

**Bone Student Center/Braden Auditorium
Benchmarking Summary
2002-2003**

The Bone Student Center/Braden Auditorium (BSC/BA) staff conducted the benchmarking project in Spring 03. Each department head was provided with information explaining benchmarking, its purpose and its importance, especially during difficult budget times. Department heads were instructed to choose two or three institutions from the “Suggested Illinois State University Aspiration Schools” list developed by the Institutional Research Office. It was stressed that institutions where they already have a working relationship built would be the most successful.

Most department heads participated in a phone conference with their counterparts at Ball State University and Miami University student centers. Other schools department heads benchmarked against included Clemson University, University of Northern Iowa, Florida State, the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Western Michigan, Purdue University and the University of Illinois – Springfield.

Staff focused their conversation around staffing structure, costs associated with their unit such as user costs and wages, rates and charges applied to services and, challenges and strengths of various departments. Each department head then turned in a written report to their direct supervisor and to the Director of the BSC/BA.

Results

- Organizational structures vary from one student center to the next.
- Operational hours vary based on schools and events’ needs.
- Most student centers do not include an Auditorium the size of Braden Auditorium.
- Both Ball State and Miami are truly student-centered by virtue of the number of student events held within the centers and, student organizations and student services functions housed in their respective buildings.
- Several student centers offer “as is” rooms which allow for the quick and easy scheduling of rooms.
- Each of Miami’s and Ball State’s facilities’ staff covers 6,129 and 16,190 square feet, respectively, while BSC/BA facilities staff cover 20,000 square feet.
- Miami’s and Ball State’s dining operations in the student center are self-operated by university dining operations, which is similar to BSC’s arrangement with CDS.
- Most student centers include a food court.
- At various institutions, event sponsors are billed public rates if an external entity co-sponsors a university event.

Recommendations:

- Provide office space in BSC/BA for student organizations and student services functions to create a “true” college union atmosphere at Illinois State University.
- Provide more gathering spaces for community building.

- Continue to modernize (technology) BSC/BA to meet the ever changing needs of the University community, especially students.
- Increase the number of “as is” rooms which will enable the Scheduling staff to expedite the event scheduling process and the Facilities staff to redirect their time to other building needs.
- Review student staffing patterns in each operation to increase student hours.
- Implement uniforms for student staff, especially those who come in contact with the public.
- Review operational hours on a semester basis to ensure efficient use of resources.
- Review scheduling policy for public events and determine whether there is a need to implement a deposit policy for first time users.
- Review billing policies and practices for co-sponsored events.