

September 25, 2024

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Anne D'Alleva
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs



RE: Appointment of Associate Professor Jessica Cooperman to the Doris and Simon Konover Chair in Judaic Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees appoint Associate Professor Jessica Cooperman to the Doris and Simon Konover Chair in Judaic Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

BACKGROUND:

The endowment by Doris and Simon Konover has made it possible for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to recruit an outstanding scholar and researcher, Associate Professor Jessica Cooperman, as the next Chair. Professor Cooperman will join the Department of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages and serve as the Director of the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life for five-year term beginning August 23, 2024 through August 22, 2029. Professor Cooperman comes to the University of Connecticut from Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania where she served as Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Religion Studies and Director of Jewish Studies Program.

As the Doris and Simon Konover Chair in Judaic Studies and Director of the Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life, Professor Cooperman will increase awareness of Jewish heritage in the University community, the state, and beyond. She will provide creative leadership for the Center and will develop its programs, as well as contribute to associated interdisciplinary programs.

In 2008, the Board of Trustees appointed Professor Arnold Dashefsky as the inaugural interim Chair. Upon Professor Dashefsky's retirement, the College launched an international search and recruited Professor Jeffrey Shoulson to succeed him and to serve in this role from 2012 to 2018. Following Dr. Shoulson's tenure, a national search led to the appointment of Avinoam Patt as Director in 2019. Under his leadership, the program achieved notable growth and success through strategic educational events, seminars, and talks. No additional funding, support or investment is necessary in order to fulfill the terms of this appointment.