

*This document is the work of an ad hoc group of twenty Connecticut State University instructional faculty – Senate Presidents, Curriculum Committee Chairs, Board of Regents’ Faculty Advisory Committee members, and CSU-AAUP Chapter Presidents and officers (see page 3 of the document for their names and positions held). It articulates a vision and an identity of the Connecticut State University System, now part of Connecticut State Colleges and Universities under the Board of Regents for Higher Education.*

*This document represents only the views of the twenty people who participated in its development and does not necessarily represent the views of any organization, institution, or other individuals.*

---

## **The Role of the Connecticut State Universities in Public Higher Education**

Students are the center of our mission, yet it is the faculty that provides continuity, identity, and vitality to the Connecticut State Universities. Amidst all the changes in senior management, both on our local campuses and at the system level, faculty leaders at the four state universities do not want to lose sight of the solid cornerstone that the new Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education set in place over its first year. From our perspective, the Board’s foundational work consists of four interrelated priorities and practices: (1) An eagerness to seek out, critically review, and incorporate best practices in higher education from across the country; (2) An intention to redirect significant resources toward full-time instruction; (3) A willingness to include faculty perspectives and experiences in forming and implementing policy; and, (4) A stated commitment to making Connecticut’s public higher education system among the best in the nation. Because we share these priorities and are eager to collaborate in building on this foundation, we offer this statement on the value that the state universities provide Connecticut citizens, businesses, organizations, and taxpayers. We also include an assessment of the challenges we aspire to overcome.

### Challenges and Goals

CSU faculty members transform the lives of our students, enabling them to develop the knowledge, skills, and perspectives essential for their roles as engaged citizens and members of an educated workforce. We also prepare our students for life-long learning, with over 85% of our graduates remaining in Connecticut and contributing to the state’s economic and social welfare. And we do so while confronting significant challenges: 49% of our students are first-generation college students, many of whom arrive with inadequate academic preparation; many come to us from a public school system known for a significant “achievement gap;” and, we and our students suffer effects from fiscal austerity and dwindling budgetary resources at the national and state levels. Despite these challenges, we provide undergraduate and graduate education to many students who could not afford such education otherwise.

While we maintain high academic standards in the face of these challenges, our students deserve more support and commitment from the public. We all know that the best education requires significant investment; as a consequence, fulfilling our mission to provide **both access and quality** demands greater fiscal and administrative backing than we currently have. Without this crucial support we will never reach the low student to full-time faculty ratio or small class sizes necessary to fulfilling our stated mission.

The CSUs are more than job-training institutions; we also prepare students to succeed in their life and career goals and to contribute to our state's economic, political, and cultural well-being. The unique identities and missions of our four CSU institutions foster the richness and diversity of our students' learning, allowing us to provide the broad interdisciplinary education, as well as the opportunities for specialization, that prepares students for both success and advancement.

### Teaching & Research

The CSUs are **not only** teaching institutions. Faculty members also engage in research and creative activity as part of our conditions of employment: we cannot be hired, promoted, or tenured—nor teach our classes—without doing research.

Teaching at the CSUs is successful because faculty members bring both theoretical and practical research into the classroom, and through our research we help create the knowledge we teach. We seek to instill in all our students the value of the liberal arts and the sciences as a foundation for professional development and life-long learning, and many of us facilitate and promote research by undergraduate as well as graduate students. (For a selection of examples, see Appendix A.) CSU students in all departments receive exemplary professional training through the constant research and creative activity of our teacher-scholars.

CSU faculty members also collaborate with industry and community organizations in applied research. An overseeing board must realize that the faculty needs time and financial support to pursue research for classroom teaching, professional development, and the public good.

### Shared Governance

For a university to function effectively, institutional governance requires a joint effort based on collaboration. As the AAUP *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* (1966) asserts, the variety and complexity of the tasks performed in institutions of higher education produce an “inescapable interdependence” among trustees, faculty, administrators, and students. The document also states that the importance accorded each group in terms of governance should be determined by the responsibility it has in a particular issue or situation. Faculty has primary responsibility for determining such educational matters as curricula, methods of instruction, the quality of research, and faculty status, including hiring, retention, evaluation, and dismissal. Faculty members additionally take a lead role in establishing and maintaining program accreditation, advising and mentoring students, and providing one-on-one academic support. The faculty also accepts responsibility for serving the university by undertaking daily administrative functions that require shared governance: chairing departments, creating and coordinating programs, directing various centers, serving on university and system-wide committees, assisting in accreditation processes, gathering assessment data, and advising on managerial hires.

