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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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news

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

UNDERGRADUATE STUDY SHAPES EASTERN'S GOALS

CHARLESTON, IL.--The current study of undergraduate education at Eastern Illinois University will have a major impact on the quality of education at the institution for years to come, according to Dr. Robert L. Kindrick, Eastern's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

For the last six months, six committees, appointed by President Stan Rives have been evaluating Eastern's current programs and considering future prospects.

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The committees have held approximately seventy-five meetings, assimilating current studies and considering the best way to gain information from those groups most involved with the University. Surveys have also been conducted among students, faculty, and alumni to solicit opinions for improving programs that are already quite strong.

At this point, most of the efforts of the steering committee and the other committees have involved the need to gather information. In addition to the surveys, the committees have also solicited information from other campuses.

During the information-gathering process, the committees have also been attempting to shape their overall goals for the institution. Most of these goals are reflected in the interim report on the study which was submitted to the Board of Governors in January.

The Committee on Campus Life Outside the Classroom has noted that it is particularly important to "try to develop a greater sense of community among the faculty and students at EIU, a sense of belonging, a sense that EIU is more than just a university of 10,000 students but a university where students feel very much a part of the educational community."

The Committee on Recruitment, Admission, Orientation, and Retention has discussed a variety of goals, including both the importance of recruiting and retaining minority students at

EIU and the need to implement a valid assessment system. The Committee on Language, General Education, and the Major has undertaken in-depth evaluation of current requirements and has given particular attention to requirements on other campuses.

Eastern Illinois University's academic support resources have been a particular concern of the Committee on Faculty Priorities, Classroom Creativity, and Learning Resources. Special attention has been given to the Booth Library, which needs additional space and technology to serve the current undergraduate and graduate programs. During the past semester, assessment and general education have been particular focuses of the Committee of Governance, Goals, and Outcomes.

All committees are united in conducting a combined survey of faculty with regard to crucial issues in the study. The return rate on the survey was well over forty percent (an excellent return by standards of professionals in opinion assessment). Tabulated survey results were returned to individual committees which evaluated the results of this survey and others.

During the Spring Semester, each committee is continuing its work. Open hearings will be held for interested parties who wish to address their concerns to an individual committee or to the steering committee. As a result of these hearings and their evaluations of other information available, the committees

will deliver final reports to Dr. Kindrick no later than May 6. The reports will then be edited to produce a comprehensive document pointing new directions for undergraduate education on the Eastern campus and presented to President Rives by August 15.

Rives then plans to solicit the opinions of numerous campus constituencies, including the Council on Academic Affairs. He feels that, for this study to have the most productive impact on undergraduate education for Eastern students in the next ten to fifteen years, it must have the most creative thinking and the best insights of the entire campus community.

Committee structure is based on the North Central Association's accreditation model. The five committees are dealing with a variety of subjects relating to all aspects of student life including life outside the classroom. The organization of subjects for each committee was determined by the organization of College: The Undergraduate Experience by Ernest Boyer. (Eastern was a subject of study in this volume.) In addition to the five individual study committees, there is a steering committee composed of all committee chairs, Dr. Sharon Bartling (who will assist in writing the final report), and Dr. Kindrick.