

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'

February 16, 2022

MORE THAN A CENTURY OF COVERAGE

VOL. 106 | NO. 76

Eastern 'all in' for masking

By Corryn Brock

Editor-in-Chief | @coryn_brock

Eastern will continue with its mask mandate regardless of a ruling by a Sangamon County Circuit Court judge that granted a temporary restraining order to over 140 Illinois school districts, allowing them to prohibit mask requirements.

Laura McLaughlin, Eastern's general counsel, said the ruling only applies to the districts named in the lawsuit.

"The temporary restraining order that was issued in this case is only specific to the defendants of the case. Eastern was not a defendant, it's not going to be specific to Eastern," McLaughlin said. "More importantly, though, the case is really about K-12. It's not about higher ed, and whether or not the executive order applies to higher ed or not."

Eastern's current on-campus masking policy requires all students, employees and campus guests to wear masks indoors in all buildings on campus.

Exceptions to the policy include when students are in their individual living space on campus or when

employees are in their private offices. As for non-compliance for Eastern's continued COVID-19 policies, current policies will remain in place.

It is unclear how universities will be impacted by an announcement from Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker that mask mandates could be widely lifted on Feb. 28 if COVID-19 hospitalizations continue to decrease.

McLaughlin said she advises University President David Glassman's President's Council and Eastern Board of Trustees and will be there to make sure any decisions made will be in compliance with state statutes and regulations.

McLaughlin said if the university were to change its policy, Glassman's judgment holds the most weight, but the university tries to follow science and public health guidance above all else.

Inside

Political science majors, professors talk mask mandate political implications, page 3

Letter from the Editor explains past, future Unofficial coverage plans, page 4

Analysis breaks down remainder of men's, women's basketball seasons, page 8

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About

The Daily Eastern News is produced by the students of Eastern Illinois University. It is published weekly on Wednesday, in Virdon, 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.

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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.

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

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Eastern's COVID-19 policy history

March 12, 2020: Eastern announces extended spring break and online classes for rest of semester

March 19, 2020: University president Glassman sends email announcing closures and urging students to stay home

July 17, 2020: Eastern announces that masks are required everywhere on campus except dorm rooms, which would all be single-occupancy. Testing was recommended and many classes were online or hybrid.

May 24, 2021: Mask/social distancing requirements relax for the summer as case numbers decrease. Masks are not required indoors in settings where all attendees could be confirmed to be vaccinated.

July 2, 2021: Glassman sends email announcing that students will be "expected" to get vaccinated and that unvaccinated students and employees will be required to wear masks and social distance.

Aug. 22, 2021: Students and employees who do not provide proof of vaccination are required to participate in randomized testing. Everyone is required to wear masks in all campus buildings.

Aug. 31, 2021: Glassman announces that rather than randomized testing, students and employees who do not provide proof of vaccination are required to participate in weekly testing.

Jan. 7, 2022: Students are "expected" to complete testing as they return to campus after break. Eastern supplies each student with two N95 masks.

WHAT'S HAPPENING FEB. 16-23

WEDNESDAY

Student Senate Meeting
 7 p.m. - 7th St. Underground, MLK Jr. University Union
 Exploring the Land of Lincoln
 1 p.m. - Charleston Public Library
 Black History Trivia Night
 7 p.m. - Martinsville Room, MLK Jr. University Union

THURSDAY

Soul Food: Nourishment for the Culture
 5 p.m. - Klehm Hall Room 2309
 What is Afro-Latinidad?
 6 p.m. - Charleston/Mattoon Room, MLK Jr. University Union

FRIDAY

2022 NAACP Image Awards
 7 p.m. - Grand Ballroom, MLK Jr. University Union

SATURDAY

YOUR EVENT COULD GO HERE. CONTACT US TO BE INCLUDED!

