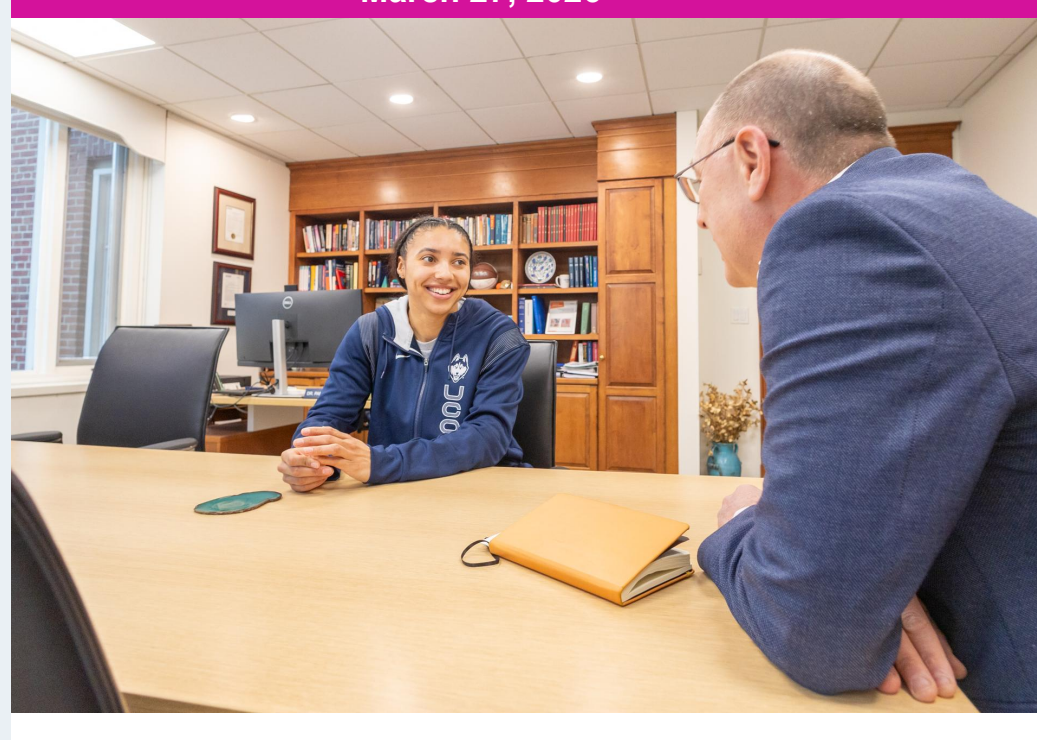


Academic Affairs UPDATE

March 27, 2026



INSIGHTS

From the Interim Provost

During March Madness, we rightly celebrate our student athletes. But this March Madness, I was very proud to see the strength of our academic programs come through as well. Many of us watched Azzi Fudd deliver 34 points to lead UConn to a 98-45 victory over Syracuse in the second round of the NCAA tournament on Monday. Equally impressive and less well known is Fudd's record in the classroom: a graduate student, Azzi has already earned a BA in communications and is on track to graduate in May with an MBA from the School of Business. I recently had the privilege of talking to her about her achievements, and she reminded all of us that UConn stands for excellence—on and off the [court](#).

One of my favorite experiences by far as interim provost was judging the [Big East undergraduate research symposium](#). The 55 entries from the 11 Big East schools were outstanding. I'm very proud of our UConn student researchers, who took home the first place team trophy, an honor that reflects the breadth and depth of student research opportunities at UConn. Senior Hailey Dewalt earned individual honors by taking first place in the STEM category. A special thanks to Jennifer Lease Butts, director of the Honors Program, and Micah Huemann, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, who led the team and to our faculty mentors who make student research experiences possible.

This week, I'm attending [QS Global Skills Week](#) in Washington, D.C., which brings together leaders from higher education, industry, policy, and economic development sectors to explore workforce issues and challenges. This year's conversations are exploring the impact of AI on industries and workforce as well as the critical skills that are needed to support emerging and retool existing industries. Conversations such as these will be needed to guide our students and equip them to succeed in a rapidly changing job market. Given the pace at which the world is changing and the magnitude of our challenges, it's clear that we will need to be flexible and adaptable to serve the needs of our students and society.

