

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

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Eastern Illinois University

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THE WEEKLY EDITION

THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

'TELL THE TRUTH AND DON'T BE AFRAID'

January 12, 2022

MORE THAN A CENTURY OF COVERAGE

VOL. 106 | NO. 70

WHAT TO EXPECT IN



The last several years have been unpredictable, but what is guaranteed to happen in 2022? See Page 3 to find out.

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BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Taylor Iverson, a sophomore pre-veterinarian biology major (right) tests for COVID-19 at Eastern's Student Recreation Center Court 5 on Monday, Jan. 10, 2022. Eastern University President David Glassman sent out an email stating that "all EIU students and employees are expected to complete on-campus SHIELD testing upon their return to campus" for the spring semester.

Campus 'expected' to test for COVID

Eastern is encouraging, but not requiring, all students and employees to take COVID-19 tests upon returning to campus.

By Corryn Brock
Editor-in-Chief | @corryn_brock

Testing will be available at Court 5 of the Student Rec Center Jan. 10, 11 and 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Jan. 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Other public institutions in Illinois, like the University of Illinois and Illinois State University, have announced plans to have a period of time with online instruction in response to an increase in COVID-19 cases statewide. Illinois has seen nearly 2.4 COVID-19 and 31,660 deaths caused by COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic.

Vice President of Academic Affairs Jay Gatrell said the university will not have a university-wide period of online instruction due to research within the university. "Without knowing the specific

situations of other institutions, our survey feedback and the observed student data over the past two years has been consistent— EIU students value and benefit from a consistent mode of intended instruction—and the majority of our students prefer face-to-face experiences," Gatrell said. "Coupled with SHIELD testing and established protocols, in-person learning best demonstrates our commitment to student success while still maintaining the health and safety on campus."

Gatrell said previous shifts in how courses are offered have had a negative impact.

"Unfortunately, temporary changes in modality are disruptive and feedback from students and faculty alike has been consistent that temporary shifts are problematic and stressful. The data also indicate that critical student success metrics, such as retention rates and academic standing, were being negatively affected," Gatrell said. "The University feels that because of the resources available that students can safely be on campus and in the residence halls moving forward with the existing schedule and calendar."

Faculty who are assigned in-person classes will have the opportunity to elect for their classes to temporarily have hybrid delivery for the first week of the semester.

This follows an agreement with Eastern's chapter of the union University Professionals of Illinois.

The agreement also requires that the university encourage the use of N95, KN95, ASTM-3 masks and other comparable equivalents in campus spaces, make two of the previously listed masks available for students and employees and continuation of COVID-19 policies that are currently in place.

Beyond classes, students should expect little change to the upcoming semester.

Students and employees are not currently required to have the COVID-19 vaccine, but all are highly encouraging all of the campus community to receive the vaccine and booster.

Similar to the fall semester students and employees who are not vaccinated must complete weekly COVID-19 testing or face disciplinary actions.

Corryn Brock can be reached at 581-2812 or at deneic@gmail.com.

About

The Daily Eastern News is produced by the students of Eastern Illinois University. It is published weekly on Wednesday, in Sullivan, Ill., during fall and spring semesters and online during the summer term except during university vacations or examinations. One copy per week is free to students and employees. Additional copies can be obtained for 50 cents each in the Student Publications Office in Buzzard Hall.

Advertising

To place an advertisement or classified ad in The Daily Eastern News, call the ads office at 581-2812 or fax 581-2923. Visit our online advertisements at dailyeasternnews.com/classifieds.

Comments / Tips

Contact any of the above staff members if you believe your information is relevant.

Corrections

The Daily Eastern News is committed to accuracy in its coverage of the news. Any factual error the staff finds or is made aware of by its readers will be corrected as promptly as possible. Please report any factual error you find to Editor-in-Chief Corryn Brock at 581-2812.

Employment

If you would like to work for The Daily Eastern News as a reporter, photographer, columnist, cartoonist, copy editor, designer or videographer, please visit it at the newsroom at 1811 Buzzard Hall.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING JAN. 12-19

WEDNESDAY

Winter Welcome Days
1-3 p.m. - Bridge Lounge, MLK Jr. University Union
Student Senate Meeting
7 p.m. - 7th St. Underground, MLK Jr. University Union

SATURDAY

YOUR EVENT COULD GO HERE...

MONDAY

MLK Jr. Day - No Classes!
All Day
MLK Jr. Vigil and Celebration
5:30 p.m. - Thomas Hall, then the Grand Ballroom in the MLK Jr. University Union

THURSDAY

Council on Academic Affairs Meeting
2 p.m. - Witters Conference Room, Booth Library

TUESDAY

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m. - City Hall

SUNDAY

OR HERE! CONTACT US TO BE INCLUDED.

