

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU)
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022
CONDUCTED IN PERSON AND VIA WEBEX**

| REGENTS - PARTICIPATING (Y = yes / N = no) | |
|---|---------------|
| JoAnn Ryan, Chair | Y - in person |
| Richard J. Balducci | Y - in person |
| Ira Bloom | Y - virtually |
| Felice Gray-Kemp | Y - virtually |
| Holly Howery | Y - in person |
| Juanita James | N |
| James McCarthy | Y - virtually |
| Richard Porth | Y - in person |
| Ari Santiago | Y - virtually |
| Elease E. Wright | Y - in person |
| *David Blitz, FAC Chair | Y - in person |
| *Colena Sesanker, FAC Vice Chair | Y - in person |
| *Dante Bartolomeo, Labor Commissioner | Y - virtually |
| *Dr. Manisha Juthani, Public Health Commissioner | N |
| *David Lehman, DECD Commissioner | N |
| *Charlene Russell-Tucker, Education Commissioner | N |
| *Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Chief Workforce Officer | N |
| <i>*ex-officio, non-voting member</i> | |

CSCU STAFF:

Terrence Cheng, CSCU System President
 Dr. Alice Pritchard, CSCU Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer
 Ben Barnes, CSCU VP of Finance and Administration
 Dr. Rai Kathuria, CSCU Provost & SVP of Academic and Student Affairs
 Jim Vasquez, CSCU Chief Information Officer
 Dr. Paul Beran, Interim President, Western CT State University
 Dr. Joe Bertolino, President, Southern CT State University
 Ed Klonoski, President, Charter Oak State College
 Dr. John Maduko, President, CT State Community College
 Dr. Zulma Toro, President, Central CT State University
 Ernestine Y. Weaver, CSCU System Counsel
 Dr. Mike Rooke, President, Northwestern CT Community College
 Ann Harrison, CT State Chief of Staff, AVP of Communications & Strategic Marketing
 Paul Steinmetz, Special Assistant to the President, WCSU
 Dr. David Ferreira, Provost, Charter Oak State College
 Pam Heleen, Asst. Secretary of the Board of Regents (recorder)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Following roll call, a quorum was declared.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The motion to adopt the agenda was made by Regent Balducci, seconded by Regent Wright, and adopted by unanimous voice vote.

CHAIR RYAN'S REMARKS

- Chair Ryan welcomed everyone and noted that meetings continue to be in person with some Regents joining virtually. Technical difficulties at Middlesex Community College prevented the Board from meeting there.
- She commented on the tragedy that struck two Bristol police officers who were gunned down in the line of duty. Lieutenant Dustin DeMonte was an alum of Central Connecticut State University with a degree in criminology and Sergeant Alex Hamzy attended Tunxis Community College. She wished a speedy recovery to Officer Alec Iurato.
- The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) held officer elections. The SAC Chair is Alexander Grant a senior at Southern Connecticut State University majoring in communication. The SAC Vice Chair is Luis Sanchez-Chiriboga, sophomore from Northwestern Connecticut Community College majoring in liberal arts and science. They will begin their orientation and attend the December Board meeting.
- She thanked the faculty and educational support staff for passing on their knowledge and caring for our students.

PRESIDENT CHENG'S REMARKS

- President Cheng also offered his condolences to the families of Lieutenant Dustin DeMonte and Sergeant Alex Hamzy of the Bristol Police Department. This loss hits close to home for CSCU campus police departments, for students enrolled in and connected to these programs, and for people across our system.
- He announced that the City of Hartford—with Capital Community College as one of its primary partners—just received a \$2M grant from the Department of Justice to expand Community Violence Intervention efforts and supporting additional multi-disciplinary violence intervention strategies.
- On behalf of CT State sister campuses, Capital Community College received a \$5M Strengthening Community Colleges Training grant from the Department of Labor to expand career and technical education programs. Only 13 colleges in 12 states across the country received this grant, and CT State's and Capital's award was the highest in nation. President Cheng thanked Lesley Mara in CSCU Academic Affairs for the hard work she put in to bring resources and support to our institutions and Capital CC CEO Dr. Duncan Harris for his ambitious and reliable leadership.
- In September, Southern Connecticut State University hosted Dr. Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General, who led a panel on student mental health and social connection. In the same week, Southern also played host to Dmitry Muratov, acclaimed Russian journalist and 2021 Nobel Peace Prize recipient who spoke about the Russian media, and inspired students to understand media literacy and freedom of the press.
- Central Connecticut State University recently had the honor of hosting Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, and Rep. Jahana Hayes, for a conversation on women's health and reproductive rights. President Cheng highlighted Secretary Cardona comments about his experience as an undergraduate at Central and how it shaped his life, followed by Rep. Hayes talking about how proud she is to be an alumnus of Southern.

- President Cheng was honored to attend a convening of higher education leaders at Excelencia in Education in Washington DC. Presidents Toro, Maduko, Bertolino and Cheng met with other leaders from across the country and studied support models for Hispanic and Latinx students. This engagement will help to better serve CSCU students in a holistic manner, while furthering equity and inclusion, and ultimately yielding even stronger outcomes.
- He also just attended the first meeting of the New England Board of Higher Education's Commission on Higher Education in Prisons, which brought together leaders from corrections, higher education, policy makers, and most importantly, justice-impacted individuals. The commission will make recommendations on how to create partnerships and programs that will bring higher education to individuals in the justice system in an equitable, effective, and destigmatizing manner. Recommendations will be presented later in 2023.
- He noted that recently, more than 50 people from across CSCU, CT State, and Southern Connecticut State University spent time volunteering at Connecticut Foodshare. The group sorted nearly 14,000 lbs. of food in just a few hours.
- President Cheng noted that CSCU and our institutions recently came together with collective bargaining units so that adjunct faculty across the system can take advantage of the Department of Education's Public Student Loan Forgiveness program. By adopting proposed new regulations and investing system resources to administer the program, we have expanded eligibility for many adjunct faculty. He thanked bargaining unit leaders—Patricia O'Neill, Gregg Crerar, Paul Morganti, Larry Salay, Seth Freeman, and Dennis Bogusky - for their advocacy and for bringing forward this matter so action could be taken.
- President Cheng commented on the challenges ahead, projecting major budget deficits for FY24 and FY25. In FY24, as a system, the deficit is projected to be more than \$100M. For FY25, the projected deficit is approximately \$120M. To achieve balanced budgets, he has asked the presidents of the six institutions to work with their communities, including their senates and curriculum committees, their faculty and staff, and their leadership teams to find and create solutions. He repeated that enrollment drops are real; unfunded pension liability, and contractual obligations are real; and the need for more state investment and support from our industry and community partners is real. He also reiterated that we are not going to cut our way out of these deficits. As work continues with the legislature and the Governor's office to find a pathway to consistent and commensurate state funding, we must also look to align our offerings with the needs of 21st century students, by strengthening existing and create new opportunities. These conversations have begun on the campuses and may look different at each institution. But no matter the process, shared governance will be adhered to collective bargaining agreements will be honored.
- President Cheng closed by stating that his office will not dictate the path, the future, and the identity of any of our institutions. That is up to each institution to decide under the leadership of their presidents.

INSTITUTIONAL UPDATES

- **NORTHWESTERN CT COMMUNITY COLLEGE - PRESIDENT MIKE ROOKE**
- **CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE - PRESIDENT ED KLONOSKI**

President Rooke shared updates from Northwestern CT Community College (Attachment A).

President Klonoski, along with Provost David Ferreira, shared updates from Charter Oak State College (Attachment B).

President Cheng thanked Presidents Rooke and Klonoski and Provost Ferreira for their presentations and recognized the following members who had comments and questions:

- Regent Wright stated that she was very pleased to learn of all the accomplishments and noted that CSCU seems to be the best kept secret in terms of affordability. She asked what more could be done to promote the colleges and universities. President Klonoski discussed direct and brand marketing - their differences and the costs. President Cheng reinforced the message and stated that the system wants to invest more in brand marketing.
- Regent McCarthy supported the importance of brand marketing, especially that which would be developed and delivered centrally, not to diminish the impact of what the institutions are doing, but to spread the dollars along.
- Regent Balducci noted his interest in the NWCC's Guided Pathways success. The investment is showing some initial positive result. He hoped to hear more from other campuses.
- Professor Blitz asked about the outreach activities of NWCC. President Rooke noted that they work with all the entities in the community (i.e., Hartford Health Center, Whiting Mills, American Mural Project) building relationships that students can benefit from.

OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOR

In addition to the ten speakers, the Board received 8 written communications. In accordance with FOI guidelines as amended during the pandemic, the communications were posted on the CSCU website immediately prior to the meeting start time and distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting. They are included as Attachment C.

| <u>Students</u> | <u>Faculty/Public</u> |
|--|---|
| Andres Rico Senior, WCSU | Seth Freeman 4Cs President |
| Marquet Humphrey Senior, WCSU Dissolving Social Sciences Department | Rotua Lumbantobing Economics Professor WCSU |
| Jacob Ferris Student Current Issue at WCSU | Carina Bandhauer Chair, Dept of Social Sciences WCSU Role of social sciences in liberal arts education and their necessity in public education |
| Taylor Green Graduate Student – Masters in Fine Arts Student Worker in Social Science Dept WCSU | |
| Melina De Osambela Student, WCSU Social Science Issue at WCSU | |
| Rebecca Wozniak Student, WCSU Importance of the social sciences in 21st century education | |
| Jennifer Bassett Student, WCSU On behalf of the Social Science Department | |

President Cheng thanked all who provided public testimony. The engagement and dialogue provide opportunity to build collaboration. He provided the following comments:

- He agreed that higher education is a “public good.” This is something that we need to work on together - the System Office, institutions, administration, faculty, students - to build it into the narrative for today and the future.

- There are a factors that guide our operations; adequate public funding is the challenge.
- Dr. Beran is beginning a process at WCSU; no decisions have been made; there is no imminent closure of the degree programs. A recommendation has been made; Dr. Beran and his leadership will now begin the analysis that will include the appropriate faculty constituent groups at WCSU. Dr. Beran and his team have not put forth the recommendation arbitrarily or capriciously. It is the time for all stakeholders to come together to talk through the recommendations, look at the data, understand what is going on, and try to solve the problems together.
- President Cheng noted one of the speaker's use of the word "embezzled." He said that if there is evidence of university employee embezzling, then please bring the information forward. If the word was chosen to add flourish, he asked that people be mindful of the impact of their words.
- He stated that we could have and should have managed WCSU finances better - at the institutional and system level. There will be more accountability and transparency at all levels.
- Dr. Bandhauer's comments were heartfelt; her passion was truly moving. He hoped that we will continue with shared responsibility, shared governance, shared problem solving to provide a long-term viable solution to the issues at hand.

President Beran added the following comments to the discussion:

- Conversations will continue with students, stakeholders (both internally and externally) as the information is reviewed and analyzed at a deeper level. He stated that engagement is crucial as they evaluate what to concentrate on and how to create effectiveness and efficiency.
- He has started the process outlined in the AAUP collective bargaining contract for low enrolled programs. AAUP is the next step in the established process. Issues will need to be addressed - some are monetary, some are emotional, some are service-oriented.
- He agreed that the liberal arts and the social sciences are an integral part of a well-rounded education. Even if the degree programs go away, the need to teach these classes will not. Freshman and sophomore level classes in the social sciences will still be taught.

President Cheng encouraged all the stakeholders at WCSU - the faculty, the Senate, curriculum committee, students - to come together to fix the significant challenge and concern, as well as to address the impact of any potential change. If there is any area of CSCU (program, unit, support service) that has a misalignment of resource allocation, that has the impact of draining resources from other areas across the system.

Professor Blitz commented on the need for better refined (customized by discipline) low-enrollment metrics. He continued by asking how much money will be saved by cutting the majors at WCSU. He also suggested that there would be considerable loss to the university by eliminating the upper level social science courses. He encouraged everyone to look at both the qualitative implications and quantitative factors of the possible elimination of these degrees.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

On a motion by Regent Balducci and seconded by Regent Wright, the September 22, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes were approved after a unanimous voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Regent Balducci, seconded by Regent Porth, the Consent Agenda was unanimously adopted.

Academic Programs

Discontinuations

- i. Infant and Toddler - Certificate - Charter Oak State College
- ii. Information Management and Services - BS and Minor - Southern CT State University

Modifications

- i. Counselor Education: School Counseling - MS - Western CT State University
[Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions]
- ii. Education Paraprofessional to Early Childhood Education - Certificate
Northwestern CT Community College [Significant Modification of Courses/Course
Substitutions and Change of Degree Title or Program Title]

Suspensions

- i. Speech and Language Pathology Studies - Certificate - Charter Oak State College

State University Centers and Institutes

- i. Continuation of a Center/Institute - The Center for Communication Disorders
Southern CT State University
- ii. Continuation and Name Change of a Center/Institute - Center for Sustainable Studies
Eastern CT State University
- iii. Continuation and Name Change of a Center/Institute - Institute for Sustainability
Eastern CT State University

RESOLUTIONS APPROVED ON CONSENT

Academic Programs - Discontinuations

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of a program, Infant and Toddler, (CIP Code: 19.0709 / OHE# 015448), leading to a Certificate at Charter Oak State College, effective Spring 2024.
- ii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of a program, Information Management and Services, (CIP Code: 25.0101 / OHE# 000646), leading to a Bachelor of Science at Southern Connecticut State University, effective December 20, 2024.

Academic Programs - Modification

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program - Counselor Education: School Counseling (CIP Code: 13.1101 / OHE# 000175), specifically modification of courses and total program credits - leading to a Master of Science at Western Connecticut State University.
- ii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program - Education Paraprofessional (CIP Code: 13.1501 / OHE# 019243), specifically modification of program name, courses, and total program credits - leading to a Certificate at Northwestern Connecticut Community College.

Academic Programs - Suspension

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the suspension of a program in Speech and Language Pathology Studies (CIP Code: 51.0816 / OHE # 016819) leading to a Certificate at Charter Oak State College until no later than Spring 2024.

Academic Programs - State University Centers and Institutes

Continuation of a Center/Institute

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve continuation of a center, the Center for Communication Disorders, at Southern Connecticut State University, until September 30, 2029.

- ii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve continuation of a center, including a name change from Center for Sustainable Energy Studies to Center for Sustainability Studies, and revision of mission, at Eastern Connecticut State University, until September 30, 2029.
- iii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve continuation of an institute, including a name change from Institute for Sustainable Energy to Institute for Sustainability, and revision of mission, at Eastern Connecticut State University, until September 30, 2029, with an interim report to be submitted to the Academic & Student Affairs Committee of the BOR no later than December 2025.

ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE - Committee Chair Bloom

No report.

AUDIT COMMITTEE - Committee Chair Wright

No report.

FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE - Committee Chair Balducci

Committee Chair Balducci reported that the Finance and Infrastructure Committee met on October 12, 2022. The meeting included one action item and no information items.

The first action item was the approval of tuition and fees for the State Universities for the next academic year. This action is being taken now to support enrollment efforts at the universities by giving them the ability to make final financial aid packages earlier in the year than before. The Committee will consider tuition and fee increases for CT State Community College in December. The recommendation from the Universities which was approved by the Committee will increase the costs of tuition and mandatory fees by an average of \$367 per year (3%), up to \$12,847. Average housing and meal costs are recommended to rise by \$461 per year (exact amount determined by the individual university), bringing the cost for tuition, fees, room, and board to an average of \$27,385.

The 3% increase will raise about \$13.4 million, only a small portion of the \$56 million deficit for the universities. If the System wanted to close the deficit by raising tuition and fees alone, we would have to raise tuition by \$2,000 or 16%.

VP Barnes provided additional details about the resolution:

- The figures reflect the averages for the universities. Tuition is the same at all four universities. Fees vary by institution, according to existing contracts and market conditions.
- The reason for approving university tuition sooner is to assist in student recruitment efforts. Not having final tuition and fee approvals until the spring prevents the universities from making final financial aid awards to students and makes the university less able to compete with institutions that are able to make unconditional offers to prospective students. It was determined that the certainty of enrollment exceeded the uncertainty of state funding.
- A tuition comparison chart was shared (Attachment D).
- He noted that he did not believe that the increase in tuition would have a material effect on enrollment.

Discussion ensued:

- Regent Porth asked how this FY23-24 increase lines up with the increase approved for FY22-23. CFO Barnes shared that a 4% increase in tuition went into effect this semester (higher than the increase proposed in this resolution). The FY22-23 increase also included a provision to allow a university (at their discretion) to extend the lower NEBHE regional rate to out-of-state students.
- Regent Porth asked whether research had been done to determine what this increase will do to the level of debt a student carries and what the average debt load is at the CSUs. VP Barnes noted that the research done so far indicates that the amount of debt taken on by students is highly variable based on the circumstances of the student and their families. The varying approaches to packaging financial aid at each university affects the debt. VP Barnes will investigate any available national studies and data sources. It is his understanding that students at regional public systems carry less debt than at private universities.
- Regent Porth asked how state support for CSCU has changed. What percentage of the total cost of our System comes from the state? How has it changed over the last 10 years? VP Barnes indicated that the amount of state aid that comes onto the System ranges from 30 - 40%. It has fluctuated within that range over the past years, largely as a reflection of the condition of the state budget. However, the amount of funding for activities other than funding of fringe benefits has been flat or declining.
- Professor Blitz commented that a 3% increase immediately following a 4% increase may dissuade some students from registering, continuing, or completing their education. He asked if we could freeze tuition for seniors to encourage them to complete their degrees; this would allow them to plan for educational costs.
- Regent Howery suggested that we continue to encourage the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) as an alternative to very expensive textbooks. Students are impacted by these costs as directly as an increase in tuition.
- Regent Bloom asked what percentage of tuition and fees is covered by PELL grants. He assumed that some of today's proposed increase will also be covered by PELL. Regent Balducci indicated that PELL affects community college students more than university students. VP Barnes did not have that information for the universities but will follow-up shortly.

