

AGENDA

University of Connecticut Board of Trustees

Academic Affairs Committee Tuesday, September 22, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. Virtual Meeting

Public Streaming Link (live captioning, upon request): <https://its.uconn.edu/bot/>

(A recording of the meeting will be posted on the Board website, <https://boardoftrustees.uconn.edu/>, within seven days of the meeting.)

Call to order at **8:30 a.m.**

1. Public Participation*

* Individuals who wish to speak during the Public Participation portion, of the Tuesday, September 22, meeting, must sign up no later than 8:30 a.m. on Monday, September 21 by emailing BoardCommittees@uconn.edu. Speaking requests must include a name, telephone number, topic, and affiliation with the University (i.e., student, employee, member of the public). The Committee may limit the entirety of public comment to a maximum of 30 minutes. As an alternative, individuals may submit written comments to the Committee via email (BoardCommittees@uconn.edu), and all comments will be transmitted to the Committee.

ACTION ITEMS

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 2. Minutes from the June 16, 2026, Meeting | (Attachment 1) |
| 3. Tenure at Hire | (Attachment 2) |
| 4. Designation of Emeritus Status | (Attachment 3) |
| 5. Sabbatical Leave Recommendations | (Attachment 4) |
| 6. Reappointment of Professor Brenda Brueggemann to the Aetna Chair of Writing in the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences | (Attachment 5) |
| 7. Appointment of Professor Guozhen Lu to the Stuart and Joan Sidney Professorship in Mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences | (Attachment 6) |
| 8. Reappointment of Professor Manisha Sinha to the James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History in the Department of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences | (Attachment 7) |

9. Appointment of Professor Shalabh Gupta to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering (Attachment 8)
10. Appointment of Professor Hongyi Xu to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering (Attachment 9)
11. Establishment of The Hartford Insurance Group Professor in Laborer Safety (Attachment 10)

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

12. University Senate Representative Report
13. Presentation from Nathan Fuerst, Vice President for Student Life & Enrollment
14. Provost's Update
15. Other Business
16. Executive Session (as needed)
17. Adjournment

PLEASE NOTE: *If you are an individual with a disability and require accommodations, please e-mail the Board of Trustees Office at boardoftrustees@uconn.edu prior to the meeting.*

ATTACHMENT 1

DRAFT MINUTES

University of Connecticut Board of Trustees

Academic Affairs Committee June 16, 2026 Virtual Meeting

Committee Trustees: Shari Cantor, Andrea Dennis-LaVigne, Philip Rubin,
Richard Vogel, Diane Whitney

University Senate Representative: Karen Bresciano, Lindsay Cummings

University Staff: Radenka Maric, Pamir Alpay, David Bergman, Sarah Croucher,
Nicole Gelston, Amy Gorin, Philip Hunt, Bruce Liang, Jeffrey
Ogbar, Rebecca Puhl, Daniel Schwartz, Tadarayl Starke,
Reka Wrynn

Vice-Chair Cantor called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

1. Public Participation

No members of the public signed up to address the Committee.

2. Minutes from the April 28, 2026, Meeting (Attachment 1)

On a motion by Trustee Rubin, seconded by Trustee Whitney, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2026, meeting.

3. Designation of Board of Trustees Distinguished Professors, Academic Year 2025-2026 (Attachment 2)

On a motion by Trustee Rubin, seconded by Trustee Whitney, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend Agenda Item #3 to the full Board for approval.

4. Designation of Emeritus Status (Attachment 3)

5. Sabbatical Leave Recommendations (Attachment 4)

On a motion by Trustee Whitney, seconded by Trustee Vogel, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend Agenda Items #4 and #5 to the full Board for approval.

6. New Program: JD Certificate in Labor and Employment Law (Attachment 5)

On a motion by Trustee Whitney, seconded by Trustee Rubin, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend Agenda Item #6 to the full Board for approval.

7. Program Closure: Graduate Certificate in Literacy Supports (Attachment 6)

On a motion by Trustee Vogel, seconded by Trustee Whitney, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend Agenda Item #7 to the full Board for approval.

8. University Senate Representative Report

There was no report from the University Senate.

9. Tenure Track Reappointments (Attachment A)

10. Academic Program Inventory (Attachment B)

11. Academic Centers & Institutes (Attachment C)

Agenda Items #9-11 were presented to the Committee as informational items.

