INTRODUCTION TO OGR:
WHO WE ARE & HOW WE CAN HELP

PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

- The Office of Governmental Relations (OGR) oversees the U of I System’s strategic engagement with federal, state and local governments, officials, and staff.

- Reporting to the President of the U of I System, OGR works with leadership, faculty and staff to develop and advocate for the system’s governmental agenda and interests.

- OGR monitors issues and activities in Springfield, Illinois, and Washington, DC, pertaining to higher education.

- OGR works to develop and maintain strong and productive relationships with elected and appointed officials and their staff.

- OGR staff have extensive experience working in and with the federal and state governments, and maintain offices in Springfield, Chicago, Urbana, and DC.

HOW YOU CAN WORK WITH OGR

- Inviting federal, state or local officials to visit campuses or participate in university-related events.

- If you’re planning to visit Washington, D.C. or Springfield, OGR can assist with setting up/staffing meetings with legislators/staff that help advance the system’s legislative agenda (e.g. discussing research projects, sharing feedback on legislation, or promoting important funding priorities).

- If you hear about newly introduced legislation that is of interest to you or your department, and would like more information or to explore ways to advance or strengthen the bill.

- If you have questions about specific competitive grant opportunities, emerging federal priorities, or funding trends.

- OGR also regularly helps secure the participation of campus experts in panel discussions, briefings, and testimony opportunities.

INTERACTING WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- In 2018, the Council on Governmental and External Relations (COGER) was established to enhance coordination of government-related activities with the three universities. OGR leads COGER, which consists of representatives from across the system whose portfolios include government relations.

- Please let OGR and your university government relations lead know about university-related interactions with government officials.

- You can find more information in our advocacy guidelines.
STATE & LOCAL RELATIONS

- State and local relations staff work closely with the Illinois General Assembly and local officials.
- They are based in Springfield and Chicago.
- Major issues/priorities include:
  - budget and appropriations
  - higher ed policy
  - regulatory relief
  - healthcare and hospital funding
  - capital funding
  - procurement
  - pensions
  - economic development

FEDERAL RELATIONS

- Federal relations staff work closely with the U.S. Congress, federal agencies, the White House, and higher education associations and advocacy groups.
- They are based in D.C. and Illinois.
- The federal relations team also collaborates with Lewis-Burke Associates, a government relations firm that has deep expertise in agencies and scientific/education areas.
- Major issues/priorities include:
  - budget and appropriations
  - higher ed policy (HEA reauthorization)
  - tax policy
  - healthcare and hospital funding
  - immigration

ADVOCACY

- Advocacy staff manage the Illinois Connection grassroots advocacy network for the U of I System. Staff engage alumni, students, faculty, staff and supporters to advocate for the U of I System in the local, state and federal governments.
- They are based in Urbana and Chicago.
- Major projects include:
  - Annual state and federal advocacy days with alumni and students.
  - Small-group advocacy days in Springfield.
  - In-district meetings and events to engage alumni with state and federal legislators.
  - Call-to-Action email and phone campaigns to engage alumni on state and federal issues.

ENGAGE WITH US!

Our office is active on social media and distributes e-newsletters to provide legislative updates on local, state, and federal government issues impacting the U of I System, as well as D.C. and Springfield visitors and events. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter:

Facebook.com/UofIGovRelation
@UofIGovRelation

Contact the state relations team:

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