Regent Balducci presented the resolution as a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Regent Howery. The resolution passed with 8 "yes" votes and 1 "no" vote (Porth).

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE - Committee Chair Howery

No report.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - Chair Ryan

No report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 12:19 p.m. on a motion by Regent Wright, seconded by Regent Bloom, the Board voted to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, as well as security matters. Chair Ryan announced that no votes would be taken in Executive Session and that the meeting will be immediately adjourned following Executive Session. Chair Ryan directed President Cheng, Dr. Pritchard, VP Ben Barnes, CIO Jim Vasquez, Ernestine Weaver, and Provost Kathuria to remain with the Board in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

Submitted,

Alice Pritchard
Secretary of the CT Board of Regents for Higher Education

Board of Regents Meeting

October 20, 2022

Attachments

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Attachment A | Institutional Update – Northwestern CT Community College |
| Attachment B | Institutional Update – Chart Oak State College |
| Attachment C | Public Comment |
| Attachment D | Tuition Comparison |

Attachment A

CT STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Northwestern CT Community College

CT Board of Regents Presentation





Facts about NWCC

- ▶ Ranked as 11th best Community College in the US (out of 677 US Community Colleges) by Wallethub
 - ▶ CT Community Colleges were collectively ranked as the BEST community college System in the US in 2022
- ▶ Enroll 1,150 students in credit courses
- ▶ Fall 2022 - 445 FT Credit Students; 704 PT Credit Students

Offers comprehensive mix of Liberal Arts, Transfer & Workforce Programs

- ▶ Program Highlights
 - ▶ The only Accelerated Nursing program
 - ▶ The only Interpreter Preparation for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing in CT
 - ▶ The first Associate Degree in Veterinary Technology
 - ▶ The first Associate Degree in Data Science
 - ▶ Manufacturing program with our local technical high school



CCRC Partnership



► Ask, Connect, Inspire, Plan

- Columbia University, Teachers' College, Community College Research Center
- We participated in a Summer 2021 Institute for Rural Community Colleges to assist with Guided Pathways implementation
- We used their expertise to integrate how faculty and GP advisors work collaboratively

