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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

THREE EIU FACULTY RECEIVE NEH GRANTS

CHARLESTON -- Three members of Eastern Illinois University's English Department have received prestigious grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

NEH Summer Stipends and Study Grants provide support for college faculty to undertake six to eight weeks of intensive study in the humanities. The grants are intended to help faculty enhance the knowledge and understanding they bring to their classroom disciplines. The emphasis is on supporting studies and research that will be used in the classroom rather than supporting research intended primarily for publication.

Both NEH grant programs are highly selective and very competitive. Only six to nine percent of 1995 grant applications from scholars at major universities throughout the country were accepted. According to Eastern's David Raybin, professor of English, it is very unusual for three members of a single department of one university to receive NEH awards at the same time.

Bonnie Irwin, a first-year EIU assistant professor, is a

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specialist in medieval, Spanish, Arabic, and Portuguese literature. She was awarded an NEH Summer Stipend to support her research "Frame Tales, Ring Composition, and the Organization of Medieval Thought," an exploration of two types of medieval literature and what they reveal about thought and memory.

Irwin received her doctorate in comparative literature in 1991 from the University of California, Berkeley.

Susan Bazargan, a professor and specialist in twentieth-century British and Irish literature, received an NEH Study Grant for six weeks of intensive study of "Visual and Verbal Representations of Ireland as a Female Figure (1854-1922)."

During the summer, Bazargan will read about the history of women in Ireland, study selected works of art, and read literary texts by Irish women authors, in order to trace the influence and contributions of Irish women writers and artists to Irish literature and culture.

Bazargan received her doctorate in English from the University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.

Raybin, a medieval studies specialist, also received an NEH Study Grant to spend six weeks on the topic "Reading and Study of Dante's 'The Divine Comedy.'"

A graduate of Columbia University, Raybin received Faculty Excellence Awards for Teaching in 1986 and 1994, and in 1993, was the recipient of the Distinguished Honors Faculty award.