

A CONVERSATION OF UNDERSTANDING

“ RIGHT TO LEARN: STUDENTS RECLAIMING HIGHER EDUCATION ”

APRIL 14 & 15, 2026

For years, students have advocated for improved student life, campus safety, fighting tuition increases, dismantling discriminatory policies, demanding an inclusive curriculum, among other issues. The SIU System office is partnering with the Young Invincibles to host four Conversations of Understanding on the SIU Edwardsville and SIU Carbondale campuses. The Conversations are designed to engage undergrad and graduate students, along with faculty and staff, in dialogue about students' rights to learn and the state funding formula for higher education.

The events will be provided in person as well as virtually. They will be offered in two parts with Part 1 focusing on students' rights to freedom to study, research, and speak without political interference dictating what actually can be taught or discussed in higher education. Part 2 follows a **free lunch for attendees** and highlights the state's public funding formula.

ATTENDEES CAN JOIN THE CONVERSATIONS IN PERSON OR VIA THE YOUTUBE LINK

April 14 • SIU Edwardsville • Morris University Center, Hickory-Hackberry Room
youtube.com/live/nnW2THg84WY?feature=share

April 15 • SIU Carbondale • Student Center, Old Main Room
youtube.com/live/9iYQmTuzqZI?feature=share

AGENDA FOR BOTH CAMPUSES

10:30 am - 12 pm: Conversation on Students' Right to Learn
12 - 12:45 pm: A free lunch will be provided for attendees of one or both sessions
1 - 2 pm: Conversation on Public Funding

Conversations of Understanding have become a fixture across the SIU System and on our individual campuses. They are a series of exchanges where students, alumni, faculty, staff, and the broader SIU communities can share their experiences and thoughts on a variety of themes related to antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion. We want to be a model for others in higher education and be recognized as a leader in our region and beyond for our work in fostering understanding of relevant contemporary issues.

Students, faculty, and staff across the SIU System are invited to join a live discussion focusing on critical issues regarding equity and justice in our country and what we can and must do to address those issues within the SIU System and beyond. A question-and-answer session will follow where audience participants can participate.

Sponsored by the SIU System President's Office and the SIU System Diversity Advisory Council



TROY ALIM
Midwest Engagement Manager
Young Invincibles



DR. SHEILA CALDWELL
Vice President for Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
SIU System



Southern Illinois University System
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