

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU)
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024
CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY**

LIVESTREAMED ON <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9ThaQXl4w8>

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

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
 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. Dwayne Smith, Interim President, Southern CT State University
 Chris Engler, CSCU Labor Counsel
 Dr. Aynsley Diamond, AVP, Academic Affairs
 Pam Heleen, Secretary of the Board of Regents (recorder)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 10:02 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 Wright, the Agenda was unanimously adopted.

3. CHAIR RYAN'S REMARKS

- Chair Ryan welcomed everyone to the first Board meeting of the Spring 2024 semester.
- She announced the creation of a new BOR Standing Committee – the Technology Committee – which will be responsible for the oversight of technology infrastructure, cybersecurity measures, and the strategic integration of technology across CSCU. Regent Ted Yang will chair the Committee with Regents Guay, Jappinen, and Santiago also serving. The charter for this Committee will be posted on the Board webpage.
- Professor Brendan Cunningham has been elected as Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee to take over for Professor David Blitz. Chair Ryan thanked David Blitz for his service and knows that the FAC will benefit from Dr. Cunningham's experience.
- Since the Board's last meeting, the 2024 session of the Connecticut General Assembly gavelled in. Chancellor Cheng delivered a presentation to the Appropriations Committee that was clear, direct, and extremely effective. She noted that during his time as chancellor, Cheng has been a strong and unwavering advocate for all the system's students and CSCU's mission of providing affordable, innovative, and rigorous academic programs in an environment where our students can realize both personal and professional success. She added that he has the Board's full support, and the Board appreciates the incredible efforts put forth on behalf of the system, the standards he has set, and the environment he has fostered.
- Chair Ryan reported that public higher education in Connecticut and across the nation has reached an inflection point and the financial challenges facing the system are significant. She noted that the Regents understand the uncertainty that faculty and staff are feeling as state funding falls short. She added that it was heartening to see so many members of the CSCU community - students, faculty and staff - joining the Chancellor at the Legislative Office Building to advocate for the additional funding needed to address the \$47.6 million shortfall in fiscal year 2025.
- She expressed, on behalf of the entire Board, condolences to the family of Bill Cibes, former Connecticut State University system President and Chancellor from 1994 to 2006 who passed away earlier this month.

4. CHANCELLOR CHENG'S REMARKS

Chancellor Cheng made the following remarks:

- During the week of February 19th, students, faculty, and staff testified before the legislature's Appropriations Committee, demonstrating how CSCU colleges and universities serve as a vital gateway to social mobility, opportunity, and life-long success. The Chancellor expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation for all students who made their voices heard. He shared a link to the compilation video of the student testimony (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aoyiWxjwCog>) and thanked the outstanding, dedicated faculty and staff who also testified before the Appropriations Committee.
- The Chancellor stated that every day until midnight May 8, when the legislative session ends, CSCU will be advocating for the additional funding needed to address the projected \$47.6 million shortfall in fiscal year 2025. He added that \$47.6 million is the amount that only balances the budget. \$47.6 million is our minimum to avoid even more painful cuts and reductions.

- Following CSCU's presentation to the Appropriations Committee, leadership went before the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee to underscore the success of the Connecticut Automatic Admission Program (CAAP). The program allows eligible Connecticut high school seniors to be automatically admitted to a CSCU university and other participating institutions. In only its second year, the total number of CAAP applicants increased by nearly 70 percent, and the total number of applicants to the CSCU schools increased by 400 percent, or 3,259 students. This program will ensure that more students have access to affordable, high-quality higher education, and help increase CSCU enrollment numbers. Proposed adjustments would increase equity and access for students.
- CSCU is also supporting legislation that would make the PACT program, CSCU's free community college program, even more accessible by helping tens of thousands of students.
- The Chancellor shared the following happenings across the system, the genuine good done to stabilize enrollment and lift communities all across the state:
 - Southern Connecticut State University's School of Nursing has earned the recognition of "Best RN Program in Connecticut" by registerednursing.org. Southern's impressive 96.86 success rate in students passing the NCLEX-RN exam over five consecutive years includes three years of a perfect 100% pass rate!
 - In December, the Board approved the establishment of the College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at Central Connecticut State University. The new College enhances community engagement through a new community clinic, which opened on January 24th. Central's Community Health Education Clinic has begun offering free health screenings to Greater New Britain residents and members of the campus community. Students and faculty from Central's Nursing program conduct these screenings, providing invaluable supervised hands-on experience for students.
 - As Western Connecticut State University's student population and that of the surrounding community steadily grows more diverse, the U.S. Department of Education designated the university as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. The Hispanic-Serving Institution designation is a "significant milestone" for the university as institutions with HSI designation gain access to federal funding opportunities aimed at improving educational outcomes for Hispanic students, allowing them to enhance academic programs, student support services, and infrastructure. In addition, HSI status fosters a diverse and inclusive campus environment, and enriches the overall educational experience for all students. Western also just celebrated its first ever Day of Giving last week, on February 22nd. Western raised \$210,000 that day, surpassing their initial target of \$150,000. In total there were 1656 donors, giving in 22 different areas, with Athletics alone raising more than \$100,000. It was a great show of community support, along with faculty, staff, and students, several foundation board members and local businesses contributed to the celebration.
 - The Chancellor shared the success Charter Oak State College has had with the \$1.375 million Career Connect workforce training grant they were awarded in 2022. In less than a year, they exceeded their goal, supporting 150 students with holistic aid, including laptops, stipends, career navigation, and LinkedIn Learning. Achieving an impressive 95% completion rate, the program's diverse student body with 65% from unrepresented minority groups from every corner of Connecticut. Their success positions Charter Oak to leverage this grant for future opportunities.
 - Eastern Connecticut State University hosted a symposium titled "Moving Forward: Community Dialogues on the Opioid Epidemic," featuring several experts and bringing together community partners and the public to better understand the opioid epidemic. Eastern also continues to help students outside the classroom. They recently opened "Thrift Warriors",

a student-run thrift store that provides free, gently used clothing, small appliances, school supplies, and decorative items. “Thrift Warriors” also serves as a communal and experiential learning space.

