

CITY/STATE

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UIS enrollment down 3.9 percent

Changes in computer science requirements may be one reason

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Enrollment at the University of Illinois at Springfield has dropped almost 4 percent this spring, and school officials are trying to find the reasons.

"It is unusual," UIS spokeswoman Cheryl Peck said of the decline of 182 students from spring 2007 to spring 2008. "We

had some stopouts — new students and transfer students who didn't come back for spring — but we really don't know why."

Overall enrollment this spring is 4,431 students compared to 4,613 in spring 2007, a decrease of 3.9 percent.

"We didn't really expect it," Peck said Tuesday.

Undergraduate enrollment actually increased by 22 students to 2,636 over the year-ago figure,

while graduate student enrollment dropped by 204 students to 1,795.

Peck said part of the decline could be attributed to changes in requirements for UIS' largest program, computer science. About 500 students are in computer science, and because of the new requirements, some students didn't have to enroll for spring semester.

Peck said UIS doesn't compare

fall enrollment figures to spring enrollment figures because some decrease is expected.

"But our projections for fall are very good," she said. "We've had record fall enrollment the past two years (4,761 in fall 2006 and 4,855 last fall), and we expect that again this year."

Other colleges in Springfield

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No loan woes yet

So far, the national credit crunch hasn't been much of a worry for students at the University of Illinois at Springfield who apply for student loans, the school's director of financial assistance said Tuesday.

"We haven't noticed anything yet," said Jerry Joseph. "But we are monitoring the situation."

Joseph said students already have loans for spring semester, so potential problems won't start showing up until summer.

UIS

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aren't showing the same spring-to-spring drop in enrollment.

Lincoln Land Community College saw an increase of 20 students, or 0.3 percent, to 6,817, compared to spring 2007 enrollment of 6,797.

At Springfield College-Illinois Benedictine University, enrollment is either down 15 students from last year or dead even with spring 2007, depending on how you look at it.

"We have another group starting in April, and that will make up that 15 students," said Susie Doddek, director of college advancement.

Because of accelerated disciplines, the college has students starting various programs at different times over the course of a semester.

She termed spring-to-spring enrollment "relatively flat."

Springfield College has 883 students enrolled this spring, compared to 898 last year.