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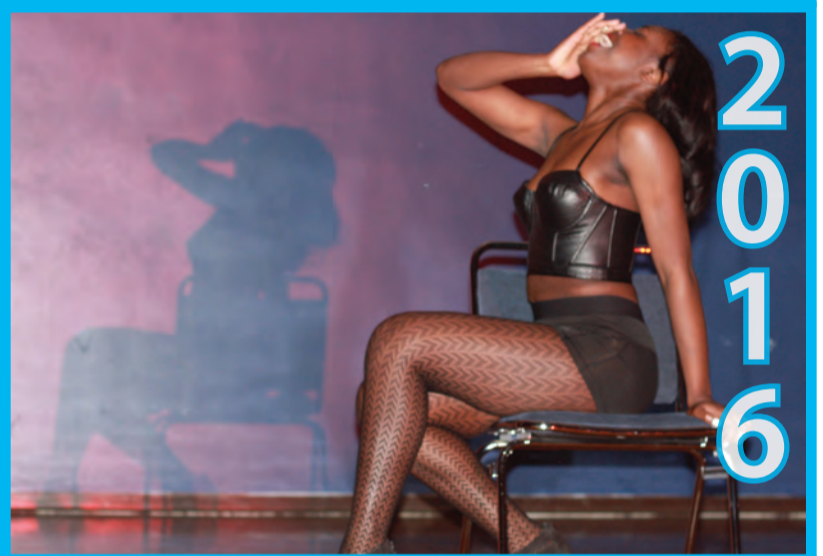
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"TELL THE TRUTH AND DON'T BE AFRAID"

NEW STUDENT GUIDE



RAs serve important roles for students

By Mercury Bowen
Staff Reporter | @DEN_News

A resident assistant, or RA, is a student who lives in a residence hall on campus and is responsible for supervising and assisting the students who live on their floor.

One of the most prominent parts of an RA's job is to establish a community among the students they are supervising; however, an RA can take on many different roles within that community.

Ben Grapperhaus, a resident assistant in Thomas Hall, said it is the responsibility of an RA to be a role model to incoming students.

"We show them good student work ethic, going to class, and getting assignments done on time," Grapperhaus said.

Christopher Wasson, another RA in Thomas Hall, said the main point of an RA is to establish connections in a student's first year of college and function as an adviser and mediator for the students.

"We have experiences," Wasson said. "They have somebody as a support system here."

Bailey Martin-Giacalone, an RA in Andrews Hall, said one situation RAs deal with is roommate conflict, and it comes up more often than people may think.

"That mostly happens at the beginning of the semester when people are kind of new to things," Martin-Giacalone said. "They haven't really adjusted to living with somebody else yet, especially in such close quarters."

RAs also receive specific training to deal with disciplinary issues such as alcohol incidents, illegal drugs, tobacco and vandalism.

"We try to make sure that we handle these and make the students understand that it is for their safety," Grapperhaus said.

RAs also function as campus liaisons, directing students to the resources available.

"We have to be very knowledgeable of resources on campus," Grapperhaus said.

Wasson said he advises incoming



Ben Grapperhaus, a resident assistant in Thomas Hall, starts a conversation with a resident while assisting her at the front desk in the Thomas Hall lobby on April 22.

freshmen to keep an open mind.

"Be able to understand that not everyone you are going to be living with is going to have the same viewpoints as you," Wasson said. "Eastern is a very diverse community overall, and we value that because we want people to feel that they are unique and special in their own way."

Grapperhaus said the friends who students have during their first year can make or break the way their college experience will go.

"People I hung out with on my floor my first year I still hang out with today," Grapperhaus said. "They're some of my best friends."

Wasson added that students should focus on building connections as well

"It brings joy to me that I am able to be that person to inspire students who just came out of high school and are going to college for the first time. They're scared; they don't know what to do, and I'm that guy that says, 'Here, I'll help you find your way.'"

-Christopher Wasson, resident assistant in Thomas Hall

as doing well in classes.

"Think of college as an experience, not just something you have to attend," Wasson said. "Build those connections so that in the future when you walk on that stage for graduation

you have an experience that you will remember for the rest of your life."

Wasson said one of his favorite things about being an RA is helping the students. He plans to return as an RA next year and eventually apply his

experiences to a career in human resources.

"It brings joy to me that I am able to be that person to inspire students who just came out of high school and are going to college for the first time," Wasson said. "They're scared, they don't know what to do and I'm that guy that says, 'Here, I'll help you find your way.'"

