

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

March

2023

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Daily Eastern News: March 22, 2023

Eastern Illinois University

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Union member salaries compared to the Illinois cost of living, p. 3

What union members, other faculty and students need to know about the strike, p. 4-5

A complete timeline of the year-long contract negotiations beginning on March 21, 2022, p. 6-7

EIU-UPI reaches approval for strike by 97%

By Madelyn Kidd
Editor-in-Chief | @Madelyn_K

EIU-UPI members voted to authorize a union strike if the almost year-long contract bargaining continues without reaching an agreement.

Eastern’s chapter of the University Professionals of Illinois held a strike authorization vote Wednesday and Thursday resulting in 97 percent of voting union members voting “Yes.” A total of 85 percent of union members voted in the strike authorization vote.

The large approval for a strike if necessary means EIU-UPI could go on strike if the ongoing contract negotiations with Eastern’s administration does not reach an agreement soon.

EIU-UPI has been negotiating for a new contract since March 21, 2022.

The last contract ended on Aug. 31 leaving union members working without a contract for over seven months.

EIU-UPI called for a federal mediator in November to help move the bargaining sessions along.

The authorization for a strike does not mean the union will strike. It allows the EIU-UPI bargaining team to call for a strike if they feel the contract negotiations continue to make little to no movement towards an agreement.

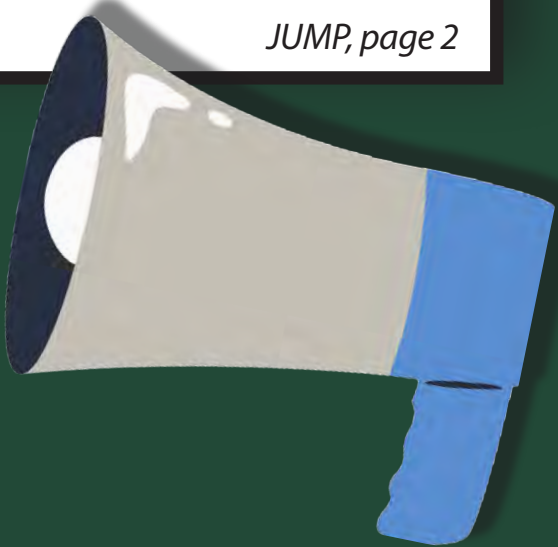
The EIU-UPI and Eastern’s negotiation teams will meet for a mediation meeting Friday.

Jennifer Stringfellow, EIU-UPI’s president and a professor of special education at Eastern, said the strike authorization vote shows Eastern’s administration that while the union does not want to strike, they will if necessary.

“This vote sends a clear message to EIU administration that we’re all in,” Stringfellow said. “Our members resoundingly reject what they are offering at the table. We don’t want to strike, but we’re willing to do this to ensure EIU students get the high-quality education they deserve, and that our members get a fair contract.”

One of the biggest hurdles left for EIU-UPI and Eastern to reach an agreement on are wage increases to reflect the cost of living.

JUMP, page 2



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FILE PHOTO | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

EIU-UPI reached the required votes to have the authorization for the negotiation team to call for a strike if necessary on March 9.

Strike vote authorization, p. 1

Billy Hung, EIU-UPI's lead negotiator and a professor of biological sciences at Eastern, said the proposals from EIU-UPI will reflect the current economy and help faculty and staff retention rates at Eastern. "We continue to offer proposals that make EIU stronger," Hung said. "We're calling on the university to plan for the future and settle an agreement that will boost faculty and staff retention. We are asking for fair compensation that reflects the current economy. We are demanding that our students get the resources and support they need as they recover from a pandemic and prepare for a career. And we need EIU administration to come to the table with a plan to make these demands a reality."

EIU-UPI is the union representing approximately 450 people, which includes Eastern faculty which are tenured or tenure-track, referred to as Unit A, and annually contracted faculty and academic support professionals, referred to as Unit B. This includes faculty teaching courses and advisors for students. If a strike is called, all union members are required to participate in the strike unless they resign from the union. A strike would result in classes across Eastern's campus to be canceled if taught by a union member. Department chairs and newly hired faculty and staff would not be in the union and able to participate in the strike. UPI chapters across Illinois have faced the possibility of a strike in the last year. University of Illinois Chicago went on a four-day strike before the administration and union reached a contract both sides

agreed with. Chicago State University's UPI chapter is having their own vote for if they can go on strike. CSU's vote for a strike started on Wednesday and ends Friday. John Miller, the UPI president and Illinois Federation of Teachers vice president of higher education, said taking the step to go on strike is not easy, but he is proud of union members for demanding solutions. "I'm proud of our members who are standing together to demand real solutions to the challenges facing EIU," Miller said. "Taking this step isn't easy, but sometimes it's necessary so that faculty and staff can continue to give our students a fully resourced and well-supported college education and to ensure EIU remains a high-quality place to learn and work."

Madelyn Kidd can be reached at 581-2812 or at DENeic@gmail.com.