FRIDAY

MLK Jr. Flag Raising
1:30 p.m. - "We Are EIU" Flagpole outside Lumpkin Hall

WEDNESDAY

Student Senate Meeting
7 p.m. - 7th St. Underground, MLK Jr. University Union

Send your event information to dennewsdesk@gmail.com to be added to our online and print calendars!

What to expect in 2022

Story By Madelyn Kidd
News Editor | @DEN_news



BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

President Glassman delivers his State of the University address in the Dvorak Concert Hall on Oct. 6, 2021. During his speech he announced his intention to retire in June 2023.

1. During University President David Glassman's State of the University address on Oct. 6, 2021, Glassman announced his retirement plans.

Glassman plans to retire in June 2023, so the search committee for the next university president will begin sometime this year.

The search begins once the Board of Trustees approves

the advisory committee for the search of the next university president.

The search committee includes 18 people who will hold a nation-wide search, which they narrow down to finalists and bring the finalists to Eastern for interviews.

The search committee a part of hiring Glassman included both students, faculty, administration and non-faculty members.



BY CORRYN BROCK | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Angie Campbell, former chair of the Naming Committee, and April Marchuk, executive assistant to the vice president of advancement,

2. The Naming Committee will continue to work towards naming recommendations to give the Board of Trustees.

University President David Glassman plans to have a discussion on renaming Douglas Hall during the Jan. 21 Board of Trustees meeting and to have the potential rename for Douglas Hall as an action item by the April 22 meeting.

Douglas Hall's controversial namesake, Stephen Douglas, is a controversial historical figure due

to him being a pro-slavery proponent. However, the name has been popular in Coles County because of his part in Abraham Lincoln's history, specifically the Lincoln-Douglas Debates.

The debate on changing the name began in 2010 and previous committees voted to hold onto the name. Last year the committee was reconvened by Glassman to review the issue once more, leading to the committee voting to recommend a rename.

The Naming Committee meets next on Thursday at 9 a.m. in Old Main Room 1019.

3. Eastern plans to build a new science building to house the Biological Sciences and the Chemistry and Biochemistry Departments at "The Tundra" south of the Tarble Arts Center.

The approximately 171,000 square foot science building will include classrooms and research laboratories.

Eastern received \$118.8 mil-

lion in funding for the new science building through Governor J.B. Pritzker Bi-partisan Rebuild Illinois Capital Plan.

Through this funding, the Illinois Capital Development Board chose the preferred architectural design firm as RATIO Architects, Inc.

The plan for a new science building located at "The Tundra" was started as early as August 2010.



BY CORRYN BROCK | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

State Sen. Darren Bailey speaks to a man at State Rep. Chris Miller's fundraising event on Sept. 2, 2019. Bailey is currently running for governor of Illinois.

4. The Illinois general elections are on Nov. 8 and primary elections on June 28 after Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker pushed back the original March 15 date due to the delayed census data.

Pritzker also made the general election a state holiday.

The 2022 general elections include elections for the U.S. Senate, Illinois Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, Illinois House, Governor and oth-

er statewide constitutional officers.

Pritzker also made curbside voting and voting by mail a permanent way for citizens to vote.

Races of interest include State Senator Darren Bailey, who currently represents the district Eastern is in, is running for governor and U.S. Rep. Mary Miller is seeking to unseat U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis in the primaries after being districted out.

Miller is endorsed by former president Donald Trump.

5. In March, Eastern's theatre department presents "Little Women the Broadway Musical" at Doudna Fine Arts Center.

Performances take place on March 3 at 7:30 p.m., March 4 at 7:30 p.m., March 5 at 7:30 p.m. and March 6 at 2 p.m. in the Theatre within Doudna.

Tickets are \$10 for stu-

dents, \$15 Eastern's employees or for seniors and \$20 for the public.

Tickets are available for purchase online at www.doudnatix.com or call Doudna's box office at 217-581-3110.

"Little Women the Broadway Musical" is based on the novel "Little Women" written by Louisa May Alcott based on Alcott's life, which was published in the late 1860s.

Eastern alum enters the 'shark tank'

Pitches business that allows fans to connect with celebrities

By Corryn Brock

Editor-in-Chief | @coryn_brock

Eastern alum and former Eastern football team member Keithan Hedrick and his wife, Quiante, appeared in Jan. 7 episode of Shark Tank, a show that allows entrepreneurs to pitch their products or businesses to investors.

