



NEWS RELEASE

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USI Board of Trustees approved 2001-2003 capital improvement budget request and schematic plans and cost estimates for science/education classroom building

At the regular meeting of the University of Southern Indiana Board of Trustees held on campus today, the board approved the capital improvement budget request for the 2001-03 biennium amounting to over \$37.7 million in capital improvements.

The request includes the proposal to complete funding of a science/education classroom building, expand the David L. Rice Library, and make improvements to the campus roadways.

The University's number one capital priority is funding for completion of the science/education classroom building. The 1999 General Assembly provided \$12,600,000 of bonding authority for Phase I of the project. USI seeks Phase II support in the amount of \$10.5 million to complete construction of the facility that is to provide general and specialized classrooms, computer, multi-media, and teaching research laboratories for the Pott School of Science and Engineering Technology and the Bower-Suhrheinrich School of Education and Human Services.

Expansion of Rice Library is the number two capital priority. The funding request of \$23.2 million would provide additional library space, general-purpose classrooms, programming and office space for Academic Affairs division, and additional space for Central Stores and Distribution Services. Rice Library opened in 1971 to serve approximately 5,000 students; the University has outgrown the facility by almost 4,000 students. Expansion will allow the library to increase service and integrate additional technology into the facility.

The third priority is for special repair and rehabilitation funds for Phase I of the campus entrance/roadway relocation project. This safety-related project would improve the intersection and flow of traffic at the University's main entrance and primary roadway. Estimated cost is \$4 million.

In other business, architects from the firms of Edmund L. Hafer and Associates and Hastings and Chivetta presented plans for the science/education classroom building along with cost estimates. The classroom building will provide additional space for the Pott School of Science and Engineering Technology, the Bower-Suhrheinrich School of Education and Human Services, and the academic instructional support areas of University Division Advising and Academic Skills. The space is needed to accommodate projected growth in enrollment, provide technology-enhanced instruction in science and education, facilitate cooperative efforts to prepare well-qualified science and mathematics teachers, and expedite delivery of science and mathematics programming to teachers and students in the southwestern Indiana public schools. Curricula for new degree programs under consideration, such as engineering- and health-related fields, include significant science course components and demand increased science classroom and laboratory space.

The architects set initial cost estimates at \$22.3 million for the classroom building, but said further work is being done to cut that cost to match the proposed funding of \$21.6 million.

In other business, the board reviewed the preliminary figures for the biennial operating budget request of approximately \$33.5 million in 2001-02 and \$36.5 million in 2002-03. The request will carry quality improvement initiatives to develop new degree programs and strengthen the undergraduate experience through instructional support services, student retention initiatives, and expansion of faculty resources.

The budget also will include a four percent increase for personal services and benefits, a three percent increase for supplies and expenses, plant expansion, and a three percent base adjustment for prior enrollments.

The board approved honorary degrees for Donald R. Hazeltine, a long-time member of the Board of Directors and Advisory Council of the USI Foundation, and his wife Allene, who assisted in the development of student life programs in the early years of the campus. The degrees will be awarded on August 24 during the President's Associates Dinner on campus.