

## Alumni Survey 2006 (1997 graduates)<sup>1</sup> University-wide Issues

What follows are direct comments students' made in answer to the following questions: *What had the most positive impact on you during your time at Eastern?* And, *What had the most negative impact on you during your time at Eastern?*

### Overall Experience/Campus/Reputation/Nothing Negative

#### Positive Impact

- I felt I was also treated more as an adult at EIU, than I was at the junior college I attended previously. (268)
- Beautiful campus, close to home. (286)
- Campus buildings close together. (514)
- Campus environment. (241)
- Campus life in general. (281)
- Campus living. (555)
- Closeness of location. (232)
- Convenience. (344)
- Everything! The beautiful campus. (290)
- I enjoyed the whole experience. (53)
- I had a wonderful experience at EIU. I loved the campus and the friendliness of my peers and fellow townspeople. My professors were not only knowledgeable but caring and compassionate. I had many opportunities to get involved with groups and clubs that supported my major. I would recommend EIU to anyone pursuing a degree in education. (96)
- I loved the intimacy of campus life. (516)
- I still have fond memories of the campus—beautiful. (244)
- It would be almost impossible to identify only one experience that most positively impacted me. My entire experience at EIU was positive—from the faculty and staff to the extracurricular opportunities, I simply loved everything about EIU. (9)
- Size of school and colleagues. (559)
- Small campus. (564)
- Small price tag and very affordable. (552)
- The campus atmosphere/ common areas. (162)
- The cost. (566)
- The small campus made me feel at home (508)
- The small, tight knit campus. Reasonable cost, good community employer, good recreation center. (335)
- Very safe atmosphere (261)
- The time at Eastern was pretty much all positive with all things in life there were the bad with good, but I must say more positive than anything. (507)
- The sense of community I found at Eastern which involved both academic and social groups in Charleston. (339)
- The friendly campus and small town atmosphere. The people. (539)

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<sup>1</sup> The numbers in parentheses following the comments are reference numbers to alumni identification data. More information about the alumni who made the comments is available.

- I loved Eastern! The size of the school allowed me to get involved and meet many types of people.(207)
- Enjoyed campus life. (534)
- Great campus. (133)

### **Nothing Negative**

- Nothing, none, N/A. (441, 443, 477)
- No negative impacts. (270, 565, 313)
- The fact that my time at EIU had to end. (400)
- All were for me most part a positive living experience. (308)
- Can't think of one. (518)
- EIU had no negative aspect on me – my whole family went to EIU and I met my husband there! Wish the classes were a little more group oriented (in psychology) rather than being lectured at all the time. (439)
- Graduating. (188)
- I can not recall a negative experience. (362)
- I can't recall anything negative at this time I loved my years at Eastern. (357)
- I can't think of any negative experiences at Eastern! (420)
- I can't think of anything negative. (265)
- I cannot think of anything negative about my experience. (340)
- I can't think of anything. (231)
- I didn't really have a negative experience. (417)
- I don't feel that anything had a negative impact on me. (312)
- I honestly can say I have no negatives from my experience with Eastern! (207)
- I honestly can't think of anything that impacted me in a negative way. (422)
- I really can't recall any negative experiences I call myself Eastern alum with pride. (338)
- I've forgotten over the last 9 years so it must have been minor. (305)
- Most of all my memories are positive. (408)
- My experience was very positive. (15)
- Negative impacts were not school related. (428)
- No negative impacts, I will strongly suggest (push) my children towards EIU! (476)
- Not many negative experiences at EIU in P.E. and health. I loved Eastern! (500)
- Nothing comes to mind. (511)
- Nothing had a negative impact on me. (508)
- Nothing truly negative. (254)
- Nothing. I even loved the residence hall food. (9)
- There was nothing negative about my time at Eastern. Any chance to learn and grow is positive. Having my degree has helped me to open doors and accept opportunities that I wouldn't have had without it. (258)

### **Negative**

- Eastern has a “party school” persona attached to its name. (566)
- In general EIU and its student body lack a strong sense of school pride or tradition. As an alumni, I find it hard to justify taking time to visit campus or donate funds, and I feel my lack of interest is related to this opinion. (552)
- Small school, does not offer some of the same advantages as a bigger university. (89)

## **Facilities/Services/Community/Staff**

### **Positive Impact**

#### **Campus Services/Offices/Programs**

- Working all four years in the admissions office. (144)
- Good services. (255)
- Book Rental! (244)
- Textbook rental was good—better than purchasing books. (240)
- Book rental—I had to buy them for my MBA. (335)

#### **Facilities/Technology**

- Computer Lab. (233)

