https://www.alestlelive.com/news/article_68cca90f-5897-486c-9634-f89ff3b46d7b.html

EDITORIAL: Minor goes public with Alestle criticism, provides no evidence of inaccuracies

Mar 16, 2026

For nearly one year, SIUE's administration has belittled The Alestle and its reporting in private. On Feb. 10, Chancellor James T. Minor took this campaign of encouraging distrust in The Alestle public.

After the Feb. 7 publication of The Alestle's breaking brief about the cease and desist filed by AFSCME Local 2887, Minor sent a letter to "University Leadership" in which he baselessly denied the accuracy of The Alestle's reporting.

"I continue to be disappointed by The Alestle's predictably poor, inaccurate and incomplete reporting," Minor wrote.

Minor then wrote that he does not "believe" SIUE violated the terms of the collective bargaining agreement and noted that cease and desists are free to file and do not require evidence to be presented upfront.

Never in this letter did Minor point out any true inaccuracies in The Alestle's reporting. This has been a recurring issue since October 2024, when Senior System Counsel Phyleccia Reed Cole wrote to the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression that the university did not believe The Alestle's reporting accurately portrayed the position of the university related to speech by Housing employees. The Alestle reported on this the following month.

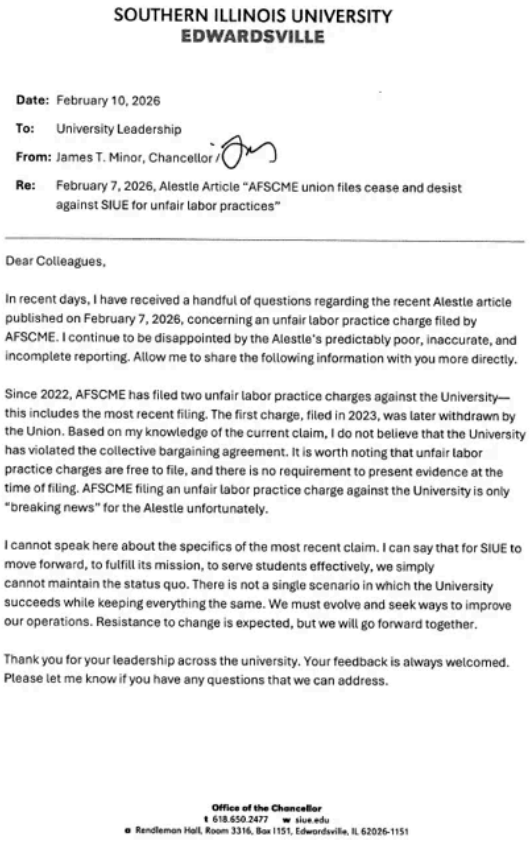
The Alestle contacted Cole requesting clarification on the alleged inaccuracies with the promise of issuing corrections if warranted. No specific examples of inaccuracies were provided.

After the March 31, 2025, publication of a story about salary sweeps Minor enacted across university budgets, former Interim Executive Director of Marketing and Communications Catie Sheehan, with Minor attached to the email, sent a memo to The Alestle in which she alleged a string of inaccuracies.

"I would be remiss if I did not convey a general concern and disappointment about a number of

Alestle articles that include significant inaccuracies and omit relevant information," Sheehan wrote. "Stories of this nature are not only harmful and do a disservice to the university community but also compromise the integrity and credibility of The Alestle."

Only once in recent years has SIUE provided concrete evidence of an inaccuracy in The Alestle's reporting — when The Alestle inadvertently published lower amounts of salary dollars swept by the university than in reality. These were fixed promptly, and a correction was issued addressing it.



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE

Date: February 10, 2026

To: University Leadership

From: James T. Minor, Chancellor

Re: February 7, 2026, Alestle Article "AFSCME union files cease and desist against SIUE for unfair labor practices"

Dear Colleagues,

In recent days, I have received a handful of questions regarding the recent Alestle article published on February 7, 2026, concerning an unfair labor practice charge filed by AFSCME. I continue to be disappointed by the Alestle's predictably poor, inaccurate, and incomplete reporting. Allow me to share the following information with you more directly.

Since 2022, AFSCME has filed two unfair labor practice charges against the University—this includes the most recent filing. The first charge, filed in 2023, was later withdrawn by the Union. Based on my knowledge of the current claim, I do not believe that the University has violated the collective bargaining agreement. It is worth noting that unfair labor practice charges are free to file, and there is no requirement to present evidence at the time of filing. AFSCME filing an unfair labor practice charge against the University is only "breaking news" for the Alestle unfortunately.

I cannot speak here about the specifics of the most recent claim. I can say that for SIUE to move forward, to fulfill its mission, to serve students effectively, we simply cannot maintain the status quo. There is not a single scenario in which the University succeeds while keeping everything the same. We must evolve and seek ways to improve our operations. Resistance to change is expected, but we will go forward together.

Thank you for your leadership across the university. Your feedback is always welcomed. Please let me know if you have any questions that we can address.

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Chancellor James T. Minor wrote this letter to "University Leadership" on Feb. 10 regarding a recent Alestle article. Minor did not respond to The Alestle's requests for verification of authenticity. The authenticity of this letter was ultimately verified via a Freedom of Information Act request.

Besides this singular instance, every time a member of SIUE's administration has alleged inaccuracies in The Alestle, they have been asked to provide proof and have been unable to.

Additionally, The Alestle's reporters make a point to reach out to administrators for comment on stories. Our goal is to represent all perspectives. When requests for comment are not addressed, it makes that goal more difficult to achieve. A productive working relationship between administration and The Alestle is dependant on communication.

Nevertheless, it is still our duty to publish a story with the information we have and know to be true if it is newsworthy. Student media is not a university's mouthpiece.

It is the responsibility of journalists — both students and professionals — to report events as they unfold swiftly, accurately and objectively. Journalists also have a duty to hold those in positions of power accountable. The facts of a situation do not always align neatly with any one

person's agenda, but it remains our duty to report the truth — especially in times where freedom of the press is being threatened.

Members of the campus community take notice when the chancellor publicly criticizes students at his own university. They also notice when those moments appear to take precedence over efforts to support the campus and further students' education.

It is also apparent when administration's words do not align with their actions. At the end of the letter in question, administration invites feedback. However, when feedback and requests for clarification go unanswered or are dismissed, it raises questions about how representative administration truly is of the broader campus community.

SIUE administration's campaign of encouraging distrust in The Alestle has been happening behind the scenes for a while now. With this letter, Minor took it public.

Chancellor Minor, The Alestle welcomes the opportunity to address any inaccuracies.

In the meantime, we stand by our reporting. No efforts to shape the narrative will alter the facts or conceal the truth.

As always, everyone in the campus community is welcome to submit a letter to the editor.

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