### BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU) MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2023 CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY AND IN PERSON

LIVESTREAMED ON https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0xxED h-tU

<b>REGENTS – PARTICIPATING (Y = yes / N = no)</b>	]
JoAnn Ryan, Chair	Y
Richard J. Balducci	Y
Ira Bloom	Y
Carla Galaise, Student Regent	Y
Marty Guay	Y (virtual)
Juanita James	Y
Sophia Jappinen	Y (virtual)
James McCarthy	Y
Richard Porth	Y
Luis Sanchez, Student Regent	Y
Ari Santiago	Y (virtual)
Erin Stewart	Y (virtual)
Elease E. Wright	Y
Ted Yang	Y
*David Blitz, FAC Vice Chair	Y
*Colena Sesanker, FAC Chair	Y
*Dante Bartolomeo, Labor Commissioner	N
*Dr. Manisha Juthani, Public Health Commissioner	Ν
*Alexandra Daum, DECD Commissioner	N
*Charlene Russell-Tucker, Education Commissioner	Y (virtual)
*Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Chief Workforce Officer	Y (virtual)
*ex-officio, non-voting member	

#### CSCU STAFF:

Terrence Cheng, CSCU Chancellor

Jessica Paquette, Vice Chancellor for System Affairs & Chief of Staff

Danny Aniello, Special Asst to the Chancellor, Executive Director for System Project Management Dr. Lloyd Blanchard, CSCU Interim Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer Dr. Rai Kathuria, CSCU Provost & SVP of Academic and Student Affairs

Adam Joseph, Vice Chancellor of External Affairs

Vita Litvin, Interim General Counsel

Dr. Manohar Singh, Interim President, Western CT State University

Dr. John Maduko, President, CT State Community College

Ed Klonoski, President, Charter Oak State College

Dr. Elsa Nunez, President, Eastern Connecticut State University

Dr. Zulma Toro, President, Central CT State University

Dr. Paul Beran, Special Assistant to the Chancellor

Chris Engler, CSCU Labor Counsel

Dr. Aynsley Diamond, AVP, Academic Affairs

Dr. Kim Kostelis, CCSU Provost

Dr. Bob Prezant, SCSU Provost

Pam Heleen, Secretary of the Board of Regents (recorder)

Rachel Cunningham, Executive Assistant to the CFO

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Following roll call, a quorum was declared.

### 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Ryan called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda; on a motion by Regent Balducci, seconded by Regent McCarthy, the Agenda was unanimously adopted.

### 3. CHAIR RYAN'S REMARKS

- Chair Ryan extended her gratitude to everyone for their unwavering commitment and dedication throughout this challenging year. She noted that navigating through the complexities of financial challenges demanded not only wise decision-making but also a shared spirit of collaboration at both the institution and system office level. She added that our accomplishments during these last six months are a testament to our strength, our unity, and the cohesive team that will carry us into the future.
- The Chair wished everyone a joyful season.

### 4. CHANCELLOR CHENG'S REMARKS

Chancellor Cheng made the following remarks:

- He recognized the anniversary of the Sandy Hook tragedy.
- The Chancellor extended his thanks to each member of the CSCU community faculty, staff, and administration...and most importantly, the students. He recognized the hard year, overshadowed by the tensions related to the System-wide fiscal situation and noted that dedication and spirit have shone brightly, demonstrating that even in adversity, we find our greatest strength. He has been inspired by the diligence and commitment seen across the System; creativity, adaptability, and a focused, unwavering commitment to our mission have been instrumental in the work we have done so far in mitigating our budget deficits.
- Faculty and staff have done everything they can to protect students; yet, in some cases, the students have not been shielded completely from the impact of the budget deficits. The Chancellor recognized their efforts to hold students harmless.
- The fiscal landscape continues to present challenges as evident in the tuition and fee proposal before the Board. As previously reported, the State of Connecticut's biennium budget allocation for CSCU falls significantly short of what is necessary to maintain our existing levels of operations. The System has made remarkable strides to close the budget gap but are not quite there. A tuition and fee increase is a step the System would prefer not to take. CSCU has long prided itself on providing affordable access to higher education and are acutely aware that a 5% tuition increase that will add burden to our students' ability to pay and to balance their educational and life obligations, especially for our non-traditional students.
- Lobby efforts with state leaders will continue for funding to address the system's shortfall and to mitigate any tuition and fee increase.
- The Chancellor is looking forward to working with the support of the Board, and with faculty, staff, and the six institution Presidents. He thanked the union leaders for their fierce advocacy on behalf of the System.
- Even in these challenging times, it is important to recognize the silver linings that have emerged. State legislators continue to be absorbed and impressed by the work done on our campuses and the impact we have on students and CT communities. The Chancellor provided a small sampling of campus activities.

- On November 28, CT State Community College signed an articulation agreement with Morehouse College in Atlanta the only all-male African American college in the United States and one of the most prestigious historically black colleges in the country. Through the updated partnership, originally initiated through CT State Capital, admission is guaranteed to Morehouse's traditional and online programs for male CT State students who meet the criteria and have earned a minimum GPA of 2.7 and an associate degree through CT State. Students who transfer with an associate degree and all credits in good standing will enter Morehouse College with junior status. This partnership demonstrates the value of CT State graduates and provides a model to create clear pathways to four-year institutions for students.
- At Eastern, more than 400 Willimantic residents replaced the usual lunch crowd of Eastern students in the Hurley Hall dining room the day before Thanksgiving. Community members and patrons of local senior centers and social service organizations feasted on turkey and trimmings at Eastern's 17th annual Day of Giving. Eastern's Center for Community Engagement organized the event and arranged for 25 student volunteers to guide visitors through the cafeteria lines to the tables. It was a great opportunity to give back.
- Last month, Western Connecticut State University was named the top nursing school in Connecticut by Nurse.org. Alumni, students and health care providers participated in ranking Western's program which continues to have high NCLEX scores with 100% job placement. The honor from Nurse.org recognizes nursing schools that excel in providing exceptional education, in fostering innovation, and in preparing nurses to make a positive impact on patients' lives. Congratulations to the Western nursing faculty, staff, and students.
- In Charter Oak news, online education continues to grow at extraordinary rates. Last week, Charter Oak held 2 virtual open houses with more than 70 signing up for the Graduate Open House and almost 450 for the Undergraduate Open House. These figures are double the largest attendance for previous virtual events. And in terms of conversion, about 50% of those who sign up will attend and even more remarkable is that of the 450 who sign up for the Undergraduate Open House, almost 50% will apply.
- Central Connecticut State University's Career Development Office has inaugurated the "Central Career Closet" which offers complimentary professional "career-ready" clothing to all students. For students who have other family and financial priorities, having a place on campus to access professional clothing for career fairs, business attire to wear at work, internships, or interviews takes a huge burden off these students and their families. When students look good, they feel good which leads to more opportunities and it's essential for conveying professionalism, fostering positive first impressions, and boosting self-confidence. It is a wonderful example of supporting diverse students all the way through the educational process to the career outcome.
- From Southern Connecticut State University, in the most recent fiscal year, FY2023, the university's faculty and staff excelled in obtaining extramural funding, amassing an impressive \$11.64 million from various sources, marking the largest fiscal-year funding cohort in Southern's history. In addition to this accomplishment, Southern currently has approximately \$4 million in pending funds awaiting sponsor decisions, promising even greater prospects for the institution. Some of the grants this year were awarded to support holistic student mental health and wellbeing, to provide adapted sports programming to veterans with disabilities, to strengthen the pipeline into STEM manufacturing for students. Southern received a monumental \$3.19 million grant to enhance the recruitment, retention, persistence, and graduation rates of students underrepresented in STEM fields.
- The Chancellor closed his remarks by noting the need to carry forward this spirit of optimism and determination. He believes in the strength of the CSCU community to not only navigate our current fiscal challenges but also to emerge even stronger on the other side.

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- He thanked everyone for their continued hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment to CSCU and wished everyone a rejuvenating holiday season and a new year filled with possibilities.

