President's Report

Dr. Radenka Maric



University Senate Meeting

2 November 2026

UCONN

Who is America





Journalism Professor Stephen G. Smith, pictured above in Lancaster, PA, journeyed across the country to learn more about America at 250. *These United States,* the photo book documenting his travels, is forthcoming in November.



Lindsay DiStefano,

Ph.D., ATC

Vice President for Research,
Innovation, and Entrepreneurship



Introducing

Andreas Bohman

Chief Transformation Officer (CTO)

As CTO, Andreas will lead cross-functional initiatives across the University that strengthen institutional effectiveness, improve service delivery, increase organizational agility, and generate savings and new revenue.

He will have direct responsibility for key functional operations, including

- **Facilities and University Planning,**
- **Human Resources,**
- **Information Technology Services, and**
- **University Safety,**

with a focus on service, accountability, modernization, and continuous improvement.

The Governor Asked

The Governor's FY25 budget recommendation suggested that UConn:

1. Increase research activity
2. Raise student-to-faculty ratio
3. Grow fundraising
4. Expand enrollment & leverage in-state/out-of-state mix

UConn Delivered

	FY22	FY26	Change
1. Research Awards	$317M	$318M	**+$1M**
2. Student-to -Faculty Ratio	15 – 1	17 – 1	**+2 – 1**
3. New Annual Gifts	$115M	$171M	**+$56M**
Endowment	$594M	$752M	**+$158M**
Foundation Campaign	$71.4M	$900M	**+$829M**
4. Undergrad Enrollment	23,837	26,382	**+2,545**
Undergrad Out-of-State %	22%	31%	**+9%**

UConn Strategic Plan: Envisioning 2034

Strategic Goals







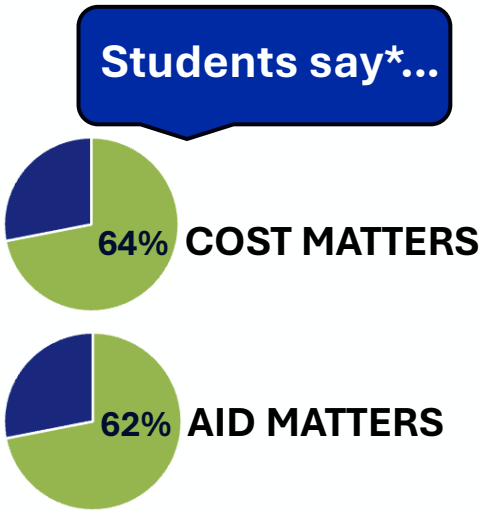
Promoting Holistic Student Success	Expanding Research Impact	Powering a Thriving Connecticut

Areas of Focus

Student Success Journey	Excellence in Research, Innovation, and Engagement	Wellness of People and Planet
Seven World-Class Campuses, One Flagship University	Husky Pride and Resilience	A Stronger, More Inclusive University

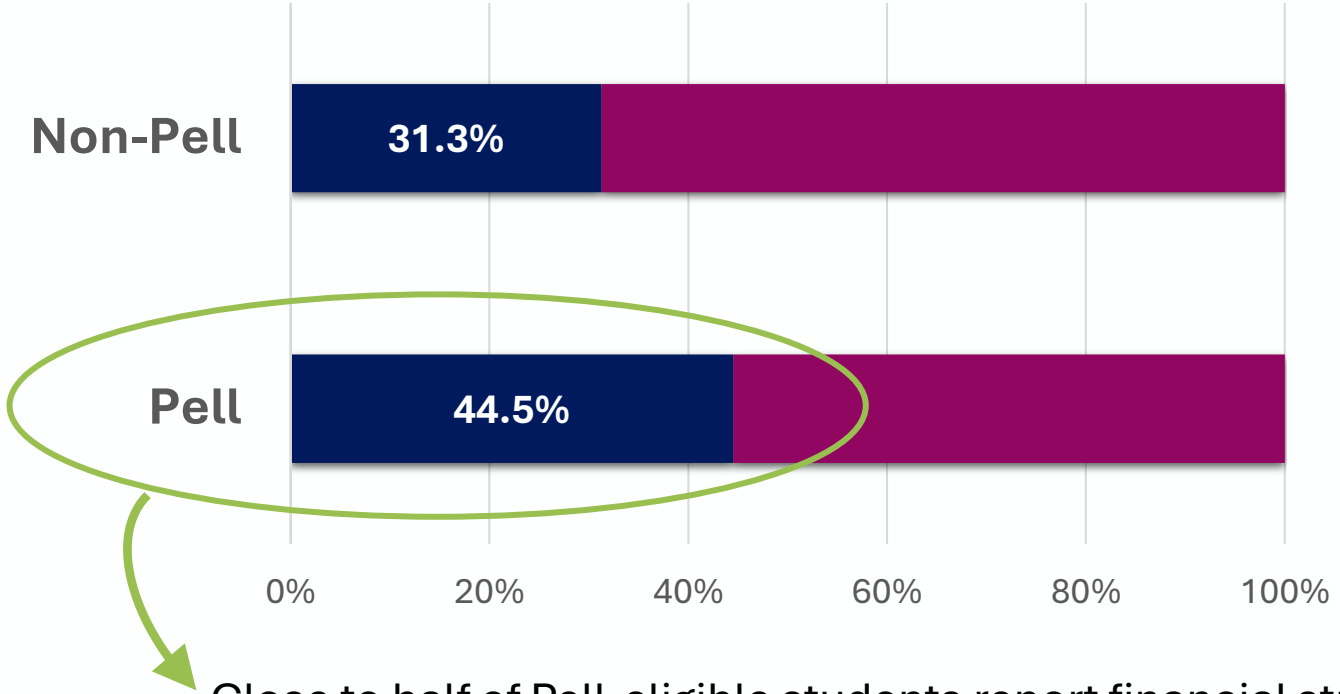
Enrollment Outlook: Situational Analysis