FRONT PAGE COVER BY MADELYN KIDD AND ROB LE CATES

WHAT'S HAPPENING MARCH 22 - 29

WEDNESDAY

Director's Brown Bag: Artificial Intelligence and Our Students
12 p.m.-1 p.m. - 1220 Booth Library
LAB (Library Ambassadors of Booth) meeting
5 p.m.-6 p.m. - Dean's Conference Room, Booth Library

THURSDAY

Backward Design Workshop
3 p.m.-4 p.m. - 1220 Booth Library
Hennings Reading Series
6 p.m.-7 p.m. - Recital Hall, Doudna Fine Arts Center

FRIDAY

Wind Symphony and Faculty Showcase Concert
7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. - Recital Hall, Doudna Fine Arts Center

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

MONDAY

International Tea & Dessert Reception
1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. - West Reading Room, Booth Library

TUESDAY

Student Accounting Society - Caterpillar Inc.
5 p.m.-6 p.m. - 2011 Lumpkin Hall
Media Professions Job & Internship Fair
6 p.m.-8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Media Professions Job & Internship Fair
11 a.m.-1 p.m. - University Ballroom, MLK Jr. Union

YOUR EVENT COULD GO HERE!

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

Instructors who do not meet the 2022 or 2023 cost of living



By **Cam’ron Hardy**
NewsEditor|@DEN_news

In 2022, the cost of living for a single parent was \$33,602 according to livingwage.mit.edu. Since then, the wage has increased roughly 31 percent to \$43,981.

With the current lack of contracts for Eastern’s chapter of the University Professionals of Illinois, EIU-UPI, professors may not meet that cost-of-living minimum.

Instructors who do not meet the 2022 and 2023 Illinois cost of living (the salaries listed are from the 2021 fiscal year) are listed in the graphic above.

With that, some of the instructors listed above may not be a full-time professor or have been hired in the middle of the school year.

Yet none of them meet the cost of living for 2023.

Instructors that do not meet the 2023 Illinois cost of living (based on their 2021 salaries) are listed in the

graphic to the right.

Illinois is the ninth lowest cost of living in the United States with a average housing cost of \$855 to \$1,693, according to sofi.com.

With the lack of contracts given to EIU-UPI, the union has voted to authorize the ability to call for a strike on March 9. The union has to have a 10 day wait period before going on strike.

The union has been negotiating obtaining contracts for over a year (exactly a year on March 21).

With University President David Glassman retiring, he will become a professor in the Department of Anthropology and will obtain a monthly salary of \$17,777.78 for a nine-month contract.

Glassman will only teach one course in the spring 2024 semester.

While president during the fiscal year 2021, Glassman earned \$325,412, which was the highest salary at Eastern.

Current provost and vice president

of academic affairs, Jay Gatrell, was approved an annual salary of \$320K and an annual house allowance of \$32,289 when he begins his term as the 13th president in July.

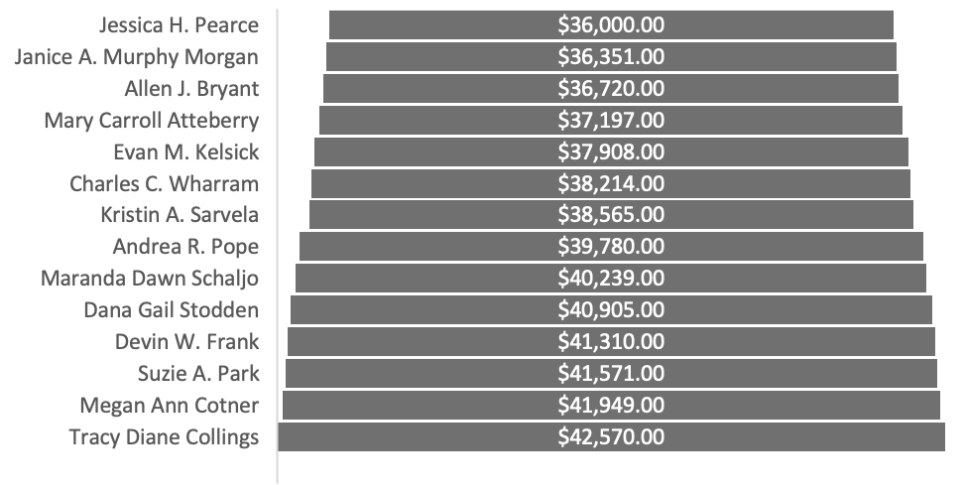
The highest paid assistant professors 2021 (not including additional compensation) are listed in the

graphic on the bottom left.

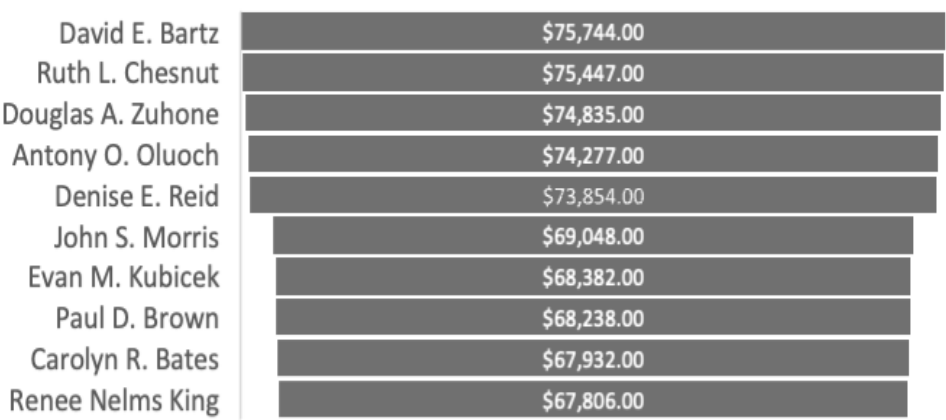
The top 10 highest paid instructors as of 2021 (not including addition compensation) are listed in the graphic on the bottom right.