Shared governance, along with tenure and academic freedom, is one of the three fundamental, interdependent principles of academic life. Without tenure, the academic freedom to pursue knowledge, truth, or art free of coercion cannot be guaranteed; without shared governance, both tenure and academic freedom are vulnerable. Weakening any of these three academic principles compromises the essential educational role of colleges and universities.

In protecting the unfettered pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, the practice of shared governance serves not only the particular needs of faculty but also the general needs of society and the larger public. Without shared governance, colleges and universities would be unable to guarantee students the broad-based liberal education they need to become informed citizens who can both participate in a democracy and contribute to the making of an educated workforce.

### Service to the Community

Often overlooked in assessing the contribution of Connecticut's public universities to the state and its citizens is faculty service to the community. CSU faculty members often serve as consultants to public and private agencies and on governing boards of community organizations. They assist in designing and carrying out research projects to address social problems and matters of public concern. They forge partnerships with external agencies to facilitate experiential learning, student internships, and clinical experiences. They bring their significant knowledge and expertise to a variety of organizations that merge university research with community needs. (For a selection of examples, see Appendix B.) Through such activities, the faculty enables our universities to be valuable resources for the surrounding communities.

### Our Priorities

In order to meet the challenges ahead of us and achieve our goals, the following should be our immediate priorities:

- Prepare students for success in their life and career goals and to contribute to the economic, political, and cultural wellbeing of Connecticut.
- Improve tenure-track full-time faculty to FTE student ratio.
- Strengthen shared governance.
- Strengthen faculty's control of curriculum and academic programs and provide necessary resources to the faculty to do their jobs.

---

This statement was developed by an ad hoc committee consisting of the following individuals:

Stephen Adair (Sociology), Faculty Advisory Committee to the BOR, CCSU  
Peter Bachiochi (Psychology), Faculty Advisory Committee to the BOR, ECSU  
Ilene Crawford (English), Faculty Advisory Committee to the BOR, SCSU  
Candace Barrington (English), Past Senate President, CCSU  
James Mulrooney (Biomolecular Sciences), Senate President, CCSU  
Mark Jackson (Biology), Curriculum Committee Chair, CCSU  
David Stoloff (Education), Senate President, ECSU  
Gregory Kane (Health and Physical Education), Senate Vice President, ECSU  
Susan Cusato (Science Education and Environmental Studies), Senate President, SCSU  
Martin Hartog (Mathematics), Curriculum Committee Chair, SCSU  
Karen Koza (Marketing), Senate President, WCSU  
Robin Flanagan (Psychology), Curriculum Committee Past Chair, WCSU  
Jason Jones (English), CCSU-AAUP President  
Kristin Jacobi (Library Faculty), ECSU-AAUP President  
Michael Shea (English), SCSU-AAUP President  
Patricia O'Neill (Psychology), Faculty Advisory Committee to the BOR (alternate member), WCSU-AAUP President  
Harlan Shakun (Accounting), CSU-AAUP Treasurer, CCSU  
Rebecca Wood (Psychology), CSU-AAUP Secretary, CCSU  
Elena Tapia (English), CSU-AAUP Vice President, ECSU  
Vijay Nair (Library Faculty), CSU-AAUP President, WCSU

December, 2012

## Appendix A Student/Faculty Initiatives

### CCSU

#### Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Program (URCAP)

URCAP at CCSU encompasses the Undergraduate Research Senior Awards, Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day (URCAD), and the Alumni Travel Program. URCAD is a campus-wide showcase for student research and creative activities. The day begins with keynote presentations by the senior award winners, followed by a poster presentation with lunch included for all attendees. Academic Affairs presents awards for outstanding poster presentations. This year, through a generous donation by the CCSU Alumni Association, CCSU students may apply for Alumni Travel Award funds to present at field-specific conferences. <http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=5056>

#### CCSU Hybrid Propellant Rocket team presentation to 50th AIAA meeting

On January 10, 2012, students Alexander Haralambous and Adam Goldreich presented the results of students/faculty research on the combustion of bio-fuels in the Hybrid Propellant Rocket Engine at the 50th American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Aerospace Science Meeting (Nashville, TN). The research paper was published in the proceedings of the 50th AIAA Aerospace Science Meeting.

