

## Alumni Survey 2005 (2000 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/Reputation/Nothing Negative

##### Positive Impact

- The size of the university—small enough to get to know more people on a personal level. (16)
- It was all positive. (20)
- The entire environment. But basically the overall feeling of the school. (21)
- Small campus. (38)
- It is a great college for young students with many activities and choices. (40)
- Campus size-just right. (126)
- I really enjoyed the small campus, small town atmosphere. I have visited U of I and it was too overwhelming, really enjoyed the comfort of Eastern's campus. (132)
- The smaller campus made a strong impact on me. Suited me much better than a large university would have. (137)
- The integration of the town with the university, and the respect offered by the university to the students who keep it alive. (139)
- Close, small environment. (142)
- Wonderful small campus. (156)
- The small campus. (158)
- I always think of Eastern with happy thoughts. (207)
- I really enjoyed everything about Eastern. It was in the best part of my life to date and I would send my children there. (213)
- The atmosphere. I loved my experience at Eastern. (226)
- I recommend Eastern to everyone I know! It truly was "big enough to matter and small enough to care." (230)
- EIU was a great school. I have a lot of great memories. (264)
- I loved EIU! I'm very happy being associated with EIU! Thank you. (269)
- I enjoyed all aspects of my career at Eastern. It has a family-like atmosphere. (273)
- I would not change a thing. (277)
- P.S. Campus was very safe and felt like home (comfortable) not overwhelming. (303)
- Eastern is a smaller, compact campus. I believe the university wants to give students the best education possible. The campus looks to bring out the best in students. (309)
- More the experience of going to a middle-sized state school. (318)
- The best choice I made was leaving to go to EIU. I grew up in Normal, IL. I think leaving home was what made me who I am. Also, Charleston is a close knit community so I fit right in as Bloomington-Normal was also "close-knit". (322)
- I really loved my experience at Eastern. (350)

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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.

- University Population (small). Felt like a student not a social security number waiting for a passing grade. (353)
- Small campus, easy to get around campus. (376)
- Is the ability to feel that I'm welcomed back. (394)
- Size of school etc. (395)
- The size of the university. (421)
- There is not one, single thing that stands out as having had "the most positive impact" on me. There were many positive aspects of my time at Eastern. (431)
- EIU was a very safe place to transition into adulthood. (498)
- I am very happy that I chose EIU for my B.A. (530)
- Size of campus and student body. (540)
- I like the fact that there was not a lot of violence at the campus. (564)
- Campus and Instructors. I came to Eastern from ISU and the decision, for me, was great. (573)
- The atmosphere of the entire campus. (595)
- Plus the campus is beautiful and full of smiling faces which made my long drive worth while. (614)
- I enjoyed my time at Eastern and hope to send my daughters there in a couple of years. (639)
- It was a very positive experience overall!! (654)
- Eastern was the perfect size. There were just enough people to make you feel like you were attending a big university. Yet, small enough to allow you to have a close knit group of friends, and always feel at home. (668)
- Eastern gave me a start. I had fun learning all there was to offer. (692)
- Eastern is a large enough University that you can blend in but small enough you can have an impact if you choose. An overall good college environment. (709)
- Close knit campus. (711)
- Close small campus. (723)
- Wouldn't change anything about my college experience. (732)
- As a friend of mine once noted about EIU, "You can be a big fish in a small pond." (737)
- It was a stepping stone. (744)
- I enjoyed my years at Eastern. I remember when I was a junior in high school; I visited EIU for an indoor track meet. When I saw Lantz gym and how the weeds and vines had grown on the building I thought and even said I could never attend this school but five years later, I can say I'm glad that I did. EIU was great! (750)
- I enjoyed student life on campus. Very close, friendly atmosphere. (359)

