

**University Senate Meeting
September 11, 2023
Student Union 330/331**

1. Election of Moderator and Secretary

President **Maric** called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and called on Senator **McDougall**, Member of the Senate Executive Committee, to nominate a moderator. Senator **McDougall** nominated Senator Tom **Bontly** as Moderator for the 2023-2024 academic year and Senator **Harmon** seconded the motion. By voice vote, the election vote passed unanimously.

President **Maric** then yielded the meeting to the Moderator. Moderator **Bontly** then called for nominations for the Secretary of the Senate for the 2023-2024 academic year. Senator **Dineen** nominated Christine North and Senator **Bedore** seconded the motion. By voice vote, the election passed unanimously.

2. Land Acknowledgement Statement

Moderator **Bontly** read the Land Acknowledgement Statement:

"We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the territory of the Mohegan, Mashantucket Pequot, Eastern Pequot, Schaghticoke, Golden Hill Paugussett, Nipmuc, and Lenape Peoples, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We thank them for their strength and resilience in protecting this land and aspire to uphold our responsibilities according to their example."

3. Introduction of Senators

Moderator **Bontly** asked that each senator introduce themselves, share the name of their school/college or division and department, and their Senate committee membership affiliation.

4. Approval of Minutes of May 1, 2023 University Senate meeting

The minutes of the meeting were approved as distributed.

5. Report of the President

Presented by President Radenka Maric

President **Maric** remarks included:

- The budget has been approved and university leaders continue to work with state government to address the projected shortfall of \$70 million.
- In July the University received the largest gift to a university, a \$40 million gift from Elisabeth DeLuca for the expansion of the School of Nursing, and the state has approved a \$30 million bond to contribute to this planned expansion.
- The University was nominated by the American Association of Land-grant Universities as an Innovation and Community University and will receive this award in November at the APLU Annual Meeting in Seattle. This award will allow the University to enter many of the grants and opportunities that were previously unavailable to us without this designation.
- Fundraising this year achieved a record high of \$165 million, with the previous year being \$115 million. When talking to donors and alumni, we are all champions for the University and the stories of the students' success truly matter to them. UConn is Connecticut and Connecticut is UConn! This the message that we want to share with outside stakeholders and the Legislature.
- There is a desire to engage students more in the democratic process and an undergraduate survey will be sent to students soliciting their input on the direction of the University and their priorities as members of the UConn community. She will also hold one-on-one meetings with students and welcomes attendance at upcoming Town Hall Meetings for university Strategic Planning.
- Concluded with the video created by the Communications group to share the story of UConn.

Moderator **Bontly** asked if there were any questions for President **Maric**.

Senator **Keilty** asked whether the State budget shortfalls are anticipated to impact capital campaign improvements, such as residence hall improvements. President **Maric** stated that she believes the capital campaign improvements are still on track.

Senator **Jockusch** mentioned that the membership for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and working groups had a proportion of it being administrators and asked how students and faculty will have a meaningful voice in the process.

President **Maric** stated that there will be numerous surveys as well as Town Hall meetings to solicit everybody's perspective.

Senator **Bush** asked about academic building renovations, such as GANT, and the anticipated timeline for those buildings. President **Maric** stated that there has been increase of 30-50% in construction costs that has delayed the timeline for these renovations.

Senator **Boraey** asked if graduate students can be involved in the discussions of building projects, such as residential buildings. President **Maric** stated that there are a number of conversations happening to consider ways to develop ourselves and partner with private sectors to consider options for the graduate students.

Senator **Morrell** asked what plans are in place to allow the University to deal with the reduction in temporary funds from the State for fiscal year 2025. President **Maric** stated that they have presented to the OPM secretary the cuts the University has implemented itself, reduction of redundancies at the President's Cabinet to improve efficiency, and which contracts will be renegotiated.

Senator **Bresciano** asked about the Office of Academic Integrity and President **Maric** stated this would need to wait until after the discussions about the budget.

Moderator **Bontly** thanked President **Maric** for the presentation.

6. Student Affairs Reorganization Update

Attachment #1

Presented by Provost Anne D'Alleva

Provost **D'Alleva**

- Welcomed Laura Burton as the new Chair of the Senate Executive Committee and thanked Del Siegle for his work on this Committee.
- Provost D'Alleva presented the new university organizational structure and stated the decision was made to divide the unit to best serve the students, splitting it between the Provost's Office and Student Life and Enrollment Management as shown in the displayed organizational chart. This will allow a focus on the students and support their success across their whole University career.

Provost **D'Alleva** asked if there were any questions.

Senator **Keilty** stated a concern that all of student activities use SAIT heavily and asked if this will require a migration to a new system. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that whatever is in place will stay in place for now with regards to support.

Senator **Gokirmak** asked about meeting with students during office hours in a way that could provide students with meals. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that technology has changed the way we work which has created a challenge and she welcomes ideas on how to interconnect faculty and students, both formally and organically as a community.

Senator **McCutcheon** asked about cost reduction plans to include administration and athletics. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that the CFO is working on these issues right now and there needs to be an approach to this fiscal challenge that shares the burden across University while preserving services to our students, as well as teaching, research and engagement. UConn is in alignment with our peers of other public universities of a similar size.

Senator **Bresciano** asked for more information on how this decision was made and what were the best practices informing this decision. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that they looked at other institutions and found several different versions. This model of putting these areas together to support the students' experience is an emerging model, as it helps address a need given that students are as likely to struggle academically due to a challenge in housing, tuition bills, or mental health as they are with an academic issue. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that the Graduate School is working on these issues for graduate students, however she feels this could be looked at more significantly with an example being graduate students attempting to find affordable housing at branch campuses.

