

## **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

### **For Collaboration Regarding Educational Services, Research, and Economic Development**

By and Between

The University of Connecticut and the Eastern Pequot, Golden Hill Paugussett, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, the Mohegan Tribe, and the Schaghticoke

#### **PREAMBLE**

**WHEREAS** the history of land-grant institutions resulted in the dispossession of American Indians and enacted harm against their peoples and communities; and

**WHEREAS** there is a national reckoning among land-grant institutions to fully acknowledge their history and actively work to make amends with American Indian tribes; and

**WHEREAS** the mission of the University of Connecticut (UConn) as the state's flagship, land- and sea-grant institution, promotes "the health and well-being" of all citizens, "through enhancing the social, economic, cultural and natural environments of the state and beyond."

#### **MISSION**

The University of Connecticut and the five recognized Tribal Nations in the state of Connecticut – the Eastern Pequot, Golden Hill Paugussett, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, the Mohegan Tribe, and Schaghticoke (hereafter the "Signatory Tribal Nations") will work together to strengthen their relationship, striving to ensure that Native American and Indigenous students, staff, and faculty at UConn are provided with the intellectual, academic, cultural, social, and financial support needed to develop a sense of belonging at UConn and for supporting processes of tribal nation building within their respective communities.

**WHEREAS** UConn recognizes and affirms for itself any established federal and Connecticut state laws and policies that recognize the distinct, inherent, legal and political sovereignty of the Signatory Tribal Nations, with their own powers of self-governance and self-determination.

**WHEREAS** UConn acknowledges that its locations statewide are on the traditional homelands of American Indian peoples who have lived in this region from time immemorial and, as an academic institution, UConn acknowledges its responsibility to establish and maintain good relations with the Signatory Tribal Nations and their communities and to support their sovereign powers. In so doing, UConn:

- Recognizes the critical importance of Indigenous ways of knowing and being to all aspects of knowledge production and dissemination at the University: teaching, research, service, and programming.
- Works to reconcile and repair the ongoing impact of the formation of the United States and the State of Connecticut, which led to the establishment of the University of Connecticut as a land-grant institution.

- Commits to discourse and action concerning the educational interests of the Signatory Tribal Nations
- Contributes to supporting and securing vibrant Indigenous futures.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT AGREED,** that UConn and the Signatory Tribal Nations:

**I. Formal Tribal Consultation:** Commit to formal tribal consultation through regular meetings between the President of UConn and appointed representatives of the Signatory Tribal Nations. Meetings shall occur annually, at a minimum, to discuss the quality and conditions of University-Tribal relations and to create and review strategic priorities. Meetings will have a formal agenda developed and agreed upon by the University and the Signatory Tribal Nations prior to the meetings. All parties may include additional representatives, as appropriate.

In so doing, parties will commit to open and respectful communication that contributes to the development of good and just relations through the values of respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. Communications will also be timely, particularly regarding issues that may directly impact the Signatory Tribal Nations.

A. Consultations with Signatory Tribal Nations shall be guided by the following principles:

1. UConn and the Signatory Tribal Nations will strive for consensus in reaching mutually desired outcomes. Consultation will occur between officials who have adequate decision-making authority concerning the proposed policy or issue.
2. Initial priorities for Tribal consultation and dialogue shall include (but not be limited to):
  - a. Recruitment and retention of Native American and Indigenous faculty and staff
  - b. Development of pathways for the recruitment, admission, and retention of Native American and Indigenous students with a focus on students enrolled in the Signatory Tribal Nations.
  - c. Development of meaningful opportunities to increase Native American history, culture, language, and Indigenous knowledge (as acknowledged in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Council on Environmental Quality November 30, 2022 Guidance Memorandum and Connecticut General Statutes section 10-16vv, requiring all public K-12 school districts to include the study of Northeastern Woodland Tribes of Connecticut in their Social Studies curriculum) in UConn's research priorities, course offerings, programming, and development.
  - d. Development of a University-wide policy that requires early and inclusive tribal consultation regarding relevant major initiatives and development projects, particularly those involving archaeological review, ground or view shed disturbance on all UConn campuses.

- e. Creating opportunities to mark the prior and continuous presence of Indigenous peoples on the lands that UConn currently occupies, particularly on the Avery Point campus.
- f. Repatriation and repatriation of any human ancestors and funerary objects, sacred and/or cultural belongings, prioritizing those from the Signatory Tribal Nations and the Northeast.
- g. Identifying Native American-owned and Signatory Tribal Nation-owned businesses for contracting opportunities with UConn for needed goods and services.

**II. Tribal/University Advisory Board (TUAB):** Commit to establishing a Tribal/University Advisory Board for the purposes of developing and providing oversight of the Strategic Priorities relevant to this MOA, to include recommendations for changes and/or adjustments to this agreement, to short and long-term planning goals and objectives, and to the monitoring and evaluation of the Strategic Priorities.

A. The parties shall establish the TUAB as follows:

1. Membership shall include the leader or appropriate designee from each of the Signatory Tribal Nations; relevant designees from UConn administration, faculty, and staff; and two students from UConn's Native American Cultural Program (NACP).
2. Members shall serve terms of up to three years, renewable upon consensus by the TUAB, NACP students will serve a minimum of two years
3. A minimum of four meetings a year will be held with TUAB members developing mutually agreed upon agendas, location sites, and related details for the meetings
4. The TUAB shall report to the UConn President and the respective Tribal Councils at mutually agreed upon intervals. Strategic Priorities will be defined for each coming year. The TUAB has the authority to form ad hoc committees as needed.
5. The TUAB shall be self-regulating, setting their own management and operating procedures through a consensus-based decision-making process.

### **III. DURATION, REVIEW and MODIFICATION:**

As the relationship between the Signatory Tribes and UConn evolves, the parties will periodically review this MOA to determine its effectiveness, progress on commitments, and whether any modifications or adjustments are necessary.

*This Memorandum imposes no legal obligations upon any party hereto. Rather, it sets out terms for collaboration for parties to work towards and achieve the mission outlined. No portion of this Memorandum shall be construed to imply that any such legal obligations exist among any of the signatories.*