### **Nothing Negative**

- None/nothing (7, 9, 13, 19, 20, 31, 36, 63, 75, 82, 94, 106, 142, 145, 163, 182, 183, 198, 200, 203, 213, 229, 233, 234, 236, 239, 240, 246, 250, 259, 260, 273, 276, 278, 279, 282, 283, 299, 305, 309, 311, 314, 329, 330, 346, 349, 357, 362, 365, 371, 376, 379, 390, 425, 441, 455, 500, 512, 534, 536, 538, 542, 566, 570, 588, 595, 602, 609, 613, 619, 628, 645, 646, 654, 666, 681, 684, 695, 719, 729, 745, 746)
- Nothing that comes to mind. (14)
- None, during my time at Eastern. (268)
- I can't think of anything that really impacted me a negative way. (39)
- Nothing significant comes to mind. (42)
- Nothing – I loved going to EIU! (52)
- I honestly can't think of any. I loved going to school at EIU. (66)
- I really don't know. (70)
- I can't think of anything negative. (71)
- It went on without a hitch. (810)
- I didn't experience any negative impacts. (101)

- I have no complaints. (107)
- There were no negatives. It was the best 4 yrs of my life to date. Oh, except the championships in any of the major sports!) (115)
- Cannot say that there was any specific negative factor that impacted my time at Eastern. I enjoyed it. (147)
- Nothing – loved my time. (155)
- Nothing, good college, excellent facilities. (165)
- I loved everything about my experience at college. (168)
- EIU was a positive experience. I can't think of anything negative. (172)
- I did not have any drastic negative experiences at Eastern. (193)
- I can honestly say that I didn't have any real negative impact as a result of my time spent at Eastern. (208)
- None! I loved Eastern! (249)
- Although everything may not have been perfect at Eastern, I cannot think of anything during my time there that stands out as negative. The job search process was very difficult, but not really a negative experience. (252)
- None-during my time at Eastern. (268)
- Nothing negatively impacted my experience (284)
- Nothing that I can remember had a significant negative impact. (300)
- Nothing, Eastern is a great school. (312)
- None! I Loved EIU! (317)
- Can't think of anything. Every rose has its thorns, nothing is perfect. It's all a learning experience. (322)
- I can not remember anything negative about my time at EIU. I loved it! I made many new friends and had a great college experience. I wouldn't have traded my time at EIU for anything in the world. (367)
- I have only fond memories of classes, cars, and friends. I kept in touch with those I was closest to and happy to hear about others through different people. (375)
- During my time at Eastern I do not feel that I have not been impacted negatively. (378)
- There was little I would change regarding my time Eastern. From the public safety officers to the food service department! Thank you for your commitment Don! (382)
- Nothing. I loved my college experience. (389)
- There were no negatives. With the flexible schedules and broad range of courses offered, students can easily pursue their educational goals. I have encouraged many individuals to continue their degree program through Eastern. (392)
- I don't think I had one. (394)
- No negative experiences. (402)
- No real experiences. (407)
- Overall, I do not feel my experience at EIU was negative in any way. I feel I did my best while attending college and I would not go back and change anything. I am proud to state where I received my bachelor's degree. (423)
- I honestly cannot think of anything that impacted me negatively during my time at Eastern. (431)
- I have no negative opinions of Eastern, (436)
- I do not remember any negative impact. (440)
- Leaving ☺ I had no problems with EIU. (443)
- No negative factors related to the University. (456)
- I can't think of negative things. (517)
- I really had a very positive, wonderful experience overall at Eastern. (519)
- I can't recall any big negatives. ☺ (528)
- I don't feel negatively about EIU at all. I thoroughly enjoyed my 4 year experience. (544)
- I did not have anything that negatively impacted my time at EIU. (551)

- None! I remember Eastern fondly – Eastern was my spring board to where I am today. (563)
- There was no negative impact. (564)
- I can't think of anything at this time. (571)
- I really don't have any negative memories from my time at Eastern. I like everyone, had issues with Financial aid or paperwork from time to time. Overall my experience was very good. I recognize these types of things are just part of the process. And in reality I think they help me with similar situations I have encountered since. (573)
- None! Thanx! (576)
- Nothing comes to mind. (584)
- N/A College was a very positive experience and I enjoyed all of my professors. (625)
- Nothing really negative sticks in my mind. (633)
- Can't recall anything that was negative. (655)
- I really don't think anything negatively impacted me. (667)
- I really can't think of anything. (668)
- Can't think of anything. (680)
- There is nothing that comes to mind. (730)
- There were no negative experiences I encountered at Eastern. (753)