12. Provost's Report: AI for ImpaCT

Provost Alpay introduced David Bergman, Associate Dean in the School of Business who is serving as the Provost's Special Advisor on AI. Provost Alpay and Professor Bergman gave a brief overview of the AI for ImpaCT initiative including plans for the AI Council, AI Executive Committee, and a general timeline of expected work.

13. Other Business

There was no Other Business.

14. Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

15. Adjournment

On a motion by Trustee Whitney, seconded by Trustee Dennis-LaVigne, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn. The Committee adjourned at 9:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexis Lohrey
Secretary to the Committee

ATTACHMENT 2

University of Connecticut
Tenure at Hire Recommendations
September 23, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>School/College</u>
--------------------	--------------------------	------------------------------

Effective August 23, 2026

TENURE AS PROFESSOR

Kharzeev, Dmitri	Physics	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
------------------	---------	--------------------------------------

TENURE AS PROFESSOR

Stokes, Jeffrey	Allied Health Sciences	College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources
-----------------	------------------------	--

ATTACHMENT 3

University of Connecticut Department of Human Resources
Emeritus Retirees
September 23, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/COLLEGE</u>	<u>RETIRED</u>	<u>HIRED</u>
Barton, Marianne L.	Clinical Professor	Psychological Sciences	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	8/1/2026	9/1/1994
Bell, John	Associate Professor	Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry	School of Fine Arts	9/1/2026	5/25/2007
Bellini, Sandra (Sandy) L.	Clinical Professor	Nursing Instructor and Research	School of Nursing	9/1/2026	5/16/2008
Dayton, Cornelia	Professor	History	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	7/1/2026	8/23/1997
Franklin, Wayne	Professor	English	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	7/1/2026	8/23/2005
Harding, Scott	Associate Professor	Social Work	School of Social Work	7/1/2026	8/23/2004
Lynes, Michael A	Professor	Molecular and Cell Biology	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	9/1/2026	9/1/1989
Nishiyama, Akiko	Professor	Physiology and Neurobiology	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	7/1/2026	8/23/1998
Pomp, Richard D	Distinguished Professor	Law Instruction and Research	School of Law	9/1/2026	9/1/1976
Rasmussen, Theodore	Associate Professor	Pharmaceutical Science	School of Pharmacy	9/1/2026	8/23/2002

University of Connecticut Department of Human Resources
Emeritus Retirees
September 23, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/COLLEGE</u>	<u>RETIRED</u>	<u>HIRED</u>
Reagan, Louise A	Associate Professor	Nursing	School of Nursing	9/1/2026	1/5/2007
Rubin, Rachel	Executive Secretary to the Board of Trustees	N/A	N/A	4/1/2022	7/1/2002
Schwenk, Kurt	Professor	Ecology and Evolutionary Biology	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	8/1/2026	9/1/1989
Segerson, Kathleen	Distinguished Professor	Economics	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	7/1/2026	9/1/1986
Teplyaev, Alexander	Professor	Mathematics	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	8/1/2026	8/23/2002
Thorpe, Judith	Professor	Art and Art History	School of Fine Arts	8/1/2026	6/1/2001
Van Hoof, Thomas	Professor	Nursing	School of Nursing	9/1/2026	8/23/2008
Waddell, Brian E.	Professor	Political Science	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	8/1/2026	8/23/1996
Walsh, Stephen J	Associate Professor	Nursing Instructor and Research	School of Nursing	9/1/2026	8/15/2008
Zinn, Steven	Professor	Animal Science	College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources	9/1/2026	9/1/1990

ATTACHMENT 4

University of Connecticut Office of the Provost
Sabbatical Leave Recommendations Requiring Board of Trustees Approval
September 23, 2026, Board of Trustees Meeting

SABBATICAL MODIFICATIONS/POSTPONEMENTS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/COLLEGE</u>	<u>PAY</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Lund, David	Professor	Marine Sciences	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Half Change to Full	AY 2026-2027 Fall 2026

