

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 3, 1992

**USI BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES
BIENNIAL OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST;
DISTANCE EDUCATION CENTER**

The University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees approved the 1993-95 biennial operating budget request -- \$28 million for 1993-94 and \$31.9 million for 1994-95 -- at their September meeting held on the USI campus today.

The request points to the serious funding inadequacies at USI resulting from enrollment growth and the state funding formula. The State appropriation per student has not kept pace with the USI's rapid growth of the past decade. The 1991 fall enrollment of 7,021 was projected to be reached in 1995; because enrollment continues to increase, new projections predict more than 9,000 students by the year 2000. USI officials told the Board that the 1992 fall enrollment projection of 4.5 percent increase would be met.

"Start with an inadequate funding base, add an enormous enrollment growth, an enrollment funding lag of two years, an open enrollment status attracting students in need of developmental work, special counseling and advising, and a faculty consisting of more than 40 percent adjunct staffing and the result is USI, an institution with a serious funding inadequacy," Byron Wright, vice president for Business Affairs, told the Board members.

He explained that the average state appropriation to the established public higher education institutions in 1991 was \$2,000 more per full-time equivalent (FTE) student than USI received. The gap between USI funding and the other baccalaureate-granting public institutions continues to widen. A base adjustment is being sought to compensate for the accumulated inequitable funding level due to significant enrollment growth.

Wright added, "This budget request seeks to strengthen faculty resources, improve accessibility and retention of students, support economic competitiveness and workforce education initiatives, and advance social work and teacher education opportunities."

USI officials explained that doubling the student population in the last decade and expanding the academic programs to meet their needs has severely stretched USI's faculty resources. Full-time faculty are called on not only to teach extra classes, but play important roles in advising and other student services not handled by part-time teachers. In addition to relying on part-time faculty in the fall of 1992, the full-time faculty had overload teaching assignments which equated to the work of nine full-time educators.

(more)



NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Kathy W. Funke
News and Information Services
812/465-7050

The faculty's 12-hour teaching obligation and heavy advising responsibilities preclude increasing participation in major projects which can affect regional economic development. With funding to add additional full-time faculty, the University would recruit people with expertise in linking university resources with the community and workforce development needs. USI President David L. Rice said, "USI believes it is vital to continue worthwhile and needed projects related to infrastructure concerns of low-income counties and small towns, programs for social service agencies, and cooperative economic development projects."

Funds are also requested in this budget for academic programs at the master's level in social work and elementary education. By 1995, many social work positions in home health care, nursing homes, and state mental health and welfare agencies will be restricted to individuals who hold the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from an accredited university. A Master of Social Work program, approved in 1991 by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, has not received implementation funding. The program's budget is \$200,000.

A master's degree program in elementary education has been designed to meet the needs of regional educators, primarily locally-employed elementary teachers. The budget request for this program is \$70,000.

In other business, the Board of Trustees approved a new program initiative for a distance education center (DEC), using television to offer courses in remedial and developmental programming for underprepared high school graduates and adults, continuing education for business and industry, and general education courses, particularly a 30-hour general education program. It would be a cooperative venture with Ivy Tech, WNIN public television station, state resources like Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System (IHETS), and area school corporations.