- CT State Community College President Maduko traveled with a delegation of faculty, campus leaders, administrators, and students to Capitol Hill this month to represent CT State Community College as part of the 2024 Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) National Legislative Summit. The group joined representatives from 1300 community colleges to advocate for community colleges and hear from members of the U.S. Congress, leading political analysts and other high-profile speakers about legislative issues impacting community colleges. Their participation in the Summit emphasized the importance of sharing stories with legislators to draw attention to the indispensable role community colleges play in addressing critical workforce shortages.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – Attachment A includes written comments received prior to the beginning of this Board meeting.

STUDENTS	FACULTY/PUBLIC
Audrey Arnold, SCSU	Cindy Stretch, Vice President, CSU – AAUP
	Louise Williams, President, CSU – AAUP
	John O’Connor, AAUP
	Ruth MacDonald, Charter Oak Faculty
	Seth Freeman, President, 4Cs

6. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

– **December 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

On a motion by Regent Balducci and seconded by Regent Porth, the December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

– **December 18, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes**

On a motion by Regent Balducci and seconded by Regent Porth, the December 18, 2023 Special Meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

RESOLUTIONS APPROVED ON CONSENT

a. **Academic Programs – Discontinuations**

- RESOLVED:** That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Bachelor of Arts program in Media Studies at Southern Connecticut State University effective February 29, 2024.
- RESOLVED:** That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Cybersecurity Operations – Certificate at Connecticut State Community College effective February 29, 2024.

- iii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the discontinuation of the Cybersecurity Option leading to an Associate of Science Degree in Cybersecurity at Connecticut State Community College effective February 29, 2024.

b. Academic Programs – Modifications

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – Masters in Business Administration (CIP Code: 52.0201/ OHE# 19157), specifically, a modification to the CIP Code and course electives at Southern Connecticut State University.
- ii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – BS in Communications (CIP Code: 90101/ OHE# 14816), specifically a modification of courses/course substitutions at Southern Connecticut State University.
- iii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the name change modification of a program – MS in School Health Education (CIP Code: 131307/ OHE# 20261), specifically a modification of program delivery method at Southern Connecticut State University.
- iv. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – BS in Criminal Justice, Criminology, and Law, specifically to modify the CIP Code at Western Connecticut State University (OHE# 00202 and current CIP Code 43.0107).
- v. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – BS in Justice and Law, specifically to change the program name to BS in Criminal Justice, Criminology, and Law at Western Connecticut State University (OHE# 00202 and new CIP Code 43.0103).
- vi. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – AS in Health Information Technology – Data Management (CIP Code: 51.0707/ OHE# 21333), specifically a modification of courses/course substitutions and a change to selective admission at Connecticut State Community College.
- vii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – Cybersecurity Essentials – Certificate 2 (CIP Code: 11.1003/ OHE#21521), specifically a modification of the program name at Connecticut State Community College.
- viii. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a program – Computer Networking Technology – Certificate 2 (CIP Code: 11.0901/OHE# 21506), specifically a modification of the program name at Connecticut State Community College.

c. Continuation of a Center/Institute

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve continuation of a center, the Research Center – Values in Emerging Science and Technology at Southern Connecticut State University, until December 31, 2030.

d. Promotion

- i. RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the promotion of Dr. April Moreira recommended by Interim President Manohar Singh of Western Connecticut State University.

e. Finance Item

i. Credit Card Fees

WHEREAS, The Board of Regents for Higher Education (the Board) under its statutory authority – CGS 10a-99 – reviews and establishes tuition and fees for such purposes as the Board deems necessary, and

WHEREAS, On October 20, 2022 and December 14, 2023, the Board approved the fee structure for CSCU institutions, including what is referred to as “Tier II” Fees for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, respectively. Tier II Fees cover items that are assessed to students on a usage basis and are not necessarily applicable to all students, and

WHEREAS, Among the Tier II Fees approved for the four CSCU universities (CSUs) is one associated with credit card service fees, assessed by the service provider, TouchNet, to process credit cards for our universities, and

WHEREAS, The requested fees previously approved by the Board were at a specific percentage of 2.85% and 2.95% for fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025, respectively,

WHEREAS, The service provider, TouchNet, recently increased the fee for international transactions to 4.25% which is allowable under CSCU Contract No. 22044, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Tier II Fees schedule line item associated with any credit card service fees shall henceforth appear as an informational item only at the bottom of the fee schedule rather than a set amount within an itemized fee schedule and asterisked to indicate that changes in the percentage are permitted in accordance with the applicable contract with the service provider.

8. ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – Committee Chair Bloom

The Academic & Student Affairs Committee met on February 2. Thirteen ASA items were included on the Consent Agenda, and he thanked the Board for their approval.

Resolution for Southern Connecticut State University’s new Bachelor of Arts program in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

Regent Porth made the motion which was seconded by Regent Wright to move the resolution forward for discussion and full Board approval.