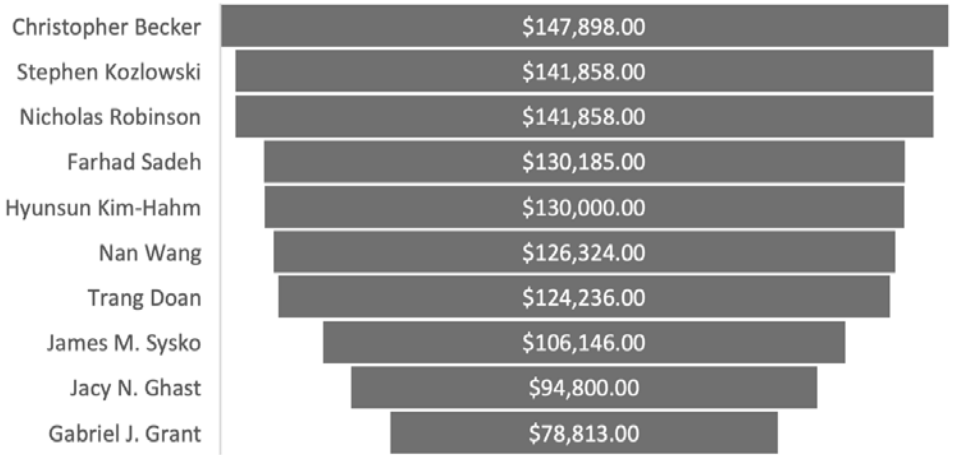
Instructors that do not meet the 2023 Illinois cost of living



Highest paid instructors at EIU asof 2021 (not including additional compensation)



Highest paid assistant professors as of 2021 (not including additional compensation)



WHAT EIU-UPI MEMBERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT POTENTIAL STRIKE

A full strike manual was sent to EIU-UPI union members with the listed information and more.

Your legal rights:

- A strike is a lawful concerted activity in the state of Illinois.
- Admin’s failure to retain members because of strike participation, or retaliation against striking employees in any way is grounds for a very serious Unfair Labor Practice Charge (ULP). However, motivation behind non-renewal or non-retention can be difficult to prove. Therefore, striking members are in a better position if there is greater participation in their chapter or unit and if they have the support of students, colleagues, and the community.
- As a local affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), and the AFL-CIO, we have both legal and financial support (as will be explained below), and any cases of retaliation would be fought. However, this support cannot necessarily prevent intimidation, discrimination, or discipline from occurring, despite the illegal nature of these actions. Each individual must assess the level of risk when considering participation. You may consult a lawyer to be sure of your particular situation.
- If you have experienced or fear retaliation for your participation in union activities, contact your Grievance Officer immediately.
- As a union member, you cannot be fired or disciplined for striking
- You are not required to tell your department chair or other supervisors if you are going on strike

Who can go on strike:

Only EIU-UPI members are protected under laws to go on strike. Newly hired faculty can also go on/participate strike but are not protected by any laws. Faculty under another union or no union at all cannot strike with UPI. Those in the union would have to resign to not be legally required to strike with their union under law.

Insurance options:

In a strike, your health insurance may be canceled. However, COBRA coverage is available to apply for. If coverage is removed, when the strike ends your health insurance will go back as if it was never suspended.

MEDIA RULES:

You are free to speak to the media if you want too, but clearly state you are not a spokesperson of EIU-UPI. Only the chapter president and their designees are official spokespersons.

Picketing:

Picketing will be peaceful and is a good opportunity to show our resolve to the administration, as well as to stand in solidarity with our students, fellow members, and supporters from the university and community. Strike activities include, but are not limited to:

- legal picketing at entrances to campus buildings
- rallying in central/visible locations on campus
- peacefully distributing literature to students and the public
- speaking out to the public as to the purpose of the strike
- serving on the contact team for the local, state and national media

A successful strike depends on mobilized members/volunteers working together to show our solidarity and strength.

Strike breaking tactics:

- Threats of reprisals, such as discharge, no reappointment, cancellation of health insurance or promotion, loss of summer work, leaves, sabbaticals, or favors.
- Lies to the effect that a “group” is going back to work tomorrow.
- Slander against Union leaders and against the integrity of the Union itself.
- Slander against fellow strikers aimed at causing dissension.
- Charges of violence on the part of strikers.
- Defeatism to the effect that the strike cannot be won, is failing, or isn’t worth the effort.
- False and misleading accounts in the press, on radio, TV, social media, aimed at undermining the strikers’ determination and/or attempting to raise false hopes that might begin a back-to-work movement that has not been authorized by a vote of the general membership.

What students should know about the union negotiations, potential strike

By Cam'ron Hardy
News Editor | @DEN_news

Eastern's chapter of University Professionals of Illinois, EIU-UPI, have been negotiating contracts with the university for the last year.

Those involved with EIU-UPI have been protesting for over a year, exactly a year on March 21, 2023, and the university is not giving them new contracts.

They have been working without a contract since Aug. 31.

With the lack of contracts given to EIU-UPI, the union has voted to authorize the ability to call for a strike.

The union has to have a 10 day wait period before actually having the strike.