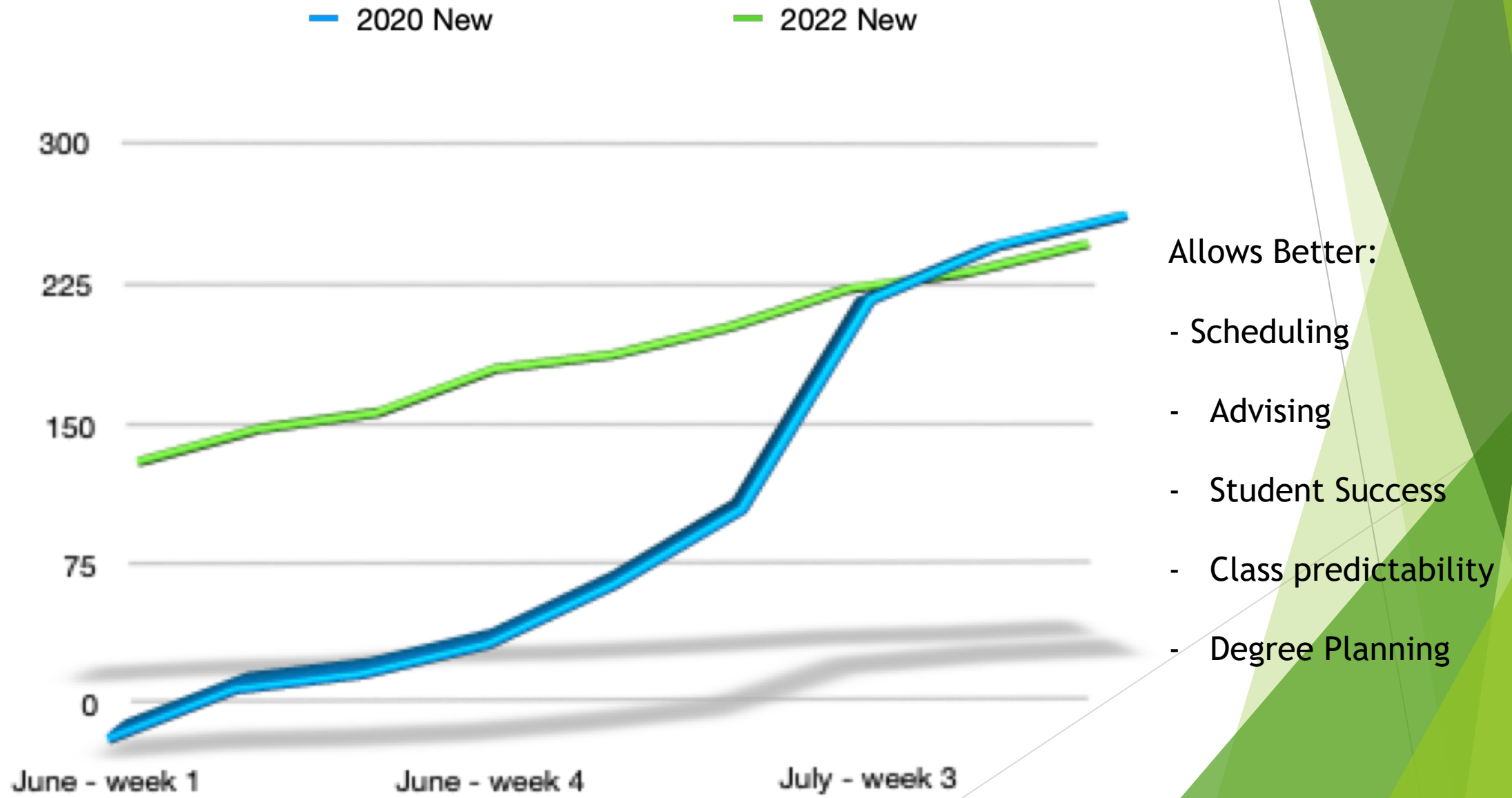
Student Success



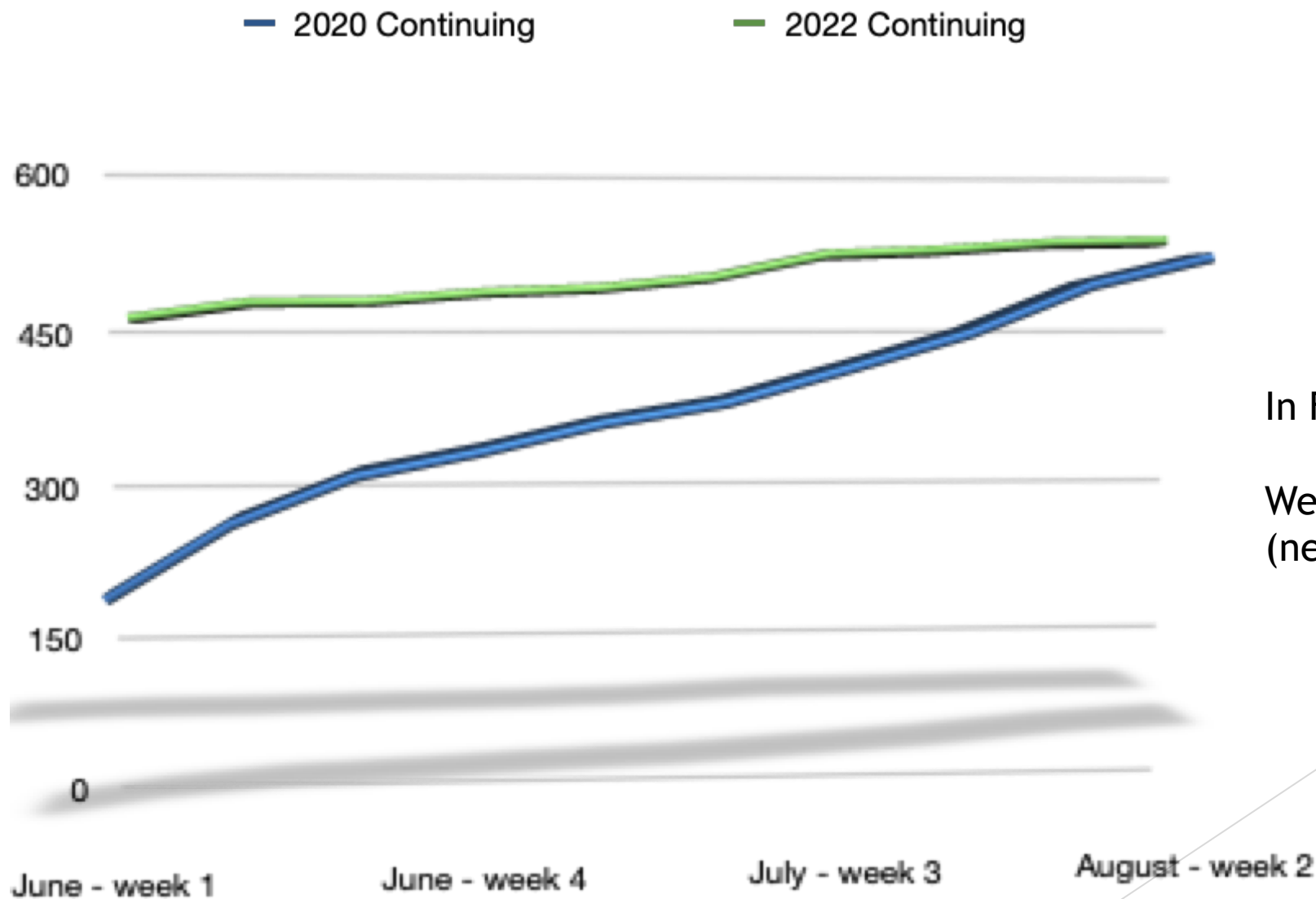
- ▶ **Guided Pathways Advising**

- ▶ In 2021 we were one of the first cohort of colleges to begin implementing GP Advising
- ▶ Fall 2022 was our first Fall Start fully staffed
- ▶ Two consecutive semesters of positive enrollment gains coming out of the pandemic
 - ▶ (+5.8% FTE Spring 2022) & (+1.6% FTE Fall 2022)
- ▶ Fall-to-Fall Student Retention Rate has increased for both full-time and part-time students
- ▶ When fully integrated with Faculty Advising and supported across the entire college

Change in NEW Student Enrollment Trend



Change in Continuing Student Enrollment Trend



In Fall 2022

We cancelled ZERO class sections
(net positive add of sections)

Benefits of holistic Guided Pathways advising

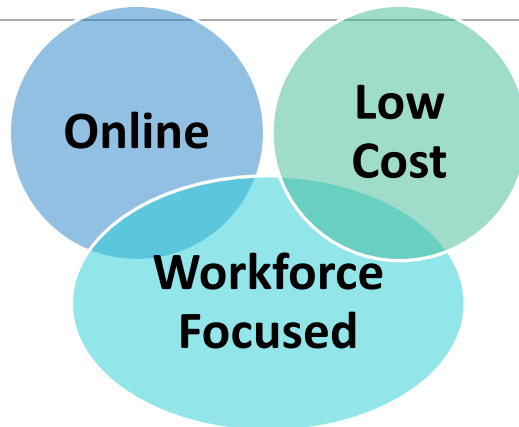
- ▶ 2021 to 2022 Fall to Fall retention rates (among first time, degree seeking students)
- ▶ @NWCC
 - ▶ Increased from 55% to 61% for fulltime students (+6%)
 - ▶ From 28% to 45% for part-time students (+17%)
- ▶ All Community Colleges
 - ▶ FT Increased 4%
 - ▶ PT Increased 6%
- ▶ 10% Equity gap between Black and White students
- ▶ Clearly, we still have important Equity work to do

| FT Fall-to-Fall Retention | Fall 2021 | Fall 2022 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| All Community Colleges | 57% | 61% |
| Latinx | 55% | 59% |
| Black/Afr. Am | 53% | 53% |
| White | 58% | 63% |

CharterOak

STATE COLLEGE

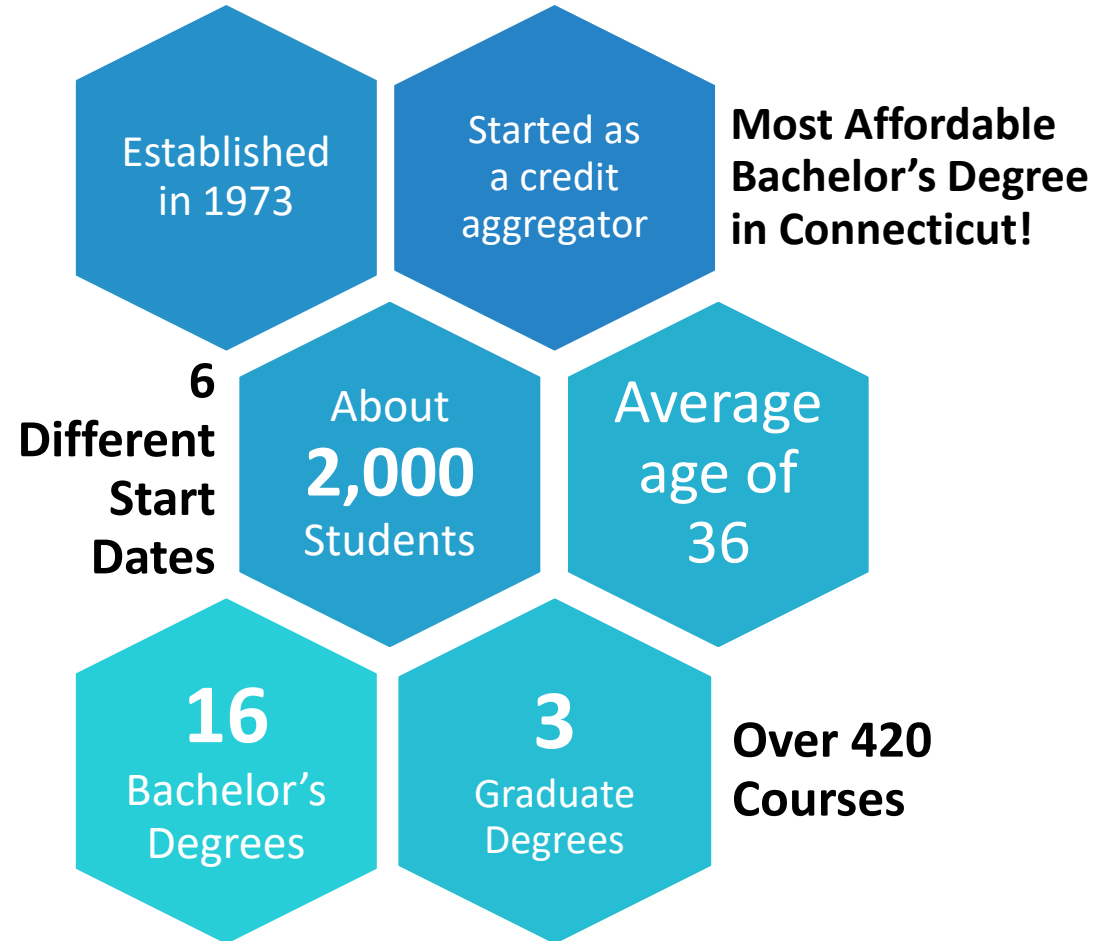
A Higher Degree of **Online** Learning



ED KLONOSKI
PRESIDENT

DR. DAVID FERREIRA
PROVOST

About Charter Oak



Ensuring Affordability



Held Tuition Rates
Flat 3 Straight Years!



Community College
Tuition Match



OWS Grant – Earn
While You Learn!



Expand OER and
#NoLo Textbooks

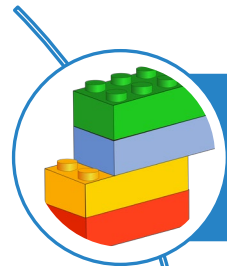


Exploring Debt-Free
Bachelor's Degree



Increase
Scholarships

Building the Workforce Pipeline



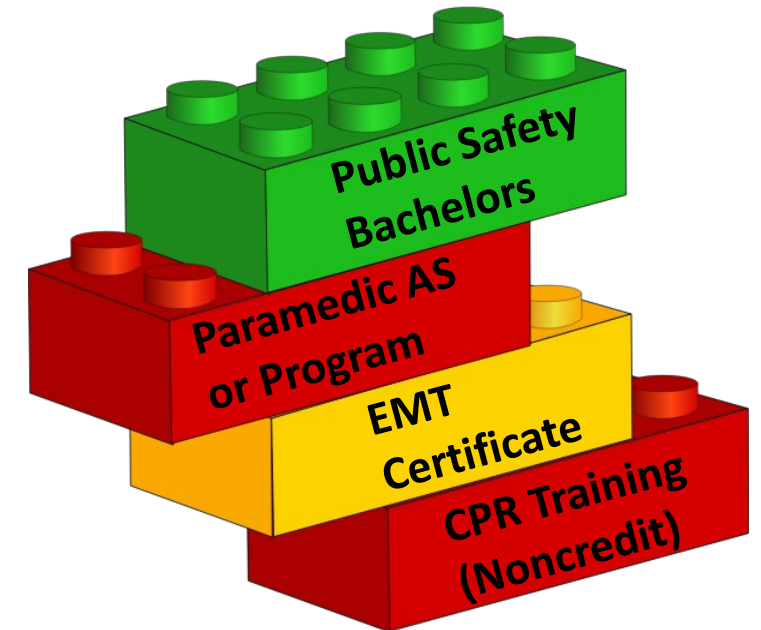
Stackable Credentials



Degrees Designed by Industry



On Ramps and Off Ramps



Closing Equity Gaps in the Classroom



Re/train Our Faculty



Redesign Our Gateway Courses



Challenges/Threats



Questions?