#### Seventh Annual CSU Undergraduate English Conference

The CSUS Undergraduate English Conference gives students an opportunity to share with other students and faculty the literary analyses and creative works they wrote for English, Linguistics, and Journalism classes. <http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=13799>

#### Annual Eastern Colleges Science Conference

CCSU has participated in this annual conference for 22 years and has served 3 times as the host for this regional conference which brings approximately 400-500 students and faculty from various Universities for a day-long conference highlighting faculty-student research. Students present platform or poster presentations on research from several disciplines including the natural sciences and behavioral sciences. Each year approximately 60 CCSU students participate.

### ECSU

#### School of Arts and Sciences Research Conference and Exhibition

This annual event showcases student research and creative activity undertaken within the School of Arts and Sciences.

#### Annual School of Education Excellence Expo

A record 120 students presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Research Conference and Exhibition, and more than 40 faculty members served as mentors for the students' projects. Oral presentations included such topics as the geology of Andover Lake; the anatomy and physiology of coral competition; the media's influence on public opinion of war; an analysis of the Harry Potter

books; sustainable energy and the workforce; ancient Greek history; the history of Irish-American women in Willimantic; and Alzheimer's Disease. Music students and faculty also presented an experimental music performance in Science 104, and several short plays were presented by theatre students. Other students presented their research findings using tabletop display posters. Visual art students exhibited two-dimensional and digital art as well as a range of sculpture art.

### Liberal Arts Work! Initiatives

All Eastern students, regardless of their majors and career aspirations, will complete an appropriate pre-professional experience that helps to clarify career goals, develop skills, and focus employment, graduate schools, or other options.

### Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) Research Conference

This regional undergraduate research conference presents a unique opportunity for students to share scholarly and creative work with six COPLAC institutions. The conference is organized around the larger academic areas of natural sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities.

[http://www.easternct.edu/academicaffairs/documents/coplac/all\\_together\\_headers.pdf](http://www.easternct.edu/academicaffairs/documents/coplac/all_together_headers.pdf)

## **SCSU**

### Center for Coastal and Marine Studies

The Center provides financial support for 5-8 undergraduate and graduate students to conduct research on mercury and other metal contaminants in Long Island Sound. Marine studies students are engaged in beach erosion studies at Hammonsett and West Haven, working with SCSU faculty, DEEP staff and West Haven town officials.

<https://www.southernct.edu/departments/ccms/>

### The CRISP Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)

CRISP is supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The REU experience is based on a very successful collaborative team-based model. Specifically, a team of researchers with various academic backgrounds are brought together to research a topic of common interest. The SCSU Physics Department offers this unique experience in collaboration with Yale University, and the teams make use of shared research/teaching facilities at both Yale and SCSU. Over the last seven years SCSU has had, on average, 5 students per year participate in this program with SCSU faculty members.

### SCSU Honors College

Students enrolled in the Honors College complete Honor Thesis Projects collaboratively with SCSU faculty. Research projects are mentored by faculty from a wide range of departments and disciplines.

## WCSU

### The 8<sup>th</sup> WestConn Research Day (WRD)

The WRD program held in May 2012 featured poster exhibitions of research projects conducted by WCSU students in a wide range of academic disciplines during the academic year. Projects were approved by the student's faculty adviser before submission. A WRD seminar and luncheon featured student presentations of several projects to invited guests from WCSU and the Greater Danbury community. Western faculty members conducted judging during the poster session to select the 2012 recipient of the Provost's Prize, which contributed \$1,000 toward student expenses for presentation of an original research project at a professional conference. <https://www.wcsu.edu/newsevents/2012WRD.asp>