Affordability is a top concern.



*From our admitted student survey

Students Reporting Financial Stress



Close to half of Pell-eligible students report financial stress.

Enrollment Outlook: Situational Analysis (2)

Fewer Students = Tougher Competition

Top Ranked Institutions (#1-50) are Outcompeting

Price Matters, but so does Financial Aid

Financial Aid is Critical to Student Success

Financial Aid is MOST Critical for Pell Students

Pell Student Enrollment & Outcomes can Improve Rankings

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan

GOAL ONE
Improve First-to-Second Year Retention

GOAL TWO
Increase Undergraduate Graduation Rates

GOAL THREE
Strategically Grow Undergraduate Enrollment

GOAL FOUR
Strengthen Workforce and Post-Graduate Outcomes

GOAL FIVE
Establish and Improve Graduate Student Success Outcomes

GOAL SIX
Manage Graduate Enrollment Through Capacity-Aligned Growth

Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators related to the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan

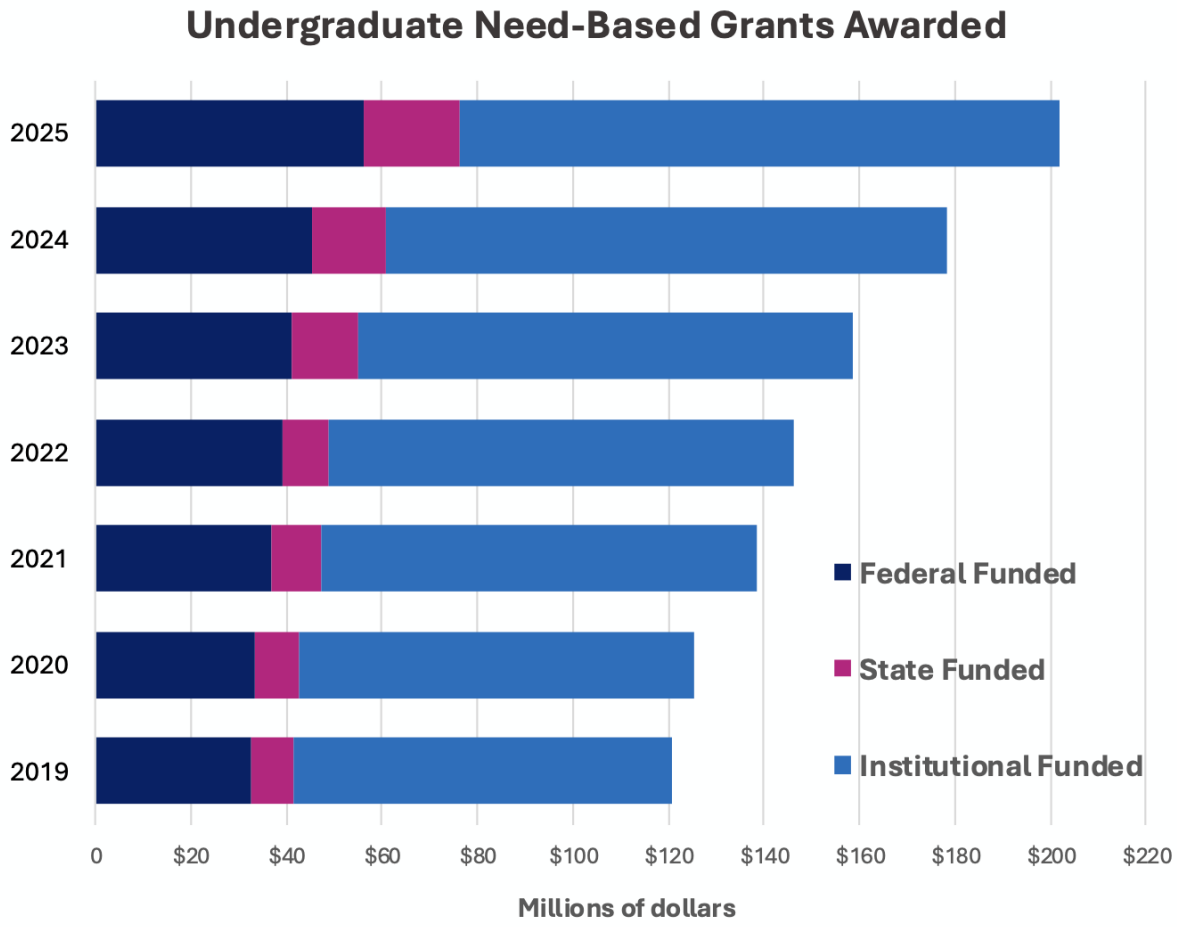
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Baseline (2024)	Target (2030)
6-Year Graduation Rate	83%	90%
KPIs for Monitoring Only	**Baseline (2024)**	**Year 1 (2025)**
Pell 6-Year Graduation Rate	77%	76%
First Generation 6-Year Graduation Rate	77%	77%
First Year Retention Rate	92%	92%