*Thank
You*

“Better is possible. It does not take genius. It takes diligence. It takes moral clarity. It takes ingenuity. And above all, it takes a willingness to try.”

-Atul Gawande

From: [Cheng, Terrence](#)
To: [Pritchard, Alice M](#); [Heleen, Pamela](#)
Subject: Fwd: Board Testimony: The Facts
Date: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 8:07:55 AM

Can you circulate to the BOR? President Nunez sent this to her faculty. I think it's important for the board to know that President Nunez is not letting these inaccuracies stand. Thank you, tc

—
Terrence Cheng
(he/him/his)
President
Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
61 Woodland Street
Hartford, CT 06105
office: 860-723-0011
www.ct.edu

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Núñez,Elsa M.(President's Office)" <nunez@easternct.edu>
Date: September 27, 2022 at 7:34:35 AM EDT
Subject: Board Testimony: The Facts

Dear Colleague,

I would like to begin by thanking Dr. Brendan Cunningham for his advocacy for increased funding of public higher education in his remarks to the Board of Regents last Thursday. His comments were generally constructive and respectfully delivered, showing that we can work together at all levels to address the serious challenges we face. However, there were some significant inaccuracies in Dr. Cunningham's formal remarks to the Board that were not based on the data.

First, he stated that "For 37 years we offered programmatic support in mathematics during the first year of college to high school graduates who are first-generation college students, from lower-income families or from underrepresented backgrounds. That support is gone." This statement is not accurate. Math continues to be required for all of our students. The course was moved from the summer to the academic year. Further, first generation and underrepresented students, in fact all students, continue to receive excellent support from our Mathematical Science Department, particularly from Professor Kim Ward, and our Math Achievement Center. This change that has been made is solely in the courses offered during the STEP/CAP program, replacing Mathematics with other courses. This decision was made to ensure the STEP/CAP

students had a full fifteen week semester to work with their excellent professors, rather than condensing it into a six week summer program. To the contrary of Dr. Cunningham's claim, we have significantly increased our support for the STEP/CAP students with the creation of the Office of Opportunity Programs in the ASC. This Office was moved into the ASC in the summer of 2021. As a result, STEP/CAP retention rose from 67% in fall 2021 (and 67% in fall 2019 – pre-COVID) to an impressive 89% this fall.

Dr. Cunningham also stated that “Students in the fields of finance, art history, and printmaking can not study with permanent faculty. Those fields are 100% adjunct taught.” This is also not true. Every major at Eastern has full-time faculty. The Art and Art History department has always had full-time faculty. They also have a full-time Art Historian, and she is tenured. It is true that we do not have a full-time faculty member in printmaking, but printmaking is not a major, minor, or even a concentration. Finance is a major that does not have any tenure-track faculty at this time because the sole Finance Professor we had retired last summer. A one-year professor was hired for this year, so it is not “100% adjunct taught.” The Finance major is undergoing its academic program review this year. As a result of that process, the major will likely be redesigned and tenure-track faculty will be hired. Again, there are no majors at Eastern where courses are covered solely by adjuncts.

Again, I would like to thank Dr. Cunningham for some of his remarks at the BOR meeting and for his clear commitment to our students. I certainly share his desire to seek more funding from the state. However, I believe it is important that everyone speaks with the actual facts and are always presenting accurate data. Elsa



19 October, 2022

To the Board of Regents of Connecticut:

As we look to the future about what WCSU and our sister institutions will be once our leadership has implemented a sustainable plan for financial solvency, I have been reflecting with my students on the challenges we face. This is a good moment for an applied anthropologist like myself to closely observe a particular community (Social Sciences students), gathering observations about what they know to be true in their experience of the world. Such observations can help us develop new insights to guide decisions that will impact this community and those who will come after them. Last week, students in our department were considering the question "What is the value of this program (either Anthropology/Sociology, Economics, Political Science, or Social Sciences, depending on their major) to you?" They have asked me to share their responses to this question with you; see below.

Sincerely,

Prof. Hegel-Cantarella
Professor of Anthropology
Associate Chair, Department of Social Sciences
hegelcantarellac@wcsu.edu

Female

20

Junior

Anthropology

What is the value (for you) of an Anthropology degree?

The value of an anthropology degree is almost unmatched when looking into any social situation. Without a background in social sciences, one's education would not be complete. Personally, I am extremely interested in asking questions. Depending on who you ask, the answers will vary, leaving you with multiple answers to interpret and understand. It is wonderful to invest time into the study of life and culture in the world, and without it, the world will continue to fall into disrepair. The anthropology department has given me a deeper understanding of why people interact in certain ways, why they need to interact and how their culture and upbringing affects these things. Without a basic understanding of people and how they work, any degree would be useless.

Female

39

Political Science

Sophomore

The value I find in pursuing this degree, as a single mother + sole parent to three daughters is the opportunity to be a voice, for them + for myself.

I have spent a lifetime being silenced by people who are smarter, better educated + believe they know better.

Institutionally, I have had my needs dismissed as a young student, I have experienced harassment at the hands of teachers + later as a mother, blame ~~at~~ ...

~~as in~~ as in fingers pointed at me when I asked for help from an unhealthy marriage. I am no longer accepting responsibility, nor am I willing to accept that there are detrimental systemic flaws in essential systems that directly affect myself + my family. There is nothing that

~~better~~ I cannot do my best to change. I can do better. This college can do better + so can the State + the country.

When my 3 young daughters became familiar w/ "Arab em by the pussy" my heart caught fire, + before that when the ~~the~~ town next to my home lost 26 children, my daughters age, my

What is the value of this program for you?

belly caught fire.

And when I began to fear that my young Ethiopian brother would be shot & killed by a police officer because his communication & mannerisms are affected by autism I could not return to my dead end job as a para-educator, feeling the system of educational trauma.

In those ways, the value of this program for me, is a way to follow the fires within me ~~until they~~ in order to contribute to meaningful change

Gender Age Major Year ethnicity/race
Female, 20, Anthropology / Sociology, Sophomore, White Brazilian

^{1. for you,}
What is the value of getting this degree?

I find that the value of getting this degree is to nurture my curiosities of the way the world around me works culturally and socially and learn the best way to take notes of these observations. To be in this major, to me, is to answer questions that we, many times unknowingly, base our lives off of. In getting this degree, I believe I will be a better writer, thinker, observer, and one of the most important things for me: more cultured and understanding of the world and its people. It is a pillar of many of my interests involving multicultural studies, language, social justice, and more. This degree ~~is~~ incorporates a wide range of skills that would enable me to work efficiently in several fields. It is why I switched from the apartment I began in; the road with this degree feels like it can better encapsulate the possible career interests I have, that in other degrees, would suffer at the hands of my indecisiveness. There is a place here for writing, journalism, foreign language, international relations, the arts, music, all without having to dramatically narrow my intentions for the future. It makes room for the dreamers and makes up a foundation for so much more: to recognize ~~and~~ patterns and make connections in so many more fields of life.

Male

22

2nd Semester Junior

Political Science

The value for me of getting a Poli-Sci degree would be that it shows I chose to study, learn, and to participate in the inner workings of the state, and country. This major has also taught me how to conduct research and just how important politics is.

Male
21 Yo
Economics
Junior

The value of getting an economics degree gives very important life skills. We have to be able to look at different types of data and analyze it. It has us look at real world issues and guide us to make decisions about these problems. Economics requires a great deal of critical thinking and analysis, which is important because ~~the~~ with this degree teaching us the valuable skills, we will have a sense on how to tackle the real world. This degree also gives us foundation of business, without a business degree. It has us look at decision making, and how we can make the best decisions, and avoid unintended consequences.

Female

23

Anthropology / Sociology

Senior

White

- What is the value for you of getting this degree?

Personally, previous to becoming an anthropology major, I genuinely hated school. I struggled all through middle/high school and even when first getting to college. I transferred to WCSU from a state school in New York. WCSU did not have the best reputation at my high school, as people saw it as a community college / wasn't prestigious enough / etc. I had only planned on attending one quick semester at WCSU before transferring again. In my first semester here, I took intro to sociology with Dr. Tel Rav. It was the first time in my whole entire life that I was excited to attend class. Excited to do homework - who would have ever thought. I continued on enrolling in classes at WCSU within the ANT/SOC department. Each next course more interesting and important than the last. I spend most of my commutes thinking about possible social research studies. I constantly see it in the World around me, because it is ALWAYS relevant. The Anthropology/Sociology department at WCSU awakened a student within me that I would have ever even known existed.