Martin-Giacalone said seeing her own RA's involvement helped her transition as well.

"I just love being an RA," Martin-Giacalone said with a smile.

Mercury Bowen can be reached at 581-2812 or mjbowen@eiu.edu.



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Eastern offers resources to stay on track

By Chris Picazo
Opinions Editor | @DEN_News

The transition from high school to college is a big step, and it may be overwhelming for students to enter into a new environment for the first time without knowing what to expect.

Here at Eastern, numerous programs and services are available to help students make that transition and find success here on campus.

One of the most important things about college is finding the right major, but many students often come to college with an undecided major.

Shelley James, interim director of the Academic Advising Center, said it is “absolutely OK” for students to come to college as an undecided major.

“It takes some students longer than others to decide on a major,” James said. “Many new students that have a major in mind will switch once they are here taking courses and realize all the opportunities that are available to them.”

The Academic Advising Center, located in Room 2100 of Ninth Street Hall, works with students who are undecided majors by helping them explore their interests and academic goals, and advises them until he or she moves to their academic department.

Its mission is to create quality and accessible advising partnerships with students by promoting student success and cultivating self-sufficient lifelong learners.

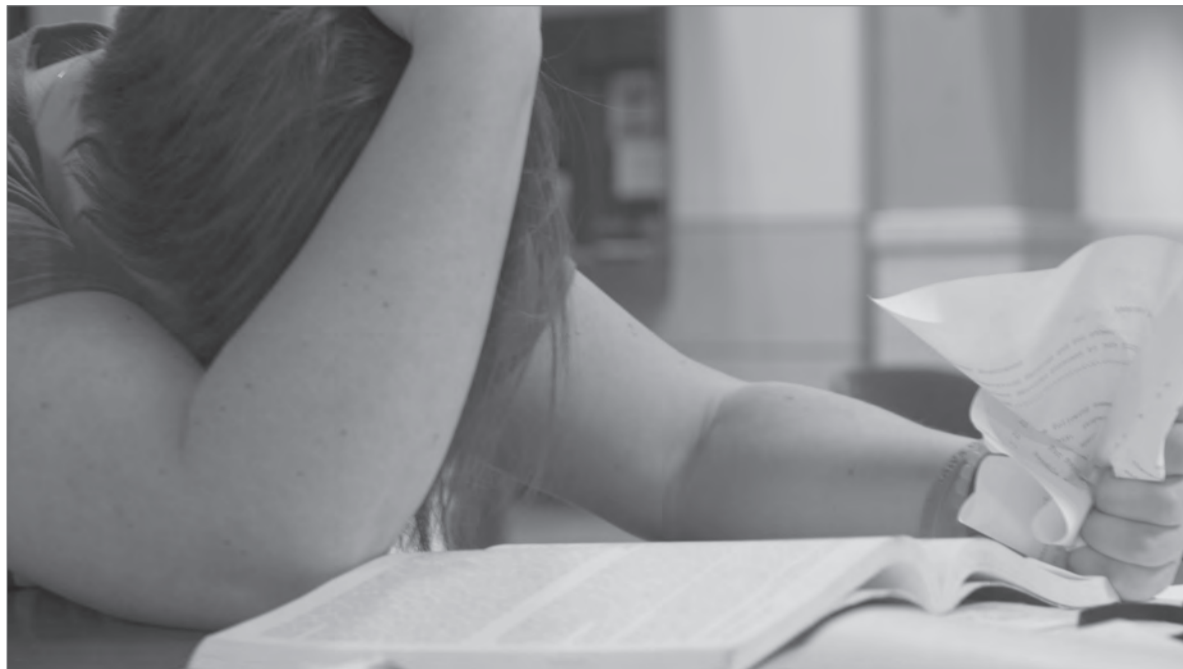


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ANALICIA HAYNES | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

By taking advantage of resources such as the Writing Center, the Academic Advising Center and the Student Success Center, students can stave off the stress of being overwhelmed by schoolwork and learn to manage their time more effectively.

It operates from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The Student Success Center is another resource available to students, and its website states that its mission is, “to provide comprehensive programs and holistic services that will empower students and connect them with the resources they need to achieve both academic and personal goals.”

Cindy Boyer, director of the Student Success Center, said the cen-

ter offers individualized consultation to students to discuss productive use of study time, reading and note taking strategies, overcoming test-taking challenges and setting goals to improve academically overall.