Committee Chair Bloom noted that Dr. Smith has certified that this new program is an investment to increase enrollment and is part of Southern’s Deficit Mitigation Plan. Committee Chair Bloom introduced the program:

- As an undergraduate TESOL program, the primary goal is to equip candidates with the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective teachers of multilingual learners. Through this training, students will learn about the fundamental principles of language, including its structure, function, and use, and how these principles relate to language acquisition. The program prepares students to work with diverse populations and provides them with the tools and techniques necessary to develop and implement effective lesson plans, assessments, and instructional strategies that meet the needs of multilingual learners.
- The research clearly indicates a strong and growing demand for qualified TESOL educators both regionally and globally. Globalization, increased international mobility, and the prominence of English as a global communication tool have heightened the need for skilled TESOL educators. Local schools, language centers, and international institutions have expressed a pressing demand for educators who are equipped with the necessary knowledge and credentials to teach English to diverse learners. As of August, 2023 in Connecticut alone, there are 14 ESL teacher positions that remain unfilled, 8 community college and adult education ESL instructor positions, and over 20 online ESL teaching jobs.

- This new program at Southern will be a great feeder program for the Master's program at Central Connecticut State University.
- Committee Chair Bloom introduced Chief Workforce Officer Vallieres who voiced her support for the program.

Already having a first and a second on a motion to approve, the resolution passed with a unanimous voice vote.

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE – Committee Chair Elase Wright

The Audit Committee met on December 19, 2023.

- Management provided an update on the Auditors of Public Accounts (APA) audits. The APA are currently performing the Statewide Single Audit which is expected to be released in the first quarter of 2024 and are continuing their audits of the System for fiscal years 2021 and 2022.
- Management discussed the 2023 financial close process and audit fieldwork, noting that the auditors were overall happy with the preparedness and timeliness of deliverables.
- Management discussed the new GASB 96 standard that was implemented for fiscal year 2023. This new standard requires all subscription-based IT arrangements that meet certain criteria to be recorded on the balance sheet as a software subscription asset and liability. Due to the significant undertaking of this GASB, the System engaged Grant Thornton's consulting team to assist with implementation.
- Management also discussed the change in the State's fringe benefit methodology that required the accounting department to make a few changes internally with the payroll posting process. The new fringe benefit methodology also required some changes to be made to some of the year-end accrual entries for the audit. This change in methodology shifted all retirement fringe costs to the state, and all non-retirement fringe costs to CSCU institutions. The non-retirement fringe costs are estimated to be \$171 million in FY24 and \$178 million in FY25. The state increased our block grant by \$42 million to help cover these costs, so CSCU bears the remaining costs of \$129 million in FY24 and \$132 million in FY25. These new costs represent a \$75 million negative impact in FY24 and an \$82 million impact in FY25.
- Audit firm Grant Thornton presented the audit reports and required communications for Connecticut State Community College, Connecticut State Universities, and Charter Oak State College for the year ended June 30, 2023. All three audit reports resulted in clean, unmodified opinions. There were no audit adjustments for Connecticut State Community College. The Universities and Charter Oak each had one auditor-identified adjustment that were considered to be immaterial to the financial statements. There were no material weaknesses or control deficiencies identified across the System.
- The System's Foundation financial statements were also finalized and received unmodified, clean opinions.
- Audit firm CohnReznick presented the CSCU 2020 Construction audit. The audit report presented was a clean, unmodified opinion and there were no audit issues encountered during fieldwork.

10. FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – Committee Chair Balducci

Committee Chair Balducci raised a point of personal privilege to express his condolences to the family of William Cibes, as well as to thank Professor David Blitz for his service to the Board as a member of the Faculty Advisory Committee.

He continued his report noting that the Finance and Infrastructure Committee met on February 14, 2024 and approved the Administration's Mid-Year Budget Update. The resolution and staff report as approved by Committee begin on page 115 of the meeting packet.

A motion was made by Regent Bloom and seconded by Regent Jappinen to open the resolution up for discussion and to forward the resolution to the full Board for approval.

- Committee Chair Balducci introduced the item by noting that the FY24 spending plan that was approved last June has been impacted substantially by the Deficit Mitigation Plan presented to the Board in November. The Mid-Year Update presented in this report showed how the mitigation efforts impacted the spending plan. The updated spending plan reflects a balanced budget for all institutions in FY24. Some institutions will produce surpluses, and these surpluses will be used to mitigate that institution's FY25 deficits.
- Committee Chair Balducci asked CFO Blanchard to present the mid-year update. His presentation is included as Attachment B.
- Professor Cunningham shared his comments. They appear in their entirety as Attachment C.
 - CFO Blanchard responded to Professor Cunningham's remarks by sharing information regarding the FY2023 Ending Reserve Balances (Attachment D).
- Regent Stewart noted that the current Funding Balance Guidelines is 8 years old and recommended that the Finance Committee look at the policies to determine if they need to be revised. She shared her congratulations on solving the deficit that was anticipated in this fiscal year, as well as seeing the institution reserves.

The resolution passed unanimously.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – Committee Chair Sophia Jappinen
No report.

12. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Chair Ryan
No report.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 11:21 a.m. on a motion by Regent Balducci, seconded by Regent Yang, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session regarding:

- matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting public security [CGS Section 1-200(6)(C)]
- Records, reports and statements of strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining [CGS Section 1-210(9)]

Chair Ryan announced that no votes would be taken in Executive Session. Chair Ryan directed Chancellor Cheng, Jessica Paquette, Dr. Lloyd Blanchard, Vita Litvin, Adam Joseph, Lori Lamb, CIO Jim Vasquez, and CSCU Information Security Officer Pete Carey to remain with the Board in Executive Session.

