

Early Alert System

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)—Faculty

Why has EIU created an Early Alert System (EAS)?

On average, 80% of Eastern's freshmen return as sophomores, a rate that is higher than the average retention rate at institutions in our Carnegie classification. However, the University's goal is to achieve 85% retention. Eastern's new Early Alert System (EAS) was developed by the Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE) in conjunction with colleagues at ITS in support of this goal. Based on a system that has been successful at Mississippi State University, the EAS provides us with a simple means to identify at-risk students early in their academic careers and to direct them to needed support services. It joins CORE's ongoing retention strategies, which include identifying and intervening with students who earn Ds and Fs at midterm, have registration holds, and/or fail to register. The EAS will replace the Student Referral Network currently offered by the Student Success Center.

Who should participate in the EAS?

Instructors already have volunteered to use the EAS in Fall 2011. However, the system is available to any instructor of undergraduate students. Because CORE hopes to focus on students early in their academic career, it especially encourages 1000- and 2000-level course instructors to participate.

How does the system work?

Log in to PAWS as you would to access your roster or submit grades. Click on the "Early Alert Reporting System" link and your roster will appear. You may submit alerts for student absences, missing or incomplete assignments, and/or other issues related to your class.

What will happen if I submit an alert to the EAS?

The student will be notified via email that an alert has been submitted. You will receive a confirmation email from CORE that action will take place. Staff members from CORE and graduate student interns will contact students via email, phone, or in person to discuss their academic progress. Referrals may be made to other on-campus support services.

Will the student know I submitted his/her name?

Yes, the student will know the course for which the alert was generated and that the instructor for this course sent the notification.

When should I submit an alert?

Ideally, you would submit an alert in the first 4-6 weeks of the semester, but you may do so at any time. Depending on how often your class meets, you may submit an absence alert after one absence (for a class that meets once a week or on the weekend) or after several absences (for a class that meets every MWF or TR). For missing assignments, the earlier a student is alerted, the better. You may want to talk to a student about a single missing assignment rather than submitting an alert; however, if the student is missing several assignments, you may want to submit an alert. If a student is experiencing multiple at-risk behaviors (e.g., failing to attend *and* to turn in assignments), you may submit simultaneous alerts.

If a student has never attended your class, send an email to registra@eiu.edu to alert the Office of the Registrar.

When should I use the "other" category?

If you have concerns about a student other than attendance or missing work—e.g., inappropriate behavior, learning difficulties, etc.—you may use the "other" category to send an email to CORE. If you are concerned about a student's mental or physical health or the safety of your class, you also should call the Counseling Center (581-3413) and the University Police Department (581-3212 or 911 for an emergency), whose staff are trained to aid individuals in crisis.

Can I submit an alert for a student more than once each semester?

Yes, you can. CORE will contact students as many times as necessary to help them with their academic challenges. CORE will be tracking the number of alerts for each student to build predictions for future semesters.

For information about the EAS, visit CORE's Web site:
<http://castle.eiu.edu/~core/index.php>