21 year old - female - Political Science major - senior

Q: What is the value for myself for obtaining a political science degree

A. Political science for me has been a guidance in the sense of my beliefs and values. I have always wanted to follow the path of advocacy but doing it in a way that has value which is where the qualitative and quantitative aspects play a role. Being immersed in a program where people have different views on different aspects allowed me to become more open minded when learning or hearing others talk. Throughout the classes I have taken, none of the professors have been ^{as} passionate as the political science professor.

ethnicity / race: hispanic / latina

Male, Asian American, Filipino

20

Social Science

Sophomore

1. What is the value of getting this degree?
2.
 - To get a well-steady earning job after
 - Becoming more knowledgeable and aware of all variety forces. Meaning instead of focusing upon one state of mind; you can consider and factor all PDV's. Learning issues that seemed harmless
 - Unlike thinking upon philosophy which basis is to logical behavior as social science is more empirical research; this program may fuse the two to discover the finalized "whole". We all may think and believe but then can prove amongst opinion and experiment.
 - The chance to understand yourself and comprehend with others

M

23

Political Science

Jr.

Hispanic/White (Brazil)

The overall value behind a P.S. degree is often an idea that gets undermined. Every interaction on this rock involves two parties, trade, politics, gender, government (kind) and we study the process of interaction between one party/group with another. We have been conditioned to look at things with perspective, gathering as much knowledge as we need to properly assess both parties views, motives, backings, and how interaction will play out. We are conditioned to question everything and speak out about what is right or wrong through opinion, expression, and debate.

In all honesty, It is almost guaranteed that the prior skills listed can be used to only further improve the political/social world in which we live in for the better.

Race: Hispanic

Gender: female Age: 19 Major: Political Science Level: Sophomore

What is the value that this program will hold?

What is the value of this program to you?

The value of this program to me is that it allows me to be an expert on things such as critical reading/writing, politics, and to which demonstrates to employers how useful and well rounded I can be within the work place. Also, this program teaches me things that I didn't know before like things in regard to politics and history. Also, it teaches you things that not only happened in history, but what's happening now in this day in age.

Overall, this program is something that is truly valuable to not only me but to others, because it prepares us of what's to come within the future.

Male

22

Economics

In between Junior and Senior

White

What is the Value (for you) of getting an Economics Degree.

For me, the Value of getting an economics degree is immense.

To me, Economics is the cumulation of Business Majors and Social Science majors into a useable and profitable skill set. The combination of Business and the Social Sciences provides a very useful skillset that just Business majors or just Social Science majors don't necessarily get. As an Economics major I have the ability to analyze, predict, and apply my business knowledge and social knowledge as a "Swiss-Army" knife. Economics is the ~~base~~ ~~foundation~~ foundation of business. Without knowledge of the Economy and its workings, how can we analyze business as a whole? ~~That's like~~ Personally, I also love

the maritime shipping and process industry, an Economic foundation of the world. Without my knowledge of Economics, the maritime shipping industry can be summed up as boats moving from A to B. Economics is practical and applicable. Cutting this program would be a shame.

18, female, South Asian

Political Science

Sophomore

I chose political science because I wanted to study how our world works through the lens of politics. I value the critical reading, writing, & analytical skills I've gained so far by participating in my courses. I value how this major can be used in many ways, but specifically I value how the skills are transferable to any career. As someone who plans on studying corporate law in law school, I will be glad I have a political science background as politics & law go hand in hand. Political science allows me to gain a proper understanding of our political & policy sphere, which will let me properly contribute to society through law. It is one of the most versatile degrees, and in a society where everything is constantly changing, versatility is crucial.

Age : 20 Gender : M Major : Political Science
Level : Junior Race : Black / African-American

What is your personal value of obtaining a Political Science degree?

Humanitarianism is my value I have come

Humanitarianism is my value in pursuing my Polisci degree; improving the welfare of those disadvantaged and making our world a better place for my family & friends.

I value human connection, the understanding of one another strengthens society.

Gender: Female Age: 21 Major: Political Science Year: Junior Race: White/Hispanic

The value of a Political Science degree is the ability to understand world events as they happen in live action. While current events are occurring a Political Scientist can look at what's happening and be able to understand why or how these events are taking place. To be able to look at simple world events and understand on a level beyond just personal thought is extremely important especially in times where the world is divided on major social aspects. To understand dividing ideas is a great start to unify and understand communities both on a small and large scale basis. This program allows those within insight and knowledge on world issues they will encounter within the work force and within society.

Ethnicity: Caucasian/white

Gender: Non-binary

Major: Political Science

Age: 21

Level: Junior

What life skills have you gained through your major?

What is the value of this program for you?

- The value of this program for me comes from a myriad of ways. Through many courses I have gained a greater skill level of debating, viewing the opposing side/arg, and finding useful information to my args/knowledge. On top of this, I have achieved an understanding of many dif types of gov't, especially America's. This is incredibly valuable in making a difference in this country. I want to spark change, thus the lessons I've learned from this program are invaluable to me. Not only have I learned many new things, PoliSci has taught me to be more understanding. I can appreciate a different POV, even if I do not agree. Political Science has given me a better understanding of the world around me.

Female, Age 20, Major: Political Sci/History,
Junior, White

I think the Social Sciences are extremely undervalued by both society + even higher education institutions. I don't think that my program is only valuable if it is profitable (or at least profitable by others standards). The social sciences teach you not what to think, but how to think. They teach you how to critically think + interpret the world around you ~~and~~ + to do so through ^{the} consideration of so many different dimensions + facets. I truly think that a person can only be truly educated if they have a strong foundation in + understanding of the social sciences. They intersect with every single field because no field is unaffected by humans + social behavior. You need to be able to recognize those connections + the social sciences give you the tools to do so. Take my field of political science for example, it's interdisciplinary in itself but it also can be used to understand other fields. One might look at how ideologies

Psychologically affected those who
stormed the U.S. Capitol on January
6th.

→ Male . 22 years . Political Science, Senior.
- white hispanic.

→ Since the first American Government class my mind was open to challenging the status quo that, in this imperfect world was created by learning how to learn, to ask the right questions, to pursue your passions by understanding that peoples action have consequences over less fortunate people. the value is understanding the basic skills that you need to live, succeed and affect positively the society that we live in.

Female

Social Science

Sophomore

White

The Value of this degree
is very important to me.

I want to learn more
about the learning of
others in hopes to work
on social problems that exist
in our society. We have a
huge racial inequality that
has been going since our
country started and it's time
to work on that. These courses
give me the essential skills
to be able to speak out on
issues like this! We
have professors who are devote
time and energy into a
field they love. They are
so passionate in their teacher
and that's a value to me.
Getting taught by professors
who love the subject is
priceless! They don't teach
to not share the joy of learning.
the social science. Out of my
time at WSCU I have gotten
more for this department than
anything else. These are classes
I look forward and eager to
go!

Female
24

Black/African American

Social science (family studies) / psychology
Junior - Undergraduate

What is your value of pursuing this program for you?

Coming into this program, I was a little hesitant but since starting it I have had great professors & advisors helping me. I feel like being in this program can bring a lot of skills that I can bring & is connected to the outside world.

One of the skills being able to develop my researching skills. I know this is a skill that will be beneficial for ^{me} within my career, as a speech-language pathologist. To be able to collect data, and knowing how to identify what kind of data based on the project/research.

It is beneficial
for one to develop
skills you
need to
succeed
personally,
career wise

I also chose to minor in psychology, this is a program I felt would help me to connect to the people around me. It will help me to understand, "why" do people do the things they do" and why they act the way they do. It will help me have a better interpersonal skill

Female, 22, ANT/Soc, Senior, White

When I first began my college career, social sciences was never an option in my mind. At a liberal arts college, I was never introduced fully into the social sciences, ironic isn't it? A liberal arts college with little to no focus on social sciences. It was not until it was finally time to declare my major that a admissions counselor gave me the option of social sciences - almost 3 years into my college career. That is when I realized - the anthropology and sociology classes that I had taken were the only classes that I truly enjoyed and understood. I had spent years feeling lost, wondering if college was really for me, when it was clearly answered right in front of me. This program is valuable to me because it makes me feel seen, heard and understood. This program makes me value my education and reassures me that I am getting a meaningful education because it is something that I am truly passionate about. Without social sciences, we would not be able to see the world from other points of view. Without liberal arts we would not be able to express our individuality. Social sciences gives us the tools to recognize issues, and connections in our world and how we can address them and solve problems.

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter with heartfelt gratitude for the privilege of being the student of Doctors Hegel-Cantarella, Misra, Schofield, and Williams, a quartet of profoundly talented professors. I am a political science major at WCSU and a single parent, devoted to my children and our education. I arrived at this institution, in this department, at this point in my life to prepare for a career through which I can contribute to meaningful societal change, for myself, my daughters, and those who do not have the privilege to access similar opportunities. I rescind both the responsibility and the consequences of the mismanagement of this institution for myself, the student body, and the faculty and adjunct staff within the social science department; it is not ours to bear.