Boyer said the one thing many students struggle with is time management, and she said consultation helps develop an individualized study plan to incorporate the proper amount of studying, extracurricular activities, work and sleep.

For a student to have the most success, Boyer said a student must reach out to his or her professors and other support services on campus as well.

“There is always someone who can help you no matter what the issue,” Boyer said.

The Student Success Center operates in 1302 Ninth Street Hall.

Also available at Eastern is the Writing Center located in Room 3110 of Coleman Hall, and it operates from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 to 9

p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday.

Writing Center Consultant Ali Arnold said the Writing Center’s mission is to help anyone at any point in the writing process, and it is available to everyone on campus.

“People seem to have a misconception that a writing center is for people who are bad at writing, and that’s not true,” Arnold said. “All levels of writers come in here, and we’ve had faculty and staff come in here before.”

Students meet one-on-one with a consultant in a 30-minute meeting to help with any questions including brainstorming, outlining or even understanding the question.

Students can make an appointment by walking in or calling in advance, and students can also set up a Skype session to reach and help as many people as possible.

Eastern offers many services to help students find their own success during their time here, and as a new student things can be difficult without any guidance.

“Many times students try to handle problems themselves when if they had talked to use early, we could guide them towards the help they need,” James said. “If we don’t have the answers, we will direct them to one of the many other support services on campus.”

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JASON HOWELL | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

President David Glassman speaks to community members before the Surround the Castle event on Feb. 28 at Old Main. Glassman started his presidency in June 2015 and said he enjoys interacting with students.

Glassman recalls past career, settles into new presidency

By **Analicia Haynes**
Administration Editor | @Haynes1943

From an adamant concert attendee to shining in the spotlight on "Forensic Files," President David Glassman said he never imagined sitting in the president's chair at Eastern.

"This is a great university with students that were coming from all parts of Illinois filled with so much passion and friendliness," Glassman said. "Eastern is a hidden jewel."

Though Glassman attended college during a time when classic rock was in its prime and bell-bottoms were the rage, some things such as goals and the spirit of youth never change and Glassman makes that very clear.

Leaving home like many 18 year olds long to do, Glassman went to the University of Arizona his freshman year before returning back to the Twin Cities to finish his undergraduate.

"It was warmer," Glassman said when talking about his venture to the southwest. "I grew up in Minnesota and although I didn't really look at colleges, I knew I wanted to go someplace warm."

Originally an accounting major, Glassman said he quickly changed his mind after taking a course in anthropology.

"I really enjoyed it, and I found my

passion," Glassman said. "Always expose yourself to new things because even I didn't know what I would do."

After he graduated, Glassman went to Mexico and practiced his anthropology skills before moving onto graduate school, earning his masters and doctorate at the University of Tennessee.

With a love for music, especially classic rock, Glassman said he went to concerts, collected records and joined a band during his college years.

"I went to a lot of concerts," Glassman said. "The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, The Who, I've seen a lot. I even brought my T-shirt from the 1975 Led Zeppelin concert I saw when I was 22."

Before diving into an administration career, Glassman was on several television shows including "Forensic Files" and "Murder by the Book."

During his time as an anthropologist and forensic scientist, Glassman said he felt like he was bringing closure to families.

"I was working to piece together clues," Glassman said. "I always felt I was doing something positives but after being around death for so long, I needed a different field."

After 350 cases, Glassman closed the door on his anthropology days and headed down a path toward working as an administrator.

Glassman dedicated 19 years to education and worked as a faculty member, associate dean and chair of the anthropology department at Texas State University and provost and vice president for academic affairs at Bradley University.

However, while in college, Glassman said he made goals similar to those set by students today such as trying as hard as he could and meeting new friends.

Sharing his wisdom with students, Glassman said to always appreciate life and the success an individual brings upon them.

"Really appreciate your time (during college) because this is the only time in your life when you are surrounded by people like you who are so knowledgeable and young," Glassman said. "So appreciate your four years here because they will never be replicated again."

Glassman said he will continue to work on strategies to help Eastern prosper and give students another reason to be proud of their school.

"I enjoy walking around and interacting with students," Glassman said. "I'm an advocate for Eastern."

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Students can find ways to stay busy on, near campus

By **Abbey Whittington**
Entertainment Editor | @anwhittington96

When students get free time on the weekends and between classes and homework, there are several activities they can take part in on and off campus.

Students can get involved and have fun through hall council and their events, the University Board events, joining registered student organizations or Greek life, getting food with friends at the dining halls and food court, getting coffee at Java, going to the Student Recreational Center, hanging out on the Doudna Fine Arts Center's steps and much more.