This does not mean that the union will strike, but they are authorized to do so, if they choose to.

The final negotiation meeting will take place on April 3 at 9 a.m. in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union and will last someone walks out or they go until they reach a consensus.

According to current Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs Jay Gatrell, the university must fulfill other obligations such as building maintenance, supporting student development and academic services that benefit students as well as composing contracts that are fair to everyone.

If the union chooses to strike, it will follow the meeting.

Instructors and professors involved with the union, must go on strike, meaning that classes will be canceled.

Gatrell sent an email March 13 informing students on what they should do if their professors cancel class.



FILE PHOTO | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

"If you're enrolled in an online course or an online element of a hybrid course, make sure to participate in online activities and complete the coursework as scheduled in the course outline," Gatrell said.

For face-to-face courses and classroom elements of a hybrid course, Gatrell communicated what students should do.

"Attend all scheduled lectures, labs and studios even if an instructor indicates that the class may not meet during a potential strike," Gatrell said.

For student teaching, internships and clinicals, Gatrell said to continue participating and attending in

off-campus academic affairs.

Gatrell said to ask questions for professors and instructors if anyone has questions.

Graduating students should contact teachers immediately around the time the strike happens (if it does happen) to understand what to do as far as graduating.

Professors and instructors who are not a part of the Union may also cancel class for numerous reasons as well as participating in the event or to make it

easier for students to just cancel the class.

Cam'ron Hardy can be reached at 581-2812 or at dennewsdesk@gmail.com.

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Negotiation process throughout a year



March 21, 2022

First negotiations meeting with Eastern's administration and EIU-UPI for the next four-year contract.

August

EIU-UPI provided an update on negotiations. Thus far, administration and the union had only reached 11 tentative agreements with 21 proposals remaining to negotiate.



Sept. 8

EIU-UPI held a Teach Out event to help spread awareness to students on labor laws and unions. Students were also provided information about the ongoing negotiations.

Oct. 14

EIU-UPI delivered a grievance to University President David Glassman's office for Eastern's administration not bargaining in "good faith."



Nov. 14

EIU-UPI members handed out flyers to the Trustees and various Eastern administrators and faculty attending the meeting with information of current costs of living compared to recent years' salary increases.



Feb. 27

EIU-UPI delivered approximately 1000 postcards addressed to the BOT with the message "get your priorities right" signed by Eastern community members across campus. This includes faculty, Charleston community members, students, employees, etc.

March 10

EIU-UPI had 97 percent of voters vote yes to authorize a strike giving the negotiation team the ability to call for one. Approximately 85 percent of union members voted in total.

March - July 2022

Negotiations continue throughout the spring and summer terms.

Sept. 9

EIU-UPI's President Jennifer Stringfellow spoke to the Board of Trustees during the public comment portion of the BOT meeting.

Nov. 10

EIU-UPI called for a federal mediator after administration and the union had reached a stone-wall in negotiations

March 8-9

EIU-UPI held a strike authorization vote that would give the union negotiating team the ability to call for a strike if the negotiations continue to not see or see little progress. In order to authorize a strike, at least 70 percent of union members have to participate in the vote, and 70 percent of the voters have to vote yes to approve the authorization for a strike.

Aug. 31

The last contract agreement for Unit A and Unit B faculty expired on Aug. 31.



Jan. 20

EIU-UPI's lead negotiator Billy Hung spoke at the first BOT meeting in the spring 2023 semester updating the BOT on the current negotiations.

March 22

Negotiations between the union and administration are still bargaining on the next contract at this time. EIU-UPI could call for a strike, but have to have at least a 10-day notice to when the strike begins. The last bargaining session is on April 3 at 9 a.m. This session either ends with an agreement or with someone walking out.



EDITORIAL

Admin need to do more in negotiations

Right before spring break, UPI-EIU released that they authorized the ability to strike.

This does not mean they are going to strike, but possess the ability to call for a strike in the near future.

With negotiations still dragging on, that could be in the very near future.

This had many students wondering what would become of the rest of this semester, and how it may affect degree progress or program completion.

To address this concern, this year's spring break was not complete without an email from provost, executive vice president for academic affairs, and president-elect Jay Gatrell.

The email was sent to all students with instructions moving forward. In these instructions was one item that left the editorial board and many students uneasy.

Per the email from Gatrell, "Face-to-face Courses & Classroom Elements of a Hybrid Course: Attend all scheduled lectures, labs and studios even if an instructor indicates that the class may not meet during a potential strike. If you have any questions or if an instructor is absent for a registered course, please contact the department chair."

Are we supposed to just sit in a classroom without a professor?

Are we supposed to "tell on" our professors because they want a livable wage and are exercising their right to protest?