The students and faculty of WCSU deserve security at this facility. We will not take the rap for mismanagement nor accept being dismissed in lieu of funding that more than makes up the deficit incurred under the former Dean, whom this institution has awarded with a promotion, despite his resignation. Respectfully, I ask you, the Board of Regents, to stand with us, to be our allies. Please support our assertion that the \$29 million of incoming funding for 2023 will sufficiently allow for the continuance of all majors within the social science department, as well as all other needs within the institution.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bassett

Testimony at the BOR meeting on Thursday, October 20, 2022

My name is Rotua Lumbantobing, and I am the president of the faculty union at Western Connecticut State University.

I come before you today, **yet again**, to express the frustration and distress that my colleagues and our students are experiencing as a result of your actions.

Last March, our Dean of Arts and Sciences, Michelle Brown, produced a document that recommended eliminating Sociology, Anthropology, and Economics from Western's curriculum.

We learned about this for the first time less than two weeks ago.

Michelle knows better, and her lack of courage in producing and then hiding this report is a true disappointment.

The real problem, however, goes much higher up.

Western's Provost and Chief Academic Officer, Missy Alexander, has gone even further than Michelle. Missy recommends that, along with eliminating Sociology, Anthropology, and Economics, our Political Science major be "parked".

Given Missy's track record, we can only assume that "parked" means a stay of execution before she tries to eliminate that option for our students as well.

Missy Alexander has already attempted to eliminate Physics, Astronomy, and Meteorology from Western's curriculum. She openly and shamelessly supports gutting this university. Apparently, Western's students do not deserve the same educational opportunities as their counterparts at other institutions.

Needless to say, our new president and hatchet man, Paul Beran, similarly recommends that Western reduce the options available to its students. Meanwhile, this Board continues to raise the cost of their increasingly watered-down education.

It is no secret that CSCU has been grossly mismanaged for years, that it faces multiple charges of discrimination across the system, and that it has squandered countless taxpayer dollars in legal expenses because of its poor hiring decisions in management.

At Western, this Board currently has not one but **two** presidents on the state payroll, as it seeks to diminish the educational opportunities for our largely Black, brown, non-traditional, and other underprivileged students.

I have no doubt that Paul, Missy, Michelle, and other managerial underlings will continue to dismantle Western until it becomes a diploma mill for our state's most vulnerable students.

Testimony at the BOR meeting on Thursday, October 20, 2022

And you should have no doubt that I and my colleagues will continue to resist. We and our students deserve **much** better, and we will continue to fight together to save our university.

Thank you.

Good morning, President Cheng and The Trustees of the Board of Regents:

I am Karen McLean, and I serve as the Department Chair and Associate Professor of Social Work at Western CT State University. I have been employed at WCSU for 7 years. Our department offers a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work degree. One of the pleasures of working at WCSU is assisting students with courses and career trajectories and empowering them to serve local, national, and international communities.

While the social work program is a rigorous one, that includes four hundred hours of field instruction in the community, students still desire and find the time to seek out minors as a mechanism to supplement their social work education. Our students often look at what I refer to as our profession's "anchors," which include the disciplines of Sociology and Anthropology. Our students find pleasure in minoring in courses offered in those disciplines, many of which explore issues that are critical in informing students on current sociopolitical trends that go beyond just what they read in the news. Courses like White Nationalism (SOC 498) and Undocumented Migration (ANT 410 – also cross-listed with SOC) provide an opportunity for critical reflection, reading, interactive learning, and participation, which prepares emerging social workers to collaborate with clients who are navigating these concerns. Not having these majors and minors available at WCSU creates a gap of critical learning and opportunity for students who seek to enhance their learning on societal concerns and denies students the opportunity to experience a rich liberal arts curriculum.

I understand that there is research that suggests that today's college students are more career-oriented in their choices of college majors and that universities must respond to these demands to address fiscal concerns. I also understand that several social sciences majors and minors at WCSU have low completion rates that have trended downward and need to be addressed. So, if we are solely following trends and numbers, it suggests that liberal arts should take a "back seat" for STEAM-related majors and more technological disciplines. So then does WCSU become an overpriced "trade school"? Or does the BOR continue to support the continuation of these majors and provide support and collaborate with the Social Sciences Department to enhance courses that will attract student enrollment? We should not abandon the liberal arts foundation that is still important in our education system. Students still need to understand the realities of the human experience, how we are connected, interwoven, as well as the things that make us unique. Please maintain the Social Sciences majors so that WCSU continues to provide a rich, liberal arts foundation for its students.

I ask that the BOR and the leadership of WCSU continue to support the Social Sciences Department and allow the identified majors to continue and support their further development and enhancement.

Thank you.

Karen McLean, PhD, LMSW

Dear Senate and Board of Regents,

My name is Omayra Vasquez. I am a senior in the Social Work Degree program, the president of the Social Work Club and Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society at Western Connecticut State University. Although I live an hour from the campus, I chose WCSU as my undergraduate institution because of the Social Work Department. In the past week I was made aware that certain social sciences majors were being closed moving forward. As a social work student and future social worker, I am saddened to hear this news.

Social sciences are the backbone of how we analyze our behavior as well as other's behaviors and teach us how to get a better understanding on creating inclusive societies and institutions. To continue to be effective, and practice diversity, equality, and inclusion, we need social science majors to go out in the world with the training and education needed to help create a manageable and structured society. Social Sciences were created to make us better people, more understanding of others and teach us how to solve problems for ourselves as well as societal issues.

Social science majors like Economics, Political Science, and Sociology teach us problem solving, becoming effective citizens, how to sustain the economy and help it thrive, reduce unemployment, and why and how we should vote. These are the core learning experiences needed to have influence and not follow the same path as our previous and present leaders. Without social sciences, we would go back to living and behaving like barbarians. If we look back at our history, without social sciences we would never have reached the level of humanity that we have reached today.

As a social work student and a student leader on campus, learning how to coexist with others has been a vital part of my success here. That is what social sciences does for people. It teaches them how to coexist with others so that we can create a better future for the next generation. On behalf of the Social Work Club and the Social Sciences students at WCSU we asked that you revisit your decision to close multiple majors that are the key to a better society. Instead of closing these vital majors, I proposed more marketing and promotion of these majors in High Schools and Community Colleges. Thank you for your time and I hope you will reconsider this decision.

Sincerely,

Omayra Vasquez

Good afternoon to everyone on this Board, to my fellow students who are testifying and our professors. My Name is Andres Rico I am a Senior in the political science department at western Connecticut state university. Since October 7 when the Dean of our school and the provost of the university announced their proposal to kill the social science department from our university, our education has been disruptive, concerning and infuriating. This proposal entails that the sociology, anthropology, social science and economics and political science are going to be eliminated. I stand by the professors and the students at our university who have dedicated a portion of their lives to the study of social sciences and liberal arts. I understand the economic crisis that our universities and perhaps every public university in the country is going through. However, the massive negligence that our former president as well as the atrocious management of our current provost have mismanaged and embezzled the funding for our university. For the past ten years, there has not been any level of transparency or accountability by the university. This board that is supposed to oversee major decisions taken by the administration are directly affecting students. This proposal has become a direct attack to entire department of social sciences which is a crucial subject to the development of a college educated professional. State colleges have the responsibility to provide the highest quality of education at a affordable price for the community, and wester Connecticut state won't be delivering on its mission without a strong social science department. A Higher education should be a public good not a commodity sold to the highest bidder. Public universities have the responsibility to serve the most vulnerable population, first generation college students, Black, Brown, and Latino communities. I ask this board to take action and get involved in these proposals which will affect my education and of my fellow students. I ask this Board for transparency and to hold people accountable for their actions or their negligence. Thank you!

Statement to the CSCU Board of Regents – 10/20/22

Seth Freeman
President, 4Cs SEIU 1973
Professor, Capital Community College



No Layoff/No Tuition Rally – February 2022

Board of Regents Members,

I address you today on behalf of faculty and staff of our twelve community colleges. This month we challenge this Board to reconsider your harmful and short-sighted decision to hike student tuition. We also continue our strong critique of HR Shared Services and demand this Board continues to change.

BOR Plan to Raise Tuition on CSCU Students

This month this Board is again planning on raising student tuition to do your part to worsen the student debt crisis in our state and continue to shift the burden of higher education on to the backs of CT students and families. Earlier this year, our unions, students and communities rallied against this Board to stop you from raising tuition. You ignored our voices last academic year and raised tuition anyway. Now, here we are less than a year later, and you are back at the drawing table, raising tuition again. This is sad and shameful.

When this Board increases student tuition time and time again, you are not demonstrating a commitment to equity, or even fiscal responsibility. Rather, you are demonstrating your commitment to neoliberalism. You are demonstrating your commitment to reenforcing and preserving the status quo in our state.

Neoliberalism gives lip service to liberal values, but ultimately serves corporate desires and interests. Neoliberalism reduces government services, and continually shifts the responsibility of education, health care, public safety, etc. away from the state and onto the individual. By shifting responsibility away from the state, our large corporations, wealthy, and ruling class in our state don't have to pay their fair share in taxes. By shifting the responsibility away from the state, we reenforce and deepen systemic racism. By shifting responsibility, we exacerbate the horrific racial wealth gap and the despicable income inequality in our state.