SUNDAY

EIU Choral Ensembles in Concert.
 4 p.m. - Dvorak Concert Hall, Doudna Fine Arts Center

MONDAY

Presidents' Day
 Movie Night: Selma
 6:20 p.m. - Phipps Lecture Hall, Physical Science Building

TUESDAY

African American Leadership Awards
 6:30 p.m. - University Ballroom, MLK Jr. University Union

WEDNESDAY

Student Senate Meeting
 7 p.m. - 7th St. Underground, MLK Jr. University Union
 Childproofing is Not Just for Kids!
 1 p.m. - 711021 E Co Rd 800 N
 Afro-Latinos Trivia Night
 7 p.m. - Martinsville Room, MLK Jr. University Union

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

Professors breakdown mask mandate suit

By Madelyn Kidd

News Editor | @DEN_news

Eastern's political science professors, Ryan Burge and Karen Swenson, weigh in on Governor J.B. Pritzker's latest change in the state's indoor mask mandate.

Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker announced on Feb. 9 a plan to lift the indoor mask mandate by Feb. 28 everywhere except where its federally mandated, privately mandated, schools or other "vulnerable" places if current decreases in hospitalizations from COVID-19 continue.

Illinois currently has the largest decrease in COVID-19 hospitalizations since the pandemic began and the largest population rate of vaccinated citizens in the Midwest.

However, following Pritzker's announcement, many began to speculate if Pritzker was making this change because of the improved COVID-19 rates or if it was a political move to gain more popularity for the upcoming election.

ing election.

Ryan Burge, assistant professor and graduate coordinator, said the reason for Pritzker's plan to lift the indoor mask mandate is a combination of the upcoming election and the improved COVID-19 numbers.

"I think Governor Pritzker's policy change was based both on politics and how conditions have changed on the ground regarding omicron," Burge said.

Burge's first reason for Pritzker's announcement is from the COVID-19 data.

"The data is pointing to the fact that the omicron surge is essentially over now," Burge said. "Case counts are down 80 percent from their peak and continuing to fall in many places."

The second reason is the public's current feelings towards masks.

"People are just sick of wearing masks," Burge said. "No matter how much a government tries to get its citizens to do something, they can always refuse - and many of them are.

And, from a policy standpoint, if a government wants its citizens to wear masks ever again, it needs to demonstrate that those are short-term measures to stop the spread of a virus."

The final reason for why Pritzker announced a lift of the mask mandate is the 2022 Election, Burge said.

"His reelection does play a role; I'm sure," Burge said. "But, he's not 'doing it alone' on this. Several other Democratic governors have moved the same direction in places like California and New York. It would be very difficult to explain politically why Illinois was the only state in the union with mask mandates when none of our neighbors do. I don't think it's going to make a huge difference come election day, which isn't for over eight months, but Pritzker will likely tout his handling of the pandemic as part of the reason he should get a second term in office."

Karen Swenson, political science professor for the pre-law program, agrees with her colleague that

both the COVID-19 numbers and the upcoming election affect Pritzker's choice.

"I think it is both," Swenson said. "This is the year he faces reelection."

Swenson explained how governors look at other governors to see what they are doing before making a decision.

"In addition, in state politics, it is common for governors to look to other states in the region and to what other governors of their party are doing," Swenson said. "Pritzker's position follows both trends."

Swenson continued by bringing up Pritzker's past motives for decisions.

"And recall our governor and our state was a leader in mask mandates and closing places of public accommodation early in the pandemic," Swenson said. "I don't think Pritzker is afraid to do what is necessary even when it is not politically popular."

Madelyn Kidd can be reached at 581-2812 or at mekidd@eiu.edu.

Vaccine, booster clinic to be held Feb. 16 in Union

By Ryan Meyer

Campus Reporter | @meyer_ryan_twt

Students will have another opportunity to receive COVID-19 vaccines or boosters on Feb. 16 in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union University Ballroom.

The Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson and Johnson vaccines and boosters will all be available, and boosters are available for those 12 and older.

Eric Davidson, the executive director of Eastern's health and counseling services, said the clinics are a partnership between the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Eastern.

According to Eastern's COVID-19 page, 78.5 percent of students are fully vaccinated, which translates to 3,624 students. Numbers for employees are similar, with 79.6 percent, or 973, of employees being fully vaccinated.

