



CoLA Lowdown

A NOTE

From the Dean

Since the spring of 2023, CoLA has embarked on an initiative to establish the Center for Virtual Expression (CVeX). The mission of the center is

College Calendars

[CoLA Events Calendar](#)

to provide resources, support, and innovative solutions in virtual & augmented reality, gamification, and artificial intelligence for the humanities and social sciences. CVeX engages current students, faculty, and alumni in metaverse learning and content creation allowing for innovation in curriculum and course design—all within a space equipped with the most powerful technology and network on campus.



The center will offer cutting-edge resources and support, inspiring faculty and students to pioneer new learning methods, research opportunities, and outreach initiatives that will shape the future of education at SIUC and beyond—including possible collaborations with SIUE, the medical school, and disciplines in CoLA. The general response to CVeX is overwhelmingly positive so far. Under the leadership of Pinckney Benedict (Director) and Toby Merriman (Assistant Director), the center will solidify our commitment to leading the charge in these revolutionary technologies, ensuring that CoLA remains at the forefront of educational innovation.

So how might you use AR/VR and/or AI in your classroom? How might you add an immersive experience and/or assignment to a course you often teach that might, in turn, recruit students to your program? Who do you want to bring from the community to see this space, see what it can do, and find out how it may impact the way we interact with

[CoLA Faculty & Staff Calendar](#)

College Committees

[CoLA Committees Webpage](#)

The CoLA Committees webpage lists all the committee meeting minutes.

others? I encourage you to check it out, play around a little, and find out for yourself.

College

Meetings

Provost Sheryl Tucker and a representative from Faculty Senate will hold an **Academic Affairs Strategic Planning Listening Session for CoLA Faculty and Staff** on Thursday, November 2, 2023, 2:00-3:30 pm, Parkinson Hall, room124.

The **Undergraduate Program Coordinators** meeting will take place the fourth Tuesday of every month at 3pm, Dean's Conference room, Faner 2408.

Directors meetings take place the second Thursday of every month at 3pm, Dean's Conference room, Faner 2408.

Share Your News

Do you have news to add to an upcoming CoLA Lowdown? Submit **this form** to share news, events, awards, and more with the rest of the College.

Recent Accomplishments

Faculty

SIU creative writing professor **Pinckney Benedict** presented at the Teaching and Learning with AI conference hosted by the University of Central Florida on September 24-25, 2023. Benedict, who serves as Interim Director of the Center for Virtual Expression, presented on a panel titled "The Ultimate Mashup: AI and Common Course Assignments" along with Susan Wegmann, Executive Director of SIU Extended Campus, Craig Engstrom, Director of the SIU Center for Teaching Excellence, and an autonomous AI conversational agent created by CVeX. The panel discussed incorporating generative AI into common course assignments as a teaching aid, discussion participant, and creative collaborator in order to increase student engagement, critical thinking, and inclusivity.

The American Sociological Association Publications Committee approved the nomination of **Rachel Bridges Whaley** to serve on the Rose Series in Sociology Editorial Board beginning January 1, 2024. The Rose Series is a joint effort of ASA and the Russell Sage Foundation. It seeks to publish books that offer synthetic analyses of specific substantive areas of sociology, challenge prevailing paradigms, and/or offer fresh views of enduring controversies by mid-career and senior scholars that could reach audiences across fields and disciplines, as well as outside of academia.

Rachel Bridges Whaley was also nominated by the Midwest Sociological Society Committee on Committees to be on the ballot for Illinois State Director. The Illinois State Director sits on the MSS Board.

Recent Events

Anthropology Preview Day





Anthropology Preview Day was held on Friday, October 13th and was sponsored by the School of Anthropology, Political Science, and Sociology, and the College of Liberal Arts. Prospective students and their families attended faculty specialization sessions during the morning where they were introduced to fields of study in Anthropology. During the afternoon, students had the opportunity to attend "drop-in" sessions in the Bioanthropology Lab, Center for Archaeological Investigations, meet current Anthropology students, and watch a flintknapping demonstration by Larry Kinsella. The day was a huge success in showing students what SIU Anthropology has to offer. Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's event!

Recent Podcast

Gender Stories



Hammer spoke with Gender Stories about their new book, *Masculinity in Transition*. The book traces the roots of "toxic masculinity," showing that while toxic strains of masculinity are mainly associated with straight, white men, trans and queer masculinities often reiterate similar patterns of behavior. Arguing that these

malignant forms of masculinity can be displaced, K. Allison Hammer's bold rethinking lays bare the underlying fragility of normative masculinity.

Important Information

Students are registering for Spring 2023 classes! **CoLA highlights courses on the Electives Webpage** that students within CoLA, and across the university, may be interested in taking. The focus is on courses at the 200/300/400 level that do not require a prerequisite. Faculty teaching special topics courses, new courses, or classes that have not been offered lately, are especially encouraged to submit their courses so that students and advisors can see more information about those courses. Please see the current webpage for examples. If interested in submitting info for the website, please contact Rachel Wolters (rachelw@siu.edu).

Preventing Harassment & Discrimination Training - Faculty and staff should have received an email to complete federally mandated training for maintaining a discrimination-free and harassment-free campus. The email contains the subject "SIU Mandatory Employee Training" and was sent on Oct. 18 by Safe Colleges, appearing from Southern Illinois University Carbondale. All faculty, staff, graduate assistants, undergraduate assistants, student employees, extra-help employees and volunteers must complete the training by Dec. 1, 2023. If you need assistance or have questions, contact the Office of Equity and Compliance at odetraining@siu.edu or 618-453-4807.

Upcoming Events

THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM PRESENTS
in collaboration with the College of Liberal Arts
THE CHARLES D. TENNEY DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER - FALL 2023

INTERSTELLAR CHALLENGE

Would Blind aliens Build Telescopes?

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND, 5:00 - 7:30 PM

GUYON AUDITORIUM, MORRIS LIBRARY

CHAT OVER COFFEE AND DONUTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 10-11 AM

THE COLA DEAN'S ATRIUM

DR. SHERI WELLS-JENSEN

AN SIU ALUMNI AND EXPERT
ON XENOLINGUISTICS AND
DISABILITY ISSUES RELATED
TO SPACE TRAVEL

Join us on Zoom



SIU
CARBONDALE

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY
HONORS PROGRAM



Co-sponsored By:
School of Languages and
Linguistics

For disability accommodations call 618/453-5738

Online Teaching and Learning - Workshop

College of Liberal Arts

IN PERSON:
SSB 150/160
or
ONLINE:
MICROSOFT TEAMS

**REGISTER
HERE:**



bit.ly/SIU-CoLA23



December 1, 2023
10 a.m. - noon

CTE and Extended Campus are coordinating an Online Teaching and Learning Workshop on December 1st, from 10a to 12p. The event will be offered both in person (in SSB room 150/160) and online. Please take a moment to register for this training. It is expected that all those who are teaching online will complete this training -- and those who are currently teaching an online course or are scheduled to teach an online course have likely already received an email with an invitation to register. However, the workshop is open to all, and will be valuable for anyone who is currently teaching an online course or who would like to "design for online" either now or in the future.



Southern Illinois University | College of Liberal Arts, 1000 Faner Dr, Carbondale, IL 62901

[Unsubscribe {recipient's email}](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by cola.dean@siu.edu powered by