### 5. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

6. <u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> – Attachment A includes written comments received prior to the beginning of this Board meeting.

STUDENTS	FACULTY/PUBLIC
Lydia Sekscenski	Seth Freeman
Student - SCSU	President – 4Cs
Gordon Plouffe, Jr.	
Student - CT State Manchester	
Sam King	
Student - CCSU	
Niya Blizzard-Ireland	
Student – CCSU	
Rosimar Quinones	
Student – CT State – Capital	
Amelia Kearney	
Student – CT State Tunxis	
Stephanie Deleon	
Student – CT State Gateway	
Elias Natal	
Student – CT State Gateway	
Hyrum Merkley	
Student – CT State Three Rivers	
Xander Tyler	
Student – CCSU	

### 7. <u>APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES</u>

- October 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Regent Balducci and seconded by Regent Yang, the October 19, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

### 8. <u>CONSENT AGENDA</u>

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

### **RESOLUTIONS APPROVED ON CONSENT**

### a. Academic Programs – Discontinuations

i. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Early Childhood Education: Infant and Toddler Concentration at Charter Oak State College effective December 1, 2023.

- ii. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Early Childhood Education: Preschool Concentration at Charter Oak State College effective December 1, 2023.
- iii. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Bachelor of Arts in Social Science at Western Connecticut State University effective Fall 2023.
- iv. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Bachelor of Science in Meteorology at Western Connecticut State University effective Fall 2023.
- v. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Associate of Science in Hotel Management program at CT State Community College effective Spring 2023.
- vi. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Associate of Science in Restaurant Management program at CT State Community College effective Spring 2023.

### **b.** Academic Programs – Modifications

- i. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program BS in Management Information Systems, specifically a modification of the Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code from 521201 to 11.0401 at Central Connecticut State University.
- ii. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program BA in Biology, specifically a name change to Bachelor of Science in Biology at Western Connecticut State University (OHE# 00192 and CIP Code Number 26.0101 remain the same).
- iii. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the name change modification of a program BS in Early Childhood Education with a Concentration in Early Childhood Teacher Credential to BS in Early Childhood Education with a Concentration in Teaching at Charter Oak State College (OHE# and CIP Code Number remain the same).

### c. Academic Programs – New Program

i. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the licensure of a Visual Arts Program (CIP Code: 50.0799, OHE# TBD) leading to a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Western Connecticut State University; and grant its accreditation for a period of seven semesters beginning with its initiation, such initiation to be determined in compliance with BOR guidelines for new programs approved on or after April 3, 2020.

### d. Academic Programs – Reinstatement of a Suspended Academic Program

 <u>WHEREAS</u>: The Board of Regents suspended the Master of Science Program in Elementary Education at Central Connecticut State University in June, 2021 (BR 21-104).
<u>WHEREAS</u>: The Master of Science Program in Elementary Education has been redesigned to address the elementary education teacher shortage in Connecticut (and nationally). The program will lead to initial certification in Elementary Education (grades 1-6).
<u>WHEREAS</u>: The program's field experience and student teaching requirements, along with the option of a paid residency in urban and suburban schools/partners have been redesigned to provide support for current classroom teachers while the students are completing the program.

<u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the reinstatement of the M.S. in Elementary Education (CIP Code: 13.1202, OHE# 00051) at Central Connecticut State University effective Spring 2024.

### e. Continuation of a Center/Institute

- i. <u>RESOLVED</u>: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve continuation of a center, the Center for Educational and Assistive Technology at Southern Connecticut State University, until December 31, 2030.
- f. Board of Regents 2024 Schedule of Meetings See Attachment B

### 9. ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – Committee Chair Bloom

The Academic & Student Affairs Committee met on December 1. He thanked the Board for the approval of the items that were included on the Consent Agenda.

Committee Chair Bloom noted that the Committee requested that four items move one item forward from the ASA Committee to the full Board for their consideration and that the respective institution Presidents have certified that these new initiatives are part of their deficit mitigation plans.

### **Resolution Requiring Annual Enrollment and Completion Reporting**

Committee Chair Bloom made the motion which was seconded by Vice Chair McCarthy to move the resolution forward for full Board consideration. Vice Chair McCarthy introduced the item.

- Vice Chair McCarthy summarized the resolution stating that it is a request for clear, predictable, and concise information on enrollment (projections and actual) and completion at the institution level across the System. The information exists on the website, but in a very difficult format to access. He continued by stating that the resolution requests administration to prepare annual reports and present them through the BOR Academic & Student Affairs Committee, so they are publicly available.
- Regent Yang asked for clarification about report frequency. Vice Chair McCarthy noted that monthly data is not available; data comes in on a semester basis and there are set due dates in the resolution for report delivery to the BOR. The report on enrollment will be due annually in May; the report on degree completion will be due annually in September.
- Regent Porth thanked Committee Chair Bloom and Vice Chair McCarthy for their leadership on this resolution. He noted that this was a topic brought up by the faculty at the recent BOR/FAC Joint Meeting. Vice Chair McCarthy reinforced and elaborated on the contribution of the FAC to this resolution.

The resolution passed by unanimous voice vote.

### **Resolution for a new 3+2 Special Education Program – BS and MS – Central CT State University** Regent Balducci made the motion which was seconded by Regent Yang to move the resolution forward for full Board consideration.

- Committee Chair Bloom noted that the 3+2 Special Education program focuses on certifying teachers in an area in which the state has faced a shortage of qualified teachers. teachers. Special education teacher shortages in Connecticut are persistent and are expected to increase with the growing number of teacher retirements in the next decade. National estimates conservatively forecast a need for 316,000 new teachers annually.
- He continued by stating that this program is designed to provide strong interdisciplinary contentspecific preparation which is often lacking from special education teacher preparation programs. This aspect coupled with an early and comprehensive approach to practice-based preparation will ensure candidates will be well prepared to meet the needs of K-12 schools. The program includes all the necessary coursework to fulfill state certification requirements, as well as providing candidates with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be learner-ready on day one.
- Department of Education Commissioner Russell-Tucker provided support for the program and context from the K-12, specifically about their shortage areas. After district surveys in March and

August of 2023, it was learned that a greater proportion of public school vacancies is in Special Education (26% in March and 35% in August). CCSU is currently approved by the CT State Board of Education to offer graduate-level initial preparation programs leading to CT certification in comprehensive special education. Approval of this new program will aid in addressing the state's critical area of need.

- Regent Yang expressed his support for the program.

The resolution passed by unanimous voice vote.

**Resolution for new Bachelor of Science Program in Software Design at Charter Oak State College** Regent James made the motion which was seconded by Regent Porth to move the resolution forward for full Board consideration.

- Committee Chair Bloom noted that the program will be the only online Software Development program within CSCU. Currently, there are 565 students in the Computer Science TAP pathway and several hundred more in non-TAP computer Associate programs.
- He continued adding that the Charter Oak General Studies Information Systems Studies concentration has high potential to enroll many more students with a separate, not General Studies, concentration with clearly defined major tied to jobs and industry certifications.
- This concentration has 28 students currently enrolled indicating a clear demand for Charter Oak to invest in expanding this pathway.
- This Software Development program is built with stackable credentials, allowing students to accumulate smaller, specialized credentials or certifications.

The resolution passed by unanimous voice vote.

## Resolution for new Central Connecticut State University's College of Health and Rehabilitative Sciences

- Regent Porth made the motion which was seconded by Regent Yang to move the resolution forward for full Board consideration.
- Committee Chair Bloom noted that CCSU's College of Health and Rehabilitative Sciences is designed to increase enrollment at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, strengthen collaborations on and off campus, streamline resources that are currently duplicated in different schools, and enhance community engagement with a community clinic.
- Committee Chair Bloom continued by adding that the new College creates better visibility for Central's programs and facilitates effective marketing strategies. CCSU already offers several programs that are focused on health science and would be an attractive option for prospective students, but the current university structure does not highlight these programs as they are distributed in different schools and/or departments. For example, Central's Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice program is housed in Biology within the School of Engineering, Science and Technology, while their BSN, RN to BSN and MSN are housed in Nursing within the School of Education and Professional Studies. Furthermore, creating a school focused on health and rehabilitative science allows CCSU to cast a wider net when recruiting students. CCSU would be able to attract a broader audience rather than marketing individual programs. This strategy aligns with Central's enrollment goals outlined in its their Strategic Plan.
- As Mayor of the New Britain (CCSU's home) and a CCSU graduate, Regent Stewart voiced her support for the new College. New Britain is home to both the Hospital of Central Connecticut and the Hospital of Special Care, thus providing a great career pipeline for CCSU students.