10. ADJOURNMENT

With the conclusion of the Executive Session, Chair Ryan declared the meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Submitted,

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

Attachment Listing

Board of Regents Meeting

February 29, 2024

Attachment A – Written Public Comment

Attachment B - FY2023–2024 Mid-Year Budget Update

Attachment C – Comments to CSU Board of Regents from Professor Brendan Cunningham

Attachment D – FY23 Ending Reserve Balances

Written Comment from Dr. Matthew Ciscel (CCSU) with Response from Dr. Elena Schmitt (SCSU)

Written Comment to the CSCU Board of Regents, Regular Meeting, 10am, Thursday, Feb 29, 2024

NAME: Dr. Matthew Ciscel

ROLE: Professor, Program in Applied Linguistics and TESOL, Department of English

AFFILIATION: Central Connecticut State University

DATE: Submitted around 11am, Tuesday, February 27, 2024

RE: Agenda Item 8a, New Program Proposal, BA TESOL at SCSU, brought by the Academic & Student Affairs Committee

While the proposal is correct in identifying a dire shortage of TESOL teachers in Connecticut to serve the needs of our growing multilingual population, I am writing to express several concerns with the nature and curricular design of the proposed program.

The concerns are that:

- 1) This BA substantively duplicates the existing initial Teacher Certification program within the CSCU System at CCSU and weakens the ability of both programs to operate with robust enrollments,
- 2) Such BA TESOL programs are rare for a reason. This is training that occurs almost everywhere at the graduate level because of the complexity and broad reach of the specialization's content. This fact throws into doubt the potential for robust undergraduate-level enrollments, academic success, and the promised impact on bilingual learners in our schools, and
- 3) Most importantly, the curriculum outlined in the New Program proposal does not reflect the full requirements of CT Teacher Certification Regulations. As outlined, it does not lead to initial Teacher Licensure in TESOL (Endorsement Code #111), because it includes neither the required nine credits in bilingualism or literacy training, nor certification-specific general education requirements, nor other required education credits such as Special Education (3 credits). Initial teacher certification is very difficult to squeeze into 120 undergraduate credits, particularly in TESOL. This proposal does not provide the teacher certification that it promises.

In sum, despite the robust justifications and thorough outline of learning outcomes, this proposal has some crucial problems that should be addressed before approval. On behalf of the established TESOL teacher certification program in the CSCU system (which is at Central), I respectfully request that the proposal be tabled or withdrawn.

1. This BA substantively duplicates the existing initial Teacher Certification program within the CSCU System at CCSU and weakens the ability of both programs to operate with robust enrollments,

The initial Teacher Certification at CSSU is at the graduate level. This is the only undergraduate initial teacher certification in the state and beyond. Undergraduate students do not have an opportunity to get certified in this crucial subject area. We do not believe that the proposed program will provide any challenges for the existing MAT in TESOL at CSSU.

In addition, offering a BA in TESOL with initial certification provides a unique opportunity for undergraduate students. It opens pathways for individuals who are passionate about TESOL to pursue this field of study from an earlier stage in their academic journey. By offering this program at the undergraduate level, we can attract a broader range of students who may not have considered pursuing a graduate-level program.

2. Such BA TESOL programs are rare for a reason. This is training that occurs almost everywhere at the graduate level because of the complexity and broad reach of the specialization's content. This fact throws into doubt the potential for robust undergraduate-level enrollments, academic success, and the promised impact on bilingual learners in our schools, and

This aspect was thoroughly considered during the development of the BA in TESOL program. The program is strategically crafted to provide students with exceptional flexibility, allowing them to pursue an additional major or concentration in various subject areas. This unique feature is highly appealing to students with diverse interests and career aspirations. By offering a dual major option, we can attract students who are passionate about TESOL and seek to complement their expertise with another field of study, such as Social Studies, English, Education, Mathematics, Sciences, or a foreign language. This dual major opportunity not only enriches students' academic experiences but also ensures that TESOL teacher candidates are well-prepared to support multilingual learners across various educational contexts. Additionally, obtaining an additional teaching endorsement in these areas of education enhances the versatility and marketability of our graduates in Connecticut's educational landscape.

3. Most importantly, the curriculum outlined in the New Program proposal does not reflect the full requirements of CT Teacher Certification Regulations. As outlined, it does not lead to initial Teacher Licensure in TESOL (Endorsement Code #111), because it includes neither the required nine credits in bilingualism or literacy training, nor certification-specific general education requirements, nor other required education credits such as Special Education (3 credits). Initial teacher certification is very difficult to squeeze into 120 undergraduate credits, particularly in TESOL. This proposal does not provide the teacher certification that it promises.

This is inaccurate. The program has followed all the requirements of the State Teacher Certification Regulations and was developed in close collaboration with the CT Department of Education and College of Education at Southern. Specifically, the program includes 9 credits in Bilingual Education and Literacy:

TSL 315 "Principles of Bilingual Education"

TSL 418 "Content Based Instruction for Multilingual Learners"

TSL 417 "Literacy Development for Multilingual Learners"

The program also includes professional certification-specific general education requirements:

EDU 200 Teachers, Schools and Society
SHE 203 School Health
EDU 413 Secondary Education
SED 225 Introduction to Exceptionalities
EDU 316 Child Development and Psychology for Education
TSL 451 and 452 Student Teaching
TSL 453 Student Teaching Seminar

And a special education course: SED 225 Introduction to Exceptionalities.

The Pre-Program Proposal Application was vetted by the CT State Department of Education to ensure compliance with certification standards.