In the past weeks, I've also continued to attend meetings of faculty and staff at schools and colleges, including Law and Engineering. In these discussions, I'm hearing common concerns around budget and operational issues, but we've also had productive conversations about how we move forward as a community. For example, a good presentation and conversation around strategies for building summer and winter programs and online course offerings resulted from a recent meeting of the department heads. Our community's purposeful engagement with [Summer and Winter Programs](#) and [UConn Online](#) is a great way to expand UConn's impact and reach.

In my meetings at our campuses and beyond, I am struck by the how much people love UConn. While in New York, alumni, donors, industry colleagues, and even new acquaintances all shared with me their enthusiasm and willingness to support our work. Please know that their good will begins with your efforts on behalf of our students.

Thank you for all you do,

Pamir Alpay
Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

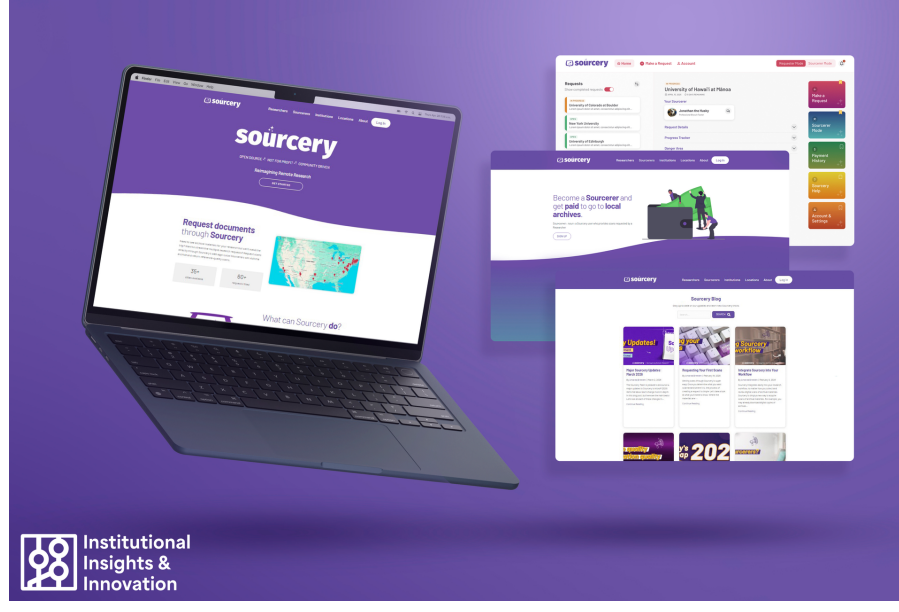
NEWS



UConn Senior Blends Disability Studies and Food Culture into Individualized Major

UConn's individualized major offers students the opportunity to shape a rigorous program of study that aligns with their academic interests and professional aspirations. UConn senior Gabriella "Gabby" DiSalvo '26 (CLAS) pursued an individualized major blending Disability Studies, Communications and Media, and Food Culture and a minor in personal branding and entrepreneurship through the School of Business to create her personal brand—[Cooking on Wheels](#)—that combines her love of food with advocacy for accessibility.

Living with a rare neuromuscular condition, DiSalvo approaches cooking with thoughtful adaptations and determination. Her work challenges assumptions about accessibility and encourages others to rethink what is possible. Looking ahead, [Cooking on Wheels](#) may grow into a broader entrepreneurial venture, including adaptive cookware and expanded media content. Her goal remains clear: to make cooking—and opportunity—accessible to all. [Read more.](#)



New Version of Sourcery Connects Researchers with Archival Materials Nationwide

A new, fully functional version of [Sourcery](#) launched [this March](#), making it easier for researchers to get the materials they need through the app. Sourcery connects researchers to materials available at repositories across the country.

Over three rounds of funding, the Mellon Foundation granted UConn's Institutional Insights & Innovation ([i3](#)) team \$1.675M to develop Sourcery's open source platform. Currently Sourcery handles requests at repositories in over 65 cities.

Sourcery is the brainchild of Principal Investigator Tom Scheinfeldt (Digital Media & Design) and has been developed with the support of Co-Investigators Sara Sikes (Managing Director, [i3](#)) and Brian Daley (Digital Media & Design) and the [i3](#) team. The platform is maintained by [i3](#) and operated as an open-source project by [Digital Scholar](#).



Nine UConn Faculty Elected to the CASE

The [recent election](#) of nine distinguished UConn faculty to CASE, the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering, reflects the profound impact UConn has on the state.

