

EIU Model Template for completing an RME form. Please direct any questions to the Office of the VPAA.

Instructions: Use this form when seeking approval from the IBHE to: 1) elevate an existing option to a stand-alone degree program, 2) change a program's degree designation, 3) create a new post-baccalaureate certificate program, 4) offer an existing program at a new off-campus location out of EIU's region, or 5) develop a new (but temporary) research or service center. NOTE: If your request is for a research or service center, please adapt the questions as appropriate. **Under question 6, answer only 6.c. (growth and need for the program).**

1. Name of the program

Name of proposed program:

Reasonable and moderate extension of the following program(s):

2. CIP (classification of instructional programs) code

See <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/cip2000/>. If in doubt, leave this item blank.

3. Learning goals and assessment methods

4. Catalog copy for new program, including all required courses and total hours for degree completion

5. Program alignment with college goals and the university mission

EIU Mission: Eastern Illinois University is a public comprehensive university that offers superior, accessible undergraduate and graduate education. Students learn the methods and results of free and rigorous inquiry in the arts, humanities, sciences, and professions, guided by a faculty known for its excellence in teaching, research, creative activity, and service. The University community is committed to diversity and inclusion and fosters opportunities for student/faculty scholarship and applied learning experiences within a student-centered campus culture. Throughout their education, students refine their abilities to reason and to communicate clearly so as to become responsible citizens and leaders.

6. Program alignment with IBHE strategic plan: A Thriving Illinois <https://ibhestrategicplan.ibhe.org/>

Briefly describe how the program will address the three goals of *A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth*: **a) equity**: close the equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind, **b) sustainability**: build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions, and **c) growth**: increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth. **(PLEASE ANSWER ONLY 6c) growth and need for the program.)**

6a) equity: close the equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind

Eastern Illinois University is committed to fostering a learning community where all members feel welcomed and valued. The university provides equality of opportunity in all areas of campus life, and we strive to recognize and appreciate the unique value of our students, faculty, and staff. Every member of campus has the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and, beyond that, our goal is for all members of our community to develop a strong sense of belonging to Eastern Illinois University. As an institution with a Fall 2025 first-time full-time cohort that identified as 43.18% non-white, EIU is a significantly diverse community of undergraduate and graduate students, as the following composition demonstrates:

- American Indian/Alaska Native 0.16%
- Asian 4.12%
- Black/African American 11.96%
- Hispanic 15.86%
- International 4.03%
- Middle Eastern/North African 0.06%
- Multiple 1.80%
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander 0.10%
- Unknown/Not reported 5.08%
- White 56.82%

EIU has a long and established commitment to providing enhanced support for underrepresented students. Below, we present an overview of critical resources, programs, and offices:

- **Office of Belonging, Access, and Engagement (OBAE)** (formerly the Office of Minority Affairs) works to create an academic environment where every individual feels a deep sense of belonging, has equal access to opportunities, and is actively engaged in their educational journey. The office's core mission is to connect students with the resources and experiences necessary to thrive. Further, staff offer personal support, answer questions, provide information on special scholarships and internships, dispense relevant academic information, and provide general information on campus life and social activities.
- **Student Success Center** offers academic support services, assesses student learning, guides through the transition to college, and contributes to the University community's knowledge of its students and graduates. As a central hub for student support, the Student Success Center is housed in McAfee Hall and offers the following services.
- **TRiO Student Support Services** is a comprehensive federally-funded program offering undergraduate students academic assistance. Students can become participants at any point in their program (freshman through senior) and remain in the program until they receive their undergraduate degree from EIU. There is no charge for services provided to students through student support services.
- **Office of Accessibility and Accommodations** is committed to facilitating the provision of equal access and opportunity to all campus programs and services for students with disabilities. The office works with students and faculty to ensure EIU is able to maximize student success by ensuring the institution is positioned to meet the accommodations and needs of all learners.
- **Testing & Evaluation Operations (TEO)** supports the educational mission of the university by providing high-quality testing, exam scoring, evaluation and survey services for faculty, students, and staff. In addition, TEO provides testing services to the local community. Services for all constituents are provided in a professional, secure, and accessible environment that supports academic success.
- **Academic Support Center** is a specialized unit supporting students returning to campus who may be on academic probation or readmitted following an academic dismissal. The center coordinates and staffs several EIU courses focused on academic skills development and offers workshops and one-on-one counseling.

