

Annual Report to the University Senate

Academic Year 2026-2027

Senate Scholastic Standards Committee

Committee Charge: This committee shall review those scholastic matters affecting the University as a whole, and not assigned to the Curricula and Courses Committee, including, but not limited to, academic programs, the marking system, and scholarship standards.

2026/2027 Senate Scholastic Standards Committee Members:

- ***Lindsay Cummings, Co-Chair, SFA**
- ***Jennifer Terni, Co-Chair, CLAS**
- *Karen Bresciano, The Graduate School
- *Dorothea Anagnostopoulos, Neag School of Education
- *David Embrick, CLAS (Hartford)
- *Holly Fitch, CLAS, Psychological Sciences
- *Carrie Fernandes, Office of Financial Aid
- *Erin Ciarimboli, Office of Undergraduate Advising
- *Elaine Choung-Hee Lee, CAHNR
- Maureen Armstrong, Dean of Students Office
- Smith Bernard, Undergraduate Student
- Sarah Croucher, Provost's Office, Academic Affairs
- Jennifer Lease Butts, Honors and Enrichment Program (Ex-Officio)
- Isabelle Norato, Undergraduate Student
- Brian Rockwood, Registrar's Office
- Lauren Schlesselman, CETL, Academic Program Assessment and Learning Initiatives
- Nadia Upah, Graduate Student
- Lawrence Walsh, Office of Admissions
- Christine Wenzel, Center for Students with Disabilities*Senate Member 2025/2026

Summary:

The Scholastic Standards Committee met 13 times between August 2025 and April 2026. Over the course of the academic year, we discussed a wide range of issues, including the attendance policy and cultural issues around attendance, Artificial Intelligence and its impact on teaching and learning, block transfers, admissions requirements, AP credit policies, changes to teaching and learning resulting from new minimum class size policies, and changes to how the Part Time Dean's List is calculated. We also addressed several "clean up" issues in the Senate Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations, including around language on academic standing and classification of students.

Specific Topics Addressed:

SSC Report 2025-2026

Academic Notice

Background

During its regular meeting on April 1, 2024 the University Senate passed a motion presented by the Senate Scholastic Standards Committee initiating several changes to the By-laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate Article II. E. 13 Scholastic Standing & Dismissal. One of the changes that passed was to rename “scholastic standing” to “academic standing” and “scholastic probation” to “academic notice” moving forward. These by-law changes came into effect starting in the Fall 2024 semester. We subsequently noticed that the old terms of “scholastic standing” and “scholastic probation” existed in other areas of the Senate By-Laws not amended as a part of that motion.

Summary of Action

The Scholastic Standards Committee submitted a proposal to the Senate By-Laws, replacing all reminding instances of “scholastic standing” or “scholastic probation” with “academic standing” and “academic notice” respectively. These included changes to II.B.5, II.B.10, II.D.2, II.E, II.E.3b, and II.E.4. This action also included several added clarifications and syntactical changes.

Revised bylaws: Clean Copy

B.5 Full-Time and Part-Time Students

Students are admitted to the University with full-time status, which requires carrying at least 12 credits each semester. Students seeking to obtain part-time status, that is, carry fewer than 12 credits, must obtain written approval from the deans of the schools/colleges in which they are enrolled. Part-time students may not participate in any extra-curricular activity involving intercollegiate competition except by permission of the Dean of Students or designee. Part-time status also affects financial aid, students not in good academic standing, and could affect eligibility for University housing.

B.10 Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from a Course

In considering a schedule with fewer than 12 credits, a student should consult with an advisor and dean or designee of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. A student considering fewer than 12 credits should note the regulations concerning part-time students, financial aid, as well as the regulations on academic notice and dismissal (see II.B.3, *Improper Registration or Failure to Register*, II.B.4, *Credits Permitted in a Semester* and II.E.12, *Suspension or Expulsion*).