### **Negative**

- School reputation is not as high as other institutions, i.e., U of I, Northwestern, DePaul, Northern. (487)
- Poor EIU. EIU deserves a lot more funding. These other places (U of I, Purdue) are more like business institution. I guess a \$1 billion dollar budget blurs the line between capitalism and education. (737)
- Eastern lacked many opportunities other universities provided. (26)

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

### **Positive Impact**

#### **Campus Services/Offices/Facilities**

- Textbook rental. (652)
- The counseling center was also beneficial for me. (222)
- The tutoring “help center” helped in my studies tremendously! (339)
- Career Services- Insightful for career corporation and internship experiences. (632)
- The squirrels on campus. (109)
- Affordability. (720)
- Affordable (723)

#### **People/Staff**

- Friendly staff. (46)
- Helpful and friendly staff. (126)
- But most of all my experience getting to know Lou Hencken and many other faculty and staff members was the best part because they gave me encouragement and confidence to go forward and be successful. (173)
- Working with Eric Davidson of HERC. (178)
- Staff-excellent! (213)
- The supportive staff. (314)
- Working with Mr. Baker was an amazing experience. He taught me many things that I still use today. (367)

- Including staff. (402)
- The people I worked with as a student worker in the purchasing department. (14)
- The opportunities available and the nice, good people of the community. (266)

## **Negative Impact**

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

- The inflexibility of some organizations toward non-traditional students. (582)
- Study overseas program. At the time my housing situation in Budapest, Hungary was screwed up and I had to pay thousands extra. This was the fault of the EIU study abroad supervisor. (660)
- Counseling Department. Counselors have no clue!! (62)
- Counseling service. (68)
- Eastern does not help the older student or students that are off-campus. The bookstore times are terrible for off campus. Communication with the off-campus or older student is very difficult. (40)
- The university does not do enough to assist and understand the difficulties of some students. Single parents are not given any incentives to attend the university. Not every person can live the life of a normal student. The university should do more to assist the non-traditional students academically, extra-curricular services. (91)
- The only ones I can think of only involved the health services not my educational experiences. (221)
- It seemed that the health services department was always giving the run-around. I had to submit my shot record 3 times! As a single mom and commuter, EIU didn't seem to understand it was EIU's times or none. (453)
- Also, a health service doctor told me to go home and lie down, but I was having an ovary cyst explode. I had emergency surgery that evening. (559)
- Also, there were a few offices on campus, such as Financial Aid, which made quite a few mistakes that I had to spend quite a bit of time correcting. Recently I found the same problem with the Graduate School. (651)
- The most negative impact resulted from too many hoops and red tape (paperwork). It seems many of the forms are duplicates and unnecessary. (749)
- Red tape. (15)

### **Facilities/Technology**

- Construction at Library. (100)
- Parking was a horrible experience and I was always stressed by the time I got to my first class because I always drove an hr. to get there. My choices once I got there was to park far away no matter what the weather or drive around trying to find something closer. (107)
- Library construction. (124)
- Construction of Booth Library. (181)
- Construction (even though it was for the better in the end). (189)
- Facilities. (202)
- Poor parking on campus. (316, 508, 708)
- I think the fact resources were not as accessible as other state institutions. At the time I attended these wasn't the state-of-the art library there is today, and my senior year finally provided us with a computer lab though not 24 hours. Other than that, it was a great experience!! (318)
- Lack of community and on-campus recycling and environmental concerns. (339)
- The reconstruction of the library. Resources were hard to find and seek out. (416)
- Not enough parking on or near campus. (449)

- Computer labs not very efficient. Dot matrix printers or whatever they were, were not useful for research or class preparation. Also, labs were often crowded. (468)
- Library renovation. (488)
- Closing of the library. (503)
- The library was under construction. (525)
- The library not being completed made studying and researching more difficult. (555)
- Parking for commuters. (638)
- Parking! There needs to be separate lots for commuters. If you live on campus you should park in the outlying lots. (683)
- The library being in 5 different locations. Constant construction on campus. Closure of food service location close to my living arrangements. Temperature control in life science building was terrible. Either froze or sweated during classes and both would occur in the same day. (707)
- Buying a parking permit, and realizing it was a hunting permit. Finding a parking place was very difficult. (718)
- Probably if anything, the library closing for construction. (687)