Brianna Martin, a senior family and consumer science major, is part of the Alpha Sigma Tau sorority and is involved with the philanthropy events and volunteer work for the community put on by her Greek organization.

"I like doing the philanthropies across campus because you get to know more of the people within the other organizations, and you're in a close-knit situation," Martin said. "It's not a weird environment where you're forced to be there, everybody wants to be there, and it's just a lot of fun."

As for students with cars, there are several surrounding businesses and parks including Jackson Avenue Coffee or other businesses in the square, the lounge area in County Market, Fox Ridge State Park, the AMC movie theater in Mattoon and much more.

The Panther Shuttle can also bring students to the town square and County Market.

Sammie Mackey, a freshman elementary education major, and Lexi Stelmar, a freshman special education major, laid out in the South Quad on a sunny day in their free time.

Mackey said she likes to explore Charleston and volunteer with young athletes, and Stelmar is a part of Alpha Sigma Alpha. The two students said they enjoy eating ice cream on the Doudna steps.

"Greek Week was really fun and

"One of my favorite things to do is go to Fox Ridge, and I love hiking there because it is beautiful out there. There are some great trails, and it is a great way to be outdoors to get that vitamin D in."

*-Laura Trombley,
College of Student Affairs
graduate student*

we won Tugs, so that was awesome," Stelmar said.

Tugs is an annual tug-of-war competition that Greek organizations participate in across the Campus Pond.

Valerie Rosen, a junior economics major, said she likes to go the UB events.

"I like to hang out at Java to do homework or catch up with friends," Rosen said.

Laura Trombley, graduate student in the College of Students Affairs and associate director of Andrews Hall, said she liked outdoor activities including playing volleyball at the Student Recreational Center and going to Fox Ridge with her friends.

"One of my favorite things to do is to go to Fox Ridge, and I love hiking there because it is beautiful out there. There are some great trails, and it is a great way to be outdoors to get that vitamin D in," Trombley said. "It is a good place if you are someone who likes to go places and reflect, and I have gone in big groups with friends."

Abbey Whittington can be reached at 581-2812 or anwhittington@eiu.edu.

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Meet your student body president

Catie Witt reflects on leadership role, journey to success

By **Analia Haynes**
Administration Editor | @Haynes1943



Catie Witt

Leadership comes in all forms and sometimes graces those who least expect it. That's the case for Student Body President Catie Witt, who never dreamed of taking the reins for a powerful institution.

From humble beginnings to student body president, Witt said she never imagined herself in the highest position a student could have. Being a first generation college student, Witt said she did not think about college until her junior year of high school. Witt said Eastern was the first school to pop up on her radar and after one visit she fell in love with the campus, the professors and the class sizes.

"I'm a big princess and I don't need a crown to be a princess; I need a castle," Witt said referencing the castle at Old Main.

Once at Eastern, Witt said she wanted to focus on her schoolwork and had her heart set on joining a sorority. But after attending Pantherpalooza, Witt said not getting involved in anything else was impossible.

"I hate to be one of those people who say 'well what if' so I might as well try it," Witt said when she recalled signing up for several organizations. "I'm a big believer in you're always moving forward."

However, out of all the organizations she tried on for size, only a few seemed to fit, including the student government

and Alpha Gamma Delta.

Originally, Witt said she wanted to change her major but thanks to her sisters who encouraged to push herself and join the Student Government, Witt said she instead scratched the idea of being a lawyer and turned to a more active role in politics inspired by her lobbying efforts from freshman year.

"I always say Alpha Gamma Delta was the organization that opened the door for student government," Witt said. "I didn't think I'd join student government until three of my sorority sisters were in it and told me it would be up my alley."

Witt said when she first joined the Student Government the president at the time was from her hometown.

"(That) gave me a glimmer of hope but I still never in a million years thought I would be president," Witt said. "I just hoped I'd be chapter president (of my sorority) because I knew I could manage that."

Witt ran unopposed this semester and is in the process of preparing herself to juggle being both student body president and president of her chapter.

"I know the position is really difficult at times, but I could manage both hats," Witt said.

With the motivation from past presidents and her mom, Witt said she is capable of anything.

"My mom was a single parent since I was six and she worked three jobs, — some full time job and two part time jobs," Witt said. "We're exactly the same, we love to be on our feet, are very involved and she always told me 'well you might as well try it.'"

Witt said her mom was always there to motivate her especially when she was in the fifth grade and she wanted to join the wrestling team.