SABBATICAL LEAVE REQUESTS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/COLLEGE</u>	<u>PAY</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Amador, Emma	Asst Professor	History	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
Baggio, Michele	Assoc Professor	Economics	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
Brunner, Eric	Professor & Director	Public Policy	Public Policy	Full	Fall 2027
Cardonha, Carlos	Assoc Professor	Operations & Info Management	Business	Half	AY 2027-2028
Coundouriotis, Eleni	Professor	English	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Half	AY 2027-2028
Dunne, Gerald	Professor	Physics	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Half	AY 2027-2028
Faesj, Christopher	Asst Professor	Physics	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
Frank, Tracy	Department Head & Professor	Earth Sciences	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Spring 2028
Furtado, Delia	Professor	Economics	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
Ivakhiv, Solomiya	Professor	Music	Fine Arts	Full	Spring 2027
Matassa, Catherine	Asst Professor	Marine Sciences	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
McNeal, Ralph	Assoc Professor	Sociology	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/COLLEGE</u>	<u>PAY</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Park, Sohyun	Assoc Professor	Plant Sci & Landscape Arch	Agriculture, Health, Natural Resources	Half	AY 2027-2028
Plesko, George	Department Head & Professor	Accounting	Business	Full	Spring 2028
Shea, Thomas	Assoc Professor	English	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
Wang, Xiaojing	Professor	Statistics	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Half	AY 2027-2028
Whitney, Michael	Professor	Marine Sciences	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027
Xygalatas, Dimitris	Director & Assoc Professor	Anthropology	Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full	Fall 2027

ATTACHMENT 5

September 23, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

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

RE: Reappointment of Professor Brenda Brueggemann to the Aetna Chair of Writing in the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the reappointment of Professor Brenda Brueggemann to the Aetna Chair of Writing in the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to reappoint Professor Brenda Brueggemann to the Aetna Chair of Writing in the Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences."

BACKGROUND:

The Aetna Chair in Writing was established in 1986 to develop, sustain, and enrich writing programs throughout the UConn system. As Chair, Professor Brenda Brueggemann has provided leadership in writing studies and supported the continued prominence and impact of writing programs at UConn and throughout the state through research, scholarship, teaching, and public engagement.

The Aetna Chair of Writing works with campus writing directors and oversees the Aetna Chair endowment, which supports the Connecticut Writing Project, visiting writers, writing awards, and other initiatives. During her tenure, Professor Brueggemann has expanded the Chair's impact through her scholarship and leadership in writing studies, disability studies, and the public humanities. Her work, including the Mansfield Training

School Memorial and Museum Project, has brought together interdisciplinary research, teaching, and public engagement while creating meaningful opportunities for students, faculty, and the broader Connecticut community.

Professor Brueggemann has been an exceptional steward of the Aetna Chair and has maintained a strong scholarly agenda while mentoring undergraduate and graduate students and advancing access and inclusion across the University. The reappointment will allow Professor Brueggemann to build on the Chair's longstanding commitments to student writing, faculty development, and service to the state while expanding work in disability centered scholarship and the public humanities. Her national reputation, professional service, and ability to connect academic work with broader audiences continue to enhance the visibility and reputation of the Department, College, and University.

The decision to recommend reappointment was made in accordance with College and departmental procedures and with the support of the Department Head of English. This appointment will be effective August 23, 2026 through August 22, 2031.

Professor Lynn Bloom was the inaugural chairholder, serving from 1988 until her retirement in 2015. The Department of English and the College subsequently conducted a search for a scholar with an international reputation in Rhetoric, Composition, Creative Nonfiction, Technical Communication, and/or Writing Studies to provide intellectual leadership on matters related to writing and the teaching of writing. Professor Brueggemann was selected through this search and held the Chair for an initial five-year term from August 23, 2016 through August 22, 2021. She was reappointed for a second five-year term from August 23, 2021 through August 22, 2026.

ATTACHMENT 6

September 23, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

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

RE: Appointment of Professor Guozhen Lu to the Stuart and Joan Sidney
Professorship in Mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Professor Guozhen Lu to the Stuart and Joan Sidney Professorship in Mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to appoint Professor Guozhen Lu to the Stuart and Joan Sidney Professorship in Mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences."

BACKGROUND:

The Stuart and Joan Sidney Professorship in Mathematics was endowed in 2009 by the four children of Stuart and Joan Sidney for the purpose of supporting an internationally recognized research mathematician with a particular commitment to teaching.

The recommendation of Professor Lu follows an internal search conducted by the Department of Mathematics. Eligible candidates were evaluated based on their research, contributions to teaching and graduate education, and service to the professional community. Professor Lu is an internationally recognized mathematician with an extensive record of scholarship in several research fields, including numerous publications in leading journals and service on editorial boards and within professional organizations. His international standing is reflected in his election to several prominent scholarly societies, and his commitment to graduate education is demonstrated through

the mentorship of numerous doctoral students and the creation of the Graduate Research Forum in Mathematics.

The search committee unanimously recommended Professor Lu, with the endorsement of the Department Head and Dean. Professor Lu will further strengthen the Department's research profile, graduate education, and international visibility while advancing the purpose of the Sidney Professorship. This appointment will be in effect August 23, 2027 through August 22, 2031.