Davidson wishes that the vaccination rates at Eastern were above what they are now, their highest point since the beginning of the school year.

"We've been about 80 percent; I would always like to see it higher," Davidson said. "Four out of five ain't bad, but I'd like to see it much, much better than what we have."

It's recommended that those who received both doses of either Pfizer or Moderna get their booster shots at least five months after their second dose, and if one opted for the Johnson and Johnson dose, they're recommended to get their booster at least two months after their first shot.

Davidson said that for people to get the vaccine, they need to see the positives of getting it and deter-



ROB LE CATES | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Students tests for COVID-19 at Eastern's Student Recreation Center Court 5 on Jan. 10, 2022.

mine how it will help them.

"I think there are a lot of factors,"

Davidson said. "Part of it is, individuals have to see a benefit of vac-

ination, meaning that they have to think about, 'If I were to get the illness, first of all how susceptible am I to getting the virus, and then if I get the virus, how severe will the consequences be if I get it?'"

Lamenting the politicization of vaccine stances, Davidson offered his view on the matter.

"Unfortunately, this issue has been politicized, and I think political beliefs greatly impact whether or not one gets the vaccine or not," Davidson said. "I think that's kind of unfortunate."

When discussing reasons why students aren't getting vaccinated, Davidson attributed that choice to more than just political beliefs, citing misinformation and perceptions of the vaccine.

"I think it's one of several different factors," Davidson said. "I think politics plays an important role, I think it's also the novelty or the perceived novelty of the vaccine. I think there is a lot of misinformation out there about the vaccine and its effects. Social media is a great tool for spreading information about availability, about science and knowledge of vaccines, but it also is used to spread a lot of misinformation and misperceptions."

Davidson thinks students and staff should get vaccinated first for their overall health, but also so they can continue to perform inside and out of the classroom.

"First of all, we want our individuals to be healthy; we want them to be well, so that way, for our students...their studies and their academics and their co-curricular lives are not interfered or negatively impacted as a result of having COVID," said Davidson.

Ryan Meyer can be reached at 581-2812 or at rameyer@eiu.edu.

Letter from the Editor

See you at Unofficial (as always)

Eastern's favorite annual pseudo-holiday will be back this March and there have been many people wondering if the *Daily Eastern News* will be covering it in light of last year's attempt to keep the party alive.

Short answer, yes. We will be out there covering Unofficial just like we have every year, pre-and post-pandemic.

However, as Editor-in-Chief, I would be doing a disservice if I did not explain why we cover Unofficial.