The resolution passed by unanimous voice vote.

### **10.** <u>AUDIT COMMITTEE</u> – Committee Chair Elease Wright No report.

### 11. FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – Committee Chair Balducci

Committee Chair Balducci reported that the Finance and Infrastructure Committee met on December 6, 2023 and approved the Administration's proposal to raise tuition and fee rates. The resolution, staff report, and attachments as approved by Committee begin on page 140 of the meeting packet.

### Committee Chair Balducci made the motion which was seconded by Regent McCarthy to move the resolution forward for full Board consideration.

- Committee Chair Balducci noted the Board's reluctance to consider raising tuition and fees but noted that the \$140 million deficit projected for FY 2025 is large enough to require new revenue through tuition increases, as well as expenditure reductions and the use of cash reserves.
- He continued by noting that the State's change in the how fringe benefits are paid has hurt the System. Discussions will continue with State leaders to share how the changes have hurt the System's financial situation.
- CFO Blanchard presented the proposal for the tuition and fee increases (Attachment C).
- Professor Blitz provided comments (Attachment D) concerning the proposed tuition increases. Vice Chair McCarthy responded that Professor Blitz's analysis may be incomplete, noting that using \$20 million of reserves in the next fiscal year may set CSCU up for a larger deficit in FY26.
- Regent Wright asked for more information about ways to assist non-traditional students and to increase aid, specifically the role that Foundations can play. She also has questions concerning the support available to students to assist them in the aid process. CFO Blanchard responded that often, non-traditional students do not qualify for PACT or PELL; institutional aid can help fill the gap and can be either need-based or merit-based. Individual campus foundations also provide aid, as well as private sources. He continued by stating that Foundations could be asked to raise more money for scholarships and emergency support aid to help avoid passing on the tuition increases to students. He also suggested that existing real estate assets and commercial (licensing CSCU brand) endeavors could be used to generate more revenue. CFO Blanchard also indicated that the FAFSA is due to be simplified which is expected to increase the number of students participating in this federal financial aid program.
- Regent Stewart noted that she opposes the proposed resolution and believes that closing the deficit shouldn't be done on the "backs of the students."
- Student Regent Sanchez discussed the difficult decision before the Board. He stated that currently, the issue lies with the lack of funding from the State and that is where the focus should be.
- Student Regent Galaise noted how torn she was about the tuition increase vote. She added that no students want a tuition increase and that though the amount may sound insignificant, it affects the most disadvantaged, but driven, individuals in the State people of color, many who battle significant financial and food insecurity, working multiple jobs or single parents trying desperately to get an education all trying to survive in our expensive State. She continued by saying that students shouldn't pay for poorly executed decisions made by previous administrations or to keep bare-bones programs functioning. Though the State touts one of the lowest tuition rates in the Northeast, Connecticut has one of the highest costs of living in the country. If the Board doesn't pass the tuition increase and the State continues to prove themselves unsupportive, the lost \$20 million in revenue will be made up in significant cuts to vital programs and services. Enrollment and retention rates will continue to drop and already struggling job markets will have amplified shortages. She noted that she will be voting yes for the betterment of CSCU and the State in the

long-term. She urged the Board to fight for extended PACT eligibility and additional funding from the State.

- Regent Porth stated that he has hope and faith that the System will keep a very close eye on the relationship between cost and enrollment in the coming months and years. Our comparison of tuition and fees to other schools in the region is encouraging. He closed by adding that given the State's decision on CSCU's support and how fringe benefits are handled, he believes we have pass the tuition increase resolution.
- Regent James appreciated the student comments and Professor Blitz's proposed alternative solutions. She does not believe that using reserves to fund a structural problem is the correct solution. She will support the resolution to increase tuition and fees, as well as supporting the need to pressure and educate State legislators and the Governor regarding the absolute benefit of supporting CSCU. She believes that the revenue sources need to be diversified and there needs to be more emphasis on scholarships and tuition aid.
- Professor Sesanker provided commentary (2:08:22). She proceeded to read a Faculty Advisory Committee resolution into the record (Attachment E).
- Regent McCarthy asked CFO Blanchard when the massive change in State allocation to cover fringe costs occurred and how much does it represent per year. CFO Blanchard responded that in FY24 the impact was \$75 million and for FY25, there will be a \$82 million impact. Regent McCarthy suggested a simple request of the State legislature – to get us back to what was paid in FY23 – keep up budget-neutral. He asked if they have singled out the colleges and universities to pay a disproportionally higher amount. He thought this change was supposed to be budget neutral. CFO Blanchard described the difference between what OPM believes budget neutrality is and what CSCU believes budget neutrality is.

The resolution passed with 12 yes votes, 1 no vote (Stewart), and 1 abstention (Sanchez).

### 12. <u>HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE</u> – Committee Chair Sophia Jappinen

No report.

13. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Chair Ryan

No report.

Professor Blitz gave closing remarks (Attachment F) as this was his last regular Board of Regents Meeting (2:31:49).

### 14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 12:38 p.m. on a motion by Regent Yang, seconded by Regent Balducci, the Board voted to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining issues and the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee. Chair Ryan announced that no votes would be taken in Executive Session. Chair Ryan directed Chancellor Cheng, Provost Kathuria, CFO Blanchard, Jessica Paquette, Vita Litvin, Adam Joseph, Danny Aniello, and Chris Engler to remain with the Board in Executive Session.

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### 15. ADJOURNMENT

With the conclusion of the Executive Session, Chair Ryan declared the meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

Submitted,

Pamela Heleen Secretary of the CT Board of Regents for Higher Education

### Attachments

### Board of Regents Meeting

### December 14, 2023

Attachment A - Public Comment

Attachment B - BOR 2024 Calendar of Meetings

Attachment C - PowerPoint Presentation - Tuition and Fee Proposal for FY 2024 - 2025

Attachment D - Professor Blitz - Comments on Proposed Tuition Increase

Attachment E - FAC Resolution on FY25 Tuition and Fee Increase

Attachment F - Professor Blitz - Remarks on His Last Board Meeting

### Attachment A

Leslie Wolfgang, Esq. Family Institute of Connecticut 77 Buckingham St. Hartford, CT 06106-1591

December 11, 2023

Via e-mail (pheleen@commnet.edu)

Board of Regents for Higher Education 61 Woodland St. Hartford, CT 06105

Re: Compliance with Public Act 23-41

Dear Members of the Board of Regents,

I am submitting this letter as a "public comment" for your meeting dated December 14, 2023.

As you may be aware, Public Act 23-41 requires your board to submit a "plan" for "access" to "reproductive health care" by students at residential campuses. To that end, I direct your attention to the attached letter from the Connecticut Pregnancy Care Coalition dated September 4, 2023. In that letter, President Lisa Maloney describes the Act and lists the pregnancy resource centers that should be included in the plan and why.

For your information, I submitted a Freedom of Information request to the Board of Regents on November 13, 2023 requesting a copy of the proposed "plan" and any information available on its status. My request was acknowledged, but I have received no plan or information despite Freedom of Information rules that materials be offered "promptly" and this means "quickly and without undue delay, taking into consideration all of the factors presented by a particular request." John Dilorio v. Banking Committee, State of Connecticut, General Assembly, Docket # FIC 2020-0231 Final Decision dated June 23, 2021.

