

Academic Affairs UPDATE

April 23, 2026



INSIGHTS

From the Interim Provost

Reflecting the strength of our programs in energy and the environment, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AMACAD) announced yesterday that [Prof. Daniel Bolnick](#) of the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (pictured above, photo by Andrew Hendry) is one of its newly-elected members. [Prof. Bolnick's research](#) in evolutionary ecology and evolutionary immunology "seeks to understand the evolutionary and ecological rules that promote genetic diversity within species: variation among individuals, and divergence between populations." Prof. Bolnick is only the 8th member from UConn elected to AMACAD in the last 30 years, and the first since 2022.

I recently attended the final lecture in the [Edwin Way Teale series](#) hosted by the Institute of the Environment. Given by Dr. Bill McKibben of Middlebury College, the lecture "Back to the Wall, Face to the Sun: The Climate Crisis and the Renewable Answer" emphasized the role sustainable energy plays in our future. The Institute of the Environment and Energy, CIRCA, and our other centers, institutes, and faculty teams conducting climate and sustainability research continue to be central to our public mission to promote education and research in service to our communities.

UConn was honored to host Mr. Sedat Onal, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the United States, during his first ever visit to Connecticut. The visit provided students and faculty a rare opportunity to discuss international relations and global affairs with a leading diplomat. Dr. Ngozi Taffe of Global Affairs coordinated the visit and Professor Oksan Bayolgen, Department Head and Professor of Political Science, moderated the discussion. The visit also included a meeting with industry leaders on scientific exchange and economic development opportunities between Türkiye and the US.

We also recently learned that three of our undergraduates have received the Goldwater Scholarship. A big thank you to the staff in the Office of Scholarships and Fellowships who support our students in their quest for well-deserved recognition. And thanks as well to the many faculty who make sure that our students receive an outstanding education and have the resources and mentorship needed to excel in academics and get started in research.

The PTR process is a top concern for our faculty. To better guide and prepare them to navigate the PTR process, we held two forums, one for Tenure/ Tenure Track faculty and the other for Clinical, In-Residence, & Extension (CIRE) faculty, organized by Senior Vice Provost Amy Gorin in collaboration with AAUP and the University Senate. As a faculty member, I found these forums and the other resources offered through the Provost's Office to be very helpful. Links to recordings of the PTR forums can be found on the University Senate [website](#).

With best regards,

Pamir Alpogay
Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

NEWS



Students and Faculty Discuss International Relations with Ambassador of Türkiye

[The visit by Ambassador Sedat Onal](#) to UConn on April 10 was his first official visit to Connecticut.

"Ambassador Onal's visit reminded the UConn community that the most complex global challenges require not just expertise, but empathy, historical understanding, and a willingness to see multiple perspectives," said President Radenka Maric, who met with Onal during his visit to Storrs. "As students face an increasingly complex world, these conversations help prepare them to engage thoughtfully with questions that have no easy answers."



Three CLAS Students Named Goldwater Scholars

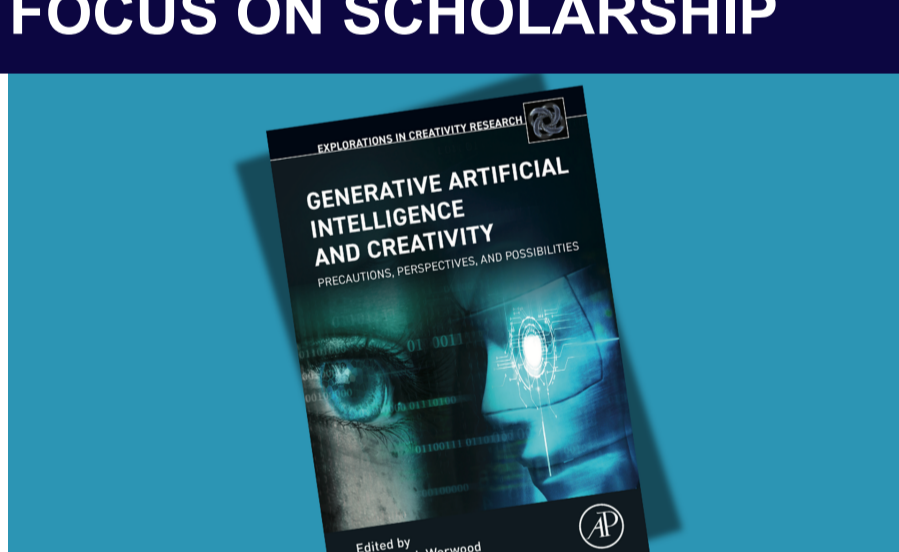
Three UConn undergraduates have been awarded [Goldwater scholarships](#), the nation's premier scholarship for undergraduates studying math, natural sciences, and engineering; Daniel D'Souza '28 (CLAS) of Cheshire; Ashly Gasior '27 (CLAS) of Seekonk, Massachusetts; and Mackenzie Robillard '27 (CLAS) of Goshen. All three are enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and are in the Honors Program.



