

9-10-1997

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### Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "09/10/1997 - Fall Enrollment Rises Despite Early Cutoff Date.pdf" (1997). 1997. 352.  
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97-257

September 10, 1997

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FALL ENROLLMENT RISES DESPITE EARLY CUTOFF DATE

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University has set another record high in terms of fall enrollment.

Tenth-day reports indicate an enrollment of 11,777 students in spite of an early cutoff date for new freshmen and transfers. Eastern's on-campus enrollment increased by 41 students from 10,775 last fall to 10,816, while the off-campus total rose from 936 in 1996 to this year's figure of 961 -- an increase of 25.

"I am pleased that Eastern's enrollment remains strong," said Vice President for Student Affairs Lou Hencken. "I appreciate the recruitment efforts of the admissions staff.

"I also thank the academic affairs staff, deans, department chairs and academic advisors, for their work made it possible to get most of the classes our students need."

First-time freshmen admitted this year had an average ACT score of 22.4, compared to 22.2 for first-time freshmen admitted a year ago and 21.9 from two years ago, Hencken said. And the number of incoming freshman Honors students rose from 122 last year to 146 this fall.

There are currently a total of 542 students enrolled in Eastern's Honors Programs.

The increase in the number of off-campus students is a continuation of a trend. Enrollment has risen steadily each fall since 1993 -- 702 (1993), 762 (1994), 857 (1995), 936 (1996) and 961

-more-

(1997).

“The steadily increasing number of students in our off-campus credit programs demonstrates the growing demand and numbers of adult students involved in higher education. We are truly living in a lifelong learning society,” said Will Hine, dean of the School of Adult and Continuing Education.

The school offers credit courses in 10 communities in the EIU service region at a variety of community colleges, school districts and other institutions, as well as on the Internet.

A breakdown of the total enrollment of 11,777 (with last year's totals in parentheses) is as follows: undergraduate students, 10,225 (10,106) -- freshmen, 2,483 (2,511); sophomores, 2,067 (1,991); juniors, 2,461 (2,606); and seniors, 3,214 (2,998); and graduate students, 1,552 (1,605). Of the total, 9,852 are full-time and 1,925 part-time. Fifty-eight percent are women, 42 percent men.

The total also reflects an increase -- from 986 to 1,027 -- in Eastern's minority and international student enrollment. The number of international students rose from 123 to 140, while the number of minority students rose from 863 to 887. Hencken said the significance of the increase is heightened in light of the record number of minority students -- 179 -- who graduated from Eastern during the 1996-97 school year.

Ten years ago, the university's minority population numbered 575, with 86 graduating during the year.