Professor Michael Neumann was the inaugural holder of the Sidney Professorship from 2010 to 2011, followed by Professor Jerzy Weyman from 2013 to 2018 and again from 2018 to 2023. Professor Euiyong Park currently holds the Professorship as a visiting professor through February 28, 2027.

ATTACHMENT 7

September 23, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

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

RE: Reappointment of Professor Manisha Sinha to the James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History in the Department of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the reappointment of Professor Manisha Sinha to the James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History in the Department of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to reappoint Professor Manisha Sinha to the James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History in the Department of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences."

BACKGROUND:

The James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History was established to develop, sustain, and enrich the knowledge, understanding, and teaching of American history. As Chair, Professor Manisha Sinha advances the national and international prominence of the program through research, scholarship, teaching, mentorship, and public engagement.

The James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair endowment supports opportunities for innovation, scholarship, and teaching in American history. During her tenure, Professor Sinha has distinguished herself as a leading scholar and highly influential public intellectual. Her most recent book, *The Rise and Fall of the Second American Republic*,

published in 2024, received a major book prize and served as the framework for an exhibition she curated at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Since arriving at UConn, she has received numerous scholarly honors, such as four major fellowships, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, and has been elected president of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic.

Professor Sinha has used the resources of the Draper Chair to advance scholarship, support and mentor students, sponsor conferences and public events, and raise the profile of the Department and University. Her reappointment will allow her to build on these strengths, including efforts to sustain teaching and research in early American history and continue the Chair's support of scholarship, student development, and public engagement.

The decision to recommend reappointment was made in accordance with College and departmental procedures and with the strong support of the Department Head of History. This appointment will be effective August 23, 2026 through August 22, 2031.

Professor Robert Gross was the inaugural chairholder, serving from 2003 until his retirement in 2015. The Department of History and the College subsequently conducted a search for a scholar with an international reputation to provide intellectual leadership in the research and scholarship of American history. Professor Sinha was selected through this search and held the Chair for an initial five-year term beginning August 23, 2016. She was reappointed for a second five-year term from August 23, 2021 through August 22, 2026.

ATTACHMENT 8

September 23, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

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

RE: Appointment of Professor Shalabh Gupta to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Professor Shalabh Gupta to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering.

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to appoint Professor Shalabh Gupta to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering."

BACKGROUND:

This Professorship was established by an endowment from Raytheon Technologies Corporation (formerly known as United Technologies Corporation) dated November 19, 2013 as part of a major investment at UConn to advanced systems engineering and subsequently amended and restated by executing a new agreement dated August 29, 2022. This Professorship supports multiple Associate Professors who are nationally or internationally recognized researchers, scholars and teachers, and who will have made significant contributions to the field of advanced systems engineering. This appointment will be effective August 23, 2026 through August 22, 2029 or until promotion to the rank of Professor.

The appointment of Professor Shalabh Gupta follows the unanimous recommendations of Dean Ji-Cheng Zhao, the College of Engineering's Executive Council and the Selection Committee of the Pratt & Whitney Institute for Advanced Systems Engineering (P&W-IASE).

Professor Gupta has developed a highly respected and impactful research and educational program focused on robotics, resilient autonomous systems, smart manufacturing, diagnostics and prognostics, and advanced control systems. His work aligns strongly with the mission of P&W IASE through its emphasis on intelligent systems, manufacturing resilience, and interdisciplinary engineering innovation. Professor Gupta has established a strong and sustained scholarly record with publications in leading journals and conferences in robotics, autonomous systems, motion planning, resilient control, and smart manufacturing. His work has achieved substantial scholarly impact, reflected by an h-index of 32 and strong citation performance. He has successfully secured competitive external funding from major federal agencies and industrial sponsors including ONR, AFRL, DOE, ARM, and Collins Aerospace, supporting research in robotics, intelligent systems, resilient autonomy, and advanced manufacturing technologies. His funding success and publication record demonstrate sustained technical leadership and national competitiveness in these areas.

We also recognized Professor Gupta's major contributions to education and workforce development, particularly through his role as inaugural Program Director of UConn's Robotics Engineering program. He has led the development of interdisciplinary robotics curriculum and new robotics courses that have attracted strong enrollment across multiple engineering disciplines. His leadership has contributed significantly to the visibility and growth of robotics education and research within the College of Engineering.