CLAS Recognizes Outstanding Service

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences [recognized nine faculty and staff members with awards](#) for outstanding contributions to academic leadership, mentoring, strategic priorities, and staff excellence. Congratulations and thank you!

FOCUS ON SCHOLARSHIP



Generative Artificial Intelligence and Creativity: Precautions, Perspectives, and Possibilities

UConn faculty are leading the discussion on generative AI.

Academic Press, an Elsevier imprint, recently released [an important new book](#) co-edited by Matthew Worwood, Assistant Professor in-Residence of Digital Media and Design, and James C. Kaufman, Professor of Educational Psychology. Developed in collaboration with colleagues across the field of creativity, the book offers a thoughtful examination of the evolving role of generative AI in creative practice. It explores both the limitations of AI in producing original work and the powerful opportunities that emerge when it is used as a tool by highly creative professionals. This publication reflects Professor Worwood's leadership at the intersection of creativity, technology, and innovation as well as Prof. Kaufman's stature in the field of creativity research. The book contributes meaningful insight to an important and rapidly developing conversation.

UPDATES

AY 26-27 PTR Timeline & Resources Available

PTR resources, including the [timeline](#), can be accessed by UConn faculty using this link: <https://provost.uconn.edu/promotion-tenure-reappointment/>

DATES and DEADLINES

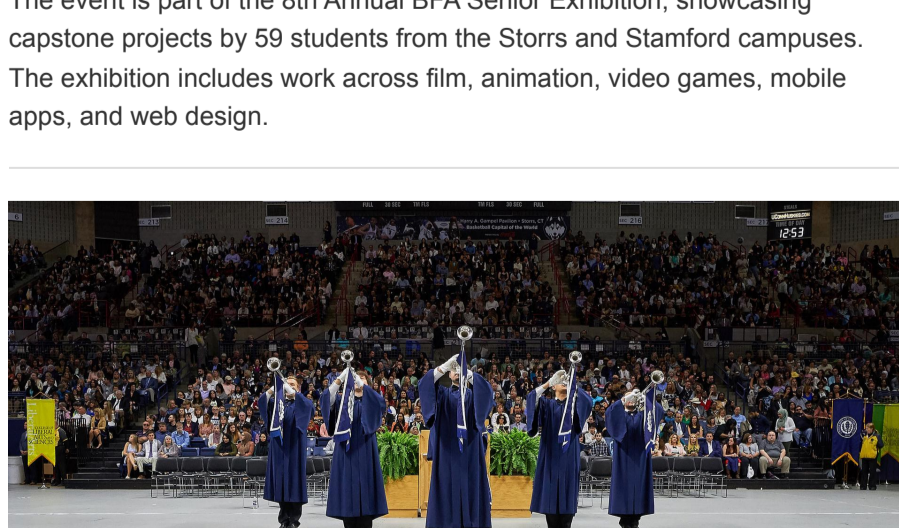


BFA Film & Animation Festival and Senior Exhibition

April 25, Jorgensen Gallery

Original films and animated works by graduating seniors will be screened at the [Film & Animation Festival](#) on April 25. Hosted by the Department of Digital Media & Design, the event will take place from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Harriet S. Jorgensen Gallery, located on the lower level of the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts. Screening blocks start at 11:00 a.m., and a public reception will be held from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The event is part of the 8th Annual BFA Senior Exhibition, showcasing capstone projects by 59 students from the Storrs and Stamford campuses. The exhibition includes work across film, animation, video games, mobile apps, and web design.



Commencement Schedule

With the exception of the School of Law ceremonies on May 17th, commencement ceremonies will be held May 9 - 11. For the full schedule and other details, please visit <https://commencement.uconn.edu>.

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