The Hedricks pitched their business, Candi, to the "sharks" as well as comedian Kevin Hart.

Candi is a service that allows fans to connect with celebrities and influencers in a live video call, with over 350 people currently available for fans to connect with on the website.

Popular people to connect with through the website include singer Sisqó, Saturday Night Live cast member Chris Kattan, and Wild N Out star Justina Valentine.

Though none of the investors offered to invest in the business, Keithan Hedrick said there are many opportunities to be had just by being on the show.

"There's no losing going on Shark Tank whether you get a deal, don't get a deal, either way, just being able to get on the show and to get air is a win," Keithan Hedrick said.

In terms of his business, the couple is ready to keep going and continuing the work that got them to where they are now.

Keithan Hedrick said lining people up for the business took a lot of work and connections.

"Initially it's reaching out to cousins, uncles, aunties, whoever you can get in contact with that knows a celebrity, it's sending them DMs, it's email and just calling them and getting in contact with their managers, their agents," Keithan Hedrick said.

He said there's no one-size-fits-all approach with his business.

"You're kind of just hustling and doing everything you can. Now, obviously, we've been doing it for a while and we've got some celebrities, and so we have a little bit more success and we have some direct relationships that we can tap into to recruit," Keithan Hedrick said. "Particularly early on, it was just a lot of hard work and reaching out and cold calling almost like sales and trying to get in contact with in any way you could."

Keithan Hedrick gave Eastern a shout out while on the show and explained his college experience.

As a student, Keithan Hedrick took on the responsibility of raising his two brothers while pursuing his bachelor's degree in applied science and playing for Eastern's football team.

After attending Eastern, Keithan Hedrick went on to pur-



Keithan Hedrick and Quiante Hedrick pitch their business, Candi, on Shark Tank. Candi is a service that allows fans to connect with celebrities and influencers through video calling.

sue a law degree at the University of Illinois and now works as a lawyer dealing with mergers and acquisitions.

In an interview with Roc Bellatoni, former football assistant head coach and defensive coordinator, a bright future for Keithan Hedrick was predicted.

"I could see him being a lawyer and honestly I could see him going into politics afterwards. He has a very infectious personality, people are kind of drawn to him and I could see him being a lawyer for a while and moving on to bigger and better things," Bellatoni said. "Maybe being a lead-

er not only to the city of Chicago, the state of Illinois, but maybe the country. I really could see that. It sounds crazy but the kid has a real presence about him."

Corryn Brock can be reached at 581-2812 or at deneic@gmail.com.

BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Students reflect on first day of classes

By **Katja Benz**

Campus Reporter | @katjabenz1

Classes for the spring semester began Jan. 10 and despite the continued obstacles of the COVID-19 pandemic, students are ready to get started.

That includes Justus Lopresto-Jackson, a sophomore computer information technology major.

Lopresto-Jackson said it was nice to get back into the swing of things.

“First day of classes was good,” Lopresto-Jackson said. “Glad to see familiar faces again. Hopefully with the rise of COVID again everything can still be normal in terms of events and activities similar to last semester.”

Even with the welcome events, some students, like Katie Frankovich, a freshman communication disorders and sciences major, found it difficult to navigate a new semester.

“It was as difficult to find my classes as I thought it would be,” Frankovich said. “Overall the classes went really well, and I’m excited to see what this semester holds.”

Frankovich also said that she was “looking forward to learning new things in class and about our campus.”

Some students may view each new semester as a fresh start and may feel hopeful when getting started with each new semester.

Even though each class has a different structure, the first week of each semester looks similar to every other semester, according to William Meyer, a freshman theater major.

“I mean, the first day of any semester usually is a combination of looking around for your classes, going over the syllabus of each class, and some form of introduction,” Meyer said. “But the general feeling is that of a hopeful readiness for the new semester and for what’s to come, for some it’s the final stretch until they leave the school for good,



BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

President Glassman delivers his State of the University address in the Dvorak Concert Hall on Oct. 6, 2021. During his speech he announced his intention to retire in June 2023.

for others it’s still a long way to go. There are definitely people dreading going back to school, but I find myself enjoying being back as attending classes gives me a structured agenda that helps my career, exercises my mind and gets me out of the house. I’m glad to be back.”

Some students may also begin to feel the pressure in some of their classes even though it

is the first day of the semester. Students are getting back into the full swing after three weeks of relaxing without schoolwork.

Jonathan Coffin, a freshman pre-nursing major, said that his classes went well.

“Definitely more intense than last semester but the teachers were super nice and my classes are very interesting,” Coffin said. “I’m looking forward

to learning a lot especially in my Spanish class and also just seeing everything Eastern has this semester. I feel like every new semester is a new chance to grow as a person and this is such a fun campus to do that on.”

