How to Graduate On Time

1. **Pick your major with care.**
   Changing majors can increase your time-to-degree, so choose wisely. If you need assistance, talk to your academic advisor and the staff in Career Services.

2. **Know what your degree program requirements are.**
   Your EIU degree comprises both university and major-specific requirements. These are detailed in our online catalog (http://catalog.eiu.edu/) and in your degree audit, which you can access via PAWS.

3. **Complete *at least* 15 hours every semester.**
   At a minimum, you should complete 30 hours by the end of your freshman year; 60 hours by the end of your sophomore year; and 90 hours at the end of your junior year. You must earn a minimum of 120 hours to graduate from EIU. However, some programs require additional hours. To repeat #2, know what your program's requirements are, and plan each semester accordingly!

4. **Think carefully before you make decisions that will affect your time-to-degree.**
   Significant decisions such as changing your major can delay your graduation, but so can seemingly "little" things. Dropping a class because you're earning "only" a C may seem like a good idea at midterm, for example, but in the long run, it may cost you. Similarly, not turning in a textbook or library book and ignoring the resulting fine can prevent you from registering for future courses. And taking a prerequisite course out of sequence may result in not receiving credit for it at all!

5. **Know and meet deadlines.**
   EIU establishes deadlines for paying bills, registering for classes, dropping classes, securing internships, applying for graduation, and so on. (See the academic calendar on the EIU home page.) Missing deadlines can delay graduation!

6. **Meet with your academic advisor *at least* once a semester.**
   Your advisors in the Academic Advising Center and in your major department not only will help you select your coursework but also will offer guidance in addressing your personal, educational, and career goals and serve as a resource to the many support services and activities on campus.

7. **Monitor your own academic progress.**
   While you will be assisted by a well trained academic advisor, *you are responsible for your own academic progress*. Via PAWS, you can run a degree audit that will show you which requirements you have met and which you still need to meet. Be sure to review your degree audit before you register each semester so that you can avoid last minute "surprises" that may delay your graduation.

8. **Take summer courses if you need to.**
   If your program requires more than 120 hours or you fall behind in hours, consider taking summer school at EIU, at your local community college, or even online. Be sure to select courses that will apply to your EIU degree. Ask your advisor for assistance.