D.2 Course Credit by Examination

- A student may not take course credit by examination for a course in which they have earned a grade of 'F' (see "Academic Standing")

E. Academic Standing

E.3.b Grades not used to calculate the GPA

Pass-Fail Option: A student who is in good academic standing (i.e., not on academic notice, subject to dismissal, or dismissed) may elect a maximum of 12 credits (not including credits on P/F recorded in spring 2020) to be distributed over not more than one course per semester and three courses total, to be recorded as "p" for Pass or "f" for Fail on their permanent record.

E.4 Temporary Grades

Temporary grades shall not prevent the calculation of either the semester or the cumulative grade point average.

This motion was presented at the regular meeting of the University Senate on December 1, 2026. It passed unanimously by voice vote.

Attendance Policy

Background

UConn has long been recognized as a "non-attendance" university. Although the policy in the Senate Rules and Regulations (E.9) distinguishes carveouts wherein exceptions can be made to the rule that "grades are not to be reduced merely because of a student's absences as such," courses at UConn are generally organized according to an assumption that attendance cannot be graded nor required as such. Policies introduced during COVID meant to protect public health and ensure student learning – an expansion of online learning and recorded lectures, a migration of substantial parts of campus life to online venues, the widespread use of smartphones and internet browsing, and student self-reporting for missed work and exams – have contributed to an erosion of student and faculty engagement. A norm of low attendance in many classes, especially large-lecture gateway and general education courses, has led to disruptions in the quality of student learning and in quantity and depth of material being taught in programs across the university.

Summary of Action

Given the longstanding norms surrounding non-attendance at UConn, Scholastic Standards recognized that any changes would potentially involve four areas: change in culture, accommodations to protect fragile students, a continued focus on class engagement as opposed to attendance alone, and a potential change in the rules or language in the Senate's Rules (E.9 Attendance). Concerns about larger class size, reduced instructional, and AI have added new layers to this question.

We conducted research on attendance policies at peers and peer-aspirants that has revealed that UConn is an outlier in terms of its culture and policies surrounding attendance. Most of UConn's peer institutions, including public universities, have more affirmative expectations surrounding attendance and engagement. This means that it is possible for individual faculty to have their own attendance policies while respecting a list of accommodations that vary according to different institutional philosophies and traditions.

We also examined a substantial body of academic research that finds attendance is one of the most stable predictors of academic success, with much of the research showing that attendance has the biggest positive impact on students in crisis. Student engagement, rather than simple attendance, is key for ensuring that class time is meaningful: UConn's robust culture of student-centric engagement-oriented teaching and learning is a critical asset and must continue to be prioritized as we consider whether UConn should revise its policy on attendance, specifically whether attendance might count as an element of academic performance.

The Scholastic Standards Committee conducted a Survey of Department Heads in CLAS. CLAS was chosen since it is by far the largest college at UConn. Twenty-six department heads completed the survey. Overall, survey respondents indicated the strongest attendance in graduate level courses and 3000+ courses capped at 50 students. Respondents reported the poorest attendance in large lecture 1000-level CCC/Gen Ed courses and in 1000-2000 large lectures required in the major, with "sporadic" and "mixed" being the respective highest-ranking responses. A strong majority of survey respondents indicated that in-class engagement was "very important for overall understanding" and "very important for acquiring skills," and that poor attendance negatively impacts student learning. The top three factors seen to influence class attendance were, in order of important, "attendance policy, course modality, and class size." Most respondents noted that the problem of attendance, but also of student engagement, has worsened post-COVID. All 24 respondents who answered the final question of the survey indicated support for faculty being able to set graded attendance policies.

SSC has had many deep conversations about student learning, peer engagement, and responsible assessment. The goal of this project is to support student learning at both a collective and an individual level, and, moving forward, we hope to determine when and how policies, particularly those related to assessment and grading, can be utilized in relationship to that goal. We believe in authentic assessment. We also believe in creating a system that sets up students for success.

On February 20, Scholastic Standards sent a report to the Senate Executive Committee reporting these findings.