"My mom told me to just do it and so I did for one year," Witt said. "Even though I wanted to quit, her motto was always 'if you start something, you have to finish it and then you don't have to do it again' and I knew it was not for me."

Witt said she knows that having her mom as her support system, she knows the impossible is possible. A popcorn lover who cannot get enough of country music, Witt said she wants to continue where former presidents left off like moving forward with the It's On Us campaign.

"I have to go onward and upward from here," Witt said.

Witt said she wants her fellow peers to remember that no matter what the project or assignment is, it is not worth stressing over because it will get done.

"When you get stressed about a paper due or a project just remember that it will get done; somehow, it gets done so don't stress the inevitable," Witt said. "Also, do every thing you can in one plate and try to figure out where you fall into place and what makes you EIU."

Analia Haynes can be reached at 581-2812 or achaynes@eiu.edu.



JASON HOWELL | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Students walk past one of the emergency phones on the South Quad. 22 of these blue phones dot the campus.

Students cautioned to stay safe, aware

By **Jason Howell**
Online Editor | @thejasonhowell

New and returning students have multiple ways of staying informed and safe as they begin their trek to campus.

The University Police Department lists several tips to prevent crime on its website, which include keeping aware of one's surroundings, knowing the locations of the emergency phones across campus and using the buddy system.

Sgt. Ryan Risinger of the University Police Department said being aware of one's surroundings is "probably the biggest thing you can do for yourself."

"Just today I was going to lunch, a girl walked through the crosswalk that says they have the right of way - that's great if the driver's paying attention," he said. "If the driver's not paying attention you have to do something to save yourself."

"She didn't look up once," he added.

Another tip is remembering the locations of emergency phones.

The university has 22 emergency phones located around the campus identifiable by their blue light.

These locations include the South Quad, northeast of McAfee Gym and on the north side of the Student Recreation Center.

A second point emphasized by Ris-

inger is using the buddy system.

Friends within a group should stay with one another, keep together when going to parties and come home as a group.

If a group goes together to a party, Risinger said that group should take care of each other while at the party.

A tip that Risinger has learned from taking several reports - lock the door.

"You want to trust your roommate, you should trust your roommate; if you don't you shouldn't be living together," he said. "But you don't know who your roommate's friends are, they may have some friends coming down from the weekend - you don't know those people at all."

Risinger also recommends taking photos of expensive electronics, laptop and serial number, gaming system and serial number, "anything that can basically fit in a book bag."

Campus is a safe place, Risinger said.

Several incidents were pretty prevalent last fall and those in question have been arrested.

"Most of the activity of that sort has ceased," he said.

"We've got officers out there 24 hours and we're available and the emergency phones are available."

Jason Howell can be reached at 581-2812 or jlhowell3@eiu.edu.



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GETTING INVOLVED

Students join organizations to find friends, gain experience

By Cassie Buchman
Associate News Editor | @cjbuchman

New students interested in anything from volunteering to acting have the opportunity to get involved at Eastern through different organizations.

Megan Mixell, a freshman education major, is a part of "Positive Learning for Active Youth," a program where students volunteer one or two times a month by going to local schools in the area such as Charleston Middle School or schools in Ashmore and Oakland.

The volunteers help children with homework and supervise them at recess.

Mixell said this gives her good experience working with children, especially because she is an education major.

"Everyone's really nice in the program," Mixell said. "I've definitely made friends with the group."

Valerie Ponce, a freshman communication studies major, joined hall council in her residence hall.

Each residence hall has a hall council that meets once a week discusses matters such as hall policies and programs. Members also organize social events for their halls.

She said she joined partly because it looks good on a resume, but it also has taught her teamwork, multi-tasking and leadership along with communication skills and dedication.

"It's helped me learn how to cram faster with time management," Ponce said.

She said it can be hard to do everything such as finding time to eat, shower, do schoolwork and participate in activities. As recognition chair in hall council, she went to meetings and recognized people with awards and shout outs in the residence halls.

On Valentine's Day, she even gave people "Sing-A-Grams."

While Ponce can understand why some freshmen feel scared or intimidated joining clubs, this was not a problem for her.

"I've made new friends, and some really good friends," Ponce said. "I've bonded with just about everyone."

Ponce said she has great mentors, such as her associate resident director and resident director.

"Don't knock it 'til you try it. If you don't (get involved), you might be missing out on an opportunity."