Senator **Boudah** asked about housing issues for regional campuses for undergraduate and graduate students. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that they are working with the directors of the regional campuses to address these issues and encourage leaders to reach out to the Dean of Students office when students need assistance.

Senator **Bresciano** asked about the dissolving of the Off-Campus Student Services office. Provost **D'Alleva** was not a part of that decision, and could not speak on this, but she stated in general about services and communication to students who live off-campus.

Senator **Roy** asked who should be contacted now that the Off-Campus Student Services office is no longer there. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that individuals could send a message to the Provost's Office directly for graduate students who are struggling with housing and the Dean of Students for Undergraduate students.

Senator **Gokirmak** asked about transportation at all of the campuses. Provost **D'Alleva** stated that this is a huge problem in Connecticut, but there are multiple dimensions to this problem both around campus and between campuses. There has been conversation with CT Transit, as this is not just an issue on the campuses.

Moderator **Bontly** thanked Provost **D'Alleva** for presenting.

7. Report of the Senate Executive Committee

Attachment #2

Presented by SEC Chair Laura Burton

Thanks to Cheryl Galli as leader of the University Senate Office for 9 years, she did an incredible job including putting together this entire meeting.

Thanks to Alexis Lohrey and Michelle Everard for their help during this transitional time as they search for a new candidate for this position with the Senate.

Senator **McCutcheon** stated that he feels that there is no reason to move the meetings to virtual as he feels it is not an effective way to run University governance organization. He states that the Board of Trustees runs their meetings as a hybrid model, and he is planning to make a motion to move all future meetings to a hybrid model.

Moderator **Bontly** called for any other new business.

Senator **Weingart** asked about faculty being harassed and the weaponization of FOI requests as they had not heard of this situation. Senator **Burton** stated they want to understand the scope of the problem and recognized Senator **McDougall** to address FOI and the weaponization of it. Senator **McDougall** stated that this is a national trend with several instances within the UConn community and there was a bill before the State Legislature that didn't make it through the session to modify the scope of what can be requested under what conditions to try to address this matter.

Senator **Heumann** asked about whether there will be an ABR Committee or will it stay in CCC+. Senator **Burton** stated that they are considering a sub-committee through CCC+.

8. Senate Calendar Meeting 2023 – 2024

Presented by SEC Chair Laura Burton

Senator **Burton** asked for a motion to move the May 6th Senate Meeting to April 29th and Senator **Cutter** made the motion, which was then seconded by Senator **Keilty**. The reason for this change is that the May 6th date conflicts with the doctoral commencement ceremony. By voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. CCC+ Report

Attachment #3

Presented by Pam Bedore

Senator **McCutcheon** asked about details of the cost of the Navigator program and whether it aligned with what was proposed last year. Senator **Bedore** stated that they are within that they are exactly to the budgeted cost and the funds are coming from the Provost's Office.

10. Consent Agenda Items:

Report of the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee

Attachment #4

Report of Nominating Committee

Attachment #5

By voice vote, the consent agenda passed unanimously.

11. Undergraduate Student Success Highlights on Retention & Graduation (2022-2023)

Attachment #6

Presented by Mona Luca (Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Policies and Strategic Initiatives)

Assistant Vice President Mona **Lucas** began by thanking their colleagues in Budget, Planning and Institutional Research for their work on the data is being provided in the presentation.

Assistant Vice President **Lucas** asked if there are any questions.

Senator **Gokirmak** asked the reason for the big gap between male and female students in retention. AVP **Lucas** said they don't know the reason but could ask those more involved in the data to see if they know.

Senator **Cutter** asked if there will be a report at the end of the year on steps to increase retention of underrepresented students. AVP **Lucas** stated that the work hasn't been crafted yet and addressing the achievement gaps of that population has to be at the top of the list. Retention in graduation tends to be on the Senate agenda at the last meeting of the year, so they expect to be invited to share what they accomplish as a task force at that time.

Senator **Vernal** asked if the data was disaggregated for COVID impacts regarding achievement and financial aid gaps. AVP **Lucas** stated that there is information noted in the lengthy report and the COVID cohort was mentioned separately.

Moderator **Bontly** thanked Assistant Vice President **Lucas**

12.New Business

Senator **McCutcheon** stated that he feels it is important for the meetings to be held in person and he feels that large, online meetings are ineffective ways to convey information and have discussion. Senator **McCutcheon** made a motion that all senate meetings, for this fiscal year, be moved to a hybrid format. Seconded by Senator **Burkey**. Senator **Siegle** shared that the legal authority stated that a move to a hybrid model for the Senate meetings will require that all votes either be done as a roll call vote or digitally by computer or other device. It will also be required that the results of the votes be displayed after the vote has been taken. Discussion followed.

Senator **Bayulgen** made an amendment to the motion to move the Senate meetings to a hybrid model for the October, November and December meeting and revisit this issue at the December meeting. Seconded by **McDougall**. Discussion followed.

The vote to replace the original motion with the amended motion passed with 52 yes and 14 no.

The vote on the amended motion passed with 60 yes, 15, no and 1 abstention.

13.Adjournment

Senator **Gokirmak** made a motion to adjourn.

Senator **Keilty** seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.
The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine S. North
Secretary of the University Senate, 2021-2024

SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Laura Burton, Chair
Maureen Armstrong
Marisa Chrysochoou
Jennifer Dineen
Jon Heiden
Morty Ortega
Del Siegle

Pam Bedore
Bob Day
Kate Fuller
Joe MacDougald
Sandip Roy