How should we handle this example for inserting. Say we insert at index 0 on a SLL then we tell our program insert at index 5. Should our program insert null nodes between index 0 and index 5 or should it default to the tail or throw an error?...

From common implementations usually an error is thrown. Since you are using C and you are not returning anything then you can either exit or do nothing. Usually in C something is returned to indicate success or failure but the function declarations don't in this case.

At this point I would just exit and see what Dr. Lusth says on the matter.

Your code will only be tested with proper input. What happens if improper input is given is undefined. Ask me about how to handle bad input in class.