By offering initial teacher certification in TESOL at the undergraduate level, we are addressing the critical shortage of ESL teachers in Connecticut and beyond. This program will prepare a new generation of highly qualified ESL educators who are equipped to meet the diverse needs of multilingual learners in today's classrooms. Increasing access to qualified ESL teachers will have a positive impact on bilingual learners and contribute to the overall improvement of language education in our schools.

Board of Regents Meeting – 2/29/24
Seth Freeman, 4Cs President

Members of the Board of Regents,

This month I am sharing my written testimony provided to the CGA Higher Education and Employment Advancement Cmte. This written testimony below is designed to properly advocate for the funding we need in CSCU, expose the continued failures of Chancellor Cheng and the Board of Regents, and highlight how COSC needs additional funding to address longstanding inequities and pay disparities with COSC teaching faculty.

February 27, 2024 – Higher Education and Advancement Committee

Good morning Senator Slap, Representative Haddad and members of the Committee,

My name is Seth Freeman, and I am a Professor at CT State Capital and President of Congress of CT Community Colleges which represents full-time and part-time faculty and staff across our twelve community college campuses, and part-time faculty at Charter Oak State College and University of Hartford.

My testimony today will focus on CT State Community College, but I also will briefly mention Teaching Faculty at Charter Oak State College as well who are in the process of bargaining their first contract.

CT State Community College

CT State Community College is in crisis due to the insufficient funding provided by the legislature last year, and because of gross mis-management by CSCU and CT State managers.

Beginning last summer, we have seen drastic cuts to essential services across our community colleges. CT State has eliminated over 200 part-time staff positions. Additionally, CT State has left dozens of full-time faculty and staff positions vacant. Between the cuts to part-time staff and the unfilled full-time vacancies, every community college campus has made drastic and painful cuts to student-facing services. Cuts to course offerings, cuts to tutoring, library, career services, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), student activities, mental health services, advising, workforce development, cafeteria, food pantry, fitness center services and more. The cuts are significantly eroding the quality of services in our colleges and hurting our students.

These drastic cuts this year come on the heels of years of smaller cuts, and years of unfilled FT positions.

These cuts are a direct result of insufficient funding from the legislature and chronic and spectacular mis-management by CSCU and CT State managers.

In our CSCU system, our system managers and Board of Regents continue to horrifically fail to manage our system. Chancellor Cheng, and President Ojakian before him, failed all of you by repeatedly lying to you about the goals and outcomes of merging our community colleges. Both men told fairy tales to this body, tales of magical savings CSCU would achieve and tales of magical equity for Black and Brown

students. Both men told you the lies that too many of you wanted to hear, that by merging our community college system, we would reduce costs while simultaneously improving services.

These leaders have led our system to the crisis we face today. A community college system that is simultaneously under-resourced and spectacularly mis-managed, with a new top-heavy managerial structure with well-paid managers in distant offices, while student-facing services and classroom services are bare-boned and being eliminated.

All the lies from President Ojikian and Chancellor Cheng are crashing down on our students. What our faculty and staff warned the legislature five years ago has come to pass. Through the merger we have wasted millions of dollars on bloated levels of statewide managers. Every dime spend on statewide managers is a dime taken away from student-facing services on our campuses. Now every year our campus budgets have shrunk, while budgets for CSCU and CT State managers have increased.

Additionally, all the lies about CSCU Shared Services are also now coming to light. CSCU managers said that moving to CSCU Shared Services would create efficiencies and improve services. This is not the experience of faculty and staff on our campuses. CSCU Shared Services is overwhelmingly viewed as a failure. Our experience of Shared Services is emptied and hollowed out Human Resources and Business offices on our campuses, which provide much lower quality of service for faculty, staff, students and administrators.

CT State managers recently provided the following budgetary data that shows how the merger and CSCU Shared Services is siphoning resources from our campuses.

Total Expenditures by Campus:

	System Office	CSCU Shared Services	Asnuntuck	Capital	Gateway	Housatonic	Manchester	Middlesex
FY 19	26,293,876		21,264,646	35,983,038	61,713,629	44,441,496	53,636,524	24,243,682
FY 20	30,015,808		21,573,359	35,963,566	60,369,177	43,242,415	51,872,501	24,234,871
FY 21	36,569,493		20,433,091	35,632,071	61,481,881	41,227,156	50,887,375	24,306,915
FY 22	6,081,386		19,976,100	32,520,603	57,214,995	38,609,605	47,443,045	23,003,558
FY 23	7,552,883	60,518,396	22,902,065	36,549,462	61,461,033	41,930,655	49,084,787	25,019,075
FY 24	7,038,906	72,093,887	15,086,698	25,512,172	43,482,740	29,989,881	33,097,931	18,821,866
	Middlesex	Naugatuck	Norwalk	Northwestern	Quinebaug	Three Rivers	Tunxis	Total
FY 19	24,243,682	59,905,144	48,315,930	16,409,040	16,367,414	36,296,788	35,341,798	480,213,005
FY 20	24,234,871	58,933,097	47,144,222	16,417,070	16,653,916	35,384,197	34,948,839	476,753,038
FY 21	24,306,915	58,207,555	44,735,494	16,483,339	16,465,352	34,983,292	36,088,091	477,501,105

FY 22	23,003,558	55,023,255	42,831,540	15,262,100	14,912,723	31,250,708	33,808,632	417,938,250
FY 23	25,019,075	58,688,084	45,841,479	17,166,786	17,211,220	34,741,336	34,856,013	513,523,274
FY 24	18,821,866	39,597,486	33,843,148	11,792,804	12,694,137	25,014,889	24,589,108	392,655,653

Note above that CSCU Shared Services cost \$72 million dollars this year. We are spending exorbitant amount of money on System Office and CSCU Shared Services, while campus budgets are being decimated.