In addition, Professor Gupta has demonstrated a strong commitment to outreach, mentorship, and institutional service. His activities involving robotics education, public-school engagement, interdisciplinary collaboration, and professional service reflect a sustained commitment to expanding the impact of engineering research and education beyond the university environment. His efforts in robotics outreach and workforce development align strongly with the broader educational and societal mission of P&W IASE.

ATTACHMENT 9

September 23, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

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

RE: Appointment of Professor Hongyi Xu to the Pratt & Whitney Associate
Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the appointment of Professor Hongyi Xu to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering.

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to appoint Professor Hongyi Xu to the Pratt & Whitney Associate Professorship in Advanced Systems Engineering in the College of Engineering."

BACKGROUND:

This Professorship was established by an endowment from Raytheon Technologies Corporation (formerly known as United Technologies Corporation) dated November 19, 2013 as part of a major investment at UConn to advanced systems engineering and subsequently amended and restated by executing a new agreement dated August 29, 2022. This Professorship supports multiple Associate Professors who are nationally or internationally recognized researchers, scholars and teachers, and who will have made significant contributions to the field of advanced systems engineering. This appointment will be effective August 23, 2026 through August 22, 2029 or until promotion to the rank of Professor.

The appointment of Professor Hongyi Xu follows the unanimous recommendations of Dean Ji-Cheng Zhao, the College of Engineering's Executive Council and the Selection

Committee of the Pratt & Whitney Institute for Advanced Systems Engineering (P&W-IASE).

Professor Xu has established a rapidly growing and nationally recognized research program at the intersection of artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, digital twins, resilient systems, and computational engineering. His work demonstrates strong interdisciplinary integration and clear relevance to advanced systems engineering applications. His accomplishments are exceptionally well aligned with the mission and strategic direction of P&W IASE. Professor Xu has developed an impressive scholarly record (h-index of 26) that includes a strong and rapidly growing publication portfolio in high-impact journals and conferences spanning AI-enabled engineering, advanced manufacturing, materials systems, and computational design. His research has received substantial national and international visibility, including recognition as a top-cited researcher in his field. He has successfully secured competitive external funding from NSF, DOE, DOD, and industrial sponsors, including a prestigious NSF CAREER Award. His funding portfolio demonstrates both technical leadership and the ability to build sustained externally supported research programs in strategically important areas for advanced systems engineering.

In addition to his research accomplishments, Professor Xu has demonstrated significant contributions to graduate and undergraduate education, curriculum development, and student mentorship. He has developed and modernized courses integrating artificial intelligence, data science, and manufacturing systems concepts while maintaining strong industrial relevance. His interdisciplinary collaborations across departments and research centers have further strengthened UConn's capabilities in advanced manufacturing and intelligent systems research. Professor Xu has also demonstrated a strong ability to bridge fundamental research and practical engineering implementation in areas of growing strategic importance to both industry and national competitiveness. His research integrates AI-enabled modeling, manufacturing intelligence, advanced materials systems, and digital engineering methodologies in ways that strongly support the future vision of advanced systems engineering at UConn. His work positions both the institute and the university for increased national visibility and expanded opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and external partnerships.

Professor Xu has demonstrated outstanding leadership potential as a collaborative faculty member and mentor. His commitment to interdisciplinary engagement, student development, and innovation in engineering education reflects the broader mission of P&W IASE to advance both research excellence and workforce development in emerging technologies.

ATTACHMENT 10

September 23, 2026

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

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

RE: Establishment of The Hartford Insurance Group Professor in Laborer Safety



RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of "The Hartford Insurance Group Professor in Laborer Safety" within the Department of Kinesiology in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources.

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to establish "The Hartford Insurance Group Professor in Laborer Safety" within the Department of Kinesiology in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources."

BACKGROUND:

The Hartford Insurance Group has generously committed to establishing a professorship and heat lab within the College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources. "The Hartford Insurance Group Professor in Laborer Safety" is expected to support a distinguished faculty leader advancing research, industry engagement, and applied solutions to protect workers from heat-related illness, while strengthening partnerships with corporations, policymakers, and practitioners nationwide.

The Hartford Insurance Group is a growing corporate partner, supporting strategic priorities in student access, research and innovation, worker safety, and sustainability. Their commitments advance both community impact and industry aligned research while strengthening UConn's workforce development pipeline. The Hartford's ongoing and proposed philanthropy demonstrates an emerging, multi-dimensional partnership with UConn. This pledge is consistent with the amount recommended for naming this position under the University's *Named Gift Guidelines*.