

SIUE investigating two racially-charged incidents on campus

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - The administration of Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville (SIUE) sent a campus-wide email Friday regarding two racially-motivated incidents - one at Cougar Village student housing, and another at the university core.

SIUE Marketing and Communications Director Doug McIlhagga said the incidents included an insulting sign posted on the door of Cougar Village containing "the n-word" and the painting of the Confederate flag on a central campus rock, which is constantly

painted and repainted by organizations across campus for various reasons, including the promotion of events. McIlhagga said the SIUE Police Department is investigating the first incident, and campus administration has covered the painting of the controversial flag with more paint. He said the paintings on the rock change as often as daily or weekly.

McIlhagga said events such as these were "extremely uncommon" on campus, and could not comment regarding why they would be occurring at this time.

The email sent to the entire SIUE student body Friday stated the following.

Two recent incidents, one at Cougar Village and one in the University core, occurred when unidentified individuals posted symbols and racist language toward African Americans that demonstrate racial intolerance or signify hate and oppression, and defy our values and expectations. This disrespectful behavior is unacceptable and has no place at SIUE.

We thank those who brought these events to our attention. The SIUE Police Department is investigating. Personal attacks based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation should never occur. Individuals aware of actions contrary to our campus culture may confidentially report those situations to residence advisors, administrators, faculty or the SIUE Police, who can help work through the issue. We continue to work with our senior leadership team to address any actions that violate campus rules and values.

This work will include: 1. - Creating an "immediate response team" for hate crimes and incidents on campus

2. - Implementing protocols to provide immediate support for students, faculty and staff who are victims of these horrible incidents, including counseling and advising

3. - Clarifying communication on how students, faculty and staff can access help and support 24 hours per day/7 days per week if these events occur

4. - Assuring follow-up on these incidents by those involved, including SIUE Police and appropriate SIUE administrators and staff members. We will work diligently to maintain a safe, secure and inclusive campus environment for all students, faculty and staff.

The email was provided to Riverbender.com/EdGlenToday.com by a student of the university. It was signed by SIUE Chancellor Randall G. Pembroke, SIUE Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Rich Walker, Vice Chancellor for Administration

Rich Walker, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement Rachel Stack, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Jeffrey Waple and Associate Chancellor for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion Venessa Brown.

A student identified as "Jane Dough" on Facebook, posted the following status accompanying a slightly censored photograph of the sign posted on the door at Cougar Village. It has been shared several times by other students:

@siue has a problem. HmL if u got info about the white girl making this sign. Posted round building 410 in CV. "1D" was supposed to imply that the folks living in that apartment (1D) posted the note. Obviously not the case, bUT they tried. The campus cops won't do anything and posting a statement from admin. won't do... Direct action or nothing. [#siue#southernillinoisuniversityedwardsville](#) Southern Illinois University Edwardsville [#gocougars](#)