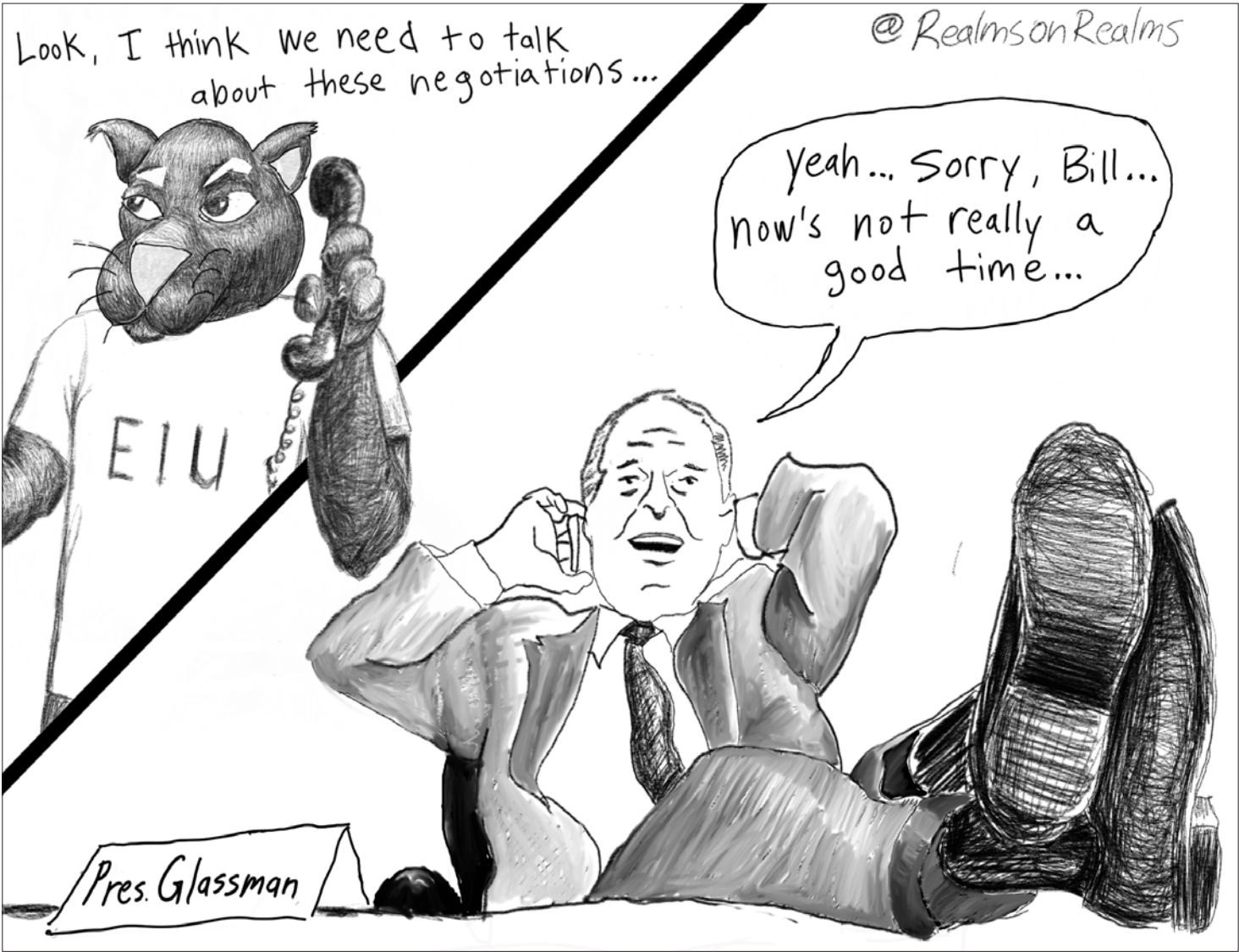
We at *The News* still support the UPI-EIU and their efforts.

It is absolutely absurd that the academic year is drawing to a close and our professors are still working without a contract.

It seems as administration saw "good faith negotiations" in the rear view mirror one hundred miles ago.

As students, we hope to look up to our professors as role models and inspiration for our future careers.

How are we supposed to look up to them if administration is painting striking professors as the "bad guys" for missing or canceling scheduled classes



COMIC BY WILL SIMMONS | THE DAILY EASTERN NEWS

during a strike.

Our professors are professionals. They are professionals who have spent years in their field and have dedication to their craft.

Why should they not be compensated for that?

But most of all they are human. These professionals have families at home, bills to pay, and food to put on the table.

They deserve a livable wage to support their basic human needs and wants like everyone else.

Administration's case is only made worse by University President David Glassman's personnel contract for when

he becomes a professor in the fall after retiring from presidency.

Glassman was approved to be paid \$160K over the span of nine months and is only teaching one anthropology class in the spring 2024 semester.

The university says there is not enough money in the budget to give the pay increases the union is negotiating for, yet Eastern can afford paying Glassman as the highest paid professor to teach one course.

Administration is walking a very fine line right now.

They have rightfully unhappy, agitated professors on one side and uneasy, nervous students on the other side won-

dering what the future will be.

One fowl swoop and this can blow up to a larger issue.

From *The News*, student body, and the professors of this university- respect our educators and get them a fair contract.

Why are we dancing around the issue?

Our higher up administration preaches good habits like not procrastinating.

Maybe they need to take a page out of their own book and get this contract done that is long overdue.

The Editorial Board can be reached at 581-2812.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

Would you support your instructors and professors if they strike?



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ANSWER THE POLL ON ...
Twitter: @DEN_News

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COLUMN

The halfway mark in my journey at EIU



Kyla Moton

We are almost at the end of the Spring 2023 semester. As this is my third year at Eastern, it almost feels surreal. It is crazy for me to think about how much I have accomplished and how much I have gotten done since starting out as a freshman. As a tour guide, I get a lot of students asking me about student life and what my classes are like. I tell them my honest opinions in the kindest way possible, but there are things that I cannot inform them of. I do not think people truly talk about the impact that being on college can have on your mental health. Even in high school, we never really touched on that subject when talking about college. It was almost like a shock to me when I started falling into an unrecognized sadness my freshman year.