UConn's Commitment to Financial Aid

UConn is committed to providing a high-quality education that remains accessible and affordable. Most UConn students graduate with no debt or with manageable levels of student loan debt.

In 2024–25, **91%** of responding Storrs undergraduates were employed, admitted to graduate school, committed to military or volunteer service, or had started a company by the end of December following graduation.

39% of UConn undergraduates across all campuses receive gift aid equal to or greater than the cost of tuition.



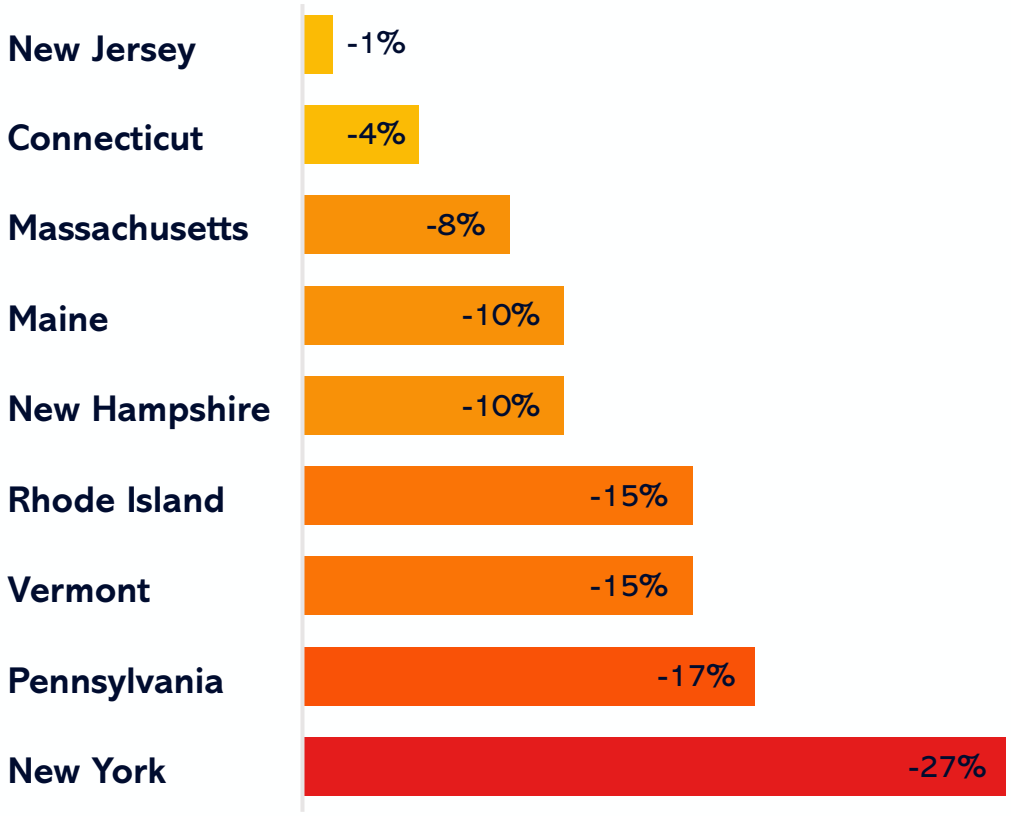
Enrollment Headwinds

Several factors are converging that will lead to declining applications in the coming years.