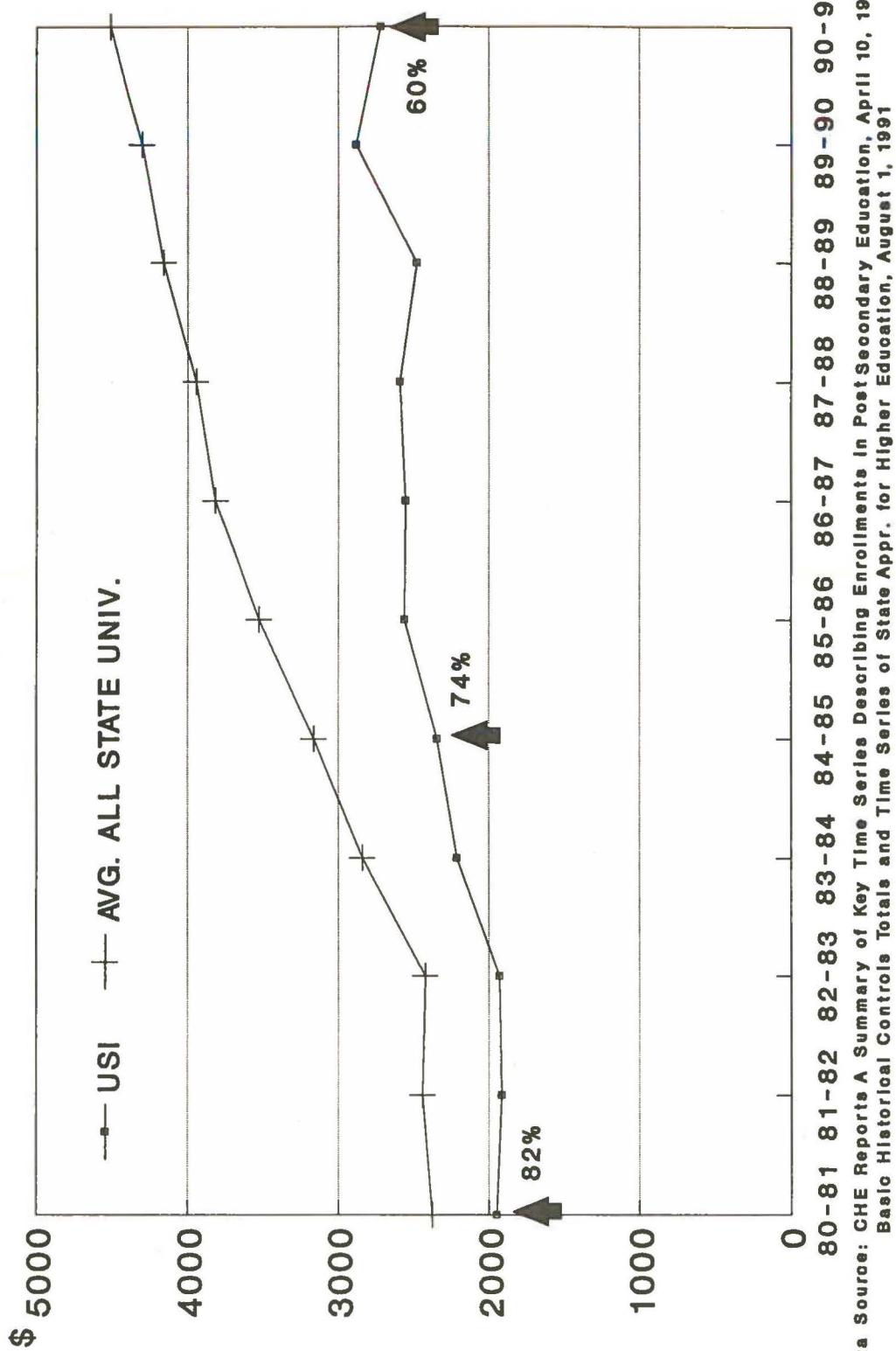
M. Edward Jones, associate vice president for Academic Affairs and director of Extended Services, and the DEC director, said, "The center will increase access to people that find it inconvenient to attend classes on the campus. It can be sent into the home or to the work site. It could be a resource to enable an undereducated workforce to compete in today's market."

For optimal delivery of programs, the Southern Indiana Distance Education Center plans to establish a two-way microwave link between USI and WNIN; obtain IHETS program origination capabilities for USI; upgrade existing USI television production facilities; and license selected satellite programming for distribution through the Center's network. The projected cost of the program would be \$343,980 for the first year and \$284,825 for the second year. This program addresses an initiative of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and is not a part of the biennial budget request.

The Board also approved a request to transfer 11.55 acres of land owned by the University to Vanderburgh County for construction of the USI interchange at the entrance to the campus. Construction of the exchange is expected to begin next year.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

Comparison of General Operating Appropriation Per FTE Student



Data Source: CHE Reports A Summary of Key Time Series Describing Enrollments in Post Secondary Education, April 10, 1992
Basic Historical Controls Totals and Time Series of State Appr. for Higher Education, August 1, 1991