Summary of Action

On March 18, the SEC empowered the Scholastic Standards Committee to review the Senate By-Laws Article E.9 related to attendance and review potential edits. Some recommendations from the SEC focus on strengthening the language in the by-laws to highlight the importance of attendance and/or giving faculty the ability to add attendance as a graded requirement to their syllabus if they so choose.

On April 6, Senate, Senate Chair, Bob Day announced a period of consultations surrounding attendance culture and rules to the Senate. "The Scholastic Standards committee is exploring

potential revisions to the Senate Rules and Regulations. Given that UConn's non-attendance policy is a longstanding policy and has played a significant role in shaping university culture, the SSC is exploring different options for bringing stakeholders together and discussing how to bring about a more vibrant climate for learning. These include a set of summer and fall meetings to ensure that all stakeholders can participate in any changes being proposed. The SSC believes that any changes brought to the Senate must be designed to uphold its commitment to protect students who need extra support while also prioritizing student success, pedagogical excellence, and a culture of student engagement.”

In April and May 2026, the Scholastic Standards Committee began identifying stakeholders for early discussions on the topic, with the intention of moving to a more robust working group to explore these topics in AY 2026-2027.

Part Time Dean’s List

Background

Concerns were brought by a student to the Senate Scholastic Standards committee regarding how the Part-Time Dean’s List is determined. The existing by-law calculated only Spring GPA but required that a student have at least 12 calculable credits over the previous 12 months. This meant that students could achieve Part-Time Dean’s list status on the merit of anywhere from 1-12 credits. This created a situation in which a student with strong performance and higher credit enrollment in the fall would miss having most of their work counted in the Spring calculation. Conversely, a student who had lower grades in most credits might take 1 credit in the Spring, receive an A, and be placed on the Part Time Dean’s List. The SSC determined that the goal should be to revise the by-law to provide a more accurate accounting of a student’s overall performance, while remaining as similar in structure to the Dean’s List as possible.

Summary of Action

Senate Scholastic Standards presented a resolution to update the By-Laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate Article II.F.1 (Dean’s List) to change the way in which the Dean’s List is calculated for Part-Time students.

We proposed including both Fall and Spring grades in the calculation, to include a broader sample of student work. The updated language also makes it clear that these two semesters of grades are calculated against the full population of the school/college across both semesters. Overall, this draws more data into the calculation. We limit the calculation to Fall and Spring semester courses, and not non-required terms, to maintain consistency with the Dean’s List for full time students.

This amendment to the by-law was presented three times in the Senate. In the first two instances, Senators pointed out lack of clarity in the language. In each instance, the Scholastic Standards Committee, which includes membership from the Registrar’s Office, integrated the feedback to arrive at the language below.

Revised bylaw: Clean Copy

Senate Article II.F.1

Semi-annually the deans of the various schools and colleges shall issue a list of those full-time degree-seeking students who for the previous semester

1. were registered for at least twelve calculable credits,
2. received no mark below 'C' nor received a 'U' in any course,
3. earned at least a 3.0 semester grade point average, and
4. were in the upper quartile of their respective school or college

Students with a reduced courseload accommodation are eligible for the full-time Dean's lists.

An annual part-time dean's list for each school or college is calculated at the end of each spring semester. To be eligible, a student:

1. Must not have attained full-time status at any time during the previous 12 months,
2. Must have earned at least 12 calculable credits across the previous 12-month period (including non-required terms) at least nine of which must be in the Fall and Spring semesters,
3. Must have completed at least one credit in the Spring semester,
4. Must have a Fall and Spring GPA (i.e. required semesters only)--using the standard procedure employed by the Registrar to calculate a two-semester GPA--at or above the mean of the 75th percentile GPA for Fall and Spring of the school or college in which they are enrolled at the conclusion of the Spring semester.

Students will receive the distinction of "Annual Part-Time Dean's List" upon satisfying these requirements. This distinction will be published on the Spring semester of their transcript.