-Valerie Ponce, freshman communication studies major

"Don't knock it 'til you try it," Ponce said. "If you don't (get involved), you might be missing out on an opportunity."

Erin Takash, a junior elementary education major, is mostly involved in theater, though she also works in the special education department and volunteers.

Because she was taking general education courses as a freshman and had a little more time on her hands, she joined these organizations.

She had been doing theater since she was around 11 or 12, and though at first she did not know if non-majors were allowed to audition for shows at Eastern, she still tried out.

Takash ended up getting the part and became the youngest person in the show.

"I didn't know anyone, and I didn't want to step on toes," Takash said. "I

was nervous about what people would think."

However, this nervousness would change once Takash realized how accepting everyone in the department is.

"They take anyone with open arms," Takash said. "It's helped me meet so many new people."

Takash's advice for any incoming student looking for an organization to join is to look for something they are interested in and give it a try.

"If you don't, you might regret not going into it sooner," Takash said. "Just go for it."

Taylor Spoonholtz, a senior elementary education major has been a part of Campus Ministries and New Student and Family Programs since

her freshman year.

She actually sought out Eastern because of its ministry programs, and met with the president of the Newman Center.

She also joined New Student and Family Programs because she loves getting to work with new students.

A shy freshman at first, Spoonholtz said being a part of these organizations allowed her to come out of her shell.

"I'm definitely not the person I was my first year here," Spoonholtz said.

She said if incoming students sought opportunities, they would end up finding them.

"If you're willing to work for it, you'll find it," Spoonholtz said.

Cassie Buchman can be reached at 581-2812 or cjbuchman@eiu.edu.

Finding an **RSO** that fits you: take your pick

Eastern has more than 200 registered student organizations to choose from. Or, take the initiative to start your own with a faculty or staff adviser, at least 10 members and approval by the Student Government.

Social RSOs

- Association of Information Technology Professionals
- Blue Crew
- Eastern Illinois University Line Dancing
- Eastern Student Parent Association
- EIU Ballroom Dance Society
- EIU Chess Club
- EIU Fishing and Hunting Club
- EIU Longboarding Club
- GLAM modeling
- Harry Potter Club
- Idiomatic Jive Chapter 2 Dance Team
- Japanese Animation Society
- Rhythm & X-tacy Dance Team

Multicultural RSOs

- African American Achievers
- African Student Association
- Asian American Association
- Asian Cinema Organization
- Association of International Students
- Black Student Union
- Chinese Student and Scholar Association
- EIU FEM
- EIU Pride - LGBTQA
- Intercultural Dialogue Association
- Latin American Student Organization
- Minority Student Health

Political RSOs

- EIU College Democrats
- EIU College Republicans

Service RSOs

- AGES - All Generations Engaged in Service
- American Red Cross Blood Drive Committee
- Best Buddies
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Bridging Voices In Our Community Bullying Prevention
- Colleges Against Cancer
- Construction Club
- EIU Sufi Meditation Club
- Golden Key International Honour Society
- Leadership and Excellence Club
- PAECE (Performing Arts for Effective Civic Education)
- Peer To Peer: EIU's Peer Health Educators
- Sociology-Anthropology Club
- Southern Poverty Law Center Chapter at EIU (EIU SPLC)
- Student Dietetic Association

Academic RSOs

- Alpha Epsilon Delta (Pre-Health Professional Society)
- Alternative Television and Film Club
- American Chemical Society Student Affiliates
- Astronomy Club
- Aviation Club
- Club Managers Association of America (CMAA)
- German Club
- Education Scholars
- EIU Geoscience Club

Religious RSOs

- Baptist Collegiate Ministries/ Campus Outreach
- Chi Alpha Campus Ministries
- Christian Campus Fellowship
- Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ)
- Elogeme Adolphi Christian Sorority, Inc.
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- Muslim Student Association

A full list of RSOs can be found online at:

<http://www.eiu.edu/slo/rso/>

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Resources available for minority students

By Torri Griffith
Staff Reporter | @DEN_News

Eastern has many programs and departments to help minority students navigate their way around campus.

One of the services offered to minority students is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Asexual (LGBTQA+) WebCenter.

The WebCenter is operated by graduate student Ben Wilburn and is located in the Cultural Center.

"Our center services all people who fall into gender and sexual minorities," Wilburn said.

The center has many resources students can use such as books, movies and magazines that talk about health.

Outside of the resources the center has to offer, Wilburn said he also sets up office hours for students just in case they want to come in and talk to him about different issues they are

having.