Additionally, "Providing such access is therefore a primary duty of all public agencies, and should be considered as much a part of their mission as their other major functions. Although each agency must determine its own set of priorities in dealing with its responsibilities within its limited resources, providing access to public records should be considered as one such priority. Thus, it should take precedence over routine work that has no immediate or pressing deadline." Advisory Opinion #51, In the Matter of a Request for Declaratory Ruling, Third Taxing District of the City of Norwalk, Applicant (Notice of Final Decision dated January 11, 1982).

I encourage you not to delay as you take action in accordance with your Bylaws to "establish" the plan before January 1, 2024 and "submit" it within 30 days as set forth in Public Act 23-41.

Sincerely,

anc Leslie Wolfgang

Director of Public Policy 860-833-4041 ppdirector@ctfamily.org

Enc.



Connecticut Pregnancy Care Coalition 492 Montauk Ave, New London, CT 06320 https://www.cpccoalition.org

September 4, 2023

VIA First Class Mail and E-Mail

Board of Regents for Higher Education 61 Woodland St. Hartford, CT 06105

Board of Trustees of the University of Connecticut 352 Mansfield Road, Unit 1048 Storrs, Connecticut 06269-1048

Members of the Board of Regents and Board of Trustees,

I am president of the Connecticut Pregnancy Care Coalition (CPCC) and am writing to you on its behalf. The CPCC is made up of 8 pregnancy resource centers, serving clients at 12 locations across Connecticut. These centers offer pregnancy resources to men and women of all ages, including college-aged students. The staff at those centers that offer medical services are licensed health care providers, such as doctors, registered nurses, sonographers, therapists and social workers. Our centers do not offer abortion or birth control services. They do offer the client other reproductive health care choices.

As you may be aware, Public Act 23-41, AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE BY STUDENTS AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, directs your boards to "establish, and update as necessary, a plan for each residential campus under said boards' jurisdiction to provide access for students who live on such residential campus to reproductive health care services ... " before January 1, 2024. The Public Act defines reproductive health care services as including "all medical, surgical, counseling or referral services relating to the human reproductive system, including, but not limited to, services relating to pregnancy, contraception or the termination of a pregnancy and all medical care relating to treatment of gender dysphoria;" (CGS 52-571m)

To that end, our centers should be included in the plans you submit. We offer reproductive health care services and more by licensed health care providers and others, including health

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care, parenting classes, free childcare supplies, pregnancy testing, information about pregnancy, birth, abortion and adoption and ongoing support in your college communities. Some centers have been providing these services for over 20 years. Below is a list of centers and the college(s) they serve, including non-residential campuses.

Central Connecticut State University	ABC Women's Center 8 Concord Street New Britain, CT 06053 Text: 860-245-1736 Call: 860-344-9292 anna@abcwomenscenter.org https://abcwomenscenter.org
Eastern Connecticut State University	Women's Center of Eastern Connecticut PO Box 71 Willimantic, CT 06226 Tel: 860-450-8072 office@womenscenterec.com https://www.womenscenterec.com
Southern Connecticut State University	Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center of Southeastern Connecticut 492 Montauk Ave New London, CT 06320 Phone: 860-448-2990 24 Hour Line: 1-800-712-4357 Text: 1-484-791-CARE (2273) Email info@carenetsect.org https://www.carenetsect.org
Western Connecticut State University	Hopeline Pregnancy Center Danbury Office 27 Hospital Ave. Unit 303 Danbury, CT 06810 203-271-2703 hopepcct@gmail.com

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	https://hopelineprc.org
Asnuntuck Community College	ABC Women's Center 180 East Main Street Middletown, CT 06457 Text: 860-245-1736 Call: 860-344-9292 anna@abcwomenscenter.org https://abcwomenscenter.org
Capital Community College	Mobile Care Hartford 426 Park St. Hartford, CT 06106 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072
Gateway Community College	Mobile Care New Haven 180 Sherman Ave. New Haven, CT 06511 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072
Housatonic Community College	Hopeline Pregnancy Center Bridgeport Office 4749 Main Street Bridgeport, CT 06606 203-271-2703 hopepcct@gmail.com https://hopelineprc.org
Manchester Community College	Mobile Care Manchester 214 Spencer St. Manchester, CT 06040 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072
Middlesex Community College	ABC Women's Center 180 East Main Street Middletown, CT 06457 Text: 860-245-1736 Call: 860-344-9292 anna@abcwomenscenter.org

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	https://abcwomenscenter.org		
Naugatuck Valley Community College	Mobile Care Waterbury Waterbury Green Waterbury, CT 06702 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072		
Northwestern CT Community College	No licensed medical providers near this location.		
Norwalk Community College	Hopeline Pregnancy Center Stamford Office 441 Summer St Stamford, CT 06901 203-271-2703 hopepcct@gmail.com https://hopelineprc.org		
Quinebaug Valley Community College	Women's Center of Eastern Connecticut PO Box 71 Willimantic, CT 06226 Tel: 860-450-8072 office@womenscenterec.com https://www.womenscenterec.com		
Three Rivers Community College	Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center of Southeastern Connecticut 492 Montauk Ave New London, CT 06320 Phone: 860-448-2990 24 Hour Line: 1-800-712-4357 Text: 1-484-791-CARE (2273) Email info@carenetsect.org https://www.carenetsect.org		
Tunxis Community College	ABC Women's Center 8 Concord Street, New Britain, CT 06053 Text: (860) 245-1736 Call: (860) 344-9292 anna@abcwomenscenter.org https://abcwomenscenter.org		

# cpcc

University of Connecticut - Storrs	Women's Center of Eastern Connecticut PO Box 71 Willimantic, CT 06226 Tel: 860-450-8072 office@womenscenterec.com <u>https://www.womenscenterec.com</u> Mobile Care UCONN 2384 Alumni Drive Storrs, CT 06268 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072
University of Connecticut - Avery Point	Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center of Southeastern Connecticut 492 Montauk Ave New London, CT 06320 Phone: 860-448-2990 24 Hour Line: 1-800-712-4357 Text: 1-484-791-CARE (2273) Email info@carenetsect.org https://www.carenetsect.org
University of Connecticut - Hartford	Mobile Care Hartford 426 Park St. Hartford, CT 06106 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072
University of Connecticut - Stamford	Hopeline Pregnancy Center Stamford Office 441 Summer St Stamford, CT 06901 203-271-2703 hopepcct@gmail.com https://hopelineprc.org
University of Connecticut - Waterbury	Mobile Care Waterbury Waterbury Green Waterbury, CT 06702 https://www.gomobilect.com Call or Text: 860-576-8072



Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Lisar. Mez

Lisa Maloney, LMFT President Connecticut Pregnancy Care Coalition

Cc: Members of the Board of Regents for Higher Education and Board of Trustees of the University of Connecticut and general counsels. Cat Proper CCSU Student Sociology Department 12/14/2023

### Dear Board of Regents,

My name is Cat Proper, and I am currently a student at Central Connecticut State University. I am a student whose life has been beautifully transformed because of other students, professors, faculty, and administrators that I have met during my time at CCSU. As a student, I subsequently have had the opportunity to change the lives and perspectives of my peers, coworkers, neighbors, friends, and family for the better, largely because I chose to pursue a university degree.

I am a student who will encourage lifelong learning because I know that knowledge and learning are instrumental in helping us transcend tradition and change the ways that the world operates. During my time at CCSU, I have tried to be a student who advocates for the needs of all students, because I recognize that any student's problems are my problems, my community's problems, and the problems of future generations.

Like many Central students, I am forced to work full-time to pay for my education. Maintaining my full-time student status, being an active club leader, organizing club and community activities, all while working full-time hours at near-minimum wage jobs is a lot to take on. I can no longer afford to be a student. I will be withdrawing after this semester, six classes shy of a bachelor's degree, because I can't pay even part-time tuition while existing in poverty.