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

- The most negative impact was the career counseling advisement. (10)
- Career counselors—very vague gave textbook examples – not real world knowledge of careers. Better career networking—there are plenty of EIU graduates scattered in major cities and working at large companies to help their fellow alums get a job. (38)
- Could use improvement on assisting graduates find jobs after school. Example: better companies at job fair and more open Alumni Network. (127)
- Limited assistance from career services. Few choices were available in my field at job fairs, etc. (155)
- Lack of Chicago companies recruiting on campus. Not a lot of assistance in career planning and job search. (227)
- I was under the impression that it would be easier to get a job out of college. It would have been nice for Eastern to help with job placement. (242)
- Lack of adequate career planning assistance. (462)
- Choice of employers who recruit from EIU was not good, especially for Finance. (492)
- The career development office offered little guidance when I was searching for a non-profit environmental internship. There was no one available too offer real experiences and realistic expectations for working in the non-profit world. (498)

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

- The troubles I had with financial office. I was continually filling out the same documents over and over! (44)
- Cost, lack of quality employment opportunities. (102)
- Financial difficulties. (111)
- Financial issues caused a lot of stress. (118)
- The ability to juggle financial commitments or a full load of courses in order to graduate in a timely fashion. (197)
- All of my student loans I'm paying back. (212)
- I had problems with financing my education because of a delay in processing my financial aid in 1996. (437)
- Dealing with financial aid office! Poor customer service overall! (442)
- Student loans. (439, 452)
- The financial responsibilities that I accrued while obtaining my degree. (486)
- Being a poor college student. (507)

- \$200 to take a GMAT test that does nothing except cost money. (523)
- The only negative that I can recall was problems with unnecessary fees that were included due to paperwork errors regarding medical records that I was not responsible for. (Obviously this had nothing to do with the BOT degree program. (533)
- The Financial Aid Staff were the most rude and unhelpful people I have ever met in my entire life! Unfortunately, I wish I were exaggerating. (549)
- I, like everyone, had issues with Financial aid (services). (575)
- I had to work full-time and attend school full-time to make ends meet. (702)
- Financial situation. (743)
- I also think a basic money management course for all majors would be useful. Also, don't allow credit card companies on campus. (748)
- I got too many credit cards!! (But that is how I paid for Eastern). (635)

### **People/Staff**

- Honestly, certain staff members who had their heads up their asses. (320)
- The customer service in some offices is very poor. (400)
- Murder of Shannon McNamara. (406)
- A campus cop pulled me over after leaving the drive thru at McDonald's on Lincoln for no reason. He saw that I had a new car and stopped me. He did not give me a ticket or warning. His name was Officer Ward. Also, my fraternal brother's accident. (420)

### **Charleston Community**

- Location. (620)
- Location, limited choices for outside shopping and entertainment. (108)
- The BARS!☺ (131)
- The most negative thing was the city of Charleston's mayor. He was a handicap on the student body. (161)
- Lack of options you would find in bigger cities. (266)
- None during my time at Eastern, but upon returning to show my wife it has gone to hell in a hand basket. Places are not the same and students told me that the university has forced unsupervised house parties with drug and rape problems. Great Impression. Styx a dump, no Mother, Rocs, Ikes' serves liquor and Marty's no more (shame on you). (268)
- Marty's! (285)
- Bars not allowing 18 years old like U of I, causing just about every student to get arrested at least once. (404)
- I just wish the town had more to do. (443)
- Bars. (493)
- Charleston community was not very pleasant and not very fulfilling in personal life. (642)
- The Charleston police! (685)
- Charleston Police and their over-eager attitude to take advantage of college students (i.e. silly regulations about garbage and heavy fines regularly handed out for unnecessary reason). (715)
- The 2 murders that happened when I was there. (503)
- Long cold winters. (710)