It was the year of the pandemic, I almost felt rushed into college, like I never truly got to finish my high school career and college came out of the blue. Life was very gray for the last few months of my first semester here. I will also admit that I started to slip academically. I feel like this happens to a lot of first year students as well, just from conversations that I had with first year students when I was a sophomore and now that I am a junior. Resources are plentiful and Eastern makes it a point of interest to encourage students to reach out when they feel that they are in need of help. But is it truly enough? I understand that physical counseling services are limited and first come first serve, but is there a way that counseling services can be rotated to

accomplish multiple students? I know that student leaders on campus are also trained for certain interventions like these, but there is only so much that they can do to help another struggling student. Two students in the same predicament would not be able to properly provide the help that both students would need mentally. At this point in time, though, I think that it helps to be there for your friends who may not be having the best time as of currently. Everyone's head is in a different space, and everyone's mental state varies as well. The final stretch is almost here, so try to find at least one thing to keep yourself going in this final half of the semester.

Kyla Moton is a junior English/

Quote of the Week:

" Cost of labor is whatever workers are willing to accept in exchange for our work. "

- Billy Hung, professor of biology and EIU-UPI lead negotiator

COLUMN

'The Prestige': a period thriller film focused on detail

Christopher Nolan has cemented himself as a director with an extraordinary attention to detail and well thought out way of telling a story. His 2006 film "The Prestige" is one of the best examples of this. Starring Hugh Jackman, Christian Bale, Michael Caine and Scarlett Johansson, the film tells the story of two rivaling magicians in 1890s London who both try to create the perfect illusion. To start, the acting in this film is very entertaining and utilizes great star power. Jackman and Bale are amazing as feuding rivals and clearly have a great time playing characters who are trying to outsmart each other for a majority of the film's runtime. Specifically, Bale does an outstanding job as a magician who is absolutely obsessed with improving his acts no matter the cost. The audience can really feel the desperation and need for his character to accomplish the perfect illusion.



Drew Coffey


When his character begins a family, his obsession with magic only hurts his wife and daughter, providing many emotional scenes. The cinematography is very grandiose, especially during the magician's acts on stage. There are plenty of extremely wide shots showing the packed house of

extras watching on. Editing is also a crucial part of the film as the illusion that both magicians are trying to pull off is The Transported Man. This is a trick where someone walks through a door and "seemingly" teleports to another part of the stage or even within the crowd. The film cleverly pulls this trick off and gives the film a very cool and stylish look to it. Something to also mention is there are many scenes where the same actor is playing two different characters talking to each other. This happens when Jackman's character needs a body double to truly pull off The Transported Man. He finds one, played by Jackman himself, and they have many scenes where they talk to each other in the same shot. While there are many times where they hide the cuts and stand-ins for the shots, it is still impressive to see. The biggest strength of "The Prestige" is how the story unfolds and

how information is subtly shown to the audience. Nolan does an extraordinary job at subtly showing viewers scenes that do not seem too important, and then using those scenes to build on the film's final reveal. The film's final reveal is very effective in that it is completely logical with several scenes preceding it. Not to spoil, but the final minutes of the film tie the entire story with a neat bow that not only gives the audience a conclusive end to the film, but also rewards them by having every scene be absolutely necessary and crucial to the plot. Overall, "The Prestige" is a very well- acted, well- rounded, and well-conceptualized film that continues to exceed the viewer's expectations until the final credits roll. My overall rating: 4/5


Drew Coffey is a sophomore television/video production major. He can be reached at akcoffey@eiu.edu or 217-581-2812.

Yes 33.87%



LAST EDITION'S RESULTS

WE ASKED STUDENTS IF THEY ATTENDED UNOFFICIAL SAINT PATRICK'S DAY?



No 66.13%

Softball at top of OVC after sweeping Ut Martin

By Autumn Schulz
Sports Editor | @autschulz

The Eastern softball team has been playing for a little over a month and Ohio Valley Conference games will kick off at Williams Field this weekend starting on Saturday at 1 p.m. against SIUE

Softball has been playing on the road since early February and they are 14-12 overall and 3-0 in conference play, putting them at the top of the conference.

The Panthers were selected to finish fourth in the OVC Preseason Poll.

The Panthers swept OVC opponent UT Martin on the road two weekends ago with one of the games ending after five innings as the Panthers were able to get 10 runs across the plate.

In game one, Kendall Grover was vital to the offense as she had two hits and four RBIs.

Amber Cieplinski tacked on one hit, which helped seal the 5-1 win for the Panthers.

The 10-0 win for the Panthers in five innings started off strong as Lindy Milkowski and Briana Gonzalez both had home runs in the first inning.

Milkowski had a three-run home run and Gonzalez had a two-run home run.

The Panthers went on to score four runs in the fifth inning.

The last game of the series saw the Panthers head into extra innings, pulling out the 5-2 win.

The game was scoreless through the first seven innings but then Milkowski drove in two runs and Rachel Kaufman had a three-run home run to give the Panthers their five runs.

Southeast Missouri is right behind the Panthers in the standings with a 4-1 record and an 11-8 overall record. Tennessee State is tied with the Redhawks for second place.