Frankly, it would be bad enough if this Board were to increase tuition after demonstrating good management and oversight of our system, but that is certainly not the case. This Board has completely mismanaged our CSCU system ever since your inception. In our community colleges, this Board has lied about the community college merger, lying that the merger would save money, and lying that the merger would increase enrollment. Faculty and staff pointed out all of these lies years ago, and we were ignored. We told this Board that hiring wasteful and bloated levels of CT State managers would not save money. The grossest example of this has always been the CT State Regional Presidents. How many millions of dollars were thrown down the toilet on those positions? How many millions are still being wasted on all the other CT State managers who do not serve one single community college student?

This Board has demonstrated fiscal mismanagement year after year and our state legislature and Governor Lamont has completely failed to hold you accountable. Now you are back to your old tricks of raising tuition and shifting the burden onto our students. This is disgusting. Our students and our state deserve so much better.

Faculty and staff across our state are proud to stand with our students, to say NO to TUITION HIKES. We will be rallying at Capital Community College Thursday at 1pm to protest this Board. We hope this Board listens this time to your students and our communities, and reverses your harmful decision to raise tuition.

Continued Embarrassing and Despicable Failures of HR Shared Services

The implementation of HR Shared Services, i.e. the defunding and destruction of functional human resources departments on our community college campuses – is an embarrassment to our colleges and has led to complete dysfunction in HR on our campuses.

In Dr. Maduko's recent visits to our community college campuses this Fall, Dr. Maduko has heard from campus after campus of the complete and utter failures of HR Shared Services. These failures include:

- Empty HR offices across our state and HR personnel that either are unable or refuse to respond to emails in a timely manner
- Dysfunction in the hiring process of faculty and staff where HR is unilaterally changing job descriptions and disregarding feedback of hiring committees
- Wasted and ridiculous investigations by HR “Investigators”
- Complete and utter failure of Payroll to pay employees and pay negotiated wage increases and lump sum payments

Since the Board of Regents has taken control over the HR functions of our community colleges, HR has been a complete disaster. Faculty and staff no longer have any human beings to address their questions to. Instead we are given email addresses to send questions to, often never hearing back, or waiting weeks to get a reply. The fact that HR calls these fragmented, siloed, and fractured divisions of HR “Centers of Excellence” is a painful irony. Somehow CSCU managers have found a way to take the “human” out of “human resources”!

Nothing has demonstrated the failure of HR Shared Services more than Payrolls complete inability to pay our PT employees the negotiated wage increases and lump sum payments owed to us. To this day, hundreds of PT faculty and staff have not been paid money owed to them since July. Faculty and staff were provided an apology by Dr. Maduko already. But our faculty and staff are owed so much more than an apology. We are owed functional HR departments.

There has been zero accountability for CSCU managers that have destroyed the HR departments in our community colleges. We need someone to step in and fix these failures and be honest for a change about the devastation that has happened to our community college HR departments.

.....

In closing, faculty and staff call on this Board to continue to change and do much better. If this Board does not partner with faculty and staff, and listen to faculty, staff, students and our communities, you will continue to mismanage our system. If this Board and President Cheng believe you can simply mislead the legislature and NECHE and fabricate your way to prosperity, you will continue to fail in your leadership.

Faculty and staff in our community colleges, as in our state universities, will not allow this Board or President Cheng to lie and mislead us anymore. Nor will we allow you to attack us or scapegoat us. When we see this Board continuing to double-down on failed policies and practices like raising tuition, and when we see you ignoring or glossing over the failures of HR Shared Services, we will continue to challenge you and demand better.

This Board needs to continue to change and evolve. When you change, and as you truly work with faculty and staff, you will find in us an eager partner to best serve our students and our state.

October 19, 2022
Letter to the Board of Regents

Dear Members of the Board,

One of my favorite things as an instructor of sociology is when a former student sends me an email telling me that they watched a television show, saw a movie or read a story in the news that reminded them of my class. I enjoy reading these emails because they indicate that I have achieved my most important objective in teaching. It is not one of the more tangible, measurable “Student Learning Outcomes” that I list on my syllabus each semester. Rather, it is that my students have truly integrated the concepts and theories that I teach in class—so much so, that they can no longer watch an episode of Law and Order, or see a story in the news about racially motivated police brutality, without thinking about such important topics as racial injustice, the roles and functions of law enforcement and the criminal justice system, or asking themselves what they think is fair and just in our society. These emails tell me that by learning sociology, they can now look at their social world with a critical eye and form educated opinions about what they have observed. Even more fulfilling is when they describe to me some of the ways that they have put these ideas into practice in their daily lives or in their career of choice.

Sociology may not be the kind of discipline that sets many students on a specific career track. Rather, it is the kind of discipline that prepares students for all careers that involve human beings, and sets them up for life in the real world. You can ask any of my students, and anyone who knows me, and they will tell you that I go to work each day excited to teach foundational courses in this discipline, and nothing makes me prouder than when a student tells me that they have learned more from one semester in my class than in any class they have taken in their major discipline or for their career track at Western Connecticut State University. I am pleased to say that I have heard this every semester since I began teaching here five years ago.

Fred Rogers, a man I see as having almost single-handedly saved public television by his testimony before congress, inspires me today, as I attempt to do my part to help save the social sciences in public education. In his 2002 commencement speech at Dartmouth University, he reiterated some of the core ideas from that testimony. He said,

I'm very much interested in choices and what it is and who it is that enable us human beings to make the choices we make all through our lives. What choices lead to ethnic cleansing? What choices lead to healing? What choices lead to the destruction of the

environment, the erosion of the Sabbath, suicide bombings, or teenagers shooting teachers? What choices encourage heroism in the midst of chaos?

I firmly believe that it is, in fact, these very choices that we consider and discuss in the social sciences and in my class at WestConn. In my classes, I encourage my students to ask the hard questions about the world around them. I motivate them to develop educated opinions, and to mobilize those opinions through social activism. I want them to know that they have a voice, and that their voices will be taken more seriously and have greater impact when it comes from a place of deep consideration and knowledge. It is, in my humble opinion, through the study of sociology that students find purpose and meaning in fighting social injustice and creating solutions for social change.

I implore you to recognize that this discipline and program of study has value that goes well beyond those quantifiable measures of headcounts in each major and minor, or dollars and cents spent. Its true value lies in its ability to educate our students about the things that matter, and the ways that they matter. Please save this program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Julie TelRav, Ph.D. and MA in Sociology, MSW in Community Organization
Adjunct Professor in Sociology
Wester Connecticut State University

From: [Martha Tepepa Covarrubias](#)
To: [Heleen, Pamela](#)
Subject: Testimony for CSU Board of Regents
Date: Wednesday, October 19, 2022 6:32:10 AM

Martha A. Tepepa Covarrubias PhD
Adjunct Professor of Anthropology
WCSU

It is well known that US universities have often offered a safe and free space for social scientists from the global south.

Students benefit from exposure to a diversity of the learning and policy experiences of instruction by social scientists able to provide firsthand presentation of conditions in a wide range of countries.

Analysis of alternative policy applications and results provides and supports academic enrichment and diversity in the wider university environment. When the range of disciplines and departments is reduced, a University is reduced to the level of a professional school and ceases to be an innovative environment for the development of the progress of knowledge.

Sent from my phone please excuse typos.

Jonathan Lafortune

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Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 202-4700
lafortune004@wcsu.edu

20 October 2022

Dear Board of Regents,

My name is Jonathan Lafortune and I am a senior pursuing a social work degree at Western State Connecticut University. After hearing that specific majors such as sociology, anthropology, economics, and political science were not going to be a part of the major list at the university I was astounded. These four majors are essential to our college students, especially sociology and anthropology. The study of human behavior and humankind is essential for our college students to explore more information about the world and ourselves. Majors such as economics and political science also play a role in our student's development of information that has immensely great rewards for careers. I think the termination of these majors is not wise because I believe there are thousands of students who will benefit from the information that each of these majors presents. Thank you and I look forward to seeing the re-establishment of these majors.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Lafortune

CSU Tuition Comparisons (includes room and board)

| | In-state | | NEBHE | Out-of-State | |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| Kutztown University | \$ | 22,908 | | \$ | 27,304 FY 23 |
| SUNY Albany | \$ | 26,066 | | \$ | 43,906 FY 23 |
| CSU Proposed | \$ | 27,385 | | \$ | 40,661 FY 24 |
| University of Maine | \$ | 27,412 | \$ 35,782 | \$ | 49,552 FY 23 |
| SUNY Binghamton | \$ | 28,062 | | \$ | 45,902 FY 23 |
| Keene State | \$ | 28,162 | | \$ | 39,071 FY 23 |
| Umass Lowell | \$ | 30,112 | \$ 42,094 | \$ | 48,480 FY 23 |
| UMass Amherst | \$ | 31,782 | | \$ | 52,948 FY 23 |
| Uconn | \$ | 33,056 | \$ 42,074 | \$ | 55,724 FY 23 |