### **Diversity**

### **Positive Impact**

- If I did not have minority affairs, I am not sure if I would have graduated. Ms. Jones was always there when I needed her. I also had the opportunity to join the best sisterhood around: Delta Sigma Theta. (9)

- Multi-cultural experiences. (17)
- A variety of people. (38)
- The diversity of students made an impact on me. I am from a small town and have not traveled abroad. Therefore, meeting, working, studying with diverse groups broadened my perspective of the world around me. (91)
- The diversity of the student and staff population. (139)
- Interaction with a broader spectrum of individuals. Coming from a town of less than 1,000, it forces one to socialize and interact with individuals from various backgrounds. In that sense, the forced interaction has helped me positively by giving me the openness and candor that is needed to produce relationships that is used in my career as a sales rep. (232)
- Coming from a very small town, I would say cultural exposure that wasn't over-whelming. (254)
- The diversity. (305)
- Minimal "imposed diversity" and political correctness. (409)
- My social interactions and the diversity/range of different ethnicities, backgrounds, and personalities of those I met at the university. (630)
- Cultural diversity of students and faculty. (645)
- The interaction with people from different backgrounds within my major. (270)
- Meeting people from different backgrounds. (466)
- It allowed me to meet people and friends who were extremely diverse and it made me more open minded. (532)
- The most positive impact was the better understanding of people with different backgrounds and abilities. (598)
- Living on campus with people of different backgrounds, etc. (607)
- The many different people I met. Meeting so many people helped me to understand the differences between the many races, backgrounds, etc. of people (700)

### **Negative Impact**

- Lack of diversity. (97)
- Racist and discriminatory. (110)
- Not enough diversity, especially in regards to number 16 (at the top) (question 16 on alumni survey) (217)
- The segregation that occurs due to the separation of races and cultures. For example, Greek Court/Black Greek Court, student union/Black Student union, etc. Does it really show tolerance when a fraternity is to allow all races and cultures, but a black fraternity is a separatist organization? By all standards and definitions that is racism and the colleges and universities have embraced and encouraged it in the name of political correctness. (232)
- During my last year(s) at EIU, it seemed that the educational quality-degrading principles of "imposed diversity" and political correctness were starting to gain momentum. Hopefully, EIU had not allowed those principles to undermine the outstanding academic experience it had been providing. (409)
- Not as diverse as I would like. (560)
- Its lack of diversity. (709)
- There really need to be more focus on meshing ethnically different groups. (749)
- Over-emphasis on the negativity of assimilation. (6)
- The campus seemed slightly segregated. Sororities were either "white" or "black". (175)
- Discriminatory attitudes by students, especially those in the student government. (467)
- The campus seemed slightly segregated. Sororities were either white or black. That's why I liked Epsilon Sigma Alpha so much – they had members of all backgrounds. (175)

## Personal Growth/Issues

### Positive Impact

- Being able to become my own person. (6)
- Confidence building. (17)
- The experiences helped me to become a more well-rounded and self-confident individual. (58)
- Being on my own taught me a lot. The experience of college is a lesson itself. (60)
- Growing up, being away from home for the first time. (62)
- Helped with teamwork and time management as well as helping in presentation and verbal skills. (71)
- I was a non-traditional student at the time I attended Eastern. Just knowing that I was working toward getting my Bachelor's degree gave me a sense of pride and self-esteem that I needed very much during that time period. The day of graduation, I walked away with such a feeling of accomplishment. I knew that all the hard work and effort I had put forth was worth the reward of getting a higher education. That is something I will have for the rest of my life. (107)
- Developing professional skills. (118)
- The life lessons I learned—outside of textbook learning. (131)
- I not only learned leadership skills there, but I greatly expanded my consciousness. I traveled to Haiti both as a student, and recently as an alumna. Both experiences have shaped my life choices. (154)
- Being away from home and learning to take care of myself, work for a living, not rely on others. My development of independence was very positive. (160)
- The independence of living on my own, while preparing for my future. (179)
- Living on my own. (225)
- Eastern not only prepared me for a job, but also for life. I learned many life lessons at Eastern that I will always hold near me. (239)
- Learning how to operate in a business and the need for teamwork. (242)
- I gained a sense of accomplishment and self-worth from pursuing my degree while fully employed and with a family. (244)
- It (the experience) gave me a pictorial sense of depth when meeting people, which has allowed me to not judge on a shallow level. I think this has been an immense help in getting the most out of people I manage and the most out of negotiations with adversaries. (268)
- Learning to be creative. (296)
- That I was forced to become semi-independent. (305)
- Learning more about myself and others. (369)
- I believe it helped me in speaking up in class and achieving more during my EIU experience. I have learned to stand up for myself and enjoy and take advantage of every opportunity that comes my way. (423)
- Taking what I've learned to get to the next level academically. (424)
- The college lifestyle afforded me to discover myself in ways a non-college life wouldn't. (i.e. living at home and going to a junior college). (433)
- Excitement of learning about my passion and considering things I had never imagined. (496)
- Learning how to teach children has helped me in raising my own children. (515)
- My self esteem was enhanced, and I gained the confidence to pursue a Master's degree in guidance and counseling at EIU. (533)
- What I observed and learned during that internship greatly shaped my perspective and values in life. My self esteem was enhanced and I gained the confidence to pursue a Master's degree in guidance and I learned a lot about myself and showed me great responsibility and time management. (535)