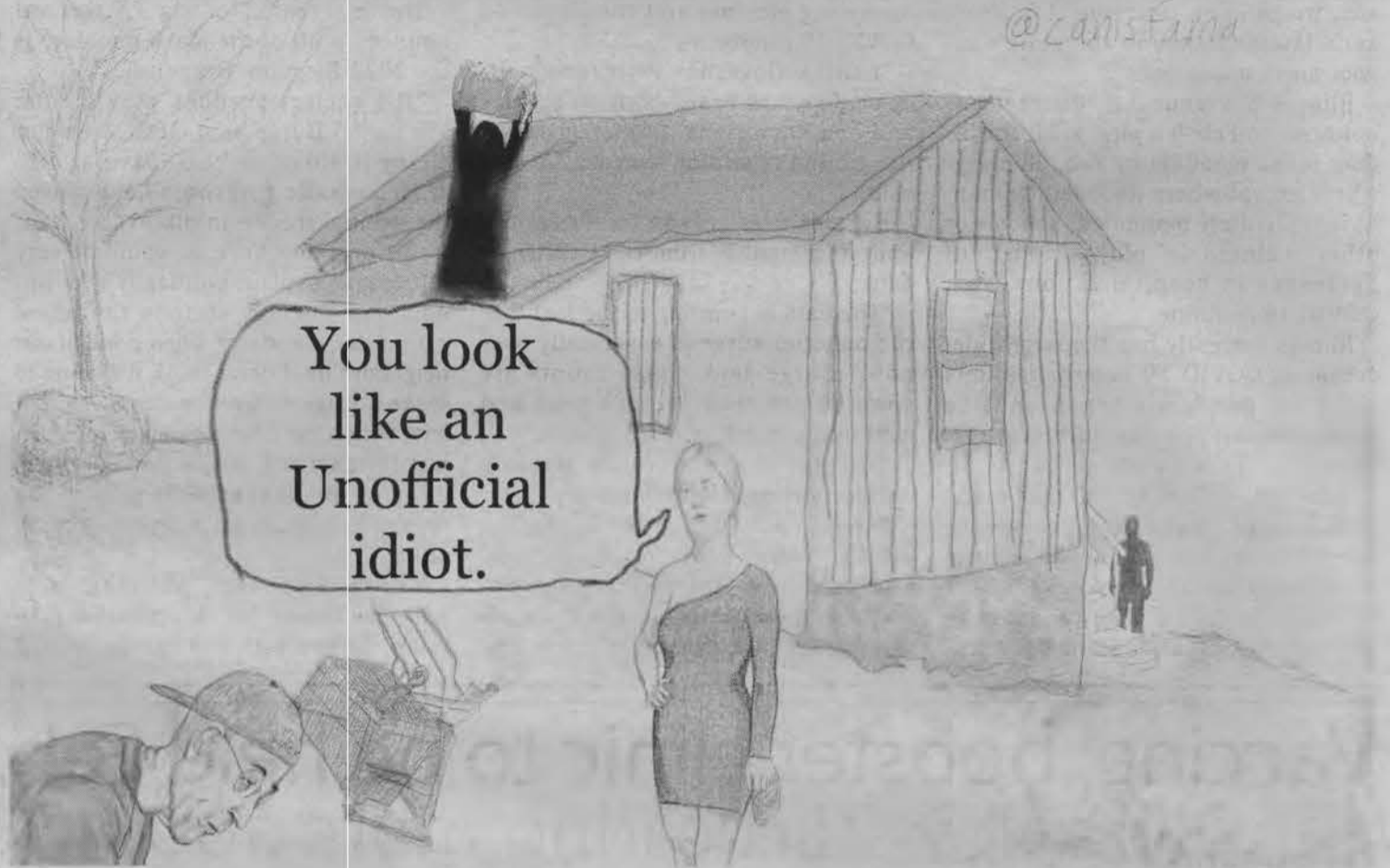
For some background information, Unofficial St. Patrick's Day originated at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1995. About a decade later it made its way to Charleston and has since become a day-long house party crawl starting early in the morning and ending when partygoers cannot walk.

As an upperclassman who went as a freshman and sophomore, I can say it was a pretty fun experience for the most part, though I should add that it was a little less fun when I had to go out in the cold to cover a shooting that happened during the festivities or when I had to go to the hospital with someone because they fell and started bleeding from their head.

Crazy stories aside, I have covered Unofficial in some capacity every year for the past three years, just like those before me have since Eastern started celebrating St. Patrick's Day officially back in the stone age.

We, the *News*, do this because it is a time-honored Eastern tradition and as a newspaper covering Eastern's campus, we often cover events to preserve a historical record of Eastern. For example, I dug through our archives to find when Eastern started celebrating Unofficial.

This has never been an issue up until last year when we covered what may or may not have been a makeshift Unofficial. Though,



Comic by Will Simmons

with so many conflicting opinions on social media, who knows what it was at that point.

Several factors went into our coverage last year:

1.) It was being advertised as Unofficial in many social media posts, so we kept up with the tradition of covering it.

2.) To my knowledge, it was the first time Eastern specifically told students to not be part of the Unofficial (or implied there would be consequences of partaking), with emails going out to members of Eastern's Greek

Life informing them of the consequences of hosting social events under Eastern's pandemic guidelines.