Wilburn said volunteers for the WebCenter do the planning for LGBT History Month in October, and they work closely with PRIDE, the registered student organization for LGBT students and allies. They also have several small support groups for students that run throughout the year.

"This department is beneficial because it is still an underrepresented community, and people still have a lot of misconceptions about LGBT people," Wilburn said. "It is good for people who have been raised, especially freshmen, in a way that makes them feel that their identity is invalid."

Wilburn said the center is targeted to everyone who identifies as LGBT or if they consider themselves friends of the community.

For students who are not open with their sexual or gender identities, Wilburn said they offer online communi-

cation with students.

"If people are not ready to come through and sit down and talk with somebody they can shoot a few emails and also connect with us on social media. They also have the option to even use the Counseling Center," Wilburn said.

Wilburn said sometimes students are overwhelmed when they arrive to college. He said he believes it is good for incoming freshmen to know programs like this exist when they are trying to figure out who they are and what they want to do.

Another program offered to minority students is TRiO/Student Support Services, directed by Maggie Burkhead.

TRiO/SSS is located in Room 3017 of Ninth Street Hall and offers services ranging from academic assistance, leadership development and cultural enrichment opportunities.

Students are eligible for acceptance into the TRiO program if they are first generation college students, low income students or have documented physical or learning disabilities.

The Women's Resource Center, yet another program offered to help students, is located in Room 3744 of Coleman Hall. Jeannie Ludlow, the women's studies coordinator, runs the center. Ludlow said the women's studies program has two parts: the women's studies minor and the EIU FEM registered student organization.

The Women's Resource Center is a space where students can access books, magazines, periodicals and videos related to feminism.

Ludlow said women's studies has a historical and cultural purpose for being on campus.

"Historically women's studies exists because in the past the things people learned about in class had little to

do with women and women's lives," Ludlow said.

She said women's studies has changed over the past 15 years, and the ways gender shapes people's lives is now the focus.

Ludlow said incoming freshmen should look into the program and consider taking WST 2309G: Women, Men, and Culture, as the course helps students understand how the things they learn in other classes apply to real life.

She said women's studies also has connections with community organizations that offer help for students for free, such as Housing Outreach Prevention and Education of East Central Illinois, a domestic violence shelter, and the Sexual Assault Counseling and Information Services.

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REPORTING BY SEAN HASTINGS, PHOTOS BY JASON HOWELL

TAYLOR SMITH



As a freshman, Taylor Smith was a big force for the Eastern volleyball team. Smith was relied on in more than just one role on the court.

Smith was used as a hitter, setter, and made a big impact defensively as well. Smith had 189 kills in her first year while dishing out 634 assists and recording 331 digs.

"Honestly, I didn't know what to expect from my freshman season," Smith said. "I didn't know what role I would have or how I would contribute to the team, whether that was hitting or setting. I was very fortunate to have gotten as much experience as I did as

a freshman, because that's definitely going to help in the seasons to come knowing what to expect and how to handle things in certain situations." In her freshman year, Smith was named on the OVC All-Newcomer Team. She also broke the record for most triple-doubles in a season with seven. That mark

was also good enough to be No. 1 in the conference.

She recorded at least 15 digs six times throughout her freshman year campaign. Smith played in all 31 games, which included 26 starts.

Looking forward to the 2016 sophomore season, Smith said she just hopes to build off what she did in 2015.

"Next year, I'll be hoping to come in more confident now that I have experience and a better understanding of what it's like to play in college game."

Smith said the team's spring season in 2016 has also helped her to prepare for next season.

CASEY TESON



In his first year at Eastern, freshman Casey Teson started 29-30 games and was a big threat from beyond the arc.

Teson tied with sophomore Cornell Johnston with three-pointers made with 64.

Teson was 64-165 from beyond the arc.

Teson averaged 7.5 points per game and scored 296 points total in his freshman campaign.

The freshman had a 20-game three-pointer made streak, which ended in the OVC tournament. His 64 three-pointers this season were four shy of tying the Eastern record.

Teson saw the second most playing time behind Johnston.

Teson's freshman year was a learning year for the new Panther.

"I learned a lot about the system and how coach (Spoonhour) wants things done," Teson said. "My first year I thought that I helped spread the floor for our drivers to get into the lane."

He stayed in the gym for extra hours to get his shot to feeling as good as he possibly he could.

"I knew coming in that one of my jobs was to shoot the ball as well and

hard as I could and my shooting numbers from three were good."

Looking forward to 2016, Teson will be looking to become a more well rounded player.