Motion passed during the Regular Meeting of the University Senate, March 9, 2006 by unanimous voice vote.

The Learning Accommodations Task Force Report

The final report of the Learning Accommodations Task Force, delivered to the Senate in Feb. 2026, showcased recommendations for enhancing UConn's capacity to manage a rapidly growing population of students entitled to learning accommodations. The report was detailed and thorough, and offered several important recommendations to help support students, faculty, and staff to succeed within the new reality of proportionally increased accommodations. The report was the result of efforts over several years. The topic had originally taken up by a CLAS Fellows program, which presented recommendations to the SEC in the Fall of 2023 by Senator Holly Fitch. In Jan 2024, the Senate passed a resolution asking the Provosts Office to convene a Task Force on the matter. In Fall 2024 this Task Force was formed, but due to scheduling and other issues, it only forwarded a comprehensive report back to the SEC in Feb 2026, two and a half years from initial SEC promise of action. Indeed, discussions about how to support academic accommodations date back over a decade in the Scholastic Standards Committee.

Despite the time it has taken to produce the report, the Scholastic Standards Committee has remained concerned about the urgency of the recommendations made in the report and the potential for a lack of follow-through. During most SSC meetings this year, we discussed both the urgency and some of the challenges involved in ensuring that resources are finally committed to providing students, staff and faculty the support they need. We held a special session of the question on November 3rd, led by Tadarrayl Starke, Vice Provost of Student Success. The SSC wrote to the SEC in March 2026 to express renewed concerns about the lack of progress on this matter, especially in light of changes at the Provost's Office that involve new leadership and another reorganization in the reporting structure of units that oversee student services. On behalf of the SEC, Senate Chair Bob Day reported that Vice Provost Starke shares our concerns and that he would make sure that Vice President for Student Life and Enrollment, Nathan Fuerst saw the report and was made aware of the fact that SSC considers this matter a priority.

Admissions Requirements

The Senate Scholastic Standards Committee addressed two admissions-related topics this academic year: High School Math Requirements and AP Scores.

High School Math Requirements

Background

It was brought to the Committee's attention that the high school math requirements, as listed in the bylaws, no longer aligned either with Connecticut state-level practices, the practices of the Admissions office, or the Admissions website. Specifically, the by-laws stipulated that college preparatory math must include algebra and geometry, which no longer aligns with Connecticut state pre-college curriculum. After discussion, the committee determined that current Admissions Office practice was provided appropriate oversight as the level of a prospective student's mathematics preparation and their suitability for admissions, and that the bylaw should be revised.

Summary of Action

The Senate Scholastic Standards Committee proposed a revision to the By-Laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate Article II.A.1 (Admissions; Minimum Requirements) to update the way in which Mathematics requirements are described for admission to UConn.

Revised Bylaw: Clean Copy

A.1 Minimum Requirements

Except as specified below, the following are the minimum requirements for admission to the freshman and transfer class in all undergraduate schools and colleges with the exception of the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture:

- b. Each applicant shall have graduated from AND have completed 16 units (or the equivalent) in an approved secondary school or program.

As part of the 16 units in the typical U.S. four-year secondary school program, candidates for admission shall present 15 units of college preparatory work. This college preparatory work must include:

- Four units of English (composition and literature)
- Three units of mathematics
- Two units of laboratory science
- Two units of social science or history
- Two units (generally corresponding to two years) of a single foreign language or the equivalent (3 units strongly recommended)
- Three units of electives (two units must be college preparatory)
- Elisabeth DeLuca School of Nursing applicants: high school chemistry and biology are required
- College of Engineering applicants: high school chemistry or physics is required.

Students attending secondary school programs outside of the United States that do not follow the typical US model of secondary education will have their curriculum evaluated within the context of the educational system they attend.

Motion passed in the Regular Meeting of the University Senate, February 2, 2006, by unanimous voice vote.

