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## **EIU Enrollment Down; Officials Looking for Answers**

*Sep-08-2011*

Fall 2011 enrollment is down at Eastern Illinois University.

"That Eastern has a decline in enrollment is a concern, and we're working hard to reverse the trend," said Blair Lord, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

It is still believed that the economy is keeping some students close to home for the first two years of their higher education.

"We know that economic conditions are making it difficult for some families to afford to send their children to a university," Lord said.

Currently, 82 percent of Eastern students receive some sort of financial aid. Thirty percent of those are not expected to receive any substantial financial assistance from their families. This is up from 16 percent two years ago.

"We know that more and more students are beginning their college careers by attending their local community colleges and taking the general education courses that will later be required of them to graduate from a university such as Eastern," Lord added.

Enrollment numbers reflect an on-campus enrollment of 10,036 and an off-campus count of 1,142 for a total of 11,178. A year ago, the number of students taking on- and off-campus classes was 10,511 and 1,119, respectively, for a total enrollment of 11,630.

A breakdown of Eastern's 9,657 undergraduate students (down from 9,970 last year) is as follows (with Fall 2010 figures in parentheses): freshmen, 2,114 (2,262); sophomores, 1,814 (1,908); juniors, 2,431 (2,551); and seniors, 3,298 (3,249). The number of new transfer students rose slightly from 1,147 in Fall 2010 to 1,150.

Graduate students number 1,521, a decrease from last year's 1,660. Female students again outnumber male students - 6,612 to 4,566.

EIU officials are pleased that minority student enrollment continues to be strong; minority students now make up 19.05 percent of total enrollment, up from 16.52 percent in 2010. There are 2,129 currently enrolled, up from 1,922 last fall.

Numbers reflect the following: black, 1,504; Hispanic, 379; Asian, 96; American Indian/Alaskan Native, 33; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 5; and those listing two or more races, 112.

"We're very pleased with the diversity of our student population," Lord said. "It affects not only the Eastern Illinois University campus, but the Charleston community as a whole, in a very positive way."

In addition, the number of international students attending the university stands at 149, a slight decrease from 152 in Fall 2010.