3.) We were, and still are, in a pandemic. As a newspaper, we report on issues for public health on campus and it was widely believed that the parties had the potential to be a super-spreader event.

However, at the end of the day, we all have choices.

Students have the choice to attend or not attend the Unofficial, knowing the typical

risks of being caught in the background of photos from the parties, injuries from drinking or drunken actions or getting arrested for public intoxication (or public urination if you're feeling really wild).

I, as Editor-in-Chief, am choosing to continue the *News*' tradition of covering Unofficial.

Corryn Brock is a senior journalism major. She can be reached at 581-2812 or at deneic@gmail.com.

Education

What's to come with blocked mask mandate?

On Feb 6, a Sangamon County Circuit Court judge ruled to place a temporary restraining order on Governor J.B. Pritzker's mask mandate across the state in public schools. Is this the best thing to happen in the recent Omicron COVID-19 surge? Absolutely not.

For years, parents have been fighting to take away the mask mandate. For some schools, they barely enforce masks. Their own administration does not even follow these guidelines. How could you enforce masks when your teachers or administrators do not even wear them?

Parents would rather spend hundreds of dollars to hire a lawyer to represent the whole state of Illinois than follow a simple rule. In my opinion, that is absolutely ignorant. This disagreement all just boils down to one thing-not wanting the other side of the aisle to win. It is not about caring for others or yourself, it is about causing conflict.



Ellen Dooley

What does this mean for the coming future? Well, this is only a temporary restraining order. The governor ordered a repeal, so this restraining order may not last long. Many schools are choosing to stay safe and follow CDC guidelines. Chicago Public Schools will continue to keep

the mandate in their schools despite the restraining order. I hope more school districts will continue in the footsteps of CPS. I believe they are looking out for their students and their students' health.

My thought is-what if it was another judge? What if it was another county? What if it was even in a different state? Would the outcome of this decision be completely different? Why even pursue this case if you knew the judge was going to rule against you? There are a lot of questions that come to mind.

What about my health? That is a big question that comes to my mind. As a student pursuing a degree in education, I will be in classrooms off campus. I know I am not comfortable being in a room with twenty plus people with no mask or social distancing. I could have a N-95 mask and I do not think there is enough hand sanitizer in the world to make me any more at ease.

There are a lot of possibilities that could happen. The state could even repeal the restraining order, and this could be done within a week. I like what Governor Pritzker said in a statement about the hearing, "The grave consequence of this misguided decision is that schools in these districts no longer have sufficient tools to keep students and staff safe while COVID-19 continues to threaten our communities, and this may force schools to go remote."

Remote. A word most students dread. Back to March of 2020 all over again. I think this is a setback in the fight against COVID-19 and I will anxiously be waiting to see how all of this plays out. Until then-stay safe.

Ellen Dooley is a sophomore special education standard major. She can be reached at 581-2812 or at emdooley@eiu.edu.

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Human Rights

There is great power in boycotting businesses

Individualistic tendencies blind us from the part we play in large-scale consumption patterns. Lately, people have been waking up to this reality, especially generation Z. First Insight, a platform for consumer data, reports that Generation Z has increased the demand for sustainable products, with 73 percent of surveyed report their willingness to spend more on a sustainable product.

These sentiments are reflected in today's movements that promote stepping away from overconsumption. Online clothing brands, such as SHEIN or Zara, are part of the wider trend of fast fashion. Fast fashion is when clothing companies produce clothes that are low quality but can be purchased for extremely low prices. These companies are known to follow trends and adjust accordingly.

The influx of trends makes these companies known for excessive amounts of waste, both in cloth-



Gisella Mancera

ing, but also the production of toxins. Younger individuals have created noise online in an effort to warn people of the environmental consequences of participating in fast fashion. Because of online advocacy people are becoming more conscious of where their clothes are coming from.

Despite this progress, people argue that the individual consumer

is often made to feel guilty at the hands of corporations. These comments were especially prevalent after the 2019 plastic straw ban in California. Why should the responsibility to reduce waste be placed on individual citizens when corporations are to blame for the systematic stripping of resources, pollution, and overall environmental degradation?

