

Conversation of Understanding #1
Live Forum Questions via YouTube
June 29, 2020

How will this issue regarding recruitment and hiring be addressed in the future?

One of the areas that each of the task forces will be examining is the recruitment process for faculty, and staff. We expect that to lead to changes in our policies, procedures and practices in order to eliminate any biases that exist in our processes. Other universities that have made similar changes have seen an increase in the recruitment of minority faculty and staff. We will also be monitoring our hiring data to determine if the changes are leading to increases in recruitment and hiring of diverse candidates.

Will you be working with the newly established DREAM Collective to work on steps to improve racial issues within the education system?

SIUE expects to support The Collective, which is committed to serving the southern Illinois and greater St. Louis area through supporting community members, educational organizations and professionals in the process of naming, addressing and dismantling racism through education, advocacy and mobilization. As its team of faculty activists seek to create effective programming and foster cultural competency in responsive educators and community members, we will be responsive to their needs/requests for assistance.

How does the SIUC campus reconcile a commitment to dismantling systemic racism w/ new School of Justice & Public Safety? There's an argument to be made that institutionalized School of Justice and Public Safety = contradictory to dismantling systemic racism. What will this School do differently?

Recent events have drawn attention to enduring issues in policing and, more generally, the American criminal justice system. These have been followed by widespread and loud calls for major reforms and, in some cases, dismantling of the justice agencies altogether to address longstanding racial, ethnic, class, and gender-based disparities caused by institutionalized practices. To be sure, the system has experienced change over the past decade in jurisdictions across the United States—[declining prison populations](#), [reductions in the use of or outright elimination of cash bail](#), [enhanced police accountability mechanisms](#), and [declining use of the death penalty](#) are just a few examples. These reforms are variably implemented, and their effects not always well understood. As society works to improve its system of justice, ensuring that the system is, in the words of a [National Academy of Sciences report on policing](#), both fair and effective, students are well served by exposure to a strong, empirically-based, academically-oriented program addressing topics in crime causation and society's response to crime and delinquency. [Southern Illinois University's Criminology and Criminal Justice program](#), the largest major in the new [School of Justice and Public Safety](#) (est. July 2019), is well-positioned to build on its nearly 60-year legacy of educating future criminal justice system professionals and contributing to evidence-based policymaking through scholarly research.

[The program was established on a foundation of system improvement.](#) Myrl Alexander formed the Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency, and Corrections (CSCDC) in 1961 as a research unit designed to increase the quality of the correctional system (Dr. Alexander would later become the third director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons). This commitment was captured in his [1993 New York Time obituary](#): “Mr. Alexander fostered changes to give prisoners productive work, education and job training to integrate them into society as useful citizens...His programs included weekend furloughs for trustworthy inmates, part-time release for classes and work...He played an instrumental role in the 1965 Federal Prisoner Rehabilitation Act.” Throughout the 1960s, courses in administration of justice and, especially, corrections would be offered through various SIU programs including sociology and political science.

Nearly a decade later, CSCDC scholars proposed their own standalone bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in Administration of Justice. In their program proposal for the master’s degree, and partially in response to the recommendations of national commissions that had issued reform recommendations during the 1960s (e.g., [The President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice](#), [The Kerner Commission](#)), they argued, “[criminal justice agencies] have generally been trapped by the intellectual inertia characteristic of closed social systems [and] more progressive attitudes must be imported from outside the agencies” (M.S Program Proposal, 1970, p. 5). Indeed, therein lied the value of Southern Illinois University’s program. It is where “traditional practices must be subjected to rigorous and well-directed scrutiny” (p. 6).

Today, the [Criminology and Criminal Justice program](#), having undergone a name change in 2009, continues that legacy. We are an academically-oriented social science degree program, not a vocational program. Students do not study tactical driving techniques, marksmanship, self-defense, or similar topics. They study the causes of crime, the development of law, and society’s response to law-breaking. Student’s learn research, analysis, writing, and critical thinking skills so they are better equipped to ask questions, solve problems, and understand evidence-based research. While most of our students are interested in entering the criminal justice system in some capacity (police officer, counselor, crime analyst, probation/parole officer, intelligence research specialist, etc.), we encourage students to challenge deeply-held beliefs about operations and to search for effective solutions.

Due to their importance within the criminal justice system, the effects of race, gender, age, neighborhood context, and other extralegal factors pervade most Criminology and Criminal Justice program courses starting at the introductory level and continuing through graduate coursework. Students are taught to describe the system ideal (the law on the books) and compare that to actual day-to-day practices on the streets, in the courtroom, or in correctional facilities (the law in action). As students begin to see disparities in the system at different stages of the criminal justice process (e.g., crime reporting, arrest, use of force, charging, pretrial detention, sentencing, capital punishment), they explore the theory and research to identify the predictors of those disparities and discuss evidence-based practices available to improve the system. All of this is done by first providing students with a strong foundation in research methods and statistics so that they are well-versed in the science used to understand these critical social issues.

Several examples are noted below; the list is not intended to be exhaustive.

