FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT TEAM INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale (IL), October 30, 2017- The Southern Illinois University Carbondale Department of Public Safety Director and Chief Benjamin Newman announced that a team from the Illinois Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (ILEAP) provided by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police will arrive on SIU campus on November 5, 2017 to examine all aspects of the Southern Illinois University Carbondale Department of Public Safety, including its policies and operations.

The department will be assessed on the basis of 180 separate ILEAP standards regarding administration, operations, personnel, and training. The department has been revising its policies and procedures during the past two years in order to meet the standards set by ILEAP. In order to complete the accreditation process, the policies and procedures must not only reflect the standards established by ILEAP, but the files that are developed must show that the department is following its own policies and procedures.

Accreditation will demonstrate that the department has achieved a level of professionalism among our law enforcement peers and validates the methods in which department members provide service to the residents and the general public in our community. In addition to improving the agency’s relationship with the community, accreditation makes the agency more accountable for its actions limiting liability and risk exposure.

The on-site assessment is expected to occur from November 5, 2017 through November 7, 2017. During that time, the team will determine whether the Southern Illinois University Carbondale Department of Public Safety meets each of the standards necessary to achieve ILEAP’s Tier Two Accreditation.

As part of the on-site assessment, members of the community are invited to offer comments to the assessment team by calling (618) 453.8654 on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. Comments at the public information session are limited to 10 minutes and must address the agency’s ability to
comply with the ILEAP standards. These standards may be viewed online at [www.ilchiefs.org](http://www.ilchiefs.org).

The assessors are Deputy Chief Joseph Mitchell of the Orland Park Police Department and Team Leader, Holly Nearing.

Deputy Chief Joseph Mitchell was the first accreditation manager of the Orland Park Police Department. In his current role, he oversees the day-to-day operation of 101 full-time police officers and 60 civilian staff. Deputy Chief Mitchell is a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command (221st) and holds a master’s degree in Public Service from DePaul University, and a BS in Aviation from Lewis University.

Ms. Nearing retired as a 30-year veteran of the Champaign Police Department with her final assignment being Deputy Chief of Professional Standards. As deputy chief, she was the ILEAP accreditation manager and was responsible for internal affairs, citizen complaints, training, evidence, and records. As a lieutenant, Nearing supervised a patrol district and FTO Unit, Investigations, and Training and Grants. She is a certified assessor for ILEAP. Ms. Nearing is a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command (105th) and holds a master’s degree in Public Administration from Governors State University, and a BS in Psychology from the University of Illinois.

The Southern Illinois University Carbondale Department of Public Safety will be the second police department in Jackson County to seek accreditation, joining neighboring Carbondale Police Department.

**Contact:** Chief Benjamin Newman or Corporal Molly Pyatt (Accreditation Manager) at (618) 453.3771.