What people fail to see is that these companies have no incentive to reduce waste or make products sustainable when people are still buying their product. Corporations are seen as these monstrous entities that are afforded overarching power, but really, it's just a group of rational decision makers, the same as the consumer. Except when their job is to make money, these companies aren't going to change their product out of newfound benevolence, consumers have to demand it.

This is where boycotting becomes

extremely prevalent. Boycotting is different than boycotting. Instead of inaction, boycotting is the active approach of buying goods that reflect the consumers ethical standards. Boycotting encourages consumers to acquire knowledge about the products they buy.

Of course, boycotting is only available for the financially privileged. Not everyone has the advantage of incorporating ethics into their shopping. But I think that if we want to see change in our markets we have to start rallying our consumer power. Boycotting movements have the advantage of flowering in online spaces where information is transparent and can be shared easily. It is never too late to start being a smart consumer, all of the information is at your fingertips.

Gisella Mancera is a senior sociology major. She can be reached at 581-2812 or at gomancera@eiu.edu.

Social Commentary

Dear Olympics, start caring more about your athletes

For those that haven't been paying attention to NBC, the Winter Olympics are going on between Feb. 4 and Feb. 20, 2022. The Summer Olympics went from July 23 to Aug. 8, 2021 and were delayed because of the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

While we all love watching figure skating and gymnastics, and as talented as all Olympic athletes are, there is so much going on behind the scenes that viewers don't know about.

From ridiculously grueling practice schedules to having to compete in events that do so much damage to your body, Olympic athletes don't have it easy. And to make things worse, the conditions for the athletes in Beijing at the moment probably aren't great.

During the 2020 summer Olympics, gymnast Simone Biles withdrew from competition because her mental health wasn't doing well. During that same Olympics, she took home a



Katja Benz

bronze metal on balance beam and a silver metal for the team event.

Even though people were excited to see her perform, she just couldn't. And that's okay.

Sometimes people don't realize that Olympians are also human. We deserve breaks and so do they.

I think that to an extent, people view Olympians as more than athletes. People view them as entertain-

ers, as people so magical that they do no wrong, or worse: people have a bar set so high for Olympians that is too high for them to reach.

That stigma makes the Olympic dream magical, almost to a point of unreachability. And when these athletes finally reach it, they work themselves harder to get Olympic gold.

When they push themselves too hard just to preform, they may neglect other aspects of their health just to preform to those standards.

And the Olympic committee lets it happen, but at what cost?

When Simone Biles withdrew from the Summer 2020 Olympics because of her mental health, people found it inspiring and rightfully so. She was finally taking care of something the Olympic committee seemingly denied her the right to.

How ethical is it for the Olympic committee to do so?

And I'm asking that for all Olympic athletes, not just Simone Biles. She,

unfortunately, is the face of a movement that should have been started sooner.

Maybe the Olympic committee just wants the views. Views, though, are nothing in comparison to a person's mental health.

If you think about it, if the committee doesn't think about the athletes as whole people, they can retire sooner and views can go down.

Which begs the question of how much views really cost.

Especially when people's health is at stake. Just because these people are Olympians doesn't mean that we should treat them any differently than we do ourselves. Just because they live a different lifestyle than us non Olympians doesn't mean their mental health is any less important.

In fact, I'd argue it's almost more so.

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

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

DO YOU THINK EASTERN SHOULD

CONTINUE ITS MASK MANDATE?

CHECK OUT DAILYEASTERNNEWS.COM TO SEE WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

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#BeBoldGetCold

Eastern softball team gets 2022 season underway

By Adam Tumino
Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

Williams Field may be covered in snow, but nevertheless the 2022 softball season is underway for Eastern.

The Panthers began play over the weekend in the Rosemont Dome Tournament in Rosemont, Illinois. They went 1-3 in the three-day tournament.

The season opener took on Feb. 10 against Western Michigan with Eastern losing 6-2. The Panthers then scored 20 runs in their two games the next day, losing 12-9 to St. Thomas and then beating Valparaiso 11-2 in five innings to get their first win of the season.