- The program offers a core curriculum course titled Crime, Justice, and Social Diversity that addresses the causes and consequences of and potential reforms to address racial, ethnic, class, and gender disparities within the criminal justice system. The course is regularly taught to approximately 200 or more students per year from across the university community.
- In many courses (e.g., [CCJ201](#), [CCJ203](#), [CCJ306](#), [CCJ360](#), [CCJ492](#), [CCJ587](#)), implicit biases are discussed, both conceptually and empirically (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> and http://psych.colorado.edu/~jclab/FPST/demo/canvas/testPrograms/st_v.1.html). For instance, student results are compared to known samples of law enforcement officers. These types of exercises allow students to reflect on the possible presence of their own biases while also considering how such biases may affect behavior in criminal justice work. Implicit biases in law enforcement are also discussed within the context of recommendations from the [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#) and the [Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#).
- All students are required to take a course in Criminal Law or Law and Social Control. In the latter, students learn how the policy formation process geared toward reducing school violence has inadvertently led to the creation, adoption, and implementation of school disciplinary policies that disproportionately affect minority students and contribute to the “school to prison pipeline.”
- In the course Mass Incarceration and Collateral Consequences, students learn about how disparities in arrest affect incarceration rates despite policies (e.g., sentencing guidelines) designed to encourage equal treatment. Moreover, students, using implicit bias tests and a review of empirical research, discover how race affects post-release employment and housing prospects and overall reintegration.
- In the required Criminological Theory, students learn about the detrimental effects of labeling individuals “criminal” or “delinquent” and attempts to reduce criminal behavior through “restorative justice” where the community, victim, and offender come together for a more holistic response to criminal activity.
- Students are also widely exposed to the concept of procedural justice (and the related concept of organizational justice) as a linchpin in criminal justice actor-citizen relations. Research shows that fair and respectful treatment builds perceptions of legitimacy, satisfaction with the organization, compliance, and other positive outcomes. At the same time, students are presented with research showing variations in procedural justice across the system and demographic subgroups and discuss recommendations for improvement.

Criminal justice faculty and students also engage in scholarly research that recognizes system disparities, evaluates agency practices, and has direct policy relevance. For instance, Associate Professor Raymund Narag has devoted much of his career at SIU to [reforming the jail system in the Philippines](#), focusing attention on the lengthy pretrial detention experienced by many who are awaiting trial. His efforts have led to the release of many non-convicted individuals from extremely crowded facilities. Professor Tammy Kochel has spent the better part of the past decade studying law enforcement practices and public attitudes toward the police in places like [St. Louis County, MO](#) and [Springfield, IL](#). Her work demonstrates the value of enhancing perceptions of police legitimacy in improving police-community relations and strengthening neighborhoods. Our doctoral students are also similarly interested in issues of social diversity,

program effectiveness, and the criminal justice system. Recent dissertations have examined topics including the potential benefits of gender diversification in prison workforces, the effects of body worn cameras in an East Coast police department, and the deployment of women in acts of political violence.

As the Criminology and Criminal Justice program joins our peer programs in Paralegal Studies (an American Bar Association-approved program started in 1983) and Public Safety Management (an International Fire Service Accreditation Congress-accredited program dating back to the late-1970s) in the [School of Justice and Public Safety](#), we are poised to provide the university community with an even broader conception of justice and safety. For example, Paralegal Studies courses address, among many other topics, the fundamental rights afforded to citizens under the Bill of Rights and threats to those rights, disparities in the way the law is applied to different groups (e.g., property transfer rights for men and women), and fairness in the workplace. Public Safety Management courses discuss matters of community safety beyond criminal risk to include fire, weather, terrorism, and other natural and intentional disasters. As we know from the Covid-19 pandemic and the Flint water crises, these risks are not distributed equally.

Students interested in these issues—justice, safety, reform—would benefit from enrollment in core curriculum classes (CCJ203 Crime, Justice, and Social Diversity or PARL105 Introduction to Law), taking a few courses within the School, picking up a program minor (Criminology and Criminal Justice or Paralegal Studies) or selecting one of the School’s majors. They will walk away with a fuller understanding of the realities of a complex criminal justice, legal, and public safety system, and the tools to serve as leaders and change agents.

How are you going to include literature, books, research, courses, etc. created by the most marginalized voices (specifically Women of Color) in the CORE curriculum, as soon as possible?

One of the areas being examined by the SIUC and SIUE task forces is how to include diversity in the core curriculum and the majors. The examples cited in this question is one way to do that and can be done more quickly and easily.

Are we aware of any other Higher education systems (i.e. other universities or colleges) that are having such transparent and open conversations regarding this issue?

We know other universities are having some similar conversations, but do not know how many plan to have ongoing conversations or have multiple task forces. We are always happy to learn from others and ask anyone who finds examples of universities doing good work in this area to let us know.

Are there plans for holding online anti-racist speakers, events, etc. that students can and would attend?

Yes, the conversations will be ongoing and we will be inviting students to attend. We hope that will be easier when students return for the fall semester.

As SIUC students we were discouraged from wearing BLM shirts to university events by faculty who said it was an inappropriate political statement. Plans on training faculty on how to approach BLM?

