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For Immediate Release:

BRUCE GUERNSEY NAMED EIU'S DISTINGUISHED FACULTY AWARD WINNER FOR 2001

CHARLESTON – Bruce Guernsey, professor of English at Eastern Illinois University, has been named the 2001 recipient of the university's Distinguished Faculty Award.

He will be recognized for his accomplishments at the 5 p.m. commencement ceremony Saturday, May 5, in Lantz Gymnasium.

Guernsey, who joined Eastern's staff in 1978, said he was "quite humbled" by the award.

"I teach with wonderful people, and there's nothing more important than winning the respect of the people who you respect," he said. "I feel that that's as high an achievement as anyone can ask for."

The Distinguished Faculty Award is presented to a faculty member with at least four years of full-time teaching experience and who excels in teaching, professional development and service. The recipient receives a small monetary award, in addition to a plaque.

Guernsey's selection was based, in part, on letters submitted by colleagues to the Distinguished Faculty Award Selection Committee. James Quivey, retired professor of English and former department chair, didn't waste words in his missive of nomination.

"In virtually all of the ways in which faculty members can positively distinguish themselves, Professor Guernsey has distinguished himself," Quivey wrote.

Quivey addressed the area of teaching: "Dr. Guernsey's teaching, and particularly his

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Eastern Illinois University emphasizes distinguished teaching in the liberal arts, sciences and selected professions. A traditional, residential state university of recognized quality, Eastern enrolls more than 10,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. The university, located in Charleston, also serves the region through a variety of non-credit and off-site degree programs, as well as cultural and recreational opportunities. Eastern's pursuit of excellence attracts well-qualified students of an increasingly diverse population and a teaching faculty active in research and public service who utilize the latest technology.

teaching of creative writing, is in my experience without parallel: It simply is the best I have seen. Many of his writing students have subsequently distinguished themselves in M.F.A. and Ph.D. writing programs and are now high school and college writing teachers and/or successful publishing writers."

Even those students with "more limited talent and achievement" have benefited from Guernsey's instruction, Quivey continued, "developing keener powers of observation, new senses of self-worth and identity, and greater understanding and appreciation of the power of language and the creative processes."

The retired professor also wrote about Guernsey's success as a poet/author and his service to others. In addition to being a widely published, nationally recognized poet (and, more recently, essayist) whose work appears in the very best literary magazines and journals, Guernsey has, by invitation, presented readings of his poetry and poetry-related lectures at more than 40 colleges and universities in the United States and abroad.

He also has received multiple Faculty Excellence awards, has been selected for Senior Fulbright Lectureships in both Greece and Portugal, was twice Eastern's nominee for the Carnegie Foundation's U.S. Professor of the Year Award and stands as Eastern's only Board of Governors Universities Distinguished Professor.

And, "as sterling as his record for teaching and for research/professional development is Professor Guernsey's record for service," Quivey continued. "At the department level he has, at one time or another, chaired or served on virtually all of the standing committees. . . he is a department chair's dream in that he cheerfully accepts – in fact, volunteers for – the jobs others shun and does them masterfully."

John Kilgore, a fellow professor of English at Eastern, echoed many of Quivey's thoughts in his own letter of nomination. "Genial, outgoing, merry and sociable, (Guernsey) is a staunch friend and fine colleague," Kilgore wrote. "People underestimate how hard he works because he makes it look easy and has a nearly indecent amount of fun being excellent in every area of his profession."

And, from colleague Lauren Smith, "I would have liked to lay claim to Bruce's work . . . I am especially moved by the grace with which he describes and gives voice to the world I inhabit and love . . . He considers his experiences as a family member, a traveler, a lover, a teacher, a human being lodged in the confusion of history, and he brings this wisdom both to his craft and his teaching."