EIU has taken several innovative steps to reach working professionals who have not yet completed their bachelor's degree. Most pointedly, EIU has expanded degree completion programs and moved all of these online. While EIU's only degree completion options up until a few years ago was the bachelor of general studies (now Interdisciplinary Studies), and the RN-to-BSN programs taught at off-site locations, the university now offers an array of degree completion programs that are fully online, including the new B.A.A.S. (Bachelor of Applied Arts & Sciences) degree, designed specifically for working professionals.

EIU has also been able to serve its most disadvantaged students through two IBHE grants: the End Student Housing Insecurity Grant (FY24, FY25, FY26) helped hundreds of EIU students with emergency funds and a major expansion of the Campus Food Pantry; the Co-operative Work Study Grant (FY25, FY26), "Working for a Healthy Rural Illinois," funds student interns at local health agencies (including several county public health agencies, local hospitals, and advocacy and crisis centers).

Based in part on the efforts described above, EIU was designated a **First-Gen Forward Campus** by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and Center for First-Generation Success in 2020. In Fall 2020, EIU also launched its Freshman Connection program that is a residentially based mentoring program intentionally designed to support first-generation, Pell-eligible, and minority candidates. The program recently doubled enrollment and expanded to include transfer candidates.

6b) sustainability: build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions

EIU's historical value proposition has been to provide Illinois residents a high-quality education at an affordable price point. Therefore, EIU continues to be the lowest cost of attendance of all four-year public institutions and has specifically developed scholarship programs that simultaneously support academic excellence and access. Several scholarships enable students to effectively and efficiently leverage financial aid and merit-based programs.

Automatic Scholarships: Academically talented students entering Eastern Illinois University will automatically be offered the Transfer Academic Excellence Scholarship at the time of application to the university. This scholarship is automatically renewable for a total of 2 years (4 semesters). Eligible students are required to maintain full-time consecutive undergraduate enrollment in fall and spring semesters, and maintain specific GPA requirements.

Competitive Scholarships: Eastern Illinois University offers over 600 scholarship opportunities to new and continuing students e.g., Honors Transfer Student Scholarship.

Success and Engagement Award: Students who do not meet the GPA requirements for the Transfer Academic Excellence Scholarships but showcase leadership and involvement can receive \$2,000 (\$1,000 annually). Students must be enrolled full-time (12+ hours) and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in order to receive this award. Students can apply for annual renewal contingent upon earning a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 and the submission of a narrative describing continued involvement within EIU's campus community.

Panther Promise Tuition Waiver (up to \$2,500): File the FAFSA and possess a household income between \$55,000 and \$100,000

EIU Promise Scholarship: A last-dollar tuition and fees scholarship for first-time students reducing total tuition and fees to \$0 for individuals with household incomes less than \$80,000 and a 3.0 GPA or higher. EIU recently expanded its EIU Promise Scholarship program to make college more affordable and accessible for students, especially prospective first-time and transfer students from Illinois. As part of the AIM HIGH Grant program in Illinois, the expansion increases the adjusted gross income threshold from \$66,000 to \$80,000 for the 2025-26 school year. Departing from comparable programs at other universities, the EIU Promise Scholarship excludes counting assets towards the AGI threshold; this makes college more affordable by removing the penalty against families with savings, farms, and small businesses.

Phi Theta Kappa: One-time award worth \$1,000. Fall admission only. Associate degree required.

6c) growth and need for the program: increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth

6C1. summary of similar programs in the state or peer institutions

| Institution | Program Name | # Enrolled, Fall _____ |
|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
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6C2. Demand for graduates of the program; empirical and/or other data

6C3. Types of careers for which the program will prepare graduates**6C4. Timeline for meeting IBHE minimum program enrollment (currently 40 students in undergraduate programs and 10 students in graduate programs, both by the fifth fall semester of enrollment)**

| Academic Year | # Enrolled Fall 10th day | # Graduates |
|---------------|--------------------------|-------------|
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7. Admission and graduation requirements**8. Impact on other programs at EIU**

Will the program require courses from other departments and do they have the capacity? Will this program compete with other programs on campus? If the proposed program includes courses from another department, then evidence of consultation with that department must be provided.

9. Staffing needs

Expected faculty, staff, and administrative costs for the first five years

10. Resource needs

Expected space needs, lab equipment, library, technology costs for the first five years

11. External funding, fees, or income (if applicable)

12. Dates of consultation with appropriate dean(s) and Provost