"I learned that I have to become a better player defensively; I have to become a better athlete and I have to get better at creating plays, not just being a shooter," Teson said.

Teson said being a starter and the amount of playing time was big for him in his first season.

"Another big thing was building a relationship with my teammates throughout the season," Teson said.

DEVIN CHURCH



In his first year in a Panther uniform, Illinois transfer and red-shirt junior Devin Church was a threat in the backfield for the Eastern offense. Church earned All-Newcomer honors as well as All-OVC honors.

"I was the playmaker for our team," he said. "I didn't accomplish all my personal goals, but I made all-conference so that was an accomplishment I was proud of. I left a lot of yards out on that field though and am looking forward to being that playmaker for our team again this season."

Church ran for 743 yards while sharing time with red-shirt senior Shepard Little. Church averaged 61.9 yards a game with his longest run being 42 yards. His 743 rushing yards were good enough for sixth in the conference. Church's nine rushing touchdowns in 2015 were the most of any other player on the team. He had 11 touchdowns total. He had two receiving touchdowns in 2015 as well.

He had two rushing multi-touchdown games in

2015. He scored two rushing touchdowns against Austin Peay on Oct. 3. He also had a receiving touchdown in the game. His other two-touchdown game came against Tennessee State on Oct. 17. He also had a multi-touchdown game with one rushing and one receiving touchdown against Southeast Missouri on Oct. 10.

The red-shirt junior had 167 rushing attempts in 12 games played. Not only was Church utilized to run the ball, he was also a key target for senior quarterback Jalen Whitlow. Church caught 36 passes, to lead the team, and racked up 254 yards. Church averaged 7.1 yards on his caught passes and averaged 21.2 yards a game. Church was also one of the team's kick returners. Church returned 17 kicks, with red-shirt freshman Tray Mitchell leading the team with 21. Church returned the ball for a total of 357 yards, averaging 21 yards a return.

Looking forward to next season, Church is expecting big things from himself and the team.

"I just want to lead my team to the National Championship," Church said. "First round of the playoffs is not acceptable. We are far more better than that."

HALEIGH KNAPP



It is safe to say that Haleigh Knapp had a strong sophomore season high jumping for the Eastern women's track and field team. The Panthers track and field team competes in an indoor season and an outdoor season. The two different environments did not seem to affect the high jumper as she jumped her way into the record books for both seasons.

Knapp first got her name atop of the Eastern all-time high jumpers list in the winter indoor season. She set the indoor record Jan. 29 at the Indiana Relays. She broke the record – which was held by Candy Phillips since 2000, by two inches.

She set the height with a jump of 5 feet 11.25 inches. Knapp jumped less than an inch shorter than in the indoor season, but still set a record nonetheless.

In back-to-back weeks, Knapp set the high jump record with a height of 5 feet 10.50 inches, and re-broke the record just one week later with a height of 5 feet 10.75 inches. She set the original record at the Illinois State Redbird invite April 16. She re-broke that record at the Illinois Twilight April 23. She won the event by more than 4 inches over the second place finisher. Because of her success in those two weeks, Knapp won back-to-back OVC Field Awards.

"I don't want to say I expect it of myself; I like to think of it more as setting goals and working hard to achieve them," Knapp said. "It is certainly my goal to keep growing as a jumper and an athlete in hopes to keep breaking records."

Knapp is part of a stellar track and field program at Eastern and helps the Panthers earn the success they do. She has two more years to try to break her own records, and with the way things have gone in the 2016 seasons for her, it seems to be well within reach.

"For the next two years my plan is to just keep growing as an athlete," Knapp said. "I want to get faster and stronger, as well as work on the technical part of jumping that will really help me clear higher bars."

RECORDS

The Panthers play in the Ohio Valley Conference. These are overall records as of press time on May 3, 2016.

*Team plays in the Summit League



MEN'S SPORTS

Basketball:

13-17

Football: 7-5

Baseball: 7-36

*Soccer: 3-14

*Swimming:

1-8

Tennis: 4-15

Cross Country:

2nd place finish in OVC

Track:

1st place finish at indoor

championship

Golf: last place

finish in OVC

WOMEN'S SPORTS

Basketball:

3-25

Volleyball:

16-15

Softball: 21-25

Soccer: 4-13-2

*Swimming:

5-6

Tennis: 14-8

Cross Country:

2nd place finish in OVC

Track: 2nd place finish at

indoor

championship

Golf: 9th place

finish in OVC