The pressure that I have been under, and students like me have been under, is ridiculous and unnecessary. My friends, fellow students, and I are suffering from mental and physical health problems due to the stresses that come from our living situations, including housing and food insecurity. Juggling the pressures of life in poverty while trying to pass classes with the goal of a university degree is a struggle that too many students are engaged in. Most times students are pushing past their limits and suffering in silence because it has become a normal thing to ask more of students than they should need to be capable of doing. With budget induced tuition hikes, program closures will make circumstances much more difficult for students.

We want and expect that the Board of Regents offer real solutions to the real difficulties that students are confronting. Yet, real solutions seem lacking. Rather, it is students that, collectively, are expected to do more, change more, pay more, and give more than ever before. Even with significantly less resources available to us, I know that I have done all I can to leave CCSU a better place than I found it. I also know that I could've walked away from this university with less debt, a degree in my hand, and even an ounce of energy left to continue fighting to make the world a better place.

I have repeatedly heard this twisted elitist story that some people just aren't cut out for college. After attending this university, I'm not sure who could be cut out for this treatment. I'd argue instead that some people just aren't cut out to be leaders. I urge the board to ground yourselves back to your roots and ask yourselves, honestly, why did you accept your leadership positions with the BOR? Was it your intent to use your positions of power to force students like me out of institutions like CCSU? With tuition hikes, that is what is happening. Thank you.

Cat.

P.S. I have never appeared before the board before and I wanted to share my story.I think it is terrible that you will not give me three minutes to tell you my story. Ithink the board should hear from students, we are the universities and the colleges.You should make time for us.



### Board of Regents for Higher Education 2024 Meeting Schedule

Student Advisory Committee 10 am Fridays	Faculty Advisory Committee 1 pm Fridays	Academic and Student Affairs 9:30 am Fridays	Audit 10 am Tuesdays	HR & Administration 9:30 am Wednesdays	Finance & Infrastructure 10:30 am Wednesdays	Executive Committee 10 am Thursdays	Board of Regents 10 am Thursdays
	January 26					January 25 *	
February 9	February 9	February 2			February 14 **		February 29
March 22 (with BOR)	March 8	March 8		March 6	March 6	Friday, March 22 (with SAC)	March 21
	April 12	April 5				April 25 *	
May 3	May 10	May 3	May 7		May 15 ***		May 23
	June 14 (joint w/ BOR)	June 7		June 12	June 12	June 6	June 14 (w/FAC) June 27
	July 19						
	August 16					August 22 *	
September 20	September 13	September 6		September 11	September 11		September 26
October 18	October 11	October 4			October 9		October 24
Thurs, November 21 (joint w/BOR)	November 15 (joint w/BOR)					November 21 (joint w/SAC)	November 15 (joint w/FAC)
	December 13	December 6 (joint w/HR)	December 17	Friday, December 6 (joint w/ASA)	December 11		December 19

\*Wanted to have an Executive Committee meeting before Session begins. It could become a Special Board Meeting, if needed.

\*\* Mid-year adjustments won't be ready earlier in February and need to avoid Lincoln's birthday (2/12) and President's Recess (2/16 – 19)

\*\*\* After legislative session ends on May 8.



## CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES





## **Overview of Financial State**

FY24-FY25 Systemwide Financial Projections as reported at the June 21st BOR Finance Committee Meeting

## **CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES**

**Projected Results** 

Millions (\$)	FY24 Budget		FY25 Projected	
Central Connecticut State University	13.5		(4.7)	
Eastern Connecticut State University	- 11/		(8.0)	
Southern Connecticut State University	5.5		(12.1)	
Western Connecticut State University	(12.0)		(21.6)	
CT State Community College **	(33.6)		(91.3)	
Charter Oak State College	(0.6)		(2.5)	
Operations Support Funding*	<u>13.5</u>	128 12	A DECEMBER OF	
CSCU Total	\$ (13.7)	\$ 10	(140.2)	

Reserved for System Initiatives from the one-time Operations Support Through Short-Term Recovery Funds Allocation

\* FY25 and Projected Net Results for CT State have been revised to reflect the \$6.5M allotment moved under the block grant from ARPA federal grant.



## Why are Projected FY25 Deficits So Large?

### 1. Enrollment decline

 10-year enrollment decline exacerbated by pandemic

## 2. Tuition & Fee revenue

• Declined for CT State and CSUs

## **3.** Pandemic

- Enrollments dropped precipitously
- One-time funds available temporarily, and used to support permanent cost increases

## 4. State Appropriations

- Block grants continue to increase slightly
- One-time fund support ended before enrollments recovered

## **5. Fringe Costs**

• Driver for growth in costs



## **State Appropriations**

			240 J		
					Variance
Plack grants				FY20	25 vs. FY2024
Block grants		FY2024	FY2025	\$ Inc (De	ec) % Inc (Dec)
increased by	State Appropriations				
\$11.8M, but	Charter Oak State College	3.1	3.2		0.1 2%
	Community Tech College System	208.5	217.5		9.0 4%
one-time fund	Connecticut State University	176.1	178.6		2.6 1%
support (which	BOR	0.5	0.5		0.0 1%
	Developmental Services	10.0	10.2		0.1 1%
was provided	Outcomes-Based Funding Incentive	1.4	1.4		0.0 1%
to support	O'Neill Chair	0.3	0.3		<u>- 0</u> %
		\$ 399.8	\$ 411.7	<b>\$</b> 1	1.8 3%
permanent					
costs) was	PACT Program - Debt Free Community College	23.5	28.5		5.0 21%
2	Enhance Student Retention at Community Colleges *	6.5	-		(6.5) -100%
reduced by	Provide Operations Support Through Short-Term Recovery Funds **	147.7	48.8	(9	<b>98.9</b> ) -67%
\$116M.	Provide Temporary Operating Support **	55.0	27.5	(2	<u>27.5</u> ) - <u>50</u> %
<b>WITCHIN</b>	GRAND Total State Support	\$ 632.5	\$ 516.5	\$ (11	.1) -18%

\* Guided Pathways funding moved under CCC block grant

\*\* One time funding provided for ongoing operating cost.



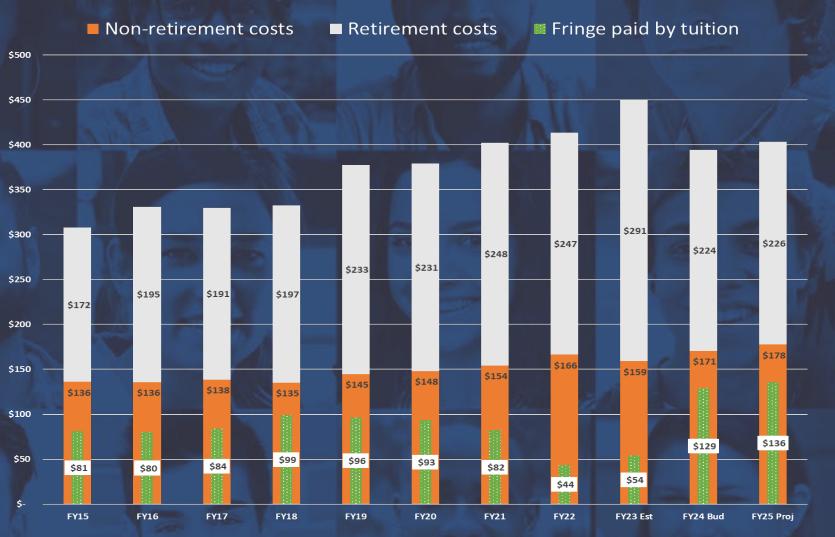
The fringe cost swap also added costs to our budgets

### • FY24

 \$75M impact = \$129M nonretirement costs minus the \$54M paid in FY23

### • FY25

 \$82M impact = \$132M nonretirement costs minus the \$54M paid in FY23





## **Overview of Deficit Mitigation Plan**

### A Balanced Path Forward for Public Higher Education: Revenues, Reductions, and Reserves

We project a balanced budget in FY24.