- Latest Gallup poll shows a record low number of people view college as "very important" (31%).
- Demographic cliff will continue to hit New England among the hardest in the country

Competition for students will reach unprecedented levels. Demand for the institution should be kept as high as possible.

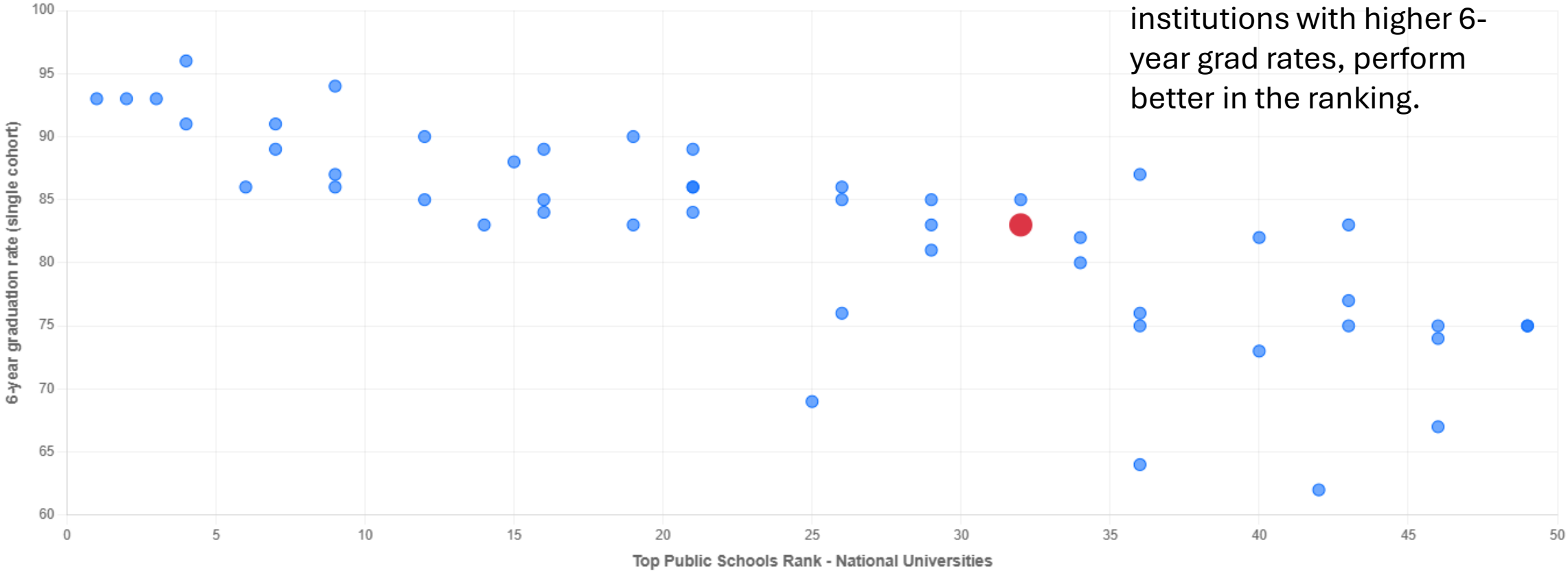
Projected Percent Change in High School Graduates in the Northeast, 2023-2041



Source data: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Knocking at the College Door Report, 2024

6-year Graduation vs Rank

Not surprisingly, institutions with higher 6-year grad rates, perform better in the ranking.



Advancing UConn's National Research Standing

Key indicators of excellence for public research universities:

- Competitively funded federal research: HERD rankings,
- Faculty distinction (recruit, retain, and support outstanding scholars): National awards, fellowships, and academy memberships.
- Scholarly impact: publications, citations
- Strong doctoral/postdoctoral education: number of PhD degrees, number of post-doctoral fellows.
- Public impact: Translate discovery into better health, economic opportunity, and stronger communities across Connecticut

Projects like this one contribute to UConn's national standing

September 29, 2026 | Mac Murray

Mapping Uncharted Antarctic Genomes

New NSF award aims to build understanding of evolution and adaptation



The $18.4 million award "Genome Infrastructure catalyzing next Generation Antarctic Data, Access, Tools, and Analytics" (GIGA DATA), is led by Alison Murray at the Desert Research Institute.

