

SIUE Counseling Services, Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion provide support for students

Counseling Services, Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion strives to improve health, academic success of learners

Madelaine Deardeuff; For the Intelligencer Friday, March 15, 2019



Boddie

When students simply need a safe place to talk about issues concerning culture and diversity, or even if they find themselves struggling with their day-to-day lives, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville provides two distinct resources to help them navigate their higher education experience.

This week on Segue, SIUE's premier radio show that showcases the lives and work of the people on campus and beyond, SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembroke, PhD, interviews Courtney Boddie, PhD. He currently serves as the director of Counseling Services, as well as interim director of the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion (CSDI), formerly the Multicultural Center. The interview will air at 9 a.m. this Sunday, March 17,

on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound and siue.edu/wsie.

Boddie is a board-certified fellow in clinical neurocounseling, and is licensed in Illinois and Missouri. His areas of expertise include multicultural counseling, integrated care, health psychology, psychological trauma and neurodevelopmental disorders. Throughout his career, he has held various roles in postsecondary settings, including coordinator for peer tutoring, learning specialist executive function coach, college counselor, tenure-line professor and administrator.

As Counseling Services director and CSDI interim director, Boddie aims to cultivate multiculturally centered, ecological and trauma-informed practices to improve the health and academic success of all learners at SIUE.

"What inspired you to go into counseling?" Pembroke asks.

"Growing up, I always wanted to be a lawyer; I think Law and Order played a role in that," Boddie recalls. "But, I knew I wanted to do something that could produce positivity in the

community, help people who have experienced injustice or marginality, and also offer economic sustainability.

“I grew up with two parents who were educators in the public school system, and while we definitely weren’t poor, every summer was definitely a struggle. I did not want my adulthood to be like that.”

After Boddie graduated from Triad High School, he went to St. Louis Community College, where he began working in peer tutoring and supplemental instruction, particularly with students with learning disabilities.

“It initially felt so out of my depth, and I felt underprepared, but it ultimately set the stage for my entire career,” Boddie says.

Boddie transferred to Washington University in St. Louis and earned his bachelor’s in organizational behavior/human resources, social entrepreneurship and psychology from the Olin School of Business. He achieved his master’s in education, specializing in counseling and psychotherapy, from the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL).

While he was pursuing his doctoral degree in counseling and counselor education from UMSL, Boddie thought he would exclusively be working with people with developmental disabilities.

“I began working with a patient who was a 50-year-old student, who disclosed she had been living with schizophrenia for about 30 years,” Boddie recalls. “This was the third time she was repeating an algebra class, and it was the only thing standing in her way to finish her associate degree. She was ultimately able to pass, but that experience made me realize that I wanted to work in higher education, and that I wanted to be a counselor that focuses on psychological well-being.”

“You ultimately ended up helping people in a different way!” Pembroke exclaims.

In his opinion, the director believes that Counseling Services offers thought leadership on how practitioners should work with the ever-changing, increasingly challenging profile of higher education students. He believes that all students should have insight into identifying students who are in distress, who might benefit from clinical treatment and how to deal with their own stressful situations.

Counseling Services offers individual or group counseling and psychological assessments to students with mood, anxiety, trauma and attention disorders. Counseling Services also coordinates with individuals, who may need accommodations through the Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) office. The service also includes prevention and outreach activities as a way to connect to the larger campus community. In the future, Counseling Services also hopes to provide specific social services to students.

Counseling Services’ help is free to students currently enrolled in three or more credit hours who have paid tuition and fees. Labs and prescriptions are not covered under the fee.

“Not only are you the director of Counseling Services, but you are also the interim director of the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion,” Pembroke says. “Thank you for serving in that capacity and taking on another role. What is it like to work at CSDI?”

“A lot of my work includes identifying what students need from a space now and working with Enrollment Management to understand how students coming our way look at culture,” Boddie says. “While Timothy Staples was director, he established four pillars of service: cultural teaching and learning, cultural affirmation, inclusive excellence, and retention.

“In student affairs, we often look at co-producing curricular programming that not only increases retention by enriching the whole student so they stay, but also ensures the students embodied our institution’s values and leave SIUE as employable professionals. A big part of that is ensuring people can communicate with people from different cultures.”

CSDI offers a safe place for these cultural conversations, and offers support and advocacy for underrepresented students. It underscores the University’s commitment to students’ well-being and success.

Boddie has worked to collect information on how the space can assist students and hand the reigns back to Staples upon his return. The interim director also has continued programs like sustained dialogues, inclusive conversations and various diversity celebrations.

“In a year or two, if someone walked by the Center, what would you like to see occurring within that space?” Pembroke asks.

“I would feel great if we strengthen our relationship with faculty and have more student involvement. I hope students think of the Center as deeply connected to how learning is transacted in the community. I hope to see one student leading a group of around eight others in a discussion, various organizations use the space for after-hours meetings, and faculty members within the margins use the space to talk about relevant issues affecting their lives. They also need a place to recharge.”

To hear the entire conversation, tune in to Segue at 9 a.m. on Sunday, March 17 on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound and siue.edu/wsie.