AP Scores

Background

The Scholastic Standards Committee received a report from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions regarding a study conducted in partnership with The College Board, regarding the effectiveness of UConn's Advanced Placement policies. The College Board drew on a dataset of 25,000 over 5 years, comparing the academic performance of students who entered higher level courses using AP credit to those students who entered those courses by first taking an equivalent introductory-level UConn course. Across 21 selected courses, results showed that students using AP credit performed nearly identically, and sometimes better, in subsequent courses than those who took the introductory-level course. The study also found that students with an AP score of 3 (currently not accepted at UConn) often outperformed peers who had taken the introductory-level course.

In addition to this data, The College Board conducted a peer institution study, revealing that many universities grant AP credit for scores of 3-5, above UConn's current threshold of 4.

These findings were presented to the committee on April 6, 2026. The committee agreed that these were meaningful findings, suggesting a strong case for changing UConn's AP credit policies. We also agreed that this would be a significant change, and that all stakeholders should be engaged. That engagement is underway, and the topic should be taken up again in the fall.

Transfer Courses

Online/Hybrid Laboratory Science Courses

Background

In Fall 2024, the Office of Admissions began investigating the issue that, based on policy at the time, students would not receive transfer credits for virtual or hybrid laboratory courses. In response, Office of Admissions representatives consulted with faculty in the sciences to write new language to ease these restrictions while maintaining the integrity of UConn's academic expectations for laboratory credit.

Summary of Action

New language on online/hybrid laboratory courses was presented to the Scholastic Standards Committee in Fall 2025 by committee member Lawrence Walsh. The committee offered faculty in the sciences an opportunity to provide any last-minute input. Upon hearing none, the language was approved.

New Online/Hybrid Laboratory Course Transfer policy

Fully online lab science courses are only transferable for generic credit. Hybrid lab science courses that include synchronous in-person examinations and laboratory components would follow the traditional credit evaluation processes.

The transfer credit language was approved unanimously by voice vote on March 23, 2026.

Block Transfer

English as a Second Language Block Transfer

CT State asked whether UConn would accept Block Transfer of students who utilized ESOL courses to fulfill their degree requirements for a program that is Block Transfer eligible. It was a simple resolution, and on November 17, the same day the question was raised, it was determined that we should honor the degree and the block transfer and that the question of whether the credits themselves should transfer or not is a different consideration. After discussion the committee determined that transfer credits would be reviewed via the same practice as other transfer credits and awarded based on whether a UConn equivalent could be identified.

Human Services and Social Work Studies Block Transfer

The School of Social Work requested approval for a Block Transfer of the Human Services and Social Work Studies, Associate in Arts program at CT State. The topic was discussed on February 16, including questions about how any part of the program might be impacted by Framework 30. On March 2, Lawrence Walsh reported back and the block transfer was approved unanimously via voice vote with a special note that these students may be required to complete the first-year writing

sequence as well as foreign language requirement as needed. The block transfer was approved on the Consent Agenda of the March 9 meeting of the Senate.

Classification of students

Background

UConn has been reviewing instances of redundancy in policies and bylaws, such as where Senate By-Laws are also listed as policies. In this process, it was discovered that Senate By-Laws Article II.E.1 (Classification of Students) is listed both in the Senate By-Laws and the policy website. To avoid confusion, the policy page will be deleted and the Senate By-Laws, Article II.E.1, will be the sole location for information about this regulation. However, the policy page does include a helpful chart explaining the rule. The committee determined that the chart should be included in the by-law.

Summary of Action

The Senate Scholastic Standards Committee presented a resolution to update the By-Laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate Article II.E.1 (Classification of Students) to include a chart that clearly defines the credit for each class of students. We also removed confusing language about “good standing,” which relates to GPA and the academic standing procedures and replaced the term “freshman” with “first-year,” to match current university nomenclature.

Revised By-law: Clean copy

E.1 Classification of Students

A student is listed as a sophomore, junior, or senior, if the student has earned 24, 54, or 86 credits, respectively.

