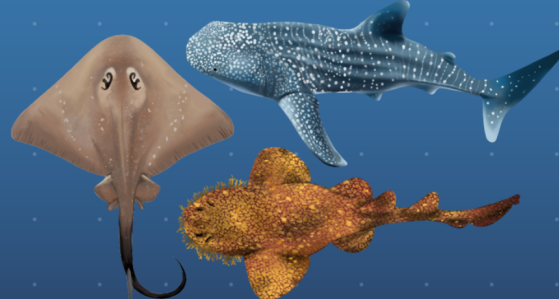


Academic Affairs UPDATE

April 9, 2026



Shark Week Illustrations
By Jennie Carra, CT State Museum of Natural History



INSIGHTS

From the Interim Provost

I'm pleased to report that the contracts with the UConn-AAUP, UCPEA, and the GEU-UAW have been ratified by the unions and approved by the Board of Trustees. A big thank you to our labor relations team, who negotiated the three contracts simultaneously—a mammoth task. Representatives from management joined labor relations to work in good faith with our unions, putting in long hours to ensure that the contracts respond to the needs of both our union members and UConn as a whole. As a long-time UConn employee and member of the faculty, I personally recognize and deeply value the work being done by people throughout the University, as do my colleagues in the administration. The administration's work on the contracts reflects our strong commitment to our faculty, staff, and students, and we welcome the positive outcomes of the negotiation process.

We recently shared a [message](#) about what's happening with the Segal Group's analysis of our business and administrative support and our marketing and communications functions. At the most recent University Senate meeting, the Segal Group and our HR team gave a status report and updated the community on next steps. To learn more, please attend the [information session](#) on the report's findings and next steps planned for April 13.

This week I met with CLAS department heads where I heard about many issues, including the federal funding environment, undergraduate programs, graduate education, and the PTR process. The Budget Transformation Initiative was also a topic of discussion.

Our newly-hired Chief Financial Officer [Anthony Rini](#) will start his university service on April 27 and will lead the rollout of a new budget model to be implemented in FY27-28. Until now, units generally received a percentage increase (or decrease) based on their prior year's budget. The new budgeting framework is designed to be more equitable and responsive to the University's needs and priorities than the past approach. The budget rollout will be done as transparently as possible, and faculty, staff, and student input will be part of the process.

I recently visited the Institutional Insights & Innovation ([i3](#)) team workspace in Rowe. They're doing great work. i3 provides custom software development, web design, and other innovation services to the University. For example, i3 built the [NEXUS](#) platform used by all UConn advisors. I encourage you to learn more about i3's other capabilities and tools, including [Lincus](#) and the [Research Insights for Faculty](#) platform designed to provide monthly financial reports and other tools for managing sponsored project accounts.

At a meeting of the Deans' Council, we heard from Dr. Ngozi Taffe on the efforts of the Global Affairs Office to make our international rankings better reflect UConn's academic excellence. These rankings play a big role in our ability to attract international students, impacting our enrollment outlook and global partnerships. Importantly, about 45% of a university's rank in QS and 33% in THE (Times Higher Education) World University Rankings is based on reputation, not quantitative data. Global Affairs has taken proactive steps to influence our rank, but the broader university community's help will be crucial in moving the needle on our reputation. In the coming weeks, Dr. Taffe and members of her staff will be reaching out to the university community on how you can get involved.

With best regards,

Pamir Alpay
Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

NEWS



UConn's Evidence-Based World-Class Honors Education

UConn's [Honors Program](#) is unique in the nation for its evidence-based curriculum and programming. This research-informed approach allows UConn Honors to deliver an exceptional educational experience and is a model for honors education programs across the nation.

Honors builds on UConn's legacy of excellence in gifted and talented education. UConn is home to the National Center for Research on Gifted Education and the Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development. The conceptual framework for UConn Honors draws on the research of Professor Emeritus Joseph Renzulli, one of the world's foremost experts in the field. His [three-ring model of giftedness](#) has become foundational for gifted education at all levels.

According to Jennifer Lease Butts, Director of the Honors Program, inclusion is a guiding principle of UConn: "If you want an Honors education at UConn, it's our job to make sure you have one."

Currently, more than 2,400 students are enrolled in the Honors Program across 77 majors at all UConn campuses offering undergraduate degrees. Since 2002, the number of Honors students at UConn has more than doubled. Additionally, one third of incoming Honors first-year students in 2023 were first-generation college students, reflecting Renzulli's principle of purposely opening gifted education opportunities to those historically excluded.

[Read more.](#)



Four Faculty Members Elected to AAAS

Four UConn faculty members have been elected by the [American Association for the Advancement of Science \(AAAS\)](#) to its newest class of fellows. The AAAS is the world's largest general scientific society and publisher of the Science family of journals.

The four are:

- **Emmanouil Anagnostou**, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Eversource Energy Endowed Chair in Environmental Engineering.
- **Diane Lillo-Martin**, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of Linguistics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
- **Jeffrey McCutcheon**, General Electric Professor of Advanced Manufacturing in the Department of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering.
- **Mark Adams**, professor and interim scientific director at The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine and affiliated faculty in the School of Medicine's Department of Genetics and Genome Sciences.

DATES and DEADLINES

Organizational Assessment: Informational Session with the Segal Group and UConn Leadership

Join members of the UConn community to hear Segal present their findings and recommendations from the Fall 2025 organizational assessment. Members of UConn's leadership team will outline the University's next steps in this initiative. The meeting will be streamed live and recorded.

Monday, April 13, 2026, at 10:00 am (Virtual Only)

Both the live stream link and the meeting recording can be found on this [webpage](#).

PTR Info Forum April 17, 2025

The Faculty Standards Committee of the University Senate in collaboration with the Office of the Provost and AAUP is hosting two forums on faculty promotion, tenure, and reappointment (PTR). These forums aim to ensure that all faculty are aware of the University's PTR and PR procedures and expectations and have an opportunity to ask questions of the administration.

PTR Forum (Tenure Track): Friday, April 17, 2026, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

PR Forum (Clinical, In-Residence, and Extension Faculty and Lecturers): Friday, April 17, 2025, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Registration can be accessed through the [University Senate Event Calendar](#).

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