Southern Indiana and Morehead State are in the middle of the stand-



BY ANGELA PRICE

Jaylen Prichard (3), a sophomore outfielder and infielder, slides into home base during the softball game against the Jackson State University Tigers at the Jackson State softball field.

ings as the Screaming Eagles have a 2-1 record and the Eagles have a 3-2 record.

The bottom half of the standings includes SIUE, UT Martin, Lindenwood, and Tennessee Tech, all of which have been defeated in their opening series of OVC games.

The Panthers are second in the conference in team batting as they are averaging .277 as a team.

They are fourth in the conference in team pitching with a team ERA of 3.50.

Sophomore outfielder Jaylen Prichard leads the starting lineup with a .354 batting average. Prichard has had 29 hits and 11 RBIs with a .451 slug-

ging percentage through 82 at bats.

Prichard is fourth in the conference in hits with 29, averaging 1.21 hits per game. Prichard is also fourth in the conference in runs scored with 16.

Junior catcher Lindy Milkowski is third on the team with a .329 batting average. Through 70 at bats, Milkowski has 23 hits, 26 RBIs, and nine home runs, earning her a .786 slugging percentage.

Milkowski is second in the conference in runs scored with 19 and first in the conference in home runs with her nine on the season.

She is first in the conference in runs batted in with her 26 on the season.

Senior right-hander Rachel Kaufman

has been the go-to for the Panthers this season. Kaufman has a 1.94 ERA through 16 appearances, allowing 43 hits and 12 earned runs.

Kaufman is fourth in the conference in individual pitching with her 1.94 ERA for the season. She is 3-3 with one save, allowing 13 runs.

The other starters for the season include junior outfielder Aryn Henke, freshman infielder Kendall Grover, sophomore infielder Briana Gonzalez, graduate student outfielder Morgan Lewis, and senior infielder Maddie Swart.

Autumn Schulz can be reached at 581-2812 or acschulz@eiu.edu.

COLUMN Other football alumni need to follow Jimmy G's example

I never thought I would see the day that Jimmy Garoppolo would return to Eastern but much to my surprise, it is happening.

Of course, I have made jokes about Jimmy G coming back to visit and how that would put both Chucktown and the Eastern football program on the map.

Las Vegas Raiders quarterback Jimmy G will be returning to Chucktown on Saturday, April 22 at 6 p.m. for a special fundraising event hosted by the Eastern Athletic Department.

According to the press release by the athletics department, the event will take place in Lantz Arena and 250 guests will be allowed to attend the event. The cost to attend for one individual is \$200 and \$350 dollars for a couple.

I think this is a very smart move by the athletics department and I think all parties involved will benefit from the evening with Jimmy G. Jimmy, I am sure, will be excited to be back at the school that put him in the NFL and to see past teammates and coaches.

Panther football fans, friends, family members, boosters, and past and current



Autumn Schulz

team members will be absolutely stoked to see one of the EIU football greats return. I think it is always great to see alumni give back to the school in which they got their start from.

Other Eastern football greats and alumni need to follow Jimmy G's example.

There needs to be more comradery between professional athletes and the schools that they went to, especially smaller schools like Eastern. I truly believe that head coach

Chris Wilkerson is bringing Panther football back to Charleston because he absolutely bleeds blue and he deserves support from all sides, no matter if someone is in the NFL or not.

I am sure the Panther football program would enjoy a new locker room, an improved weight room, a better field to play on, and anything else that is needed to improve the program. No, I am not saying that these improvements just fall on the backs of alumni that have made it to the NFL.

There needs to be an effort, on all sides, to help improve the program. And Eastern has quite the NFL presence that could easily help.

Tony Romo, Sean Payton, and Mike Shanahan are all familiar faces that people think of when they think about Eastern. They have all had very successful careers in the NFL and I only hope that seeing Jimmy G come back will inspire them to give back more.

Shanahan has been an active alumnus as he visited the Panther football team over the summer and he donated two tickets to Super Bowl LVII, lodging and \$1,000 to the

winners of the raffle.

In a 2020 businessinsider article, it called Eastern "the little-known FCS program" that "has produced some of the greatest minds and arms of the professional football past and present."

I think the "little-known" part of Eastern seems to be a reoccurring theme. I have had classes with athletes where the professor asks them if they knew what Eastern was before being recruited here to play and a lot of them say no.

There will be talk about Eastern a little bit here and there on sports broadcasts, especially with Tony behind the microphone. Jimmy G put Eastern back in the headlines after he was seen with an Eastern Illinois football backpack during the 2020 NFL season. However, it is still not enough. Eastern has produced quite a number of notable alumni that have come out of the Panther football program and that alone should open the door for more publicity. If people want the football program to be as great as it once was, then make the effort to help improve it.

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Baseball to start OVC games Friday at home

By Autumn Schulz
Sports Editor | @autschulz

The Eastern baseball team has not played any Ohio Valley Conference games so far this season, but it is gearing up for the start of OVC games this Friday at 3 p.m.

The Panthers will take on UT Martin in a three-game series at Coaches Stadium as Saturday and Sunday’s games are slotted to being at 1 p.m. Friday’s game will be the first game against two OVC opponents this season.

Southeast Missouri and SIUE will be facing off this weekend along with Morehead State and Southern Indiana and Lindenwood and Little Rock.