Katja Benz can be reached at 581-2812 or at kjbenz@eiu.edu

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DAILYEASTERNEWS.COM



THROUGH THE LENS: Returning to campus



BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

A group of students in Lawson hall carry groceries and move in their belongings before Spring semester classes start.



BY ROB LE CATES | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Whitney a sophomore business marketing major moves into Taylor Hall using laundry baskets to carry belongings on Sunday, Jan. 9, 2022.



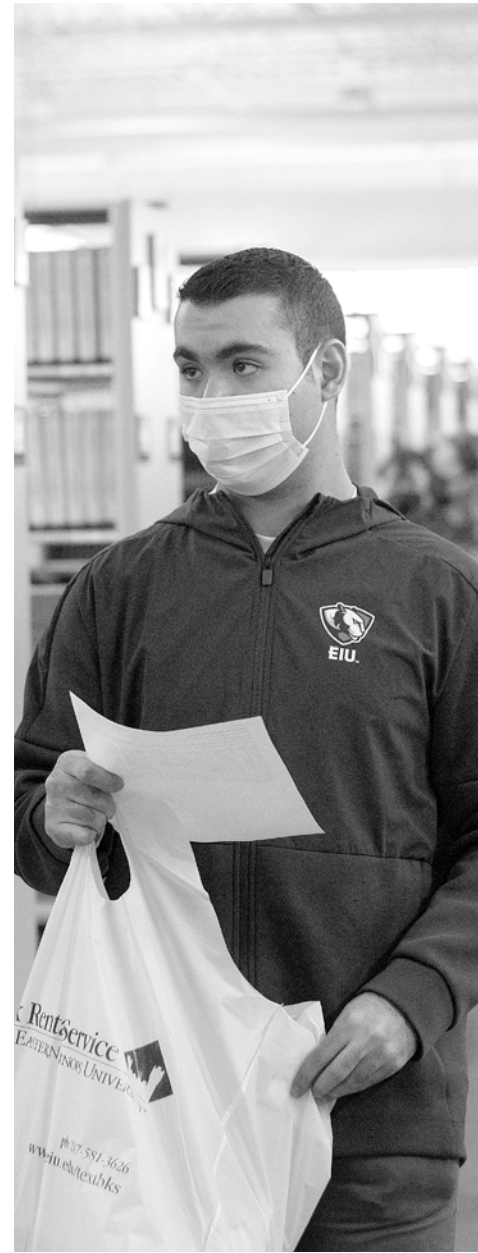
BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Elizabeth Wilder, a freshman undecided major, hugs her friend, Rileigh Haarmann, a freshman communication disorders and sciences major, when she gets off the elevator while moving back into the residence halls for Spring semester.



BY ROB LE CATES | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Isai Morales, a freshman biology major, tests at Eastern's Student Recreation Center Court 5 for COVID-19 on Monday, Jan. 10, 2022. Eastern University President David Glassman sent out an email stating that "all EIU students and employees are expected to complete on-campus SHIELD testing upon their return to campus" for the spring semester.



BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Ken Grimaudo, a sophomore marketing major, searches the shelves to find his textbooks Sunday afternoon at the Textbook Rental building.



BY ASHANTI THOMAS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

At Textbook Rental Sunday afternoon, Jack Valente, a freshman physics and pre-engineering major, gathers his textbooks before Spring semester classes start.

Editorial

Admins show weakness, complacency

This week Eastern “encouraged” and “expected” students and employees to get tested for COVID-19 as they flood back to campus for the Spring 2022 semester. Despite this, they apparently did not have it in them to require the simple task of students and employees despite the number of COVID-19 cases rising drastically nationwide.

We at *The Daily Eastern News* are appalled that university officials so seasoned are deciding to take the backseat on this matter and be inactive, putting the campus and surrounding communities at risk in the process.

Testing is the absolute bare minimum that the university should be requiring and only requiring testing would be laughable if it was not so willingly complicit in spreading COVID-19.

Since the start of the pandemic to Dec. 31, 2021, Coles County had 10,118 cases. Within a week of the new year, that number had jumped nearly 10 percent to 11,085.

There is no doubt that number will increase as students and employees partake in their optional testing, only adding to the issues here in Charleston and the county as a whole and who knows how many more

cases will spread from individuals who do not get tested because they are not required to.

With the lack of action from administrators, we are worried about what comes next. What

will make the university finally take a stand and ensure student’s safety?



