UCAR Membership Committee Review of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Program of research and studies

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign has been a member of UCAR since 1970. The Department of Atmospheric Sciences (DAS) at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) maintains an active program of education and research in the atmospheric sciences. The department is part of the School of Earth, Society, and Environment within the College of Liberal Arts. The DAS faculty currently has ten tenured and tenure-track members with several new hires planned in the next few years. There are two non-tenure-track faculty members and seven research staff.

The department offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees. The undergraduate curriculum meets the AMS and federal government requirements. There are currently 73 undergraduate majors and 48 graduate students. In the last five years the department has awarded 71 B.S., 46 M.S., and 17 Ph.D. degrees. The department also teaches popular undergraduate service courses.

The department currently occupies two campus buildings. Plans are underway to move the entire department into a newly renovated building within a few years. The department has substantial computing facilities and also uses national computing facilities at NCAR, the NSF Supercomputing Center on the UIUC campus, and elsewhere.

Progress in the atmospheric sciences

The department has an active research program in a wide range of sub-disciplines with the atmospheric sciences, with approximately $3M in grants and contracts annually. During the last five years department members have published over 300 peer-reviewed scientific papers in leading journals. Members also organize scientific conferences and participate in the governance of scientific societies.

Participation in UCAR activities

Department members have been active in UCAR governance and research activities, including service on the UCAR Board of Trustees, the Membership Committee, the Research Applications Program Advisory Committee, and the President’s Advisory Committee on University Relations (PACUR). Junior faculty members have attended UCAR members meetings. Researchers are active users of NCAR models and facilities.

Summary and Recommendation

In summary, the UIUC Department of Atmospheric Sciences meets the all of the criteria for UCAR membership, and the Membership Committee recommend that their membership be renewed.