

April 29, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Pamir Alpay, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Appointment of Professor Steven L. Suib, Ph.D. as the Harold S. Schwenk, Sr. Distinguished Chair in Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Professor Steven L. Suib, Ph.D. as the Harold S. Schwenk, Sr. Distinguished Chair in Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for the period August 23, 2026, through August 22, 2031.

**RESOLUTION:**

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees appoint Professor Steven L. Suib, Ph.D. as the Harold S. Schwenk, Sr. Distinguished Chair in Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for the period August 23, 2026, through August 22, 2031."

**BACKGROUND:**

The Harold S. Schwenk, Sr. Distinguished Chair in Chemistry was established in 1996 by Harold S. Schwenk, Jr. and Paula H. J. Schwenk in order to support the research and academic activities of a faculty member in the Department of Chemistry who would build a reputation among top national and international educators and enhance the visibility of the Department of Chemistry within the business community.

The appointment of Professor Suib as the next Harold S. Schwenk, Sr. Distinguished Chair in Chemistry for a five-year term is recommended, following the endorsement of the Department of Chemistry and with the support of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This recommendation reflects strong confidence in Professor Suib's ability to advance the Department's research excellence, visibility, and strategic priorities.

Professor Suib has an outstanding record of publications, patents, national and international recognition, and sustained external funding. His work focuses on developing new approaches to solve fundamental problems, specifically in the field of catalysis and materials science and involves the synthesis of novel porous semiconductors used to make new chemicals for use in lithium batteries, oil spills, and other applications. Professor Suib currently serves as the Director of the Institute of Material Science at the University.

His leadership and extensive collaborative network position him to elevate the department's research profile through multi-investigator initiatives, stronger industry partnerships, and the mentorship of mid-career faculty. Professor Suib will use the chair resources to support shared infrastructure, foster collaboration, and advance programmatic initiatives that will strengthen the department's overall visibility and impact. His appointment is also expected to deepen connections across campus, particularly with the Institute of Materials Science, and further elevate the department's national standing.

In 2000, the Board of Trustees appointed Professor Robert Birge as the Harold S. Schwenk, Sr. Distinguished Chair in the Department of Chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Professor Birge retired in 2016. Professor Fabris became the second chair holder from 2020 – 2024, and then again from 2024 – 2026 having received a one and a half-year extension, supported by the Department and College, in recognition of COVID-19 impact. Professor Suib will be the third chair holder for a five-year term starting in 2026.