FY25 mitigation is allocated as follows:

- 7% in technical adjustments
- 28% in new revenue
  - Assumes tuition & fee increase
- 46% in expenditure reductions
- 19% in institutional cash reserves

	CSCU Totals		
	FY24	FY25	
Surplus/(Deficit) reported to June 21 <sup>st</sup> BOR F&I	(26.7)*	(\$140.2)	
Total deficit mitigation (in millions)	<u>\$63.0</u>	<u>\$106.6</u>	
1. Adjustments updating deficit	(2.6)	7.8	
2. New revenue initiatives	16.7	29.8	
3. Expenditure reductions	36.8	48.6	
4. Institutional cash support	12.1	20.4	
Additional support needed	0.0	47.6	
	and the second se		



## **Recommended Tuition and Fee Increase**

The 5% increase applies to tuition and mandatory fees. Increases in room and food service fees vary by university.

	Proposed I	Proposed Increases for Academic Year 2024-25					
	Tuition*	Fees*	Room**	Food Service***			
State Universities	\$334	\$276	\$234	\$146			
CT State	\$216	\$30	The second se				
Charter Oak	-	-	-				

\* 5% increase in in-state tuition and fees. Average amount across CSUs.

- \*\* Increase in housing fee: Central (2.9%), Eastern (2%), Southern (3%), and Western (3.5%)
- \*\*\* Increase in food service fee: Central (3%), Eastern (3%), Southern (0%), and Western (3.5%)



## **Recommended Tuition and Fees, AY25**

Fees for State Universities include University General Fee and University Fee. The Fee for CT State is the College Services Fee.

	Proposed Rates for Academic Year 2024-25				
	Tuition*	Fees*	Room**	Food Service***	
State Universities	\$6,998	\$6,186	\$8,448	\$6,425	
CT State	\$4,608	\$610	-		
Charter Oak	1-			15 - 1	

\* 5% increase in in-state tuition and fees. Average amount across CSUs.

\*\* Increase in housing fee: Central (2.9%), Eastern (2%), Southern (3%), and Western (3.5%)

\*\*\* Increase in food service fee: Central (3%), Eastern (3%), Southern (0%), and Western (3.5%)

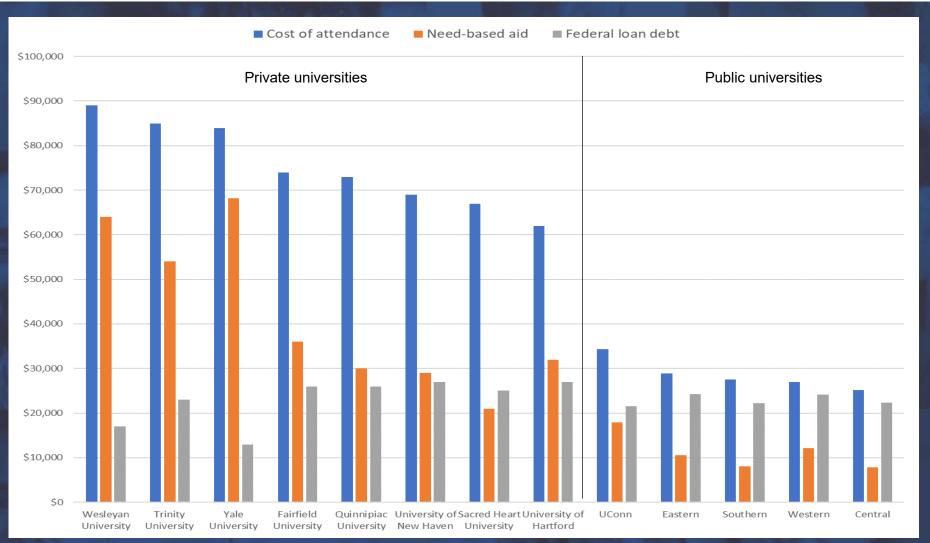


Overall, 43% of CSU students receive Federal aid, 23% receive State aid, 56% receive institutional aid, and 16% receive private scholarships.

	CSUs	Central	Eastern	Southern	Western
Share of FT UG students who receive aid					
Federal aid	43%	55%	38%	60%	54%
State aid	23%	26%	22%	43%	17%
Private scholarships	16%	9%	14%	35%	19%
Institutional aid	56%	66%	76%	54%	58%
Average aid per FT UG student					
Federal aid	\$4,824	\$4,586	\$4,816	\$5,355	\$4,280
State aid	\$2,021	\$1,813	\$2,001	\$2,118	\$2,267
Private scholarships	\$8,112	\$21,740	\$8,447	\$3,733	\$8,568
Institutional aid	\$4,938	\$4,200	\$5,957	\$4,320	\$4,051

# **CSCU** Impact on University Students

- Impact on university students depends on the aid they receive.
- While CT's public universities charge far less in tuition and fees, the institutional aid from private universities is far greater, leaving similar levels of average federal debt for the average CT student.
  - Only Yale and Wesleyan leave graduates with federal debt less than \$20,000.



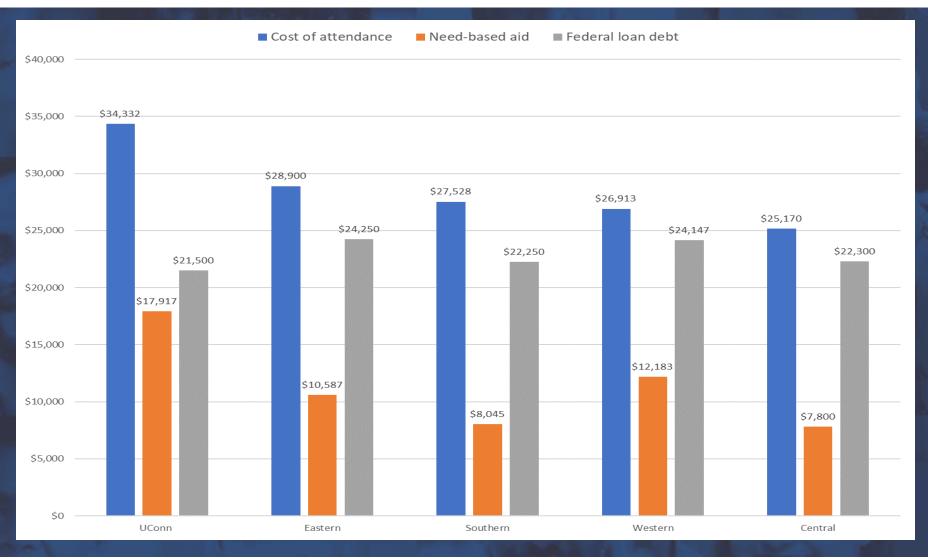
# **CSCU** Impact on University Students

Our universities charge less in tuition and fees, but needbased aid for CSU students is far less than for UConn students.

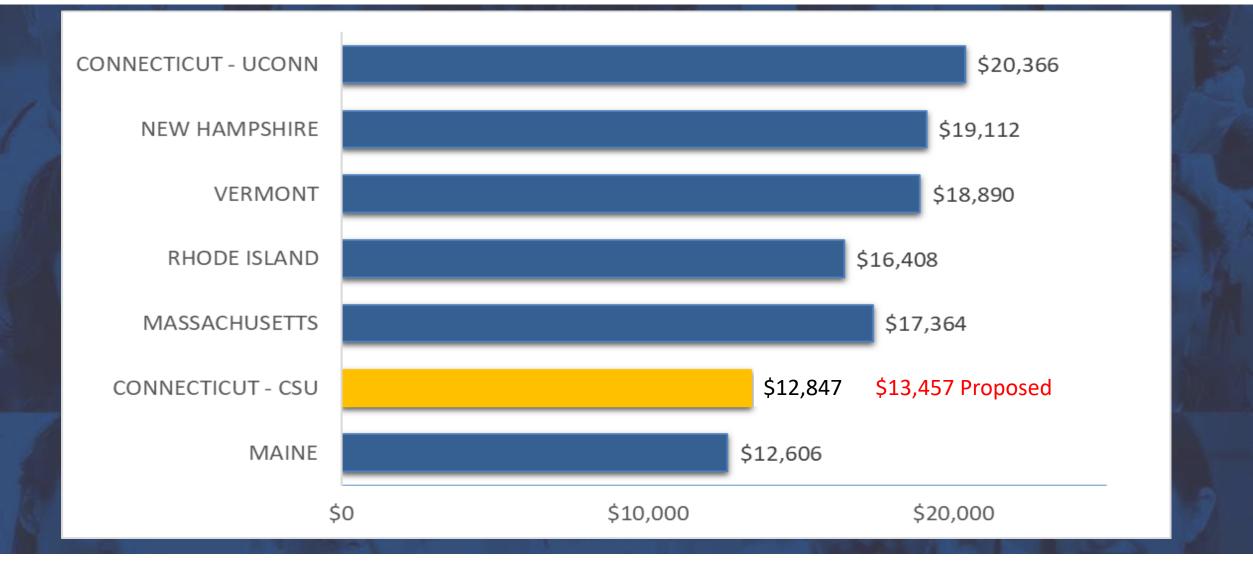
## Need-based aid as % of UConn's:

- Eastern (59%)
- Southern (45%)
- Western (68%)
- Central (44%)

CSU tuition & fees remain competitive. Problem is the lack of aid.