#### **People/Staff**

- Staff. (280)
- The friendly staff. (51)
- The staff. (430)
- The staff in the life sciences building was excellent in their knowledge and support of students. (58)
- The staff members of College of Arts and Humanities had a positive impact on my time at EIU. They were friendly and willing to take extra time with you regarding subject matter and personal goals. (162)
- The staff. (239)
- Staff at EIU. (173)
- The small community and attitude about the school by employees. (100)

### **Negative Impact**

#### **Campus Services/Offices/Programs**

- A lot of red tape to get things accomplished. Just getting everything outside of the classes taken care of. (116)
- Campus police/parking tickets (138)
- Construction! (84)
- Dealing with cashier's office. (299)
- Health Services was miserable. (240)
- Parking especially since I was a commuting student. (416)
- Judicial system. (75)
- Standing in line at Book rental (and having to return some of the books)! Yet it was a financial positive to not have to buy the books. (195)
- The first impression of EIU at freshman orientation wasn't positive when I experienced the program in 1994. But over the course of time EIU Debut was developed and I believe helped to create a better impression of the university on students and visiting families. (209)

#### **Facilities/Technology**

- At that time the lack of technology available on EIU's campus. There were no good computer labs and the library was a terrible place if you needed to conduct research. (356)
- Computer technology was lacking a little. (459)
- I would have liked to see more updated Science equipment and better dorm living. Some of the dorms & buildings were in pretty bad shape. (516)

- Lack of resources in science (environmental Biology) Dept. Needs more funding. (302)
- Parking (90)
- On campus parking (378)
- The parking for commuting students was very frustrating and not convenient. (404)
- Outdated technology. (284)
- The buildings are a lot nicer now it is exciting to see the improvements on campus. (361)
- The campus was a little outdated when I attended school (1993-97). I'm very glad that improvements have been and continue to be made. (419)
- The facilities were very poor, but that's all changing now! (67)
- The library—I hear it's much better now. (6)
- The library was awful back then. (17)
- The lack of Buzzard Building facilities. Any building while the college of education was being updated. (156)
- Probably the fact that I chose a major that I wasn't able to learn the newest methods because it was under construction so when I interviewed for jobs I didn't have skills necessary to be hired. (370) SPC

### **People/Staff**

- Staff members that treated students like a number. This primarily occurred with support staff. (54)

### **Career Preparation/Services/Job Placement**

- Career placement or even help picking out majors were very hard to do or get help with. (485)
- Difficulty finding employment. (234)
- Disappointed in jobs fairs. (4)
- I don't feel career services was helpful at all. (194)
- I wish now I had more counselor/career planner time. I don't think I had consistent valuable guidance. The career center wasn't easy to navigate in 1992. I left school without a sense of what I could do in the field I chose/degree I had. (318 )SPC
- Lack of career guidance, uncertainty. (10)
- Lack of career help for finding a finance job in Chicago area. Most recruiters were looking for Central IL positions or accounting/computer majors (for college of business grads). (327)
- Poor career counseling. I relied more on my military experience for a core competency when choosing my career. (335)
- The lack of emphasis on gaining job experience through internships (61)
- The lack of support for graduating seniors entering the work world. More support in regard to writing resumes, cover letters, work options, etc. would have been much appreciated. (208)
- The school lacks an adequate career service center. (263)

### **Financial Aid/Tuition and Fees/Economy/Jobs**

- At no fault to EIU since minding my financial affairs is my business, [but] I do wish someone had guided me in regards to student loans. I attended an out of state grad program and could have saved myself 20,000 if someone tipped me off to let me know I could have maintained admission status but postponed attendance 1 year. In that year I could've worked in field and earned state residency (now have a very large student loan debt I can not justify supporting EIU until its gone). (354)
- Dealing with the financial aid office always seemed to be the biggest challenge. (426)
- Having to put myself into so much debt to be able to attend school. It is something I will be paying back for many more years. (452)

- I had to work 70+ hours to afford to pay for my schooling—not the university’s fault though. (146)
- I had to work a lot to pay for school. (1)
- I was unable to afford college without taking advantage of a track scholarship at EIU and could not study nursing. (393)
- Mix ups with financial aid office causing me to take out additional loans due to the limited jobs available in town and no public transportation. (19)
- Money for the university seemed to be the deciding factor – not class content. (467)
- Office of Financial Aid. (250)
- The continued rising costs. (306)
- The cost of tuition and fees. (12)
- Working full and part-time while attending school. (66)

### **Charleston Community**

- Mayor Cougill. (74)
- Panther's Lounge (bar). (180)
- Student Housing Authorities were two rigid as was Charleston PD. (335)
- The city of Charleston and its lack of growth and social outlets had a somewhat negative impact on my time at EIU. (162)
- The mayor of Charleston. (519)
- The relationship between EIU and the town of Charleston could have been better. I was unfortunately involved with a violent crime off campus and felt I was treated unfairly because I was a student not a native towners. (381)
- As an economic hub of the area I would expect EIU to do more to fight the rise in meth abuse which is killing rural Illinois. (335)

