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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **EOU announces online enrollment up, on-campus holding steady**



**LA GRANDE, Ore.** – Robust online programs continue to grow at Eastern Oregon University, according to [fall enrollment](#) reports. EOU also saw a record number of Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students and steady levels of ethnic diversity on campus.

Enrollment in online courses is higher than it's been in the past six years with a 6.8% increase from last year. Graduate enrollment also increased by 33.5% from last year, from 200 to 267 students.

Tim Seydel, Vice President for University Advancement, said shifts in enrollment and modality were expected during the coronavirus pandemic, and EOU's long-time expertise in online education allowed the university to remain flexible while meeting students' needs. Remote and hybrid learning formats have expanded student access, opportunity and completion.

"If you look at the numbers here, that's where you see a shift: fewer on-campus students, more online students—and that helps us balance out our enrollment portfolio," Seydel said. "The other big thing we work on a lot is retention. It's not just about getting them in the door, it's about how we take care of those students when they get here."

EOU's total head count is at 2,853 for 2020, with a full-time equivalency of 2,124. This represents a 0.4% reduction from last year, but this fluctuation is not unexpected. Oregon residents make up 65% of the student population, and 35% are first-generation college students, or students who come from low-income households, and 62% of resident undergraduates come from rural areas. Ethnic diversity among students held steady, with 28% of EOU students identifying as culturally or ethnically diverse. Low income households have

been hardest hit by the pandemic and this creates added challenges for students from these families to afford college.

Although the university saw a slight dip in retention, 73% of 2019-20 students returned for an academic year that holds an array of adaptations. Students have access to virtual or in-person study support through the Learning Center, online resources for academic and personal success, and digitized library references and personalized research assistance.

Kristin Johnson, an advisor in the Master of Arts in Teaching program, said this year's graduate student numbers reached an all-time high, up from 45 students last year to 80 now in the program. Johnson credited renewed leadership and marketing efforts, as well as a teacher shortage. She said even before the pandemic started, the MAT program had record numbers of applicants.

"People know us here, they know the quality of our institution and so we are seeing more students from the Northwest still wanting to attend Eastern, they're just doing it online," Seydel said.

For more information about fall enrollment, visit [eou.edu/institutional-effectiveness](https://eou.edu/institutional-effectiveness).

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