They closed out the tournament with 5-3 loss to Bowling Green.

Several newcomers to the Panthers performed well in their first few games, led by catcher Lindy Milkowski.

She hit the Panthers' first home run of the season in the game against St. Thomas and followed it up with a historic game against Valparaiso.

Milkowski hit two grand slams in that game, tying an NCAA record. She also doubled in the game.

Milkowski played for Iowa last season. She hit two home runs for the Hawkeyes, one of which was also a grand slam.

Freshman Riley Dittmar also made an impact in her first collegiate action. She played in all four games and went 5-of-11 from the plate for a .455 batting average, the second-highest on the team.

Leading the Panthers in batting average is returning second baseman Han-



FILE PHOTO | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Eastern shortstop Megan Burton throws to first after fielding a ground ball at third base in the second game of a doubleheader against Tennessee-Martin April 12, 2021. Eastern lost the game 1-0. Burton

nah Cravens, who also leads the team in slugging percentage despite going hitless in the season opener.

So far Cravens is slashing .462/.533/1.077 with two home runs and two doubles.

Reigning OVC Player of the Year Megan Burton has three hits and two RBI in the first four games.

On the mound, freshman Alexa Rehmeier leads the team with 8.1 innings pitched. She has allowed three earned runs for an ERA of 2.62.

Freshman pitcher Kaitlyn Reifsteck has pitched 4.1 scoreless innings to begin her college career.

The Panthers play again this weekend in the River City Classic II in

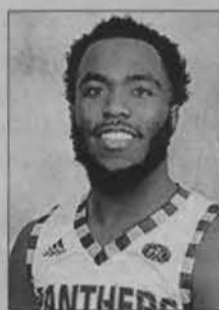
Vicksburg, Mississippi.

They have two games each on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. They will play Jackson State three times and one game each against North Alabama, Alcorn State and Alabama A&M.

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

Athletes of the Issue

KASHAWN CHARLES



The men's basketball team picked up a big win on Feb. 12, beating Tennessee-Martin 82-70 at home. The longest-tenured player on the team, guard Kashawn Charles, had a career-high 27 points in that game.

He played all 40 minutes, shooting 10-of-18 from the field including 6-of-11 from three-point range.

LINDY MILKOWSKI



The Eastern softball team began its season over the weekend, and catcher Lindy Milkowski started the season with a bang.

Milkowski tied an NCAA record by hitting two grand slams in the Panthers' 11-2 win over Valparaiso Feb. 11. This is her first season at Eastern after playing a season at Iowa. She hit two home runs last season, one of which was also a grand slam.

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OVC women's basketball season in final 2 weeks

By Adam Tumino
Sports Editor | @adam_tumino

Each OVC women's basketball team has four games left in the regular season. The top eight teams in the conference are already locked into the OVC Tournament, but seeding is still up for grabs late in the season.

Belmont leads the conference with a 12-2 record in conference play, having won six games in a row.

The Bruins have the top defense in the conference, allowing just 57 points per game.

Tennessee Tech sits in second place with an 11-3 OVC record. The Golden Eagles have won their last two games and nine of their last 10.

The OVC's third-place team is Murray State at 10-4. The Racers lead the conference in scoring margin at +12.7 points per game. They have the conference's top-scoring offense and rank fourth defensively.

Also at 10-4 is Austin Peay. The Governors lost to Tennessee-Martin on Monday, snapping a four-game winning streak.

They are also the top three-point shooting team in the OVC, shooting 37.3 percent from deep.

Eastern remains in fifth place after dropping its last two games following a five-game win streak. The Panthers have a road game against Belmont on Thursday.

The Panthers rank second in the conference in offense, averaging 68.9 points per game.

Tennessee-Martin has climbed up to sixth place after a slow start. The Skyhawks have won five of their last six games and their last three in a row.

Their defense has helped them get back to .500, allowing just 49 points per game in their last five games.

