

# UNIVERSITY of ILLINOIS at SPRINGFIELD

## ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION

The alternative admission program at the University of Illinois at Springfield was developed to help mature persons expedite their entrance to the junior year of study at UIS. The purpose of the program is to allow UIS to consider a person's life/work experience as equivalent to a portion of the traditional freshman/sophomore years of study. Consideration is given only to persons who have a minimum of 12-15 years of work experience following completion of high school.

The key to being selected for admission through the Alternative Admission process is to show competency in the general education areas described under sections B and C of this document. Those competencies can be demonstrated, as described in the information, either by presenting transcripts of completed college courses or by satisfactorily completing the appropriate College Level Examination Process (CLEP) test(s).

It should be emphasized that the Alternative Admission process does **not** grant credit or an associate degree on a transcript. It waives credit and allows you to be classified as a junior at UIS. Upon completion of 60 credit hours of junior/senior course work at UIS, assuming all program and UIS graduation requirements are met, a bachelor's degree is awarded.

**NOTE: Credit for Prior Learning and Alternative Admissions are two separate programs and processes.**

The Alternative Admissions process is to assist applicants in earning admission to UIS; no credits are granted. There is only a waiver of credits required for admission to UIS.

The Credit for Prior Learning Program is to assist students in earning upper division credits for prior learning which apply towards graduation from UIS. Credits from CPL apply to graduation, not to admission.

Applicants do not need the Credit for Prior Learning course to gain alternative admission. However, the portfolio developed in CPL may be of some assistance to applicants when they prepare their narrative.

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD  
OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS**

**ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

It is possible for a student with less than 60 undergraduate semester hours of credit to be considered for admission to a bachelor degree program at the junior level. A program of Alternative Admission permits consideration of an individual's total life experience as admission criteria for a bachelor's degree study. The program is for the mature student who seeks junior status and has had extensive life learning which may be considered in lieu of the traditional classroom learning during the freshman and sophomore years. It is expected that the applicant would have had the minimum of 12-15 years of experience following high school. The Alternative Admissions Committee provides an individual assessment of each applicant's eligibility. Step-by-step procedures are listed below- see the following pages for detailed information.

1. Discuss the program with an Admissions Counselor (217-206-4847 or toll free at 888-977-4847)
2. Submit an application for admission marked "Alternative Admission" and the non-refundable application fee.
3. Submit official transcripts from all previously attended colleges or universities.
4. Determine whether the general education requirements have been met. If not, plan to meet any general education deficiencies by taking appropriate courses or taking the appropriate CLEP (College Level Examination Program) tests. General tests or subject tests may be considered; an applicant may decide to take any number of the five area tests and can choose courses in the remaining areas. These general education courses/tests are specifically required for alternative admission and will **not** count toward the upper-division degree requirements. Transfer guides for all Illinois community colleges are available online to assist in the selection of appropriate courses.
5. Plan to complete any special program prerequisites courses in addition to general education courses prior to beginning courses at UIS.
6. Letters of reference from appropriate former faculty, employers, etc. who can attest to your past learning demonstration and your ability to do upper-division academic work (junior-senior level). A minimum of three letters is required.
7. Prepare your narrative according to the guidelines provided. The narrative should be 4 to 7 pages, typed, double spaced. The narrative should emphasize learning experiences and help the committee determine that the learning through life experience is the equivalent of college work which you might have been expected to complete.
8. The Alternative Admissions Committee will meet when the application process is complete.

## A. Transcripts

Transcripts bearing the official college or university seal must be received from all colleges attended and must arrive at the Office of Admissions and Records directly from that school.

## B. General Education Requirements

All non-traditional applicants are required to show competencies in the five areas of general education. Applicants through the Alternative Admission process must meet the general education requirements before they can be fully admitted to the University. These competencies may be demonstrated by taking the required courses or by taking the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests covering the competency areas needed.

