

UConn Senate Student Welfare Committee

August 28, 2025, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | MS Teams

Charge: This committee shall review the conditions that contribute to the academic success, personal development, and well-being of undergraduate and graduate students.

Agenda:

1. Welcome & Introductions: Leo Lachut and Jennifer Tibbetts opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and going around the virtual room for introductions.
2. Approval of Minutes: meeting minutes were approved by voice vote with three abstentions.
 - [April 24, 2025 Meeting](#)
3. Old Business
 - Review annual report: Leo Lachut referred committee members to last year's annual report of this committee, available on the Senate website, inviting members to ask any questions they may have after reviewing. No further discussion.
 - Housing update: Cynthia Costanzo gave an update on housing, sharing that "Summer Residential Life" is no longer an independent unit and that "Campus Housing" will now be comprised of two departments (1) Housing Administration & Finance, focused on the business practices related to housing and (2) Residential Living and Education, focused on day-to-day services. They added that additional communication will be forthcoming and that student interactions with Campus Housing will not be impacted by this structural change. Cynthia Costanzo added that Campus Housing is operating at 107% capacity (with some lounge spaces having been turned into rooms) and that there is still some capacity for students to receive housing. They added that the opening of The Standard has alleviated some of the housing pressure this semester. The Stamford Campus also acquired a new long-term contract for housing and the first housing facility in Hartford (accommodating approximately 50 students) has also opened. Additional Hartford housing will be available in Fall 2026. The floor was opened to questions and Leo Lachut thanked Cynthia for their report.
 - Financial aid: Sue Peters gave a report on the process of awarding late financial aid (which became available in late July). Sue Peters stated that their office does their best to award as many students with this additional aid as quickly as possible (before late fees are applied to student accounts). For Fall 2025, approximately 500 students were awarded a total of \$3 million funding, up to \$10,000 per student per academic year depending on the unmet need of the student and unpaid balance. The groups that were targeted for this additional funding were primarily Pell Grant recipients (who applied on time) and had taken advantage of Federal Direct loans,

and who had undergone the verification process for financial aid. Sue Peters also reported that students who attended summer term and did not meet academic requirements for financial aid will receive notification on September 2nd of this change; they will have until September 16th to appeal.

- One Stop Initiatives: tabled to a future meeting
- Regional Concerns: Erica Granoff shared they have concerns about regional graduate students and how they can access services.

4. New Business

- Setting agenda for the year: Committee members were invited to brainstorm ideas of topics that they would like the group to review this academic year.
 1. Proposed rule which was recently announced by the federal government that may limit how student visa holders maintain their status in the U.S. (now status comes from duration of degree program and new rule proposes fixed dates separate from their enrollment) (Arthur Galinat)
 2. Scooter and bike safety concerns on sidewalks (Sue Peters)
 3. Discussion of potential changes to financial aid as a result of the passing of the “Big Beautiful Bill” (Sue Peters)
 4. Impacts of ICE activities on student communities (Erica Granoff)
- Potential guests: no specific names mentioned

Members & Attendance:

- ***Leo Lachut, ISS, Co-Chair, Academic Achievement Center**
- ***Jennifer Tibbetts, Co-Chair, One Stop Student Services**
- *Valarie Artigas, Nursing
- *Alexis Boylan, SFA
- *Arthur Galinat, International Student & Scholar Services
- *Erica Granoff, Student Services (Stamford Campus)
- *Amy McKeon, CAHNR Professional Staff
- *Sarira Motaref, Engineering
- *Nathanael Okpych, Social Work (Hartford) (*absent, on sabbatical Fall 2025*)
- *Tracy Rittenhouse, CAHNR
- *Fiona Vernal, CLAS, History
- Bryanna Anderson, Center for Students with Disabilities
- Cynthia Costanzo, Interim Vice President for Student Life (Ex-Officio Member)
- Kimberly Duby, Dean of Students Office
- Tina McCarthy, SHaW
- Suzanne Peters, Financial Aid
- Megan Petsa, The Graduate School
- Peter Tribuzio, Student Services, Hartford Campus

*Members are Senators, AY 2025-2026

Potential Upcoming Topics:

- Exams outside of class time