- Developed better communication, gained a sense of urgency, better writing skills, better studying habits. (546)
- I feel Eastern made me a better person both socially and academically. (555)
- I walked away from EIU with a very strong love for politics. (569)
- It taught me ethics, understanding, and involvement. It also introduced me to my career path. (584)
- Increased self esteem. (588)
- Being on my own. Getting to know other people. Becoming a more responsible adult. (674)
- Doing well in college courses increased my self-confidence. (678)
- College was really an enrichment opportunity for me rather than preparing me for a career. I took classes I enjoyed rather than career development. (680)
- Learning to live on my own. I was away from home and it was still structured enough to not be overwhelmed but you still had to learn what to do to survive. (710)
- First experience living on my own and supporting myself. (712)
- My attitude and adaptability. (743)
- The experience helped me grow intellectually and socially. (746)
- I had good and bad times but with TRIO, Delta Sigma Theta, Phi Sigma Pi (National Honor Fraternity), Judicial Board for NPHC, I can say that EIU was valuable in determining who I am today. (750)
- Self management—school vs. social life vs. responsibilities. Ex. Money management etc... (489)
- Self motivated, social environment situation that allows you to develop as a person. (250)
- The life lessons I learned. (261)
- Social interaction, learning social skills while in a controlled environment. It prepared me well to be a productive citizen while I was in a sheltered environment. (663)

### **Negative Impact**

- The university provided every opportunity for me. Due to a lack of maturity at the time, I chose not to utilize all that EIU offered in academics. EIU is a fine institution. Sometimes it's just the individual who is to blame for negative experiences. (144)
- But when you reflect back, you always think I should have done this or done that differently. (147)
- Personal lesson I had to learn. (201)
- I under-utilized the career center for future employment. (204)
- Poor planning and indecision on my part. (277)
- I didn't retain most of what I learned. (369)
- Spread self too thin joining many groups leading to less time focusing on school and grades. (387)
- Freshman year – due to newly found freedom and naïve experience. (408)
- Getting mono and breaking my hand during finals week. (411)
- The most negative aspect of my time at Eastern was my indecision in choosing a major. (414)
- Not exactly knowing what career I wanted to go into. (422)
- My first time at EIU ('88-'90) flunked out. (473)
- The commute time to classes; but this was my choice. All classes I attended except for one as at least a 45 minute drive for me. (475)
- The distance away from home and family. (489)
- Driving to the different sites for classes. (494)
- My roommate died my sophomore year and I got a little off track. (519)
- I partied quite a bit and too many hot women distracted me some. (521)
- Having to commute from Urbana! (545)

- The situations that had the most negative impact was during my freshman year. I had to combat the usual homesickness while dealing with a roommate who didn't like me. Dealing with that was difficult,, especially for someone who is shy. (603)
- Overworked—job, school, and sports. Trying to pay for education. (641)
- The difficulties of parenthood, school, and working 2 jobs with fulltime class work. (665)
- Time away from my family. (671)