Comic by Will Simmons

Quote of the Day:

" Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly. "

Mahatma Gandhi

Letter from the Editor

What readers can expect in the Spring 2022 semester

Last semester, I told you of the updates our publication would be seeing. This semester, I am proud to tell you more about where our publication is headed and what you can expect from us this semester.

A redesigned weekly paper

If you are holding the newspaper in your hands right now, you are holding an entirely redesigned publication.

This includes new fonts, new styles and the first of many new and exciting ideas.

As we settle in to printing once a week over our typical daily publication, we are excited to spend more time on designing and creating visual elements to compliment stories.



Corryn Brock

A weekly newsletter

On Fridays, a weekly newsletter will go out to highlight the week’s events.

Additionally, the newsletter will

highlight what is to come in the next week.

A staff podcast

This week we are starting with a new podcast, The News Desk.

The podcast will feature staff members being interviewed by Multimedia News Editor Luke Taylor regarding recent and near-future news.

This podcast will cover topics from all sections of *The News*, including news, sports, opinions and photography.

For the first episode, I will be going more in-depth into changes with our publication and I invite everyone to listen in and learn more about how we have operated in the past compared to how we will be operating moving forward.

Some more of the same

With so many changes at once, it is easy to think that this will be a completely different publication.

However, as Editor-in-Chief I would like to ensure all of our readers that we are dedicated to continuing the tradition of student media at Eastern.

For the past three and a half years, I have been happy to continue the traditions of our publication and I am so excited to be a part of creating the next traditions for years to come.

Welcome back, readers.

Corryn Brock is a senior journalism major. She can be reached at 581.2812 or at deneic@gmail.com

Editorial Board

Corryn Brock Theo Edwards Madelyn Kidd Luke Taylor Adam Tumino Ashanti Thomas

Social Commentary

Dear Instagram, thank you for ruining my mental health

Holidays are the worst. From the stress of buying presents to the family gatherings, holidays can reek of stress and unhappiness.

Social media never makes breaks any easier. All everybody sees is a highlight reel of somebody else's life, one they may so desperately want to live themselves.

During break, I saw people going to the Christkindlmarket in Chicago, which as great as it looks, probably isn't worth the hype just for some really expensive hot chocolate.

I also saw people I know post about getting engaged around Christmas, which actually made me feel really bad about myself.

I've noticed that while I'm happy for these people, all I want is to have their life. It felt like I was missing out on something really special, even though I'm nowhere near ready to be engaged.

Over break, my boyfriend and I



Katja Benz

talked about 'the Instagram aesthetic' and how harmful it can be to outside viewers. People's Instagram profiles persuade others that their life is more amazing than possible.

In reality, all we see is what people want us to see: from the wide array of friends you see in only one picture to how happy they are on the outside, even though they're

too unsure of themselves on the inside.

All social media is external validation that someone is really popular. That works for some people, but it really just seems to make people feel bad about themselves.

Social media can help us connect with others, which it did during the beginning of the pandemic, but it really just gives people a distorted view of reality.

McLean Hospital, a Harvard Medical School affiliate, said that when people see that they are missing out on something, they get a false sense of how others appear. McLean Hospital continued by saying, "In addition to providing young people with a window through which they can view missed experiences, social media puts a distorted lens on appearances and reality."

With that distorted lens, all we see is how imperfect our own life is. All we want to show is anything

but.

It's hard watching people going about their lives thinking that it's okay and normal to feel like their life has to be validated by the world around them. Who are people really trying to impress?

Are people trying to one up others? Or are they just upset that people 'have' a better life than them?

It's hard watching people do this to themselves because I fall prey to the same tactics. The same ones that make me feel awful about myself for not 'being perfect'.

I know it's not my fault. Social media is designed that way.

Which begs the question of why we have it at all, especially when we know we shouldn't.

Katja Benz is a junior English major. She can be reached at 581-2812 or at kjbenz@eiu.edu.

Psychology

Hong Kong journalists, the psychology behind governmental control

It is said that humans can be selfish creatures, but as displayed through many protest efforts in history time again, people don't speak out just for themselves but for the hope that life will be better for future generations to come.

When people speak out, despite the consequences of potential arrest or violence, it requires major empathy for fellow people.

Last month consequently to efforts of free media and coverage of protests, Stand News in Hong Kong was raided by around 200 police officers, according to Al Jazeera Media Network.

These journalists are not terrorists. Large enforcement was not needed. They were raided by a large number of police officers to be made an example of and it worked.

Citizen News, another independent Hong Kong news outlet followed in shutting down on January fourth due to concerns about staff safety.

