



## University of Illinois needs to improve salaries, officials say

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPRINGFIELD - Without higher pay and better perks, the University of Illinois will continue to lose talented faculty to other institutions, officials say.

In a discussion with the Board of Trustees Thursday, officials said professors are being lured from the university for more lucrative and higher profile positions elsewhere, including other public institutions, private schools such as Northwestern and the University of Chicago and Ivy Leagues.

"Salary issues are a pretty significant factor when it comes to other institutions coming in and raiding our top faculty," said Tom Hardy, university spokesman.

More than 130 top faculty have left the UI's three campuses \_ in Champaign-Urbana, Chicago and Springfield \_ for other schools in the last two years. About 70 percent of those left the flagship campus for other public schools, and at least another 13 went to Ivy League institutions.

About half who got offers from other schools stayed, officials said, but only after UI sweetened their salaries. Deans said they need more resources to get more professors to stay.

"There are too many instances of our department heads and chairs trying to fight a winning battle without the necessary ammunition," said UI President Joseph White.

Officials said it also isn't just about money: other schools can offer professors perks like research assistants. UI also needs to step up its profile, improve laboratories and other facilities, and boost the number of endowed positions.

The average salary for tenure-track professors at the Champaign campus is \$92,900 a year. In order to be competitive with other schools that number would need to rise to \$110,000, officials said.

But some observers questioned the need for salary increases for faculty in the relatively affordable central Illinois communities of Champaign and Urbana to match the amount made by professors in New York and Chicago.

"It's a poor excuse to say we need \$110,000 salaries because other people have it," said Jeff Trigg, executive director of the Illinois Taxpayer Education Foundation. "We need to be living within our means."

UI spends about \$960 million a year on faculty and staff compensation.