CASE was established by the Connecticut General Assembly to advise state government and industry "in the application of science and engineering to the economic and social welfare." As a public service organization, CASE pursues activities, such as technical studies and policy guidance, that contribute to informed decision-making by state and industry in support of Connecticut's economic vitality and community well-being.

Congratulations to [this year's distinguished inductees](#), who reflect the depth and breadth of UConn's impact on disciplines that are critical to Connecticut's future.

UPDATES



Faculty Mentorship Training Strengthens the Graduate Student Experience

A faculty mentor can make or break a graduate student's chance at success.

Mentorship training for faculty helps lay the foundation for successful mentoring by exploring fundamentals like establishing clear expectations and supporting the unique needs of each individual mentee. This clarity ensures a better working, teaching, and learning environment all around.

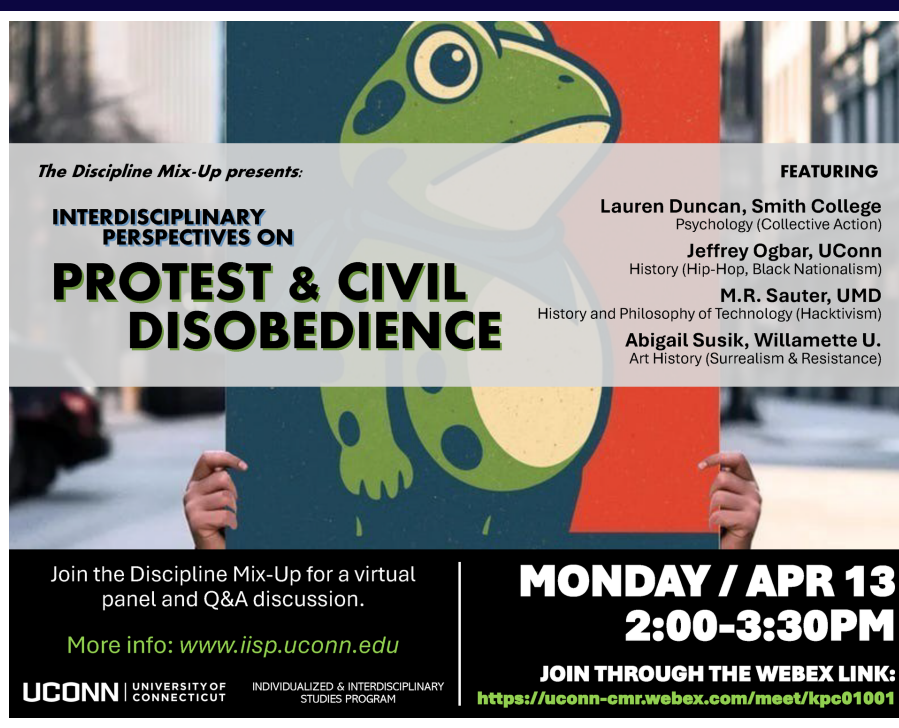
A committed team of faculty and staff, including associate dean and professor in the Department of Sociology Mary Bernstein, Jennifer Cavallari professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences, and Rachel Prunier '10 Ph.D., director of Teaching and Learning in the Life & Physical Sciences for CETL, have been important players in building UConn's culture of mentorship and developing mentorship training opportunities.

An important component of the graduate student mentorship strategy is the [formal mentorship training program](#) for faculty new to UConn developed by Bernstein and based on the [Entering](#) Mentoring curriculum of the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research ([CIMER](#)). This training improves the ability of new faculty to mentor students, leading to stronger research output and academic success. Although designed for new faculty, the training program is open to current faculty as well on a space-available basis.

To strengthen their mentoring efforts, all faculty are encouraged to review the [Mentor's Guide](#) and to connect their students with the [Mentee's Guide](#) as well as the combined mentor/mentee training offered through CETL. This training helps graduate students and postdocs to improve their practice in both of these roles.

[Read more](#) about mentorship initiatives.

DATES and DEADLINES



Discipline Mix-Up Panel Discussion

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Protest & Civil Disobedience

Monday, April 13, 2:00 p.m., Virtual

The [Individualized and Interdisciplinary Studies Program](#) is sponsoring the Discipline Mix-Up, an interdisciplinary panel on Protest & Civil Disobedience. Panelists reflect a range of disciplines and interests, making for a lively exchange of ideas. Use [this link](#) to join the conversation on April 13.

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