### Archaeology at WCSU

The Summer Archeology Field School runs almost every summer. Students test and excavate sites throughout western Connecticut through their numerous affiliations with the [Office of State Archaeology](#), the [Office of Culture and Tourism](#), the Department of Environmental Protection, and local municipalities, museums and historical societies. Over the years, they have presented some of the fruits of their summer field school labor at the [Institute for American Indian Studies](#), in Washington, CT. <http://www.wcsu.edu/socialsci/archaeology/>

### WCSU students win national MBA case competition

Four students in the Master of Business Administration program at WCSU have earned the top prize in a nationwide competition to design a new leadership volunteer institute for the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). WCSU students Rachid Chtioui, Kathleen Lindenmayer, Thomas Loughman and Stacey Miller received the award in the AARP/IW Group MBA Case Competition announced on April 25. The WCSU Ancell School of Business will receive a prize of \$10,000 in recognition of the winning case study for a leadership volunteer institute, which the students will present this summer to AARP senior management at the organization's national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The award marked the capstone of an intensive project that required research on AARP's mission and organization, design of a national leadership volunteer institute consistent with AARP's priorities, and analysis of instructional and financial requirements to propose a high-impact and cost-effective program. The students collaborated closely with their business school faculty adviser and school liaison for the project.

<http://www.wcsu.edu/newsevents/MBAcasecompetition.asp>

### Grant awarded to WCSU professor will keep Lyme disease study ticking along.

A recent \$35,000 grant from the state [Department of Health](#) will help Dr. Neeta Connally hire students to conduct a tick prevention study in several area towns. Dr. Connally has been working on establishing a research program at the university on the ecology of the deer tick and disease

prevention in collaboration with the [Centers for Disease Control](#), Yale School of Public Health and the DOH. Connally is joined in the WCSU research lab by three undergraduate students.

## Appendix B

### Events and Service to the External Community

#### CCSU

Community Central - CCSU maintains a storefront in the heart of downtown New Britain as a connection point between CCSU, New Britain Schools and the New Britain Community. The storefront serves as a site for various activities led by CCSU faculty and students that are mutually beneficial to all. For example, the site serves as a tutoring center, an outlet for various art activities with the community and most recently provides free health screening by CCSU nursing students and faculty. <http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=11410>

7th Annual Connecticut Best Robotics Competition - The department of Manufacturing and Construction Management of the School of Engineering and Technology hosted the 7th Annual Connecticut BEST Robotic competition. This year's theme was WARP XX, and featured high school and middle school students from local schools and around the northeast region.

Civil War Commemoration Commission – Dr. Matt Warshauer, professor of History at Central Connecticut State University, is co-chairman of the Connecticut Civil War Commemoration Commission, and has co-organized several events, including reenactments of various battles, that are open to the public. <http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=8577>

Global Environmental Sustainability Action Coalition - GESAC is a group of CCSU students, administrators, faculty, and alumni committed to providing information on how to live our lives in a way that is sustainable and in harmony with nature. Founded as the CCSU Climate Action Coalition in 2007, the coalition has since expanded its scope to the larger issue of environmental sustainability. In 2008, we held our inaugural Global Sustainability and Climate Change Symposium in support of Focus the Nation. At this three day event, more than 800 people from middle school students to community members to state governmental officials attended. <http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=2254>

Science-based research experiences for Middle and High School Students – Several initiatives coordinated by Dr. Kathy Martin from the Department of Biomolecular Sciences deliver laboratory research experience to students at their schools or bring the students to campus. The Summer Research Internship Initiative pairs High School students with CCSU students for a 6 week intense research experience in the laboratories at CCSU.

#### ECSU

Community services through Eastern's Center for Community Engagement – Commended by *US News & World Report* (11/02/11), the Center for Community Engagement works closely with ECSU faculty to ensure that the service that our students perform in local communities aligns with their academic programs. In providing thousands of hours a year of service to dozens of social agencies and nonprofits, Eastern students are demonstrating their social responsibility while learning valuable professional and organizational skills. Service learning opportunities at Eastern have included:

- “University-Verified Badges” that present students professionally for job searches

- Database development for the Covenant Soup Kitchen
- Mentoring and stress management programs at local schools and residential mental health hospital
- Storefront and billboard design for Willimantic small businesses and community initiatives
- Production of public service announcements for broadcast on local television stations
- Willimantic community promotional film production
- Business plan design for Willimantic small businesses

One example of community service is Town Pride, Town Wide, which brings students and residents together with local nonprofit organizations and town parks to provide a helping hand to give the towns of Windham and Willimantic a face lift. Hundreds of students come out to help and work alongside community members, faculty and administrators to provide a spring-cleaning where it is most needed. Thousands of volunteer hours are donated in this effort, which has brought a fresh spring look to such towns as Willimantic and Coventry.