Tennessee State is headed in the opposite direction, having lost four-straight games to fall to 6-8. They are averaging 45.5 points per game during that streak, although three of their losses have come against Belmont, Murray State and Austin Peay.

Southern Illinois-Edwardsville is in the eighth and final tournament spot at 5-9 in conference play. Even if the Cougars lose out and ninth-place Southeast Missouri wins out they will have the same record, and the Cougars won both of their games against the Redhawks this season to claim the tiebreaker.

Southeast Missouri is just 1-13 in conference play and has lost its last five games.

Morehead State has yet to win a conference game. The Eagles are 0-14 in conference play and 1-23 overall, losing 21-straight games.

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



BY ROB LE CATES | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Eastern forward Taris Thornton drives toward basket at the women's basketball game against Tennessee-Martin on Saturday at Lantz Arena. Thornton had four points in the game, which the Panthers lost 58-45.

Tournament time approaching for OVC men's basketball teams

By Autumn Schulz
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A chance to punch a ticket to the 2022 OVC Tournament is shrinking for most men's teams across the conference as the two-week countdown to Ford Center in Evansville has begun.

The top eight men's and women's teams in the conference, based on conference winning percentage, automatically qualify for the tournament. The tournament will kick off with the number five seed facing off against the number eight seed.

If the tournament started today, the Eastern men's basketball team would not qualify for a spot. The Panthers were picked in the preseason to finish in ninth place and so far, this remains to be somewhat true as they lost 62-54 to fifth place Austin Peay Monday night.

The Panthers are now 3-10 in the conference and 5-21 overall, putting them in last place. The loss kicked off the final road game stretch of the season for the Panthers as they have five regular-season games left, two of them being against the conference leaders.

SIUE, who occupies the ninth spot in the conference, would also not make the tournament if it started today. The Cougars are 3-10 in the conference with a 9-17 overall record. Their most recent one-point win was over Tennessee Tech. Their next game will be against Tennessee State and if they win, they could continue to overcome the Panthers in the rankings.



BY ROB LE CATES | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

Guard Kejuan Clements dribbles the ball after a turnover at the men's basketball game against Tennessee-Martin on Saturday Lantz Arena. Clements had 15 points and four rebounds in the game, which the Panthers won 82-70.

The OVC selected Belmont as the preseason favorite to win the tournament with Morehead State earning the number two slot and Murray State earning the number three slot. Since then, both the Bruins and the Racers have announced that they will be leaving the OVC to join the MVC.

Today, things look a bit different for the Bruins as they are second in the conference with a 12-2 conference record and a 22-5 overall record. Their

only conference losses came at the hands of the Racers and the Eagles.

The Bruins' next game will be against the Panthers this Thursday night. They are on an eight-game winning streak with their last win being over number four Southeast Missouri, 81-72. The Bruins will enter Thursday's contest just two games behind the Racers.

The Redhawks are 6-7 in conference play and 11-15 overall with their last loss coming at the hands of the Bruins,

81-72. Their next game will be against the number seven Golden Eagles who are one game behind the sixth place Tigers.

As for the Racers, they sit at the top of the conference with a 14-0 record in conference play and a 24-2 overall record. The AP Poll has ranked them No. 21 in the nation, improving from No. 23.

They are on a 14-game winning streak and are coming off a 57-53 win over the Eagles. Their next game will be against the Governors on Thursday night as the Governors are fighting to lockdown the fourth spot in the conference and receive a first-round bye.

The Eagles are third in the conference with an 11-3 conference record and a 19-8 overall record. They are on a two-game losing streak and will take on number eight Tennessee-Martin Wednesday evening. The Eagles are currently 3 games behind the Racers and one game behind the Bruins.

The Skyhawks are 4-10 in the conference, earning them the eighth spot, just one game behind the Golden Eagles and one game in front of the Cougars. The Skyhawks are now 8-18 overall after losing 82-70 to the Panthers last Saturday.

From the top of the conference to the bottom, the race to Evansville for the OVC men's basketball teams continues to be a tight one.

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