

# 'Recruit, enroll, retain and graduate'

## Rhythm of SIUE's Office of Enrollment Management

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For the Intelligencer

On this week's episode of Segue, SIUE's premier radio show that features the ideas and issues on campus and beyond, SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembroke interviews Scott Belobrajdic, associate vice chancellor for enrollment management.

This episode will air at 9 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 4, on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound.

Belobrajdic received a bachelor's in art and communications from Illinois College (IC) and a master's of education in human services management and counseling from DePaul University. He also received his doctorate in higher education leadership from Maryville University.

"Your 32-year career in higher education began as an admission's counselor at Illinois College," Pembroke says.

"After I graduated, there was one thing I was an expert in: life in college," Belobrajdic recalls. "I quickly realized as I talked to parents and students from around the country that they listened to me about the student experience at IC, and that I had something valuable to share with them."

"Admission counselors provide that bridge between the day-to-day experience and the University."

The Office of Enrollment Management oversees the recruitment, admission, and enrollment of students across all levels, provides students with resources to navigate financial aid commitments, help all students, including military veterans, stay on the path to graduation, and uses evidence-based approaches to develop annual admission, enrollment and retention goals.

"It's a support unit, from the time they're

enrolled to the time they walk across the stage at commencement," Belobrajdic mentions.

"Your office connects with them across their entire journey, from the first moment they express interest in our University until they get their diploma," Pembroke says. "What an amazing thing!"

The School of Nursing enrolled a record 1,701 undergraduate (including pre-nursing) students, master's and doctoral students for fall 2018. New graduate student enrollment in the program also represented a three percent increase over 2017. Ten percent of the SIUE student body, or 1,362 students, are enrolled in at least one online course this fall compared to 9 percent last fall.

"What is the enrollment process like, and how do you get potential students to understand more about SIUE and

consider coming here?" Pembroke asks.

"First, we share information about the diverse array of programs we offer and a multitude of entry points to the University experience. Admissions and University Marketing and Communications work together to lead that recruitment effort."

Recruiting high school seniors, Pembroke mentions in the conversation, has become hypercompetitive in higher education. According to the chancellor, the number of Illinois high school graduating seniors is decreasing.

"How does this information shape what we do at our University to be competitive and attract them to a quality education at SIUE?" Pembroke inquires.

"Our highly-accredited academic programs resonate the most with prospective students," Belobrajdic says. "Those



Belobrajdic

third-party endorsements within the academic community help us make good on our promise of a high-quality education.

"Our beautiful campus also surprises prospective students with its welcoming atmosphere. The Edwardsville and Glen Carbon community that surrounds campus has a positive influence on the entire recruitment process."

From an enrollment management perspective, Belobrajdic notes that now is probably the best time for students

from Illinois to consider applying for and enrolling in colleges in the state of Illinois.

"Our legislators have undergone an awakening of sorts and have recommitted to providing financial assistance in order to keep them in-state," he says. "The state of Illinois provided an additional \$25 million in additional financial aid that wasn't there before."

"They've asked the state's 12 public universities to match that, and SIUE will provide \$4 million in additional, mostly merit-based scholarships next fall in the form of \$2,000 to \$2,500 AIM High Grants."

"I'm glad they've realized how important the quality of Illinois universities is in providing education to Illinois' students," Pembroke says. "This will definitely make a difference in your recruitment efforts."

To hear the entire conversation, listen to Segue at 9 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 4, on WSIE 88.7 FM the Sound.