SIUE has plans for anti-racism training. SIUE has hosted BLM-themed conferences. Faculty and staff often use BLM backgrounds in Zoom. SIUE Office of the Provost messages to faculty have invoked the language of BLM.

SIUC faculty, staff and students will be provided with ongoing anti-racism training that builds on the Conversations of Understanding. SIUC's Chancellor's Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion will make recommendations for an annual diversity week that will include all members of the community and reinforce our efforts to have an environment that supports Black Lives Matter and other minority groups and organizations.

Are you planning on giving more funding to the Black Resource Center and the Hispanic/Latino Resource Center (at SIUC) during these upcoming semesters?

At SIUC, the Black Resource Center and Hispanic/Latino Resource Center will be called upon to assist with our overall diversity and inclusion efforts as they relate to student programming and will require more funding to engage students and the campus community. Each budget for the Student Multicultural Resource Center is currently under evaluation.

Steven (SIUC student trustee) made a great point much earlier - do students know what resources are available? And are we really meeting their real needs?

The SIUC chancellor has met with a number of students and student groups via zoom this summer. Those types of meetings will occur regularly during the academic year as well, including monthly meetings of the Chancellor's Cabinet with the Undergraduate Student Government's Cabinet and leaders of the Black Affairs Council.

The chancellor is intentional in his efforts to solicit student feedback and will engage students directly through his university-wide listening and learning tour this fall. Students will be encouraged to share their thoughts about the resources available to them, what their experience at SIUC have been and what the university can do to make their time as a Saluki better. The chancellor will support a number of activities, such as the Black Resource Fair, that provide opportunities for students to learn more about what resources SIUC offers them.

This will also be a focus of the Chancellor's Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion, which will also be proactive in communicating with the campus community about resources available to students, faculty and staff.

How is a youtube discussion reaching to the 15 thousand students just on SIUE alone??? I genuinely believe this is preformative and in SIU's comfort. What are you doing beyond comfort?

The conversations of understanding are just one part of the SIU plan for making change. The task forces are each developing other actionable steps that will address a number of areas including, but not limited to, the educational experience of students, learning opportunities for

faculty and staff, recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and staff, and changes in various policies and procedures.

When are you going to give equitable pay to your faculty and staff that are POC? It is too late.

One of the recommendations from the System Task Force is to do a salary study to determine if there are pay inequities based on race or gender.

I agree with diversifying both staff and students, but it would be pointless if they aren't entering safe space. What is SIU doing to promote safe spaces for their staff and students?

Chancellor Lane will detail his points in the coming days. He is committed to ensuring the university provides safe spaces for its students, faculty, staff and visitors and will learn more about SIUC's current efforts in this regard through his on-going engagement with the campus community. Together, we will identify ways to improve what the university currently does to provide safe spaces to all.

How are campuses engaging or planning to engage their local communities in anti-racist work knowing students, faculty, & staff live in the area? They should feel safe & welcome on and off campus.

The Chancellor's Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion has student, faculty, staff and community members, including alumni, Carbondale residents and officials from the City of Carbondale. Members of the university administration also meet with the mayor and other city and business leaders on a regular basis to discuss common issues and opportunities.

The SIUE Anti-Racism Task Force has a subcommittee dedicated to engaging the community in addressing both on- and off-campus issues.

You can't teach what you haven't learned. So are we going to make sure that the "diversity/inclusion" courses need to have culturally competent instructors. How will that be developed?

SIUE – Each year, the Center for Faculty Development and Innovation supports a variety of workshops that support inclusive excellence and offers opportunities for faculty to develop greater skill in supporting diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. These include book clubs, workshops, videos, panel discussions, and other training opportunities. SIUE is working on additional anti-racism and cultural competency training and development opportunities. The Impact Academy Fellows will also support professional development for faculty.

SIUC – The chancellor and provost will be working with the Faculty Senate and Graduate Council on this matter in conjunction with the Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion. We will call upon campus experts in academic and non-academic areas and explore external resources that provide cultural competency training and related professional development opportunities for faculty. Notably, as shared in a recent blog by the Chancellor, the Faculty Senate made a commitment that will benefit everyone associated with SIU Carbondale. The [Resolution to Charge Faculty Senate Standing Committees to Address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) is

noteworthy because it acknowledges that we have work to do to provide a “safe, diverse, welcoming, and inclusive academic environment.”

But even after hiring the people, and getting a diverse student in, how are you going to not just accept but advocate for their voices? The committees sound great but what type of power do THEY hold?

All of the task forces have been appointed by the leaders of the institutions and were given the charge to identify actionable steps that will address systemic racism. Given this, they have the opportunity to advocate for a number of significant changes at SIU and this is an opportunity for their voices to be heard.

Not to backtrack, about campus safety: How a/b stricter, clearer, & transparent punishments for hate speech/acts meant to intimidate rather than saying free speech? Hate is definitely not in the Saluki Creed.

These are some of the policies and procedures that will be reviewed by the task forces. In addition, this will be the topic for the next Conversation of Understanding.

Are there plans for faculty training?

One of the subcommittees of the SIU system task force is focused on developing a plan for employee training.