UNIVERSITY OF USI SOUTHERN INDIANA

NEWS RELEASE

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Numbers of Full-time Students Up; Part-time Students Down at University of Southern Indiana

University of Southern Indiana registrar John Deem has released enrollment figures for the fall 1994 semester, which show that the overall number of students has declined slightly to 7,443, compared to 7,551 last fall. The figures also reveal a slight shift in enrollment patterns, with the number of full-time students increasing over a declining number of part-time students. The number of students in graduate programs also increased this year, due mainly to the addition of the Master of Social Work program and increased enrollment in the Master of Science in Education for elementary teachers.

Stable enrollment patterns include the number of students over the age of 25 (36 percent of the student population), minority students (5.5 percent of the student population), and female students (50 percent of the student population). The number of readmission students also held relatively steady, with 638 students, over 8 percent of the enrollment, included in this fall's figures. Mr. Deem said this pattern emphasizes the tendencies of many of the USI students to "stop out" and then return at a later date, reflecting a similar pattern at urban institutions where many students are employed full time while attending college.

This year is the first time in several years that enrollment has not increased at USI. Many schools in Indiana and across the nation experienced flat or declining enrollments a year ago. University officials say there are many variables which may help to explain the decline. The number of students at the age to complete high school has been declining and is at its lowest level before the numbers begin to increase next year. Financial aid programs also have changed in the past two years, with fewer grants available at both the state and federal level, thus shifting students to loan programs. The cost of postsecondary education also has been increasing at a rate greater than the inflation rate, and in Indiana, a greater share of the cost of higher education at public universities is being borne by the student as a result of shrinking state budgets. Another variable may be the high rate of employment being enjoyed in Vanderburgh County. Nationally when jobs are plentiful, students who work while attending college tend to postpone higher education.

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