

WGLT
2026-2028
Final – April 2026

Illinois State University Mission, Vision, and Core Values Alignment

As an Illinois Board of Higher Education-recognized Service Center at Illinois State University, WGLT works to align itself with the Vision, Mission, and Values as outlined in ISU's strategic plan, *Excellence By Design 2024-2030*.

Mission

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University prepares diverse, engaged, and informed members of society through collaborative teaching, scholarship, and service.

WGLT is McLean County's leader in local news. As both a proud member of the NPR Network and a state-recognized Service Center at Illinois State University, we inform our audience with the highest quality local, national, and international news coverage. WGLT serves as a training ground for the journalists of tomorrow in every facet of our news operation, leading with the understanding that independent journalism is the foundation of the First Amendment and a thriving democracy.

Vision

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University will be a national leader in student-focused education connecting teaching, research, innovation, and intercultural understanding.

WGLT aspires to be Central Illinois' first and most trusted destination for local news. Serving our community with high-quality, timely content and coverage at no cost is at the heart of our public media mission. We aim to earn and maintain the trust of our community with consistent, high-quality, timely content and coverage. WGLT will serve as a training ground for the journalists of tomorrow in every facet of our news operation, leading with the understanding that independent journalism is the foundation of a thriving democracy. We will innovate in all areas of our business to remain financially sustainable - especially in light of public media's loss of federal funding - so that we may serve a dynamic and thriving community for years to come.

Values

Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship

From Excellence by Design: Illinois State University students, faculty, and staff excel in the pursuit of learning as an active, lifelong process through a balanced model of

teaching, research, creative productivity, and experiential learning.

WGLT will:

- Embody the university motto “We Gladly Learn and Teach”
- Provide a media and journalism learning laboratory to ISU students
- Share novel and relevant content to inspire learning in our listeners and readers
- Generate new insights and expand thinking with rigorous journalistic inquiry and analysis

Individualized Attention

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University provides a supportive, student-centered environment that maximizes each student’s potential. The University fosters academic and personal growth, recognizes unique educational aspirations, and values each faculty and staff member’s contributions to student success.

WGLT will:

- Ensure that WGLT internships and professional opportunities are substantive and sensitive to learner contexts
- Lend the authority and credibility of institutional media to the lives and particulars of our neighbors’ lives and struggles
- Grow and retain our audience one person at a time
- Resist the forces of the “corporate attention economy” and maintain in-depth, high-quality focus on local, complex, and accurate news

Equity, Diversity, Access, and Belonging

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University upholds and models a campus culture of belonging dedicated to equity, diversity, access, and social justice for all.

WGLT will:

- Champion student talent, experiences, and perspectives as a major source of diversity at ISU, WGLT/WCUBU/The Vidette, in McLean County, and within public radio
- Level the playing field for prospective interns by funding paid positions, so that no student has to choose between getting career experience and earning money.
- Make our freely available content accessible to all types of digital users, including those with disabilities.
- Do the extra legwork to reach more diverse sources

Collaboration

From Excellence By Design: The Illinois State University community works collaboratively through shared governance to ensure a culture of success, development, and continuous improvement. The University partners with business, industry,

government, and educational entities to expand outreach and provide leadership expertise in local, statewide, national, and international initiatives.

WGLT will:

- Convene the talent represented by The Vidette (students/ISU), WGLT (BloNo), WCBU (region), other Illinois public media outlets (state), and NPR (nation) to advance common goals
- Maintain a station culture that expects and respects contributions from all
- Actively seek unlikely or unusual sources and partners both within and external to station staff

Community and Civic Engagement

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University prepares students to be informed, ethical, and engaged global leaders who will shape, uphold, and advance civic engagement as a lifelong responsibility for the betterment of society.

WGLT will:

- Staff the station and its projects with community members who are invested in the health of our civic institutions
- Seek out, participate in and lead matters of consequence to the community, from the League of Women Voters to NAACP and more
- Help to make our local institutions and their operations accessible for all to understand and engage with
- Lift up our community organizations, small businesses, and civic institutions and make plain their value to our audiences' quality of life
- Engage at and connect with local, regional, and state issues, events, and culture
- Mentor elementary, middle and high school students on news literacy and careers in media to recruit the next generation news consumers, students and employees

Respect

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University fosters a culture that embodies mutual respect, openness to new ideas, different cultural perspectives, and a synergistic approach to problem-solving. Faculty, staff, and students promote understanding, acknowledge each other's rights to express differing opinions, and listen and respond to opposing views with civility.

WGLT will:

- Communicate with listeners, readers, and supporters thoughtfully and with an open mind

- Earn support without gossip or clickbait, respecting the complexity of the community we cover and the issues at hand
- Respect ourselves and the community enough to test our limits and challenge our assumptions

Integrity

From Excellence By Design: Illinois State University promotes the highest levels of ethical standards and accountability in personal and professional actions in all endeavors.

WGLT will:

- Maintain steadfast dedication to transparency, accountability, and fairness
- Earn listener, reader, and supporter trust with continued mission-driven, value-based content
- Maintain a sustainable business model