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Sept. 11, 1998

For Immediate Release:

EIU ENROLLMENT DOWN AS PLANNED

CHARLESTON -- In April 1998, Lou Hencken, vice president for student affairs, announced before the Eastern Illinois University Board of Trustees that student enrollment purposely would be down during Fall 1998.

Tenth-day reports, indicating an enrollment of 11,735 students -- a decrease of 42 from this time last year -- proved him right.

For the past five years, enrollment has remained somewhat consistent, with modest increases from year to year. On- and off-campus enrollment numbered 11,301 in 1994; 11,424 in 1995; 11,711 in 1996; and 11,777 in 1997.

A deliberate effort was made this year to begin enrollment reduction, thus assuring Eastern students continued accessibility to classes they need and/or want.

A breakdown of Eastern's total Fall 1998 student enrollment of 11,735 (with last year's totals in parentheses) is as follows: undergraduate students, 10,174 (10,225) --

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freshmen, 2,446 (2,483); sophomores, 2,085 (2,067); juniors, 2,413 (2,461); and seniors, 3,230 (3,214); and graduate students, 1,561 (1,552). Of the total, 9,790 are full-time and 1,945 part-time. Forty-one percent are men, 59 percent are women.

Hencken noted his particular pleasure at the number of first-time freshmen enrolled in fall classes. A total of 1,708 -- up from 1,653 in 1997 -- enrolled despite an early cut-off date for applications and the "most rigorous admission standards" ever established for incoming students at EIU.

Will Hine, dean of the School of Adult and Continuing Education, also expressed satisfaction with Eastern's fall numbers.

"Off-campus credit hours have increased 5.3 percent, course enrollments are up 3.3 percent, and student FTE (full-time equivalences) is up 5.3 percent this fall compared to last fall. They are also all-time records!

"The number of students taking only off-campus courses is down very slightly, but the number of students taking classes both on- and off-campus is up. These numbers demonstrate the strong continuing demand for off-campus credit programs," Hine added.

Eastern's total on-campus enrollment decreased from 10,816 to 10,790, a difference of 26, while off-campus enrollment went from 961 in 1997 to 945, a difference of 16.

The Fall '98 numbers also reflect a slight decrease -- from 884 in 1997 to 864 -- in Eastern's minority enrollment, although the number of new minority students -- transfers and new freshmen -- rose from 144 in 1997 to 150. Average minority ACT scores increased dramatically -- from 18.4 to 19.6.

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The average ACT score for overall first-time freshmen at Eastern is 22.4.

Herbert Lasky, director of EIU's Honors Programs, was pleased to announce an increase in the number of students enrolled in his area. A year ago, that number stood at 542.

"Total enrollment (of honors students) now exceeds 600, a number which proves the demonstrated success of our Honors Programs," he said.