

Report on the First Year of the Summer Institute of Higher Learning AY 13

The Summer Institute of Higher Learning was first envisioned during the 2010-2011 academic year for possible implementation during the 2011 summer session. Initial discussions revealed that more comprehensive planning from several sectors of the University was called for. Consequently, a committee was convened during the 2011 summer session and charged with completing planning for an in-residence program for implementation during the 2012 summer session.

The goals of the Summer Institute of Higher Learning (SIHL) are to (a) improve access to higher education, (b) enhance summer (and overall) enrollments at Eastern Illinois University, and (c) improve the success and retention of newly admitted students with potential academic risk factors.

The program grants provisional summer admission to new freshman students with ACTs of 20 or greater but with GPAs between 2.0 – 2.49; an indicator of some academic risk that previously pooled the applicants. The program could enroll approximately 100 assuming and is downwardly scalable.

Students will agree that they must achieve at least a 2.5 GPA in SIHL courses in order to satisfy their provisional admission and successfully extend their matriculation at EIU to the fall semester. Students who pass both courses and have a GPA of at least 2.0 may appeal/petition for matriculation by providing evidence of seriousness of academic purpose including recommendations from SIHL faculty and staff. SIHL students successfully matriculating at EIU will agree to meet with a Student Success Center advisor on a regular basis during their freshman year.

Students will be enrolled in six semester hours of academic course work during the 5 week summer session. Each student will be enrolled in ENG 1001, Composition and Language and a Social and Behavioral course. In addition to the academic curriculum, the SIHL includes co-curricular activities designed to support successful transition from high school to college academically, personally, and socially. SIHL students are mentored by high achieving undergraduate students (Peer Learning Assistants or PLA) who live with them in the residence halls throughout the program. The PLA's assist with extra-curricular programming and serve as role models and support to the students in the program.

The summer 2012 cohort consisted of 52 students. 49 students (94%) were eligible for fall admission. 79% of these students earned a 3.0 GPA or higher during the summer term. Of these students, 45 students elected to start at EIU fall 2012. 43 students returned spring 2013 and 41 completed the spring semester.

At the conclusion summer 2012, students were asked to rate their experience with the following components of the SIHL:

Question	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Not Very Good	Poor
Faculty	57%	31%	10%	0	2%
Courses	45%	47%	8%	0	0
Peer Learning Assistant	57%	25%	6%	8%	4%
Out-of-class Activities	14%	31%	20%	20%	14%
Residence Hall	27%	53%	14%	4%	2%
Library Resources	65%	25%	8%	2%	0
Overall rating	24%	35%	31%	6%	4%

At the conclusion of the 2012 SIHL pilot, information and suggestions were gathered from the Program Coordinator, GA, PLA's, students and faculty. Changes were implemented for the 2013 SIHL cohort including the development of a mach registration form and all SIHL checklists appearing in the MyEIU portal, less hand-holding and encouragement of more independence during the summer sessions, more out of class activities to help students become connected with campus, mandatory bi-monthly meetings with Student Success Center advisors and periodic grade checks with professors during the freshman year. Brian Gorman, Assistant Director SSC has been responsible for the following:

- Developed and posted PLA employment opportunity
- Interviewed and hired PLA staff
- Developed and completed PLA training
- Coordinated with Admissions, the Office of Financial Aid, Housing and Dining for SIHL enrollment process
- Completed phone recruitment of potential SIHL applicants
- Fielded numerous calls and emails requesting information on the SIHL
- Coordinated SIHL seminar presentations with Career Services, the HERC, and the Office of Student Standards
- Planned and organized 2013 SIHL
- Coordinated with SRC, Greek organizations, and the Student Life Office for programming initiatives during the 2013 SIHL
- Coordinated faculty video presentations for SIHL

At the conclusion of spring 2013:

- 30 students were in good standing (73%)
- 5 students were on academic warning (10%)
- 9 students were on academic probation (17%)
- 2 students left early in the semester
- The average cumulative gpa was 2.46
- The average hours attempted were 30; hours earned 23

We hope to see these statistics improve with the changes implemented for the 2013 cohort.