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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Charleston, Illinois

news

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FILE COPY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FUNDING DROP CONCERNS RIVES

CHARLESTON, IL--The State funding piece of Eastern Illinois University's budget pie has dropped nearly 25 percent since fiscal year 1976 and Eastern President Dr. Stan Rives is gravely concerned.

He expressed that concern Monday to members of the Board of Governor's staff led by Chancellor Dr. Thomas Layzell during a meeting at Eastern on its FY91 budget request.

The BOG is the state governing body for Eastern Illinois University and four other state universities: Chicago State and Northeastern Illinois Universities in Chicago; Governors State University, University Park; and Western Illinois University, Macomb.

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RIVES CONCERNED

"The State of Illinois cannot continue to make education a lower and lower priority and expect the people of Illinois to prevail in the nation and about the world," Rives said.

Rives noted that even in the last twelve months, tax support of Eastern has fallen from 42% to the current 39.8%. "We have become a state-assisted, not a state-supported University," he said, "and are having to depend more and more on ourselves."

In addition to the overall reduction in tax support, Eastern is also receiving the lowest number of dollars per Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) student in the Board of Governors system.

Eastern receives an "inequitable distribution of tax support" according to the amount spent per full time equivalent student, Rives told the Board staff.

In FY89 \$4,326 per FTE student was spent by Eastern compared to the \$9,944 per student at Governors State University; \$7,886 per student at Chicago State University; \$6,576 per student at Northeastern Illinois University; and \$5,151 per student at Western Illinois University.

The FTE average for the Board of Governors universities is \$5,770 or \$1,444, more than Eastern's allotment.

If Eastern were funded even at the "average" figure, Rives said, its appropriation would be \$59,482,930 rather than \$44,592,100.

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RIVES CONCERNED

Earlier this year, Rives told the Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce that although the local economy would benefit from an increase in the number of students at Eastern, the University is actually downsizing by 200 students per year for the next five years.

Rives said, "To maintain quality, with the current level of funding, Eastern must reduce the number of students. To accept more students than we have the resources to serve will lead to a steady erosion of the quality of education we provide students--exactly the opposite of what has made us so attractive to students. Our obligation is clear--quality is more important than quantity."

According to statistics released by the University Monday, the deficit in tax support has had to be offset by several increases in tuition and fees, which now provides nearly a fourth of Eastern's budget.

Eastern has been able to hold the line on Auxiliary costs. This includes its residence halls, food service, and University Union operations.