Both Stand News and Citizen News were part of covering pro-democracy protest movements in Hong Kong, especially during pro-



Theo Edwards

tests to the extradition bill China tried to put in place in 2019. The bill has since been redacted but protests continue for full democracy.

After the protest movements were riddled with major arrests and national security law (a law where virtually anything deemed a threat to "national security" could bring any suspects to mainland China to be handled within the mainland's criminal justice system and tried under mainland law), the news outlets turned the focus to the courts

and put dozens of criminal cases against protesters and opposition politicians into the public eye.

The Chinese government shutting down independent journalism this way is not just a political and democratic issue, but it must be acknowledged that specific fear tactics are being used. There is a psychological angle to this.

There is a baseline violation to making people fear to speak up as well as restricting people's access to information on what is going on in their country.

By taking away information and knowledge it limits citizens from being able to talk about or even think about what is going wrong. This is not new when it comes to China.

Trying to gaslight citizens into believing a modified version of history as such by the erasure of Tiananmen Square Massacre, a student-led protest in 1989 for greater accountability, constitutional due process, democracy, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech.

According to History television network online, "Chinese

troops and security police stormed through Tiananmen Square, firing indiscriminately into the crowds of protesters. Turmoil ensued, as tens of thousands of the young students tried to escape the rampaging Chinese forces. Other protesters fought back, stoning the attacking troops and overturning and setting fire to military vehicles. Reporters and Western diplomats on the scene estimated that at least 300, and perhaps thousands, of the protesters had been killed and as many as 10,000 were arrested."

To this day the Chinese government refuses to acknowledge it and censors it on the internet there.

It is important to look at this from a psychological standpoint and that the Chinese government is not enacting these laws and conducting raids for safety, but enacting fear in people to make them behave the way the government wants them to.

Theo Edwards is a junior psychology major. They can be reached at 581-2812 or at heedwards@eiu.edu.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

SHOULD EASTERN MANDATE COVID-19 TESTING AND VACCINES?

CHECK OUT DAILYEASTERNNEWS.COM TO SEE WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

Women's basketball team starts OVC play 1-1

By Adam Tumino

Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

The Eastern women's basketball team started conference play over Winter Break, starting off with an OVC record of 1-1.

The Panthers would have had two more conference games under their belt as well, but their Jan. 6 game against Murray State and Jan. 8 game against Tennessee Tech were both postponed due to health and safety protocols within Eastern's program.

Prior to the conference opener, Eastern also played a non-conference game against Lipscomb, which they lost 54-47. They also had a nonconference game against Wisconsin canceled due to COVID issues with Wisconsin.

Once the Panthers took the court in conference play, they took care of Morehead State with relative ease, winning 91-64.

Eastern dominated the Eagles on the boards, outrebounding them 50-25. The Panthers had 17 offensive rebounds and converted them to 21 second-chance points.

Morehead State had just four offensive rebounds as a team.

The Panthers shot 13-of-27 from three-point range in the game, led by junior Morgan Litwiller who shot 5-of-8 from deep. She led the team with a season-high 18 points in the game.

Senior forward Abby Wahl led the team with eight rebounds and finished fourth with 14 points.

Junior guard Lariah Washington and senior guard Jordyn Hughes added 17 points apiece.

The 91 points in the game set a new high for the Panthers this season.

Their next game was against perennial OVC powerhouse Belmont, who the Panthers have not beaten since Jan. 10, 2015.

Belmont entered the game ranked No. 19 in the College Insider Women's Mid-Major Top 25.

The Bruins pulled away in the second half to win their eighth-straight game against Eastern.

The Panthers outscored Belmont 18-15 in the first quarter, but the Bruins outscored Eastern 56-39 the rest of the way.

Neither offense shot particularly well, with Eastern shooting just 30.9 percent and Belmont shooting 37.1 percent from the field.

The Panthers won the turnover battle once again, forcing 17 turnovers while turning the ball over 13 times. They continue to lead the OVC in turnover margin this season.

While the Panther offense as a whole struggled, Washington had another strong game. She scored a team-high 15 points on 6-of-15 shooting before fouling out late in the game.

After the two postponements, the Panthers are scheduled to host Southern Illinois-Edwardsville on Thursday afternoon.

Adam Tumino can be reached at 581-2812 or ajtumino@eiu.edu.



FILE PHOTO | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Eastern guard Lariah Washington fights for position in the Panthers' game against Evansville on Nov. 20, 2021, in Lantz Arena.

COLUMN

Exploring the effects of continuing conference realignment

There has been something happening throughout the past year, the effects of which will be felt for some years to come.

It seemed as if it was dying down, but recently it has resurfaced and led to more uncertainty.