I want to highlight Manchester's budget. It went from \$53 million in FY 2019 to \$33 million in FY2024. This is painful to see in plain numbers. But this has happened on every campus, and why our campus services – our student-facing services – are being eroded.

Sadly, Chancellor Cheng is still failing you today. He is failing you by telling you that \$47 million is enough to provide the resources and services our CSCU students deserve. Chancellor Cheng and the Board of Regents are still not fighting for CSCU students, but rather serving Governor Lamont's austerity agenda. Their ask of \$47 million is not enough. \$47 million for CSCU will not restore the cuts that have been made. \$47 million will not stop the tuition hikes.

Our faculty, staff, and students are here to tell our truth. We need \$160 million dollars to stop the 5% tuition hikes, reverse the terrible cuts that are destroying our colleges and hurting our students. Cuts and tuition hikes that are guaranteed to hurt retention and hurt enrollment, and only deepen the crisis we are already in.

We need the legislature to provide more oversight over CSCU and CT State managers, to ensure the funding you provide goes directly to our campuses for student-facing services. As the chart above shows, our campus budgets have been decimated, and our CSCU and CT State managers are grossly mis-managing the resources provided by the state.

Our students are depending on you to fix the crisis that you caused last year. Please do what is right for our students so CT can once again have one of the best community college systems in the country. Please do not sacrifice our working-class students and our Black and Brown students across our community colleges, to serve the lie that our state can't afford to fund our community college system and provide our students the quality of education they deserve.

Charter Oak State College

Charter Oak State College Teaching Faculty, who are all part-time, and all online teaching faculty, have recently formed their union and are bargaining their first contract.

Charter Oak Teaching faculty for the past 30 years, were the only faculty in the CSCU system that were not unionized. They recently won their union last Fall semester.

Charter Oak State College for decades has grossly underpaid their faculty, and they have balanced their budgets on the backs on their teaching faculty. Some basic data from 2012 shows the following:

- COSC Student Tuition has risen **40%** since FY12 to FY24 from \$236 to \$329 per credit

- COSC Administrative Staff salaries have risen approximately **40%** between this same time, consistent with other higher education bargaining units (including community college faculty and staff)
- Inflation has risen approximately 34% over this time period
- **COSC teaching faculty have seen flat salary, 0% salary increase since 2012**

COSC Teaching Faculty are fighting for equity and respect in their contract negotiations right now.

Just like our community colleges and our state universities, today CSCU managers are failing to request the funding to properly fund Charter Oak State College. Proper funding for COSC recognizes that teaching faculty need to be compensated fairly and respected. We need this legislature to support equity for Charter Oak teaching faculty, and ensure COSC faculty are provided a fair contract and well overdue compensation.



Attachment B



FY2023-24 Mid-Year Budget Update

Finance and Infrastructure Committee
February 14, 2024





Deficit Mitigation Plan

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

In June, we projected a \$26.7M deficit for FY24.

In November, we presented our Deficit Mitigation Plan that covered FY24 and FY25.

This mid-year update shows how the Deficit Mitigation Plan impacts the FY24 budget.

Today, we project a balanced budget in FY24.

Surplus/(Deficit) reported to June 21 st BOR F&I	(26.7)
Total deficit mitigation (in millions)	<u>\$63.0</u>
1. Adjustments updating deficit	(2.6)
2. New revenue initiatives	16.7
3. Expenditure reductions	36.8
4. Institutional cash support	12.1
Balanced Budget for FY24	0.0



Deficit Mitigation Plan

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

FY24	Central	Eastern	Southern	Western	CT State	Charter Oak	SO/SS
Surplus/Deficit reported to June 21 st BOR F&I	\$13.5	\$0.0	\$5.5	(\$12.0)	(\$33.6)	\$0.0	\$0.0
Total mitigation (in millions)	<u>\$7.6</u>	<u>\$2.1</u>	<u>\$4.2</u>	<u>\$12.1</u>	<u>\$33.6</u>	<u>\$0.4</u>	<u>\$3.0</u>
1. Adjustments updating deficit	(0.5)	(1.4)	(3.8)	0.4	2.5	0.1	0.0
2. New revenue initiatives	8.5	(0.2)	7.6	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.0
3. Expenditure reductions	(0.4)	3.7	0.4	6.6	23.6	0.0	3.0
4. Institutional cash support	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	7.1	0.0	0.0



FY24 Systemwide Mid-Year Update

Revenues are adjusted upward by 1.5% (+\$17.5M).

Expenditures are adjusted downward by 4.5% (-\$53.7M)

Projected Net Results are adjusted upward by \$71.7M.

The deficit mitigation plan presented to BOR in Nov 2023 explains the difference between the original FY24 Budget and FY24 Mid-Year Projection.

