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September 26, 2000

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

EIU HOSTS TRANSFER STUDENTS, COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNSELORS

CHARLESTON – Because more than 37 percent of Eastern Illinois University's undergraduate student population is comprised of transfer students, their opinions matter.

That's why Eastern officials have invited transfer students, community college advisors and transfer coordinators to a two-day Community College Articulation Conference today (Wednesday) and tomorrow on the EIU campus.

"The Articulation Conference provides a means for soliciting feedback from students on how their transfer experience went and how their Eastern experience is unfolding. We also receive suggestions for improvement directly from the students," said Rita Pearson, assistant director of admissions/transfer coordinator at Eastern.

Pearson said of Eastern's 10,627 students, 3,467 are undergraduate transfer

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## TRANSFERS

students. Of those, 858 are new to the campus this fall.

Eastern attracts transfer students from a number of community colleges with the top 10 (in terms of number of students who enroll at Eastern) being Lake Land College in Mattoon; Illinois Eastern Colleges in Olney, Fairfield, Robinson and Mt. Carmel; Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills; College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn; Parkland College in Champaign; Joliet Junior College; Harper College in Palatine; Illinois Central College in East Peoria; Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield; and Danville Area Community College.

Today's program includes check-in at 3 p.m. in the University Union's Alumni Lounge. Community college representatives will have the opportunity to talk with Pat Gartley, articulation coordinator, in the Union's University Ballroom. Colleges that have new or revised courses have the opportunity to submit them for articulation.

Student meetings will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. in the University Ballroom and will provide transfers with the opportunity to visit with community college counselors and their peers who have made the transition to Eastern. Surveys will be distributed for students to complete and/or individual assessments/interviews are encouraged.

The conference on Thursday begins with check-in and a continental breakfast at 7:30 a.m. in the Union's Alumni Lounge, followed by welcoming remarks by Eastern President Carol Surles.

Throughout the morning, there will be a variety of presentations by university officials, with a discussion of the new general education requirements and campus

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## TRANSFERS

improvements highlighting the agenda. Participants will break for lunch at 12:30 p.m., with a closing session and campus tour at 1:30 and 1:45 p.m., respectively.

“Our staff will have the opportunity to talk candidly with community college representatives to determine how well we are serving Illinois students and seek suggestions for improvement,” Pearson said.

She noted that Eastern works closely with community colleges to improve the articulation of courses and programs. “We are full participants in the Illinois Articulation Initiative, which is a voluntary cooperative effort to facilitate the transfer of students in Illinois. This means that IAI-approved courses will be accepted as general education at the lower level. We will accept these courses and place them in the appropriate corresponding component at Eastern.”

Pearson added that Eastern continues to have faculty representation on IAI panels for majors and the IAI steering panel. As a member of the Transfer Coordinators Committee of IAI, Pearson and other transfer coordinators throughout the state work closely with representatives from the Illinois Board of Higher Education and Illinois Community College Board to develop a system to facilitate the transfer of all Illinois students.

“I think what we have done at the statewide and campus level has made a difference. At Eastern, we have done a number of things to make the transition for new transfers a smooth one. Our academic advisement area holds a series of seminars for new transfer students which provide additional information and tips on surviving college.

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## TRANSFERS

We are also starting a Transfer Student Organization for all interested students,” Pearson said.

“New this year is the publication of a transfer viewbook which includes information of particular interest to transfers. We also have open houses Oct. 9 and Nov. 10 where prospective transfers can visit campus and talk to departments about possible majors, take campus tours and eat in one of our residence halls,” she added.

Pearson said transfer students at Eastern are very successful. “They do very well academically and add so much to our campus in both experience and diversity.”