# **CSCU** Impact on University Students





Half of CT State Community College students taking classes for credit will not be impacted by the proposed increase in tuition and fees.

	<u>Students</u>	Avg Household Income
Students taking classes for credit	36,162	\$62,582
Students who received enough grant aid to cover tuition and fees in full	18,276	\$33,089
Students who received Pell grants	14,828	\$31,522
Students who received enough Pell to cover tuition and fees in full	10,248	\$19,501
Students who received PACT funds	11,518	
Students who received enough PACT to cover tuition and fees in full	4,861	
Students who do not receive enough grant aid to fully cover tuition and fees	17,882	- I - I -
Students who received grant aid to partially cover tuition and fees	2,584	- 1
Students who received no grant aid (ineligible or no FAFSA filed)	15,028	\$137,107

Students taking non-credit classes and courses via dedicated workforce programs face no impact of proposed increase.

Charter Oak students will not be impacted, as it will not increase tuition and fees this year.





# **CSCU** Impact on College and University Students

### • Since 2019:

- Average change in tuition & fees for CT State is 1.3%--lower than average for peers.
- Average change for CSUs is 3.1%--lower than MA and RI averages.

### • For CSU graduates:

- Average Career ROI = \$1.1M
- Median debt ranges from \$14K to \$18K
- Average Earnings to Debt Return = 2.2

ROI and Debt (2022)						
Street Laboration	40-year NPV	Median debt	Earnings-debt retur			
Central	\$1,124,000	\$17,639	2.1			
Southern	\$1,073,000	\$16,668	2.6			
Eastern	\$1,049,000	\$16,056	1.8			
Western	\$1,125,000	\$14,250	2.3			
Charter Oak	\$1,200,000	\$12,500	3.3			
UConn	\$1,527,000	\$19,292	2.7			
Wesleyan	\$1,407,000	\$14,000	3.8			
Yale	\$1,917,000	\$12,000	6.3			

Sources: Tuition & fees data are from IPEDS. ROI & Debt data are from "Ranking 4,500 Colleges by ROI (2022)", Center for Education and Workforce, Georgetown University.

Average Change in Tuition and Fees, Public Institutions, FY19 through FY22						
a cost of	FY18-FY19	FY19-FY20	FY20-FY21	FY21-FY22		
CT State	2.5%	2.1%	0.1%	0.4%		
Massachusetts (2-yr)	6.5%	1.7%	3.1%	0.1%		
Rhode Island (2-yr)	0.0%	3.0%	2.3%	3.6%		
New York (2-yr)	2.9%	3.6%	2.8%	1.2%		
Central	3.8%	4.3%	3.9%	0.3%		
Southern	3.9%	4.5%	3.1%	0.7%		
Eastern	4.0%	4.3%	3.9%	0.0%		
Western	4.2%	4.5%	3.9%	0.0%		
Massachusetts (4-yr)	4.6%	3.5%	3.0%	1.9%		
Rhode Island (4-yr)	2.1%	5.1%	5.1%	3.2%		
New York (4-yr)	3.3%	3.0%	-0.6%	0.2%		

As a preface to my remarks, I note that the proposed 5% across the board tuition/fee increase (on average) marks the culmination of the misnamed "Students First" plan approved by this Board (with substantially different leadership and membership) in 2017, and clearly indicates its abject failure.

I skip the details, which both Prof. Sesanker and I, and before us, Prof. Adair clearly indicated; this will be part of my 2020-24 update of the critical history of the BOR. I note the following significant flaws in the resolution now before us:

- The proposed percentage increases are not explicitly included in the resolution, making it difficult if not impossible for those affected to fully understand the resolution. This is particularly the case when the resolution is posted in the required state depository, as it refers back to a staff report typically not included. I also note that 2023 resolutions are not posted up to date; and a true copy of June Financial resolution is still lacking.
- The staff report itself does not contain essential information requested by FAC representatives and at least one voting member of the Board, specifically, what is the negative effect of a 5% tuition/fee increase on recruitment and retention. Without this we cannot judge the consequences of the proposed increase or decide on its merit.
- 3. While the resolution in its last Whereas refers to tuition and fee increase as part of the mitigation plan, the one page summary of the mitigation plans distributed at the last Board meeting does not include this item under "new revenue initiatives" or any other category.
- 4. The report does not calculate the gross total of additional revenues that the proposed increase would generate, not does it explain how this would affect the PACT funding of community college students.
- 5. The resolution uses vague language in permitting further increases beyond those mentioned in the staff report, such as "not significantly" increasing costs, or "ensuring that the overall financial burden on students remains limited", without specifying the maximum of additional increases in percentage or absolute terms.
- 6. In addition the resolution requires only that these further increases by reported to the Finance Committee for review, without explicitly requiring further Board approval other than the also open-ended "may be revised or reconsidered by the BOR as the BOR deems appropriate".

I should add that there was a response to one of the points I raised at the Finance Committee on the absence of the total additional revenue expected from a 5% tuition increase. VP Finance/CFO Blanchard stated at that time last week that this amounted to approximately \$20 million dollars. This is helpful and allows me to formulate the following proposition, which I advance on my own and not as FAC representative, with the hope that a voting member of the Board will move it as an amendment to the resolution so that we can fully discuss it.

I note, in a preparatory way, that the last figures for reserves presented to the Board indicated a total of nearly \$250 million (\$247.8 million to be exact), most of which is not encumbered or designated. Some of that is to be used in the mitigation plans for CT State and some as a loan to Western CSU. I also note that there are seven, not just six reserve funds, the seventh being indicated as CSU-SO, of which 1/3 or just under \$75 million is available, a total of \$25.1 million.

The CT State reserve is just over \$100 million (\$100.1 million), of which 99% is available (\$99.8 million), some \$22.2 million of which is proposed for use as "additional support" for operating expenses for CT State in FY24 (\$7.1 million) and FY25 (\$15.1 million). That stated, I propose the following one time use of some of two of the reserve funds to avoid any increase to student tuition and general fees (excepting individual institution increases, which are minor in comparison):

That based on the figure of an expected \$20 million additional revenue from an average 5% across the board tuition/general fee increase, that, on a one time basis only and solely for FY25, an additional \$10 million be made available from the CT State reserve and \$10 million from the CSU-SO reserve to offset the proposed tuition/general fee increases for college and university students, respectively. As a result, the 5% increases should be rescinded.

Board members: what say you. Should students pay for the deficits accumulated due in large part to Students First, in which case we should rename the plan as Students Pay? Or should this Board take full responsibility for the errors of commission and omission of the immediate past, and avoid having students pay through a judicious, one time use of part of the reserves? I welcome anyone who would move, for purposes of discussion and eventual vote, the above proposal as an amendment to the resolution before you.