	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Mid-year Projection	FY24 MidYear Projection vs. Budget	
				\$ change	% change
Revenue:					
Tuition & Fees	484.1	490.7	501.1	10.4	2.1%
State Appropriations	362.7	358.1	358.1	-	0.0%
Fringe Benefits Paid By State (GF & OF)	396.8	41.7	41.7	-	0.0%
One-time Funding	169.4	189.2	189.2	-	0.0%
Housing and Food Services	89.0	90.7	95.7	5.0	5.5%
Other Revenue	19.2	8.2	10.3	2.1	26.3%
Total Revenue	1,521.2	1,178.7	1,196.2	17.5	1.5%
Expenditures:					
Personnel salaries	650.3	668.1	642.5	(25.6)	-3.8%
Fringe Benefits	444.7	179.9	160.5	(19.5)	-10.8%
Inst. Financial Aid/Match and Waivers	78.6	80.5	80.7	0.2	0.2%
Utilities	28.4	33.6	33.3	(0.3)	-1.0%
Other expenses	174.5	210.6	201.7	(8.9)	-4.2%
Debt Service	29.7	30.9	31.3	0.4	1.3%
Total Expenditures	1,406.2	1,203.6	1,149.9	(53.7)	-4.5%
Net gain/(loss) before transfers	115.0	(24.9)	46.3	71.2	-
Net Transfers	(30.3)	(1.8)	(1.3)	0	-
Net Results	84.7	(26.7)	45.0	71.7	-



State Universities FY24 Mid-Year Update

Revenues are adjusted upward by 2.6% (+\$18.2M).

Expenditures are adjusted downward by .5% (-\$3.7M).

Projected Net Results are adjusted upward by \$20.6M.

	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Mid-year Projection	FY24 MidYear Projection vs. Budget	
				\$ change	% change
Revenue:					
Tuition & Fees	321.6	326.8	332.5	5.8	1.8%
State Appropriations	174.4	173.7	173.7	-	0.0%
Fringe Benefits Paid By State (GF & OF)	195.5	2.3	2.3	-	0.0%
One-time Funding	88.7	103.2	103.2	-	0.0%
Housing and Food Services	89.0	90.7	95.7	5.0	5.5%
Other Revenue	16.2	11.6	19.0	7.4	64.3%
Total Revenue	885.3	708.3	726.5	18.2	2.6%
Expenditures:					
Personnel salaries	357.5	366.5	361.9	(4.6)	-1.3%
Fringe Benefits	242.6	90.3	91.6	1.3	1.5%
Inst. Financial Aid/Match	57.7	61.4	60.5	(0.9)	-1.4%
Utilities	19.4	22.5	22.2	(0.3)	-1.2%
Other expenses	120.1	128.6	128.9	0.3	0.2%
Debt Service	29.7	30.9	31.3	0.4	1.3%
Total Expenditures	827.0	700.1	696.4	(3.7)	-0.5%
Net gain/(loss) before transfers	58.4	8.3	30.1	21.9	-
Net Transfers	(29.7)	(1.3)	(2.6)	(1.3)	-
Net Results	28.7	7.0	27.6	20.6	-



State Universities FY24 Mid-Year Update

Projected Net Results for our 4 universities combined is \$27.6 million.

	FY24 Mid-year Projection	Central	Eastern	Southern	Western	System Office
Revenue:						
Tuition & Fees	332.5	119.7	46.7	114.5	51.5	-
State Appropriations	173.7	53.2	32.0	50.5	31.9	8.3
Fringe Benefits Paid By State (GF & OF)	2.3	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.4	-
One-time Funding	103.2	35.7	17.0	33.6	16.9	-
Housing and Food Services	95.7	29.2	27.1	26.7	12.7	-
Other Revenue	19.0	6.9	4.1	4.8	3.3	-
Total Revenue	726.5	245.5	127.2	230.8	116.7	8.3
Expenditures:						
Personnel salaries	361.9	111.1	60.1	123.3	61.4	6.0
Fringe Benefits	91.6	28.3	15.2	30.8	16.1	1.2
Inst. Financial Aid/Match	60.5	20.5	15.7	16.9	7.4	-
Utilities	22.2	7.5	4.5	6.0	4.2	-
Other expenses	128.9	41.6	20.4	35.1	25.1	6.8
Debt Service	31.3	13.4	7.1	7.4	5.3	-
Total Expenditures	696.4	222.3	123.0	219.5	119.4	14.1
Net gain/(loss) before transfers	30.1	22.4	3.8	10.9	(3.1)	(5.8)
Net Transfers	(2.6)	(2.3)	(1.6)	(1.6)	(1.6)	6.4
Net Results	27.6	20.1	2.2	9.3	(4.7)	0.6



CT State & Shared Services FY24 Mid-Year Update

Revenues are adjusted downward by .2% (-\$933K).

Expenditures are adjusted downward by 10.3% (-\$49.8M).

Projected Net Results are adjusted upward by \$16.9M.

	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Mid-year Projection			FY24 MidYear Projection vs. Budget	
			CT State	Shared Services	System Office	\$ change	% change
Revenue:							
Tuition & Fees	150.5	151.4	155.7	-	-	4.3	2.9%
State Appropriations	172.5	168.5	140.0	22.9	5.7	-	0.0%
Fringe Benefits Paid By State (GF & OF)	196.4	40.0	40.0	-		-	0.0%
One-time Funding	64.6	83.6	83.6	-		-	0.0%
Housing and Food Services	-	-	-	-		-	-
Other Revenue	13.7	7.2	1.9	-		(5.3)	-73.3%
Total Revenue	597.7	450.6	421.1	22.9	5.7	(0.9)	-0.2%
Expenditures:							
Personnel salaries	282.1	290.3	249.5	15.8	3.9	(21.2)	-7.3%
Fringe Benefits	195.2	86.7	61.1	4.5	0.7	(20.4)	-23.6%
Inst. Financial Aid/Match	19.6	14.4	18.2	0.3	-	4.1	28.6%
Utilities	8.9	11.1	11.0	0.0	-	(0.1)	-0.6%
Other expenses	54.1	81.7	45.8	21.4	2.3	(12.2)	-15.0%
Total Expenditures	559.9	484.2	385.6	41.9	6.9	(49.8)	-10.3%
Net gain/(loss) before transfers	37.8	(33.6)	35.5	(19.0)	(1.3)	48.8	-
Net Transfers						-	
Total Net Transfers	17.3	-	(26.9)	26.3	2.3	1.7	-
Net Results	55.1	(33.6)	8.6	7.3	1.0	16.9	-



Charter Oak FY24 Mid-Year Update

Revenues are adjusted upward by 1.3% (\$253K).

