

Eastern Illinois University reports predictable, stable enrollment

University leaders are describing Eastern Illinois University's Fall 2021 enrollment as "solid, steady, and poised for additional growth" as the highly ranked public regional institution reports its official 10th-Day numbers. EIU's figures come from the university's 10th-Day enrollment report – the standard metric for enrollment data tracking in Illinois.

EIU, located in Charleston, Illinois, is reporting a total fall 2021 enrollment of 8,608 students. According to Josh Norman, Associate vice president for Enrollment Management, the number represents what amounts to an even enrollment – only 18 total enrollments (-.2 percent) lower than EIU's fall 2020 numbers.

In previous addresses to the University community, EIU President Dr. David Glassman indicated a "right-sized" enrollment for a residential university like EIU would hover around the 9,000-student mark.

"Nationally, the pandemic has created some enrollment unpredictability," said Josh Norman, associate vice president for enrollment management at EIU. "To see our Fall 2021 numbers stay steady while our region, state and nation navigated a global pandemic is extremely encouraging, and it just says so much about the phenomenal relationships we create with our students."

For EIU, those relationships sometimes begin

with high school students participating in dual-credit programs. Students who enroll in Eastern's dual-credit courses get a jump start on college by either registering for online sections taught by EIU instructors or enrolling in innovative face to face dual-credit courses that are taught in partnership with highly qualified high school teachers and coordinated by EIU faculty. According to EIU's 10th-Day report, 2,278 students are taking advantage of that option—many of whom plan to become future, on-campus EIU students.

A closer look at EIU's numbers also includes the following:

* 1,661 – represents the highest amount of EIU graduate-level enrollees since 2007

* 399 – represents the second-highest amount of EIU international enrollees in EIU history

* A 2.5 percent increase in total undergraduate transfer students enrolled, from 2,790 to 2,862 (+72)

* A 133-student increase (+2.9 percent) to EIU's on-campus population

"To see EIU's highest graduate enrollment in almost 15 years speaks to the quality and appeal of our first-rate graduate programs," said Dr. Ryan Hendrickson, L.M. Hamand Dean of the Graduate School. "Beyond that, it also speaks to the importance of higher education in general, and to the amplified demand for skilled workers with ad-

vanced degrees in an increasingly competitive global job market. For those reasons, EIU continues to represent excellence in education and unsurpassed value for our students and their families."

Hendrickson also oversees the University's Office of International Students and Scholars.

"The University is also thrilled to host the second-largest international population in the institution's history," Hendrickson added. "Hosting 399 students from 51 countries allows our international students to bring an incredible depth of culture and diversity to our campus."

Steady or increased enrollment in continuing, new transfer, international, dual-credit and graduate students fueled Eastern's stable numbers. According to Institutional Research documents comparing Fall 2020 and Fall 2021 numbers, freshman and

sophomore total enrollment is down by only 93 students at the University, but that decrease is offset to a degree by the increase in transfer students to EIU from community colleges and other institutions. Overall, steady enrollment at EIU continues to aid the university in replenishing what have been large, outbound graduating classes throughout the mid-2010s.

Complementing EIU's steady enrollment is the University's wide array of student success efforts. These efforts are also thought to have contributed to a third year of increasing freshman retention—despite a pandemic that challenged some students' persistence. Over the past year, EIU launched the "Freshman Connection," which paired incoming freshmen with upperclassmen and Panthers who are already familiar with the EIU experience. EIU's 10th-day data

revealed that participating freshman students were retained at even higher rates than EIU's already-elevated retention rate. EIU is also opening a centralized tutoring center in the middle of campus that will support group study environments, academic coaches, supplemental instruction and tutoring across subjects for its 1000- and 2000-level level courses.

"We're proud of our efforts in these critical support areas," said Dr. Mona Davenport, Executive Director of the Office of Inclusion and Academic Excellence. "Studies continue to demonstrate the importance of sustained engagement and high-profile academic assistance outside the classroom. Those supports are the backbone of Eastern's commitment to year-to-year retention, degree completion, and personal and professional achievement."

"EIU continues to enjoy a phenomenal reputation for its value and excellence," said EIU President Dr. David Glassman. "I want to extend my personal thanks to every single passionate EIU employee for their commitment to EIU, and to our amazing network of enthusiastic Eastern advocates. We pride ourselves on the relationships we create, and I'm beyond proud of everyone's 'ALL-IN' dedication to student success."

Tenth-day enrollment reports are the nationally accepted standard for tracking university and college enrollments every semester.

For more information about EIU, or to explore its growing assortment of programs and services, visit the university's website at www.eiu.edu, or call EIU's public information office at (217) 581-7400.



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