## **Diversity**

### **Positive Impact**

- Being accepted into the Minority Assistance Program under Mona Davenport was a huge positive impact. The structure of this program gave me an opportunity to succeed during my college tenure. (113)
- Diversity of students and campus life. (93)
- Diversity. (175)
- EIU’s cultural diversity made the greatest impact in my life. Thank you! (338)
- People valued my race and background. (549)
- The most positive impact was the Office of minority affairs. Initially I was placed to complete MAP (The Minority Admissions Program) and I resented the program. In hindsight the strict criteria/requirements (for example, mandatory study groups twice a week) helped to give me good study habits. (528)

### **Negative Impact**

- During one of my classes my teacher brought in several gay students to talk to us about the hardships of being gay. I did not care then and I do not care now. (43)
- Increase in diversity would help. (113)
- Lack of culture and diversity outside of campus in Charleston. (229)
- Lack of diversity on campus. (230)
- No cultural diversity. (248)
- Not being able to socialize or meet with other people from my ethnic group (very few Hispanic students back then). (549)

- Not enough diversity. (434)
- Racial segregation. Why have separate black and white fraternities or Miss EIU vs. Miss Black EIU etc...(78)
- Racial tension on campus. Still don't understand why fraternity council didn't work close with Black fraternity council. (101)
- Racially exclusive groups (particularly African-American fraternities). (13)
- Racism I experienced by the broader community of Charleston. The lack of activities and cultural/diverse influences. (530)
- The campus involvement with minorities and lack of diversity in administration, etc. (522)
- The conflict between ethnic groups that was being published in the EIU paper. (46)
- The lack of cultural experience outside the classroom. (330)
- The most negative impact during my time at Eastern was the lack of diversity. The majority of freshmen in my dorm were from the same area of Chicago that I was. (296)
- The O.J Simpson trial and the racial tensions at EIU during 1995 (in the dorm). (442)

### **Personal Growth/Issues**

#### **Positive Impact**

- Becoming more motivated and analytical. (131)
- Being away from home and learning to make use of my social surroundings. This helped build independent living skills. (308)
- Being independent of your parents to allow you to grow. (21)
- Being responsible and on my own. (440)
- Developed confidence in myself and my abilities to work with children. (428)
- Developing independence. (282)
- Finally enjoying college experience after a 30-year hiatus. (536)
- Getting first place for a paper submitted in a writing contest. (524)
- I received two academic scholarships that allowed me to pay for my last year of school. (74)
- I won the Livingston Lord Scholarship. I actually used this money towards my BSN and my MSN degrees. (461)
- I wouldn't trade the college experience of moving away from home right out of high school. It taught me independence, communication skills and responsibility. I had an overall wonderful experience. (86)
- Interaction with others to develop an understanding of technological issues faced by other corporate programs. (202)
- Just the fact I was on my own and had to be responsible for all my actions. Attending Eastern sure made me grow up and appreciate the seriousness of obtaining an education and contributing to society, which I'm now doing as a teacher. (337)
- Learned independence. (188)
- Life experiences. (252)
- Maturity and growth. (533)
- Meeting my wife. (133)
- Meeting people from different backgrounds instilled work ethic during student employment. (369)
- My time at Eastern helped to establish my sense of self. I was exposed to new ideas and experiences and I was invigorated by this. I was a nontraditional student. (221)
- Personal growth and sense of confidence in myself. (438)
- Social skills. (5)
- The entire college experience was great, getting away from Chicago and living alone. (299)

- The experience I had was so valuable both socially and professionally. I recommend Eastern to everyone. (408)
- The independence. I had to learn to make it through college on my own. Thinking for myself. (293)
- The overall experience of education being away from home. (160)
- Working full-time and attending school full-time gave me a better sense of responsibility. (210)
- Working multiple jobs while taking 21 credits, I learned how to effectively manage my time. (115)
- Being on my own and interacting, for the first time, with a largely diverse group of people. (127)
- I came from a very small town, so I had not been exposed to a lot of different people or cultures. Through classes, instructors, roommates, and classmates I was able to meet and learn a lot about people. (342)
- I learned valuable social and interpersonal skills. I learned how to live on my own. (408)
- Eastern provided me the ability to think and act for myself. I learned a lot about how to “exist” in the real world and achieve the career I want to have. (126) MGT
- I had an excellent experience at EIU. It was small enough I didn’t feel lost, but large enough to meet a diverse group of people. It’s hard to say exactly what made it positive. (312)

### **Negative Impact**

- I made a few bad choices off campus, but I was young and should have respected myself more. It had nothing to do with the university. (244)
- Juggling work and school. (382)
- Personal struggles. (69)
- Self-inflicted pressure to achieve. (427)