$6.6 million of the award is coming to UConn, where co-PIs Rachel O'Neill and Jill Wegrzyn will contribute their genome sequencing and assembly expertise.

Funds Committed from the State to Support Research and Academic Excellence

$35M

Research Investment Fund

$46M

Funding for Innovation Faculty Hires

$20M

Funding for Top Tier Faculty Hires

Stabilize the research enterprise amidst a dynamic funding climate

Bring in outstanding talent to drive innovation and discovery to extend UConn's impact and support economic opportunity and national security.

Focused investment helps elevate our national standing

AN ACT REQUIRING AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT TO BECOME A MEMBER OF AN ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES.

Substitute House Bill No. 7095

Special Act No. 25-3

Thank you, Connecticut!

Research Investment Fund

Notes:

- Funds were made available for FY27, so disbursements are in the early stages.
- Endangered Programs support research in areas deprioritized by federal funding agencies
- Infrastructure investments enable productivity and compliance improvements
- Seed grants, graduate students, and new faculty are investments will seed research growth

Research Investment Fund Spending Plan

Item	Allocated to date	Total planned allocation
Endangered Programs	881,794	$5.85M (17%)
Seed Grants	3,000,000	$7M (20%)
Research Infrastructure Investments	4,737,596	$10.25M (29%)
High Performance & AI Computing	4,125,982	$4.75M
Research Security	611,614	$2M
Electronic Research Administration	-	$2.5M
Capital Research Equipment Funds	-	$1M
Graduate Students	823,690	$4M (11%)
One Year Continuation of PI 5% IDC/DCAA Return	1,137,493	$3.9M (11%)
School / College Allocation for New Faculty^		$4M (11%)
Total	**10,580,573**	**$35M**

UConn Faculty Hiring Initiative

Building on UConn's established record of discovery and innovation, the University and the State of Connecticut are coming together to invest more than $100 million in a multi-year faculty hiring initiative.

A Transformative Investment in the Next Chapter of UConn

This significant commitment will support the recruitment of new faculty while strengthening the research infrastructure, facilities, and academic environments that enable faculty and students to do their best work. Building on UConn's existing strengths, the investment advances the goals of *Envisioning 2034*, UConn's strategic plan, including expanding the University's research impact and helping power a thriving Connecticut.

Through a series of faculty hiring initiatives, UConn is bringing together scholars, disciplines, and resources to accelerate discovery, deepen interdisciplinary collaboration, and advance transformative teaching. We invite scholars whose work will complement the expertise already thriving at UConn and open new possibilities for research, education, and engagement.

EXPLORE FACULTY OPPORTUNITIES

Top Tier Faculty

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Faculty

Quantum Futures Cluster Hire

Year 1 Hiring Initiative Timeline

July–October 2026

Prepare

Identify strategic areas of focus

Perform administrative groundwork

Approve searches by October 31

November–May 2027

Search, Recruit, and Hire

Innovation Hires: 4 positions

Top Tier Hires: 2–3 positions

Quantum Hires: 5 positions

August 2027

Employ

10–12 high-impact faculty hired

New faculty on board and begin research and teaching responsibilities at the start of the academic year.

Budget Impacts Excellence

Threats to UConn's budget will impact student success, affordability, and national reputation.

Pressures on the Budget

Growing Student Needs

Higher demand for student support services (mental health, academic advising, success coaches, etc.)

Tuition Constraints

Limited ability to raise tuition without pricing out prospective students

Expanding Financial Aid Requirements

Students increasingly reliant on institutional financial assistance

Personnel Costs

Annual salary increases and growth in fringe benefit costs

Rising Operating Pressures

Increased costs for IT infrastructure and cybersecurity, compliance, regulations

Escalating costs for outsourced contracts

Inflation on necessary contracts drives up expenses

Path Forward

Revenue Growth | Cost Discipline | Close the Gap

Align fiscal management strategies with operational priorities

Ensure all new initiatives are in alignment with the strategic plan and operational priorities.

Invest in capital improvements

More capital investment leads to decreased facilities operating expenses.

Support strategic growth in academic program offerings

Add certificate, badges, non-degree options and increase summer session and online course activity.

Restore state support

Seek full funding of collectively bargained wage increases and support for student success initiatives and the protection of our research enterprise.

Optimize revenue from tuition and fees

Adjust tuition and fees to support student life and academic success.

Expand innovative utilization of campus facilities

Grow revenue by using campus facilities and event services for private occasions.

Sustained partnership with the State, paired with disciplined cost control and targeted revenue growth, is required to reach structural balance beyond FY27.

Thank you!



2 November 2026