

UIS Chancellor plans to retire in October

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SPRINGFIELD – The chancellor at the University of Illinois' Springfield campus is stepping down after nine years on the job.

Richard D. Ringeisen, who is about to turn 66, said his retirement is effective Oct. 31.

He is the fifth CEO in the 40-year history of the school, known as Sangamon State University for 25 years, campus spokesman Derek Schnapp said.

Ringeisen told *The News-Gazette* that his proudest accomplishments came with the planning of the university as it moved into a four-year liberal arts college and NCAA sports program.

"We were a little uncertain who we were when I started," he said.

From a two-year institution of mostly commuter students to a four-year university with a more traditional, residential campus atmosphere, UIS increased its enrollment by 16 percent under Ringeisen's tenure. The number of faculty has increased 24 percent – 170 to 211 – in that time.

The Springfield university also was ranked as one of the best small public liberal arts universities in the Midwest by *U.S. News & World Report* in 2009 and 2010. The campus also prides itself as a leader in online education.

Facilities built in his term include the Recreation and Athletic Center, Founders Hall, University Hall, the Quad and its colonnade, Emiquon Field Station and the new Peoria Center downtown location.

Interim President Stanley Ikenberry called Ringeisen's term "a solid tenure."

"I think he's helped shape the current character of the campus in positive ways; I'm pleased with what has happened there over the last decade," he said.

Ringeisen said progress was not without setbacks.

"The planning process we went through and the goal-setting was an interesting, exciting and painful process," he said. "We created some very special things to become an outstanding liberal arts institution."

This year, the UI system faces its greatest financial struggle since the Depression, but Ringeisen said finances have always been a challenge in Springfield.

"We've never really had a good budget," he noted.

Ringeisen said he and his family will return to Clemson, S.C., where he spent much of his academic career.

"We don't want two homes," so Clemson will be his base from now on, he said.

"The winters are entirely different," he added.

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