In the OVC Preseason Poll, the Panthers were picked to finish third. The rest of the OVC Preseason Picks are as follows:

- Southeast Missouri**
- Morehead State**
- Eastern Illinois**
- Little Rock**
- Tennessee Tech**
- SIUE**
- UT Martin**
- Southern Indiana**
- Lindenwood**

Although there have been no OVC games, the Panthers are currently second in the OVC based on their 10-4 overall record.

SIUE is in first place with a 13-5 overall record, Little Rock is in third place with a 10-7 overall record, Morehead State is 9-10 overall, putting them in fourth place and Southeast Missouri is locked in fifth place with a 10-12 overall record.

The bottom half of the conference includes Tennessee Tech, Southern Indiana, UT Martin, and Lindenwood.

Senior utility player Ryan Ignoffo was selected to the Preseason All-OVC team along with sophomore infielder Chris Worcester.

Through 14 games, Ignoffo is seventh on the team with a .294 batting average.

He has recorded 15 hits, four home runs, and 14 RBIs. Worcester is



The Eastern Illinois University baseball team comes out of the dugout to celebrate with fellow players after their win against the Arkansas State Razorbacks at Baum-Walker Stadium.

BY UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

fourth on the team with a .344 batting average.

In 32 at bats, Worcester had recorded 11 hits, one home run, and five RBIs.

The Panthers are currently first in the OVC in team batting with a team average of .283. They have recorded 139 hits and 18 home runs.

Junior catcher Grant Lashure is third on the team with a .355 batting average.

Through 31 plate appearances, Lashure has recorded 11 hits and four RBIs. He currently leads the conference with his .355 batting average

Junior utility player Cole Gober is first in the conference in hits with 21 hits through 14 games.

He has a .339 batting average, and he has recorded five home runs and 15 RBIs.

In team pitching, the Panthers are third in the conference.

They have a 4.97 ERA, allowing 67 earned runs and 128 hits. Graduate student right hander Ky Hampton is third in the conference in individual pitching.

Hampton has a 2.45 ERA this season, allowing 22 hits and seven earned runs.

Hampton was able to strike five

batters out against Florida A&M back in February, setting his season high. He pitched eight innings against Dayton earlier this month, allowing eight hits and one earned run.

The Panthers will look to continue their winning streak as they have won six games in a row. Their next opportunity will be against Bellarmine on Tuesday at 1 p.m.

Then, the Panthers will return home for their first home matchup of the season against Roosevelt on Wednesday at 3 p.m.

Autumn Schulz can be reached at 581-2812 or acschulz@eiu.edu.

COLUMN I want to enjoy more EIU sports before I graduate in May

This year has gone by so fast. I can’t believe we are in the final stretch of the semester with just about seven weeks to go. After spring break, it just goes by in the blink of an eye.

It feels like we just began the year off with football, volleyball, cross country, and soccer.

Then it feels like we just blew through basketball, swimming, and indoor track.

Now we are in the swing of things with beach volleyball, outdoor track, baseball, softball, tennis, and golf.

While it feels like things are starting to wind down as the end of the year gets closer, there are still so many things to enjoy when it comes to sports at EIU.

If you want to escape the reality of being back on campus or thinking about finals or graduating soon, go



Kate Stevens

support your peers at a game.

There is always something going on around campus in the spring with the most sports happening at once.

If you need something to do as spring begins here soon, check out some baseball, softball, or beach vol-

leyball games.

There is also a home track event this weekend and there are also tennis matches that will be going on on campus for the next several weeks, so be sure to go check them out.

Unfortunately there are no home golf tournaments.

There will also be a spring football game on April 22, which I am looking forward to.

With football as my personal favorite sport, I am looking forward to getting to see some football action.

I think that it is cool to have the offense go up against the defense for a game. It gives the players a chance to show off what they can do.

Jimmy G will also be having his jersey number retired that day, so that will be a very exciting time.

If you want to feel like you are at the beach, you have got to watch the

beach volleyball team.

If you didn’t get enough beach action over spring break, this is the perfect sport for you to watch. This is the first season that the team will be hosting games at Sister City Park here in Charleston.

I’m excited for what is to come regarding EIU sports in the coming weeks.

I hope to see you out there! I’m looking forward to warm weather and some entertaining EIU games before I graduate.

Summer is so close to being here, but make sure you take some time to get out and enjoy these sports on campus before leaving for the summer. There are sure to be some good ones.

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SPRING SPORTS STANDINGS

As of March 20



Baseball
10-4 Overall
Next home game:
3/22 vs. Roosevelt @ 3 p.m.



Softball
14-12 Overall, 3-0 OVC
Next home game:
3/22 vs. UIC @ 4 p.m.



Beach Volleyball
0-1 Overall
Next home game:
3/28 vs. McKendree @ 1 p.m.



Track
Outdoor season begins with
annual EIU Big Blue Classic at
home 3/25 & 3/25



Men's Tennis
4-8 Overall, 0-2 Horizon League
Next home match:
3/25 vs. Lindenwood @ 3 p.m.



Women's Tennis
9-8 Overall, 1-0 OVC
Next conf. home game:
3/25 vs. Lindenwood @ 11 a.m.



Men's Golf
9th in OVC
Next meet:
4/10 & 4/11 @ Northern Kentucky -
The Jewell - Batavia, OH



Women's Golf
7th in OVC
Next meet:
3/27 & 3/28 @ Northern Kentucky -
The Julie - Batavia, OH