<http://www.easternct.edu/communityengagement/>

Campus-wide Day of Giving - The Day of Giving was started by Jason Budahazy '09 in 2007. The project consists of two parts. The first is a large-scale food drive that takes place in the local community as well as on the Eastern campus. All food items collected go to the Northeast Food Collaborative, which consists of local food charities such as the Covenant Soup Kitchen, Access Agency, Catholic Charities, and others. The second part of Day of Giving is a full-course Thanksgiving meal complete with all the trimmings for members of the Willimantic/Windham community who otherwise would not be able to have a Thanksgiving dinner.

<http://www.easternct.edu/communityengagement/>

## SCSU

Marine Studies - Students conduct an annual beach clean up on West Haven beaches. For over a dozen years SCSU students have spent a Saturday in the early fall helping remove trash and debris from West Haven beaches.

Students in the Secondary Science Certification program mentor New Haven middle school students in the development of science projects.

SCSU Physics Department - Offers a variety of public lecture/demonstration/career events for the general public. In the fall of 2012, the lecture was held at Yale University. The department plans to offer an event like this in the CSUS Nanotechnology Center [at SCSU] in the spring.

The Public Health Department – The department received a \$292,000 grant (four years) from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration to participate in the CT-RI Public Health Training Center, which is established to help train the public health workforce. Through this grant, the department is able to award six \$5,000 fellowships each year to a group of graduate and undergraduate public health majors. 2012 is the second year of the grant. Last year the Fellows conducted two projects in Bridgeport – they developed a community gardening Expo and created a toolkit for "Body and Soul," a faith-based health promotion system. This year the

students will conduct a community health assessment for the Quinnipiac Valley Health District.

SCSU Day of Service - Each September freshman spend a Saturday serving the New Haven community and especially the communities surrounding the SCSU campus. Tree planting, neighborhood clean ups and community activities help students engage with local families and businesses. Many of our students engage with the greater New Haven community through their clubs and organizations. Red Cross Blood Drives, Cancer Fund raising activities, holiday food drives, and sporting fund raisers.

## WCSU

Dalai Lama visits WCSU - One of the world's leading spiritual figures, his Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, spoke at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury on October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> 2012. The first was on "The Art of Compassion," and the second was called "Advice for Daily Life." This concluded a year-long series of events getting ready for the Dalai Lama's visit. All events were open to the public. On October 17<sup>th</sup> 2012, WCSU Senate voted to designate WCSU a '**University of Compassion**'. This initiative came from the Honors students at WCSU, and encourages events through the next decade to foster a more compassionate society.

<http://www.wcsudalailama.org/>

Bridges Program - For the past 8 years, Western Connecticut State University has partnered with Bethel and Danbury middle and high schools on a project called "**Building a Bridge to Improve Student Success**." The partnership has helped thousands of high school seniors move successfully to college and to succeed there. The majority of students who graduate from Bridges and attend Western are able to skip remedial classes in mathematics and writing and move instead into credit-bearing classes. That means they will be able to earn their university degrees more quickly, saving both money and time. And just as significant, the two-year retention rate for Bridges students is 10 percent higher than for students from non-Bridge schools. Building a Bridge to Improve Student Success offers the following programs to middle and high school students:

Camp College - Students from Bethel Middle School and Danbury's Rogers Park Middle School STEM Academy attended WestConn's second annual "Camp College." Participants took classes in Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Writing, all led by WCSU professors. Students studied animal physiology and learned about CSI type forensics. In addition, they went on an "Excellent Bug Adventure" to learn about the ecology of insects and found out about "Spirals in Nature." Another highlight of the camp was a Moon Crater Workshop led by Rick Varner, NASA Education Specialist. All of these experiences were fodder for writing classes in which students created poems, stories, and essays.