The General Education Requirements are;

<b>English</b> (2 Composition courses, 1 Speech)	at least 9 semester hours
<b>Humanities</b>	at least 9 semester hours
<b>Social Science</b>	at least 9 semester hours
<b>Mathematics</b> (1 applied math, 1 skills course)	at least 6 semester hours
<b>Science</b> (1 Physical, 1 Life science; 1 including lab)	at least 7 semester hours

Students should consult with the UIS Undergraduate Academic Advising Unit about which CLEP exam will fulfill the UIS general education requirements, as well as the score needed.

## C. Courses which meet the General Education Requirements

The five specific areas of general education may be satisfied by course work taken in the following areas:

**English** – composition, rhetoric, and speech; some courses in communication may be considered.

**Humanities** – art, music, drama, theater, literature, philosophy, religion/theology (not Bible).

**Social Science** – economics, history, sociology, anthropology, political science, psychology, and geography.

**Mathematics** –

**Math Skills** - college level math, college level algebra, calculus, trigonometry, finite, etc.

**Applied** – probability and statistics, statistics, and research methods.

**Science** – (one course must have a laboratory)

**Physical Science** - chemistry, astronomy, physics, geology, etc.

**Life Science** – biology, botany, zoology, entomology, etc.

### **C. Letters of Recommendation**

At least three letters of recommendation are required. These letters may be written by an employer, instructor, or other person who is in a position to comment on your personal, work, or academic achievements. The letters should attest to your past learning demonstration and your ability to do upper-division academic work (junior-senior level). If you have completed courses at UIS, or if you are currently enrolled at UIS, please submit at least one UIS faculty recommendation.

### **D. Narrative**

This following guide has been prepared to assist applicants as they develop the 4 to 7 page, typed, double-spaced narrative which is part of the application process. It is not expected that applicants will have information under all of the suggested categories, and there may be a number of additional categories. However, it is hoped that this will serve as a guide to facilitate the preparation.

The emphasis in the narrative should be directed at intellectual and emotional growth through learning experiences such as work, volunteer, and other activities. The narrative should concentrate not on personal issues as much as on learning experiences which would be the equivalent of subject areas covered in the classrooms of a college or university (i.e. management experience equals principles of business, personnel management, sales management, financial planning, etc.; secretarial experiences equals editing, composition, library reference, planning office management, office skills, and/or public relations).

Some areas to consider are:

1. Work experience – describe the level of responsibility, variety of assignments, titles, etc.
2. Community services – volunteer, church and school activities. Make specific note of committee on which you served, leadership positions, etc. Explain what you learned from those experiences.
3. Reading – are there particular emphases or themes identified in your reading sources? How extensively have you read in any particular field or area? Include some bibliography as samples of what you read.
4. Traveling – where have you traveled? Describe depth of cultural understanding and awareness of different parts of the world. (The travel itself is not sufficient; the learning from the travel is what the Alternative Admissions Committee is seeking.)
5. Family – rearing children, involvement in children's school activities, financial planning, dealing with specific family situations which were learning experiences, etc.

6. Professional seminars – include any seminars or professional meetings such as nursing, law enforcement, counseling, literature, computers, etc.
7. Hobbies – antiques (historical background), music, art, crafts, sports, etc.
8. Extension courses, special schooling, or related classroom experiences
9. Recognitions – awards, honors, promotions, selection for any kind of recognition.

**Important Note: The narrative should close with a Statement of Educational Goals and Objectives.** What academic program do you think you want to study and why? What do you hope to get from this educational experience? Why have you chosen to attend the University of Illinois at Springfield?

**E. Review**

9. When all required information (application for admission, application fee, narrative, letters of recommendation, transcripts or appropriate CLEP scores) are on file in the Office of Admissions, the Alternative Admissions Committee will review the application. If you have any questions, or if you would like to check on your application status, please contact the Office of Admissions at (217) 206-4847 or toll free at 888-977-4847.

Please submit the documents to:

**Office of Admissions  
University of Illinois at Springfield  
One University Plaza, MS UHB 1080  
Springfield, IL 62703-5407**

**Attention: Alternative Admissions Committee**