Expenditures are adjusted downward by 1.2% (\$217K).

Projected Net Results adjusted upward by \$470K.

	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budget	FY24 Mid-year Projection	FY24 MidYear Projection vs. Budget	
				\$ change	% change
Revenue:					
Tuition & Fees	12.0	12.6	12.9	0.3	2.2%
State Appropriations	3.7	3.7	3.7	-	0.0%
Fringe Benefits Paid By State (GF & OF)	4.6	(0.6)	(0.6)	-	0.0%
One-time Funding	1.3	2.5	2.5	-	0.0%
Housing and Food Services	-	-	-	-	-
Other Revenue	1.0	1.1	1.1	(0.0)	-2.3%
Total Revenue	22.5	19.3	19.5	0.3	1.3%
Expenditures:					
Personnel salaries	10.3	10.8	11.0	0.2	1.6%
Fringe Benefits	6.6	2.9	2.6	(0.4)	-12.1%
Inst. Financial Aid/Match	1.4	1.4	1.6	0.2	12.9%
Utilities	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	4.2%
Other expenses	3.2	3.5	3.3	(0.2)	-6.4%
Total Expenditures	21.5	18.8	18.6	(0.2)	-1.2%
Net gain/(loss) before transfers	1.0	0.5	1.0	0.5	-
Net Transfers	(0.6)	(0.5)	(0.5)	-	-
Net Results	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.5	-

Comments to CSCU Board of Regents

Brendan M. Cunningham, PhD

Professor

Chair, Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of Regents

Treasurer, CSU-AAUP

Economics and Finance

Eastern Connecticut State University

February 29, 2024

Planning for unforeseen events is difficult because they're unforeseen. Large organizations like CSCU keep cash on hand in order to meet financial commitments in the event that an unforeseen event disrupts revenue. CSCU now has two distinct eras for how it has accumulated cash. Before COVID, cash holdings increased by an average of 4.3% per year, just above the rate of inflation. Post covid, this rate of cash accumulation nearly tripled, to 12%.

Why? I attend a lot of meetings, but I have not seen any explanation for this change in approach. We actually do have data on an unforeseen event that disrupted revenues: covid. That shock required CSCU to draw down \$14.4 million from cash. As of FY2023, we now have enough cash on hand to cover 30 covids. When, exactly, do we expect to experience 30 covids? Will it be one per year until 2054? Clearly that is almost guaranteed not to happen. Covid, itself, was a once in a century pandemic. The most proximal to covid was the Spanish flu in 1918. If these two viruses are predictive of the pace of pandemic crises, then we have enough cash on hand for 3 millenia. Maybe we've covered our

bases when it comes to cash on hand (by the way, it is approaching half a billion dollars)?

This is important, because politicians are watching. Faculty bargaining units are talking to politicians a lot these days, over 100 of our members showed up and delivered comments to the appropriations committee earlier this month in order to avert the FY25 “fiscal cliff” built into the last biennial budget. We’ve been asked about all the CSU cash on hand. We’ve also been asked why the legislature should provide more funding when we have so much cash. I’m not sure we’ve been able to answer that question. I sure hope someone in the system office or a member of the board is engaging on this question.

I want to praise the board and system office for their novel use of reserves to address a crisis on one of our campuses. I think this was, broadly speaking, the right decision. I want to challenge the board and the system office to continue this novel thinking, particularly when it comes to the unprecedented rate of cash accumulation I mentioned earlier.

It is past time for us to invest in ourselves. If we are asking the legislature to invest in us then we should match, or exceed, them with our own investments. We need to eliminate the floor on class enrollments at the CSUs. Running the numbers, it looks like, even at an enrollment of 5 students, CSUs “profit” from offering a class staffed by a part time faculty member. I’m not even sure we should use profit as a motivation given the abysmal history of for-profit efforts in higher education (see Trump University). But even if your only KPI is profit, so-called “low enrollment” classes taught by part-time faculty are well worth offering.

We need to increase financial aid so that we are more competitive in attracting more students. Simultaneously, this would make our

campuses more accessible, which is undoubtedly a key part of our shared mission. We need to increase services and retention initiatives so that when our students arrive on our campuses they can be confident they will graduate in a reasonable amount of time. We need to recruit tenure-track faculty so that our campuses renew their scholarly and creative contributions to our state.

I want to reiterate: I am not questioning the need to prepare for emergencies by holding cash. What I am questioning is whether we've wandered into the realm of irrational doomsday prepping in which we're starving the kids in order to accumulate more pasta and canned vegetables than we'll ever need. I think we can all agree that is not a place we want to be in.

Reserve Balances, ending FY23

Cash Reserves (\$M)	CSCU Total	CT State	Charter Oak	CSU's
Unrestricted Net Position (UNP)	\$449.2	\$153.9	\$8.3	\$287.0
less: Designated balances	\$284.8	\$30.3	\$5.1	\$249.4
Undesignated UNP	\$164.4	\$123.6	\$3.2	\$37.6
Primary Reserve Ratio (> 40%)	29%	25%	38%	15%
Days of UNP (90 to 180 days)	110	98	137	116
Days of undesignated UNP	40	79	53	15