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01/04/1988 - EIU Committee Studies Life Outside The Classroom

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EIU COMMITTEE STUDIES LIFE OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM

CHARLESTON, IL.--Eastern Illinois University's current intensive undergraduate study is so comprehensive that an entire committee is studying Campus Life Outside the Classroom.

The committee, directed by Lou Hencken of the EIU Housing Office, is one of five committees making a year-long survey of undergraduate education at EIU. Under the leadership of Dr. Robert Kindrick, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the committees are meeting regularly--some as often as once or twice a week--to examine EIU's present undergraduate education program, including its strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for changes.

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EIU President Dr. Stan Rives initiated the study last March in his "State of the University" address. The five designated committees have set a target date of the fall of 1988 for the final combined report, but preliminary progress reports should be ready within a few days.

Dr. Sharon Bartling, professor of English, will edit the final study.

Before the study is over, hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and alumni will submit information and ideas to the various study groups. All committees are paying close attention to the book, "College: The Undergraduate Experience in America," edited by Ernest L. Boyer and coordinated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. EIU was one of 29 colleges studied as background for the book.

The five EIU committees and their chairmen are Recruitment, Admission, Orientation, and Retention (Dr. Steve Whitley, zoology, chairman); Institutional Goals, Governance, and Outcome Measure (Dr. Dave Maurer, history, chairman); Language Proficiency, General Education, and the Major (Dr. Kandy Baumgardner, zoology, chairman); Faculty Priorities, Classroom Creativity, and Learning Resources (Dr. Dave Buchanan, chemistry, chairman); and Campus Life Outside the Classroom (Dr. Lou Hencken, housing, chairman).

The Campus Life Outside the Classroom committee is examining the total student and his activities, not just what takes place in classrooms.

"We are trying to look at the total student with special emphasis on his housing, food habits, and life outside the classroom to see how the outside life may be affecting classroom performance," explained Chairman Hencken.

"We are looking closely at the 4,500 students in residence halls plus 300 in university apartments. Our committee also will examine the lifestyles of students living in sororities, fraternities, and other off-campus housing plus the commuting students."

Hencken added that a student may spend 15-20 hours a week in the classroom but 140 or more hours per week in activities outside the classroom.

"We will survey students and their jobs, speakers coming to campus, social and sports events on campus, and will try to decide what campus activities seem to be the most helpful and most pleasing to the students. We will talk to student leaders and will make some random telephone surveys.

"Among other things we will try to determine to the extent that outside activities may have a favorable role in keeping students in college and to what extent outside activities might influence students in withdrawing from school," Hencken continued.

"This seems to be a perfect time to examine these things when EIU appears to have few serious problems. Our committee will try to determine possible needs for changes that would help students in their outside the classroom activities.

"The whole idea of the committee is fantastic. Our members are excited about our work, and we hope the final combined report of the various committees will make EIU an even better place to attend college." concluded Hencken.

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LIFE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Other members of the Campus Life Outside the Classroom Committee are Dr. Bob Saltmarsh, educational psychology; Dr. Bud Sanders, counseling center; Dr. Bill Kirk, psychology; Jim Lyles, admission; Dr. Ron Wohlstein, sociology; Joan Schmidt, women's athletics; Gayle Strader, home economics; Anita Craig, student activities; and Deb Camren of Decatur, EIU Student Body President.