I am of course talking about the conference realignment that is happening in the OVC.

Back in January 2021, Jacksonville State and Eastern Kentucky announced their intentions to leave the OVC in July of that year.

Then in September, Austin Peay and Belmont announced they too would be leaving the OVC in July 2022.

These moves shrank the OVC from 12 to eight members.

Then last month, the conference responded to the departures with the addition of Little Rock as a new member.

After that all was well. The OVC was back up to nine teams and was in discussion with more potential



Adam Tumino

members.

Then 2022 began with the news that Murray State would also be leaving the OVC.

This was the most consequential departure to date, as it left the conference with only five football programs, falling one shy of the minimum number of teams required for a conference to receive an automatic bid to the FCS Playoffs.

That is perhaps the most tangible problem with the recent exodus from the OVC.

Another problem is that, with the departures of Belmont and Murray State, the OVC will be losing per-

haps its two most respected basketball programs.

On both the men's and women's side, Belmont has been a force in the OVC since it joined the conference in 2012.

Both are also ranked in the most recent release of the College Insider Mid Major Top 25, with the men ranking sixth and the women ranking 19th.

The Murray State men's team is also ranked in the same poll, coming in at No. 9.

The Racer women are not ranked in that poll, but are off to a 10-4 start this season and are 2-1 so far in conference play.

Little Rock brings a strong women's basketball program to the OVC, as the Trojans received votes in the Mid Major Top 25, officially coming in at No. 31.

The OVC's reputation seemed to be growing as a basketball conference.

The Belmont women won their

opening game of the NCAA Tournament last season, becoming the first OVC women's basketball team to do so.

Chelsey Perry of Tennessee-Martin also became the first OVC women's basketball player to be selected in the WNBA Draft last year.

Belmont's success has also attracted attention on the men's side, as has the meteoric rise of former Murray State star Ja Morant, now a star for the Memphis Grizzlies.

The realignment may be harmful to the OVC's reputation, at least for now.

It is impossible to know what the OVC will look like in several months, or even in several weeks. But we can certainly expect a very different conference in the not-too-distant future.

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Panthers go 0-4 over break, have 3 games canceled

By Ryan Meyer
Men's Basketball Reporter
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The most recent victory for the 2-12 Eastern men's basketball team was Dec. 4, 2021, a close win over Division III North Park University. Since then, they have gone 0-5 with each game ending with over a 10-point margin of victory. The five-game losing streak is the longest of the 2021-22 season.

Two of the Panthers' key offensive performers in their three winter break games were CJ Lane and Kejuan Clements. Lane accounted for nearly half of Eastern's 50 points by dropping 20, and Clements showed more high-scoring potential with 17 at Ball State. Clements' 25 points in the win against North Park is Eastern's highest individual point performance of the season.

Paul Bizimana was named OVC Freshman of the Week for his performance against Ball State, where he had 13 points, seven rebounds and three blocks.

Even given these highlighted performances, the Panthers do not have a player averaging over 10 points, with Kashawn Charles and Clements leading the team with 9.2 per game.

Eastern has had trouble controlling the ball this season, where



FILE PHOTO | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Eastern guard Kejuan Clements brings the ball up in the Panthers' game against North Park on Dec. 4 in Lantz Arena.

they stand last in the OVC in both assist to turnover ratio and turnover margin. Their turnover margin is -5.07 with the next lowest team being Morehead State at -1.20.

The Panthers are also last in the OVC in scoring offense by a significant margin, averaging 56.7 points per game, with the next closest being Austin Peay at 68.3. The reason for this is apparent in

their field goal percentage, where they make less than 40 percent of their shots, trailing second-to-last SIUE by about three percentage points.

Sammy Friday IV is likely keeping the team from dropping below 35 percent, as he leads the conference in field goal percentage but has the least attempts out of the top 15 and has not scored over 10 points since a Nov. 28 loss to

Evansville, where he had 12. After a few strong performances in November and late December, true freshman Rodolfo Rufino Bolis was quiet during the three winter-break games, averaging 4.7 points and 4.7 rebounds.

Some of the seemingly bright spots in offensive production are marred by inefficiency or below-average shooting percentage, like a four-game stretch where Charles averaged 14 points a game and shot over 40 percent from the field but then followed up with two games shooting 25 percent or below.

Eastern ranks within the top five in parts of the OVC in defense, like where they sit fifth in field goal percentage defense, fourth in three-point field goal percentage defense and fourth in blocks, where Jermaine Hamlin contributes 1.7 a game to the team's 3.9.

