadcast schedule consists of news, public affairs, music (classical, jazz, folk, and bluegrass), and variety programming (e.g., Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion" and "Whad 'Ya Know"). WUIS/WIPA is operated by a professional staff, assisted by faculty, student workers, and community volunteers. Financial support comes from both state and federal sources and from tax-deductible contributions from listeners and businesses. A bimonthly program guide is distributed to those who support the station through voluntary subscriptions.

The station has a commitment to in-depth coverage of the Illinois legislature and routinely provides the other 15 public radio stations in Illinois with news reports from the state capital.

UIS Television Office

The UIS Television Office maintains a broadcast-quality, fully equipped television studio and produces video projects for state and local government agencies and nonprofit groups. The office uses both studio and portable equipment for the production of public affairs, documentary, and educational programs.

The office produces programs for distribution through the CONVOCOM microwave system, a two-way video electronic highway that links UIS with other institutions and public television stations in Jacksonville, Springfield, Peoria, Macomb, Quincy, and the Quad Cities. Public affairs programs and telecourses are carried on this network.

The UIS Television Office also operates ACCESS 4 Springfield (channel 4) for Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI). Since 1985 the community access station has produced and aired more than 7,000 local programs.

Data Collection

Interviews

Broadcasting/Production

Institute Publications

The Institute Publications office encompasses the Publication Unit and *Illinois Issues* magazine.

Illinois Issues

Illinois Issues was established in August 1974 as a monthly magazine on Illinois government and public affairs. As the state's leading public affairs magazine, it provides fresh, provocative analyses of public policy in Illinois. With a special focus on Illinois government and politics, the magazine pays close attention to current trends and legislative issues, and it examines the state's quality of life in a balanced, fair, journalistic style. The magazine also engages its readers in dialogue in a variety of ways, enhancing the quality of public discourse in Illinois.

Publication Unit

The Publication Unit publishes and markets books and academic periodicals on public affairs topics, with an emphasis on Illinois, so that scholars, practitioners, and others interested in public policy will be better informed.

Graduate Public Service Internship Program

The Graduate Public Service Internship (GPSI) program provides a professional development experience during a 21-month period for graduate students interested in pursuing careers in Illinois government. Interns enroll in an appropriate UIS graduate program and work 20 hours per week in a sponsoring state agency during the regular academic year (full time during summer months). They receive a monthly stipend, a tuition waiver for academic coursework, and an allowance for professional development.

Objectives of the program are to (1) attract to Illinois state government high-quality college graduates who otherwise might not enter professional public service careers with the state; (2) assist participating state agencies in their efforts to attract qualified candidates, including affirmative action candidates; and (3) prepare those graduates for professional public service careers with the state of Illinois.