UConn Administration’s Budget
Creates distrust, confusion and will have long-term, devastating effects on research, teaching & learning

At the start of winter break, the UConn Administration rolled out a 5-year Financial Plan that will begin to take effect in Fall 2024. This plan includes a 15% reduction in permanent 2-Ledger budgets for all academic units over the next five years. The total reduction will be achieved through incremental 3%, 4%, 3.5%, 2.5% and 2% reductions beginning in the upcoming school year. The Administration has said they are asking nonacademic units to review their budgets as well.

University Administration:

- The UConn administration maintains that there was a “misunderstanding” with the state regarding the funds that were provided in the first year of the biennium budget. The university thought they were permanent funds and used them for collective bargaining increases (CBIs) for all employees.
- In December of 2023, the University learned that the ARPA funds and the promise of carry-forward funds (lapses) would not be available for FY25 or beyond.
- The state now wants to phase out the temporary funds they provided to cover, among other things, the CBIs for employees not paid through the block grant.
- Given the reductions in temporary funding, the administration plan applies across the board cuts to all top-level academic units (e.g., Schools and Colleges) and rolls any savings beyond the deficit into the Academic Budget. This allows the administration to fund selective reinvestment based upon the Strategic Plan.
- In December 2019, the Board of Trustees approved a 5-year plan to increase tuition by 23.3% over that time frame.
- In response to CT’s reductions in temporary funding, the UConn administration’s 5-year Financial Plan applies across-the-board cuts to all top-level academic units (e.g., Schools and Colleges) and rolls any savings beyond the deficit into the Academic Budget. This allows the administration to reinvest in certain units based upon the Strategic Plan.
- Lack of transparency and communication from the Administration has created distrust, confusion, and low morale.
- The UConn administration has an ongoing relationship with Huron Consulting Group, a global management consulting company, that oversaw University of Wisconsin’s 2017 “austerity plan” and a $12 million budget cut at University of New Hampshire.

Facts that we know:

- According to the co-chair of Connecticut General Assembly’s Appropriations Committee, the state fully funded negotiated collective bargaining increases for employees paid through the block grant. The University decides how to use the money from the block grant.
- The lack of transparency and communication from the Administration has created distrust, confusion, and low morale.
- There has been a 275% increase in “Executive, administrative, managerial” full time non-instructional staff from 2003 to 2021.
- Reliance on temporary funds from the state will not support the on-going UConn budget. We must call on the governor and legislature to provide for more permanent state funding.

The effects of these cuts will have significant impacts on teaching, learning and research which include:

- Entire graduate programs may be severely reduced or entirely eliminated as graduate assistantships and TAships will be cut.
• Massive impact on students: larger class sizes; reduced tutoring and academic support across campuses; inability to complete degree requirements in timely fashion due to reduced course offerings; likely increase time to degree.
• Administration has already signaled interest in raising course enrolments, including canceling low enrollment classes, and increasing course enrollments for writing (W) classes.
• Moving faculty into different departments/campuses to meet changing needs.
• Department workloads will increase: possible elimination of course releases for administrative work; increase “teaching capacity” by up to 10% per faculty member, cutting into research and scholarship time.

Impact to the State of CT
• Asking students to take on more debt to attend an underfunded public university with fewer offerings less is not a sustainable model to build CT’s workforce.
• Students will have fewer instructors, larger classes, and diminished services, making it harder for them to succeed at UConn.
• Workforce Pipeline Delays: Affordable, high-quality public higher education is essential to filling the nearly 100,000 job vacancies in CT.
• Research and Scholarship will diminish as faculty and researchers will be asked to do even more with even less.
• Severe threat to UConn’s standing as an R1 University “Very High Research Activity” with implications for future accreditations.

The time to act is now: Communicate to the UConn Administration that they must be transparent about the long-term planning and communicate more effectively on the state budget implications. Support ongoing efforts of other members of our community by asking for a town hall with administrative leadership. Share publicly how these cuts will affect your work.