After a 63-50 conference loss to 10-5 Morehead State on Dec. 29, the Panthers had three OVC games postponed due to health and safety protocols.

Their first game since Dec. 29 will see them hosting 6-8 Southern Illinois-Edwardsville on Thursday.

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Athletes of the Issue

CJ LANE



Lane played in all four games for the men's basketball team over Winter Break. He had a team high 12 points in the Panthers' road loss to Butler on Dec. 11.

He also had a team-high 20 points in Eastern's conference opener against Morehead State Dec. 29, shooting 4-of-5 from three-point range in the game.

LARIAH WASHINGTON



Washington led the women's basketball team in scoring in two of the three games the Panthers played over Winter Break. She averaged 15 points and 6.7 rebounds per game during that span.

Washington had a team-high 17 points in Eastern's 91-64 win over Morehead State in the conference opener on Dec. 29.

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What to expect from Eastern sports in 2022

Beach volleyball era set to begin

By Adam Tumino
Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

Eastern will have 21 sports on campus starting in 2022 with the new beach volleyball team beginning its inaugural season.

The addition of the beach volleyball team was announced in August 2021 and it will make Eastern the fourth OVC school and the first Division I school in Illinois to offer a beach volleyball program.

The program will be headed by Manolo Concepcion, the associate head coach of the court volleyball team, while court head coach Sara Thomas will be the assistant coach for the beach team.

At the time of the announcement, Concepcion, Thomas and Eastern Athletic Director Tom Michael said that the beach program will allow for skill development for Eastern's volleyball players, and also give Eastern an advantage when it comes to recruiting.

The beach volleyball era will officially begin on March 22 when the Panthers travel to take on Missouri Baptist.

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Men's basketball team looking to rebuild program

By Adam Tumino
Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

It is approximately the midway point in the 2021-22 season for the Eastern men's basketball season, the first for new head coach Marty Simmons.

Now Simmons and his staff are working to rebuild the program that seemed to hover around the middle of the conference under previous coach Jay Spoonhour.

The Panthers are 2-12 to start the season with wins against Rockford and North Park so far. They dropped their conference opener 63-50 to Morehead State on Dec. 29 and then had their next three conference games canceled due to health and safety protocols within the program.

They are scheduled to play at home Dec. 13 against Southern Illinois-Edwardsville.

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FILE PHOTO | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Eastern head coach Adam Cushing (right) expresses displeasures with a call on the field in Eastern's Homecoming Game against Tennessee State on Oct. 23, 2021, at O'Brien Field. Eastern lost to the Tigers 28-0.

Panthers to search for new head coach

By Adam Tumino
Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

The search for a new football coach will be one of the top developments early in 2022.

It was announced Tuesday that Eastern football coach Adam Cushing is stepping down to take the offensive line coach position as Duke.

"It was a very challenging decision because I love the young men here at EIU, I love everything about EIU, and it's a great place with great people," he said. "You can't control when opportunities come your way sometimes, and every opportunity is about what's best for my family and allow us an opportunity to have that

conversation as a family, and ultimately that's what played into it. It made it extremely difficult because of the people here at EIU and the type of place this is and how very close the program is to winning and getting ready to have an awesome year."

Cushing said that the everything came together very quickly for this decision.

"Things happen really, really fast in this business, so the timing was incredibly quick," he said. "Sometimes that's how things play out."

He also said he had an opportunity to speak to the team this morning regarding his decision.

"I just said to them that I love

them and I understand that it's probably not what they wanted to hear from me at that point, but I love them and I love this program," he said. "I'm really proud of everything that they have built, and I mean that. This program's in a great place. They've had so many wins off the field in so many different areas. Academically, socially, community, there's so many great things and it's because of the young men that are here, and that's why I really feel the program is going in a phenomenal direction."

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OVC continuing conference realignment

By Adam Tumino
Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

A major shakeup hit the OVC in January 2021, with Jacksonville State and Eastern Kentucky announcing they would be leaving the conference for the Atlantic Sun.

Both teams left the OVC in July 2021, just a few months before Austin Peay and Belmont announced their upcoming departure from the conference in July of this year.

In December, the OVC announced Little Rock would be added as a member on the same day



Austin Peay and Belmont are leaving.

Murray State began the new year by announcing they would be leaving the OVC as a full member on June 30, 2022.

The Racers will remain in the OVC for rifle, and are in the pro-

cess of joining the standalone MVFC for football.

This departure puts the OVC at just five football programs currently, falling short of the six-team minimum for a conference to receive an automatic bid for the FCS Playoffs.

Continued realignment will be a major story in 2022, as the OVC will look to add schools, with more potential departures also remaining a possibility.

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