Traditional Progression*	Earned Credits
First Year	0-23
Sophomore	24-53
Junior	54-85
Senior	86+

*Traditional progression assumes 12 or more credits per required semester.

Motion passed in the Regular Meeting of the University Senate, March 9, 2006, by unanimous voice vote.

Artificial Intelligence

Senate Scholastic Standards discussed Artificial Intelligence several times throughout the year in relationship to our work on the attendance policy, academic integrity, and the

Learning Accommodations Task Force. In all cases, we have emphasized that Artificial Intelligence has a significant impact on teaching and learning and should be considered in the formation of scholastic policies.

In our October 20 meeting, we were joined by guests Brian Goepfrich (Office of Community Standards), Gwen Tarbox (Director of CETL), Daniel Facchinetti (Director of Educational Technologies), Desmond McCaffrey (Director of UConn Online), and Tina Huey (Interim Director of Faculty Development at CETL).

Gwen Tarbox and Tina Huey summarized CETL's initiatives to support faculty in AI-related workshops and consultations, as well as the most frequently questions posed by faculty. Desmond McCaffrey explained that, unique to online education, e-Campus has an internal Artificial Intelligence working group focused on ethical and moral guidelines around AI to guide faculty. Daniel Facchinetti added that his focus recently has been on AI developments in BlackBoard and how this may impact faculty and teaching – features such as AI-assisted feedback for assignments. Brian Goepfrich shared that artificial intelligence has been an ongoing concern for academic integrity since its release, noting that out of 133 specific academic integrity violation cases, 70 include a misuse of artificial intelligence. At present, the [Academic Scholarly and Professional Integrity and Misconduct Policy](#), includes no specific references to artificial intelligence, which can cause confusion for faculty and students when reporting violations.

Conversations about how to approach AI proceeded slowly through the year, due both to the complexity of the issue and to some confusion over what work might be spearheaded by centralized university-level committees on AI. While some confusion remains, policies about what should be included in syllabi are clearly under the purview of the Senate, and this is a direction where we need to act.

At present, the W Task Force, charged by the Courses and Curriculum Committee, is considering A requirement that all W syllabi include an AI policy that defines when, where, and how AI use is permitted by students. There will be additional AI-related recommendations coming out of that task force as well, related to student privacy and disclosure of whether student's assignments are being entered into LLMs. As the academic year ends, Scholastic Standards began early discussions on this topic, with committee support to move forward with a similar requirement that all syllabi include a statement of when, where, and how AI use is permitted in a course. This and other AI-related issues, including a possible addition of AI-specific language to the Academic Scholarly and Professional Integrity and Misconduct Policy language, will need to be taken up again in Fall 2026.

Transfer Credit Policy

Background

The US Dept of Education has recently begun enforcing the policy that “regional accreditor” language cannot be used because all accrediting bodies are nationwide. This necessitates revisions to the Transfer Credit Policy.

Summary of Action:

Lawrance Walsh and Sarah Croucher shared draft policy language replacing “regional accreditor(s)” with “degree granting institutions accredited by a US Department of Education recognized accreditor.” Because there are some institutions with standards for accreditation that whose transfer credits UConn would not approve, this change will mean that we will have to look at more requests for transfer credits moving forward. The committee voted to approve these changes unanimously by voice vote on April 6, 2026.

Babbidge and New England Scholars Recognition

Background

Committee member and Director of the Honors Program Jennifer Lease Butts shared the committee the fact that, despite nearly 30 years of history, the New England and Babbidge Scholars designations are not codified in Senate Bylaws.

Summary of Action

In our regular committee meeting on April 20, the Scholastic Standards Committee approved a proposal to amend section II.F, Scholastic Honors, to include reference to the conferral of Babbidge and New England Scholar recognitions. This proposal will be presented to the Senate on May 4, 2026.

This concludes the 2025-2026 AY Report of the Scholastic Standards Committee.