David Blitz, 14/12/2023

### FACULTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON CSCU TUITION/FEE INCREASES FOR FY25

Whereas in 2017 the Board of Regents implemented a plan known as "Students First" to both decrease costs and improve services to students;

Whereas in 2023 after consolidating the 12 community colleges into one institution and failing, for years, to supervise that all institutional budgets were balanced, the Board now reports a deficit of over \$125 million for the community college and nearly \$30 million for one of the universities, WCSU;

Whereas the community college has cut a total 777 course sections, thereby reducing educational opportunities rather than increasing them, and necessitating decreased enrollment;

Whereas further problems for community college students have resulted from the lack of teachout from previous college programs to the new "aligned" ones and from policies inadequate to the task of the transition have only exacerbated difficulties;

Whereas essential services to the community college students have been reduced by the elimination of hundreds of Educational Assistants and other contingent workers who constitute the majority of the well-trained student-facing supplemental workforce at the community colleges, including tutors, library staff, educational tech support and others, with the inevitable result of reduced student retention and loss of institutional memory;

Whereas the System Office and the Board failed to secure sufficient state assistance for FY 25 by proposing an inflated CSCU 2030 plan, which was countered by an inadequate offer by the Office of Policy and Management, as incorporated in the Governor's Budget and approved, with improvement only for FY24, by the legislature;

Whereas the Board approved a 3% fee and tuition increase for community college students and a 5% tuition/fee increase for university students for FY24, and now is proposing a further 5% increase for FY25, despite the likelihood that this will further reduce enrollment and retention rates, which the office of policy and management uses as an (inappropriate) gauge of our funding requirements;

Whereas this increase applies to both community college and university students, in an attempt to remediate, in part, the system-wide debt incurred by a failed policy of Students First and the concomitant failure to supervise all member institutions in CSCU for balanced budgets;

Whereas this effort to remediate through increased tuition is simultaneous with remediation through significant cuts to institutions, requiring students to pay more for far less, and to do so amid the disruption caused by the launch of the new community college;

Whereas no member of the administration, Board of Regents, or government agency has been held to account for the failure while, through tuition increases and hollowed out institutions, students are being asked to bear its consequences;

Whereas the disproportionate impact of this mismanagement and state underfunding on community colleges represents a significant failure of the Board of Regents in its responsibilities to public higher education and the state and

Whereas that impact has the exact opposite effect of the advertised benefits of the Board initiative that is Students First to benefit economically disadvantaged and students of color —a negative impact which satisfies the definitions of both institutionalized racism and structural injustice;

#### Be it resolved

That the FAC considers that Students First has failed to achieve its twin advertised goals of reducing costs to the state while improving educational opportunities and services to the students and has contributed to a financially perilous situation for the CSCU System as a whole;

That the FAC rejects the average tuition increase of 5% approved by the BOR Finance and Infrastructure Committee on Dec 6, 2023 as detrimental to the goals of recruiting and retaining students at reasonable cost to them;

That the FAC communicates this resolution to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee of the Board of Regents, CSCU leadership, to the next meeting of the Board, to faculty, and to students in the CSCU system

### Concluding Statement by FAC vice-chair and ex-officio BOR member David Blitz

Madam chair, before we adjourn I would like to say just a few parting words of my own. This is my last meeting as an ex-officio, non-voting "member" of the Board. I did not seek re-election to the FAC as I consider that two terms suffice. I know my replacement as CCSU representative to the FAC will continue to defend the autonomy and integrity of our university, and I am convinced that a fully qualified FAC university representative will succeed me as co-chair for the four CSUs, hopefuly someone with an economics or finance background to continue on the Finance and Infrastructure Committee. I did my best as a philosopher who had chaired or co-chaired his university Planning and Budget committee for the better part of a decade.

In the past four years I have not missed a Board or Finance meeting, though I was never counted for quorum at either. I do wish to thank Board chair Ryan and Finance/Infrastructure chair Balducci for always recognizing me when I put up my actual or virtual hand, even though they knew that my comments would likely be critical. And indeed, with the exception of the resolutions on the covid vaccine mandate and the name change to Chancellor where I concurred, they were critical, and with justification, I believe. I also found inormal meetings with then President Cheng, as well as Provost Kathuria, Vice President Blanchard and Vice-Chair McCarthy as helpful in favoring the exchange of viewpoints, though more limited in bringing about results.

It is not appropriate to go into details about agreements and disagreements at this juncture, especially as I wish to keep my remarks as short as possible so we can adjourn as soon as possible. I have followed two maxims in my critical comments: Seek truth from facts and Speak truth to power. I think these maxims go well together, though you may know they come from very different political views and parts of the world – Den Xiao Ping during a period of reconstruction after one of chaos in his country and Justin Beyard during the civil rights movement in this country, respectively. I suspect that this is the first time that either name has been mentioned at a Board meeting.

I had hoped that in assuming a leadership role in the FAC and as consequence joining, in a limited role, this Board, that I could effect greater change than I was able to do. Again, I leave the details for another time, though I will update the critical history of the BOR, which I have already produced for the period 2011 – 2019 for the last four years. And fear not, I do not plan to finger-point but rather draw lessons from a series of flawed resolutions and failed projects in terms of their stated goals, from Transform 2020 through Students First to CSCU 2030, so that in the future similar problems may be avoided.

I especially want to thank the current chair of the FAC, Colena Sesanker. She has done far more than I, not only in terms of representing her faculty during a difficult, I daresay traumatic period for community college faculty and staff, but she has also established solid relations with legislators and executive branch staff, as well as national organizations dedicated to the advancement of public higher education.

She has gone above the strict requirements of her function to alert the community college executive of brewing disasters, of which the lack of teach out from academic programs and the

more recent CPOS self-imposed fiasco are but two examples. I hope that she continues on the Board, despite the handicap of ex-officio non voting status. According the FAC a regular agenda item at Board meetings would be of value in permitting the FAC she has so successfully headed to accomplish its statutory role of advising and assisting the Board.

There is one further item on my agenda, beyond the above-mentioned 2019-2023 critical history, and that is the 2023 annual report of the FAC to the appropriate legislative bodies concerned with public higher education. I expect that will be completed by mid January, and we will distribute it to the Board members as well as interested members of the executive branch and the public. We had a good discussion at the last FAC meeting specifying the items to be evaluated, including the issue of the relation not only of the FAC and the Board, but also the relations of the Board to the System Office and to the constituent Institutions of CSCU.

The problem is one of over-centralization and consequent de-localization, to the detriment of the distinct missions of the colleges and universities, and the ability of each unit to thrive and innovate. We are a system of systems where the appropriate flow of policy should be bottom-up, not top-down. Each of the now 6 constituent systems can and does provide all the educational content needed to recruit, retain and graduate students, as well as recruit and retain qualified faculty able to teach and contribute to knowledge. But these constituent units could benefit from cooperation and coordination in specific areas based on mutual consent. That is, however, inconsistent with a top-down command and control model that we have seen to our detriment in the past. It implies a much more modest role for the System Office and its executive to listen and learn, and to communicate and consult with faculty, staff and local administrators, in order to better serve our students.

In that context, I hope that this Board will take seriously, in a far more substantial way than it has up to now, the importance of reviewing and revising its plans and policies. If you're hesitant to take my word for it, may I suggest that you follow the example of our Governor, who has recently retracted a plan for electric vehicles by the mid 2030s after reviewing criticisms. I presume he will revise and resubmit an improved plan at a later date. Had a similar attitude been taken towards the Students First Project, we would not be in the present fiscal and academic straits we now face.

In closing, I want to repeat what I've said before: we share a guiding principle, that of protecting and promoting public higher education in our state, and that should provide common ground to review and revise policies, including the current one of student tuition and general fee increases. I consider that we also share what Gov. Lamont has appropriately called our Connecticut values, at a time when in our country and world wide the notion of public goods and scientific knowledge are under assault. If we can communicate and consult, listen and learn, and review and revise we can contribute to protecting and promoting our two college and university sectors of public higher education.

With that I conclude my remarks, along with my participation at this Board, and request that Chair Ryan proceed with any last minute items before adjournment.