

## **Institute for Student Success (ISS)**

Maria D. Martinez, Assistant Vice Provost

The Institute for Student Success (ISS) within Undergraduate Education and Instruction consists of three units: The Academic Center for Exploratory Students, First Year Programs & Learning Communities, and the Center for Academic Programs. ISS also includes the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP). These units provide academic advising and support, transition assistance, and enrichment opportunities to middle, high school, and college students. The Academic Center for Exploratory Students offers high quality academic advising and educational planning, to students who are exploring and preparing for various degree programs. First Year Programs & Learning Communities help first year and transfer students transition to the University, and promote personal and academic development through interdisciplinary courses, peer education, academic support, one-on-one mentoring, and opportunities to live and participate in Learning Communities. The Center for Academic Programs and LSAMP increase access to higher education for students who come from underrepresented ethnic or economic backgrounds and/or are first generation college students, and also provide support services to aid students' retention in and graduation from the University. For detailed information about each unit, please visit [www.iss.uconn.edu](http://www.iss.uconn.edu).

### **Academic Center for Exploratory Students (ACES)**

Jim Hill, Executive Program Director

ACES is UConn's academic advising program for students who want to explore the University's academic opportunities before deciding on a field of study and for students who must complete specific requirements before applying to a University program. The goal of ACES is to connect every student with an appropriate major(s) as early as possible in their academic career. Each student is assigned an ACES advisor who will work with the student until he or she officially declares a major. The ACES advisors work in collaboration with a variety of campus resources including faculty, Counseling and Mental Health Services, and the Center for Career Development to ensure that both students and academic programs reach their full potential.

<http://www.aces.uconn.edu>

***The Major Experience (TME):*** TME is a University-wide collaborative program designed to help students (inside and outside of UConn) explore majors in a holistic, interactive, and intentional manner. Using a personalized approach, TME provides students with the appropriate tools and support to choose a major(s) with confidence. This is accomplished by facilitating peer-to-peer connections through TME mentors, encouraging networking with faculty and staff, offering personal guidance from professional TME coaches (for UConn students only), providing access to an assortment of valuable tools, and partnering with various University departments, programs, and resources. [tme.uconn.edu](http://tme.uconn.edu)

***Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) Program:*** The BGS program is the University's degree completion program designed primarily for returning adult students. The program was developed with the busy adult student in mind. The program is accessible at any of the campuses of the University. Students must have an associate's degree or 60 credits from a regionally accredited

college or university to be eligible for admission to the program. For more information or to contact a BGS Counselor go to <http://www.bgs.uconn.edu>.

***Non-Degree Study Programs:*** Non-degree study at the University of Connecticut enables students to register in regular credit courses for academic credit without being admitted to an undergraduate or graduate degree program. Day and evening courses are offered at our campuses and online. In addition to fall and spring classes, non-degree students may enroll in May term, summer session and winter session classes. Non-degree status does not constitute, guarantee, or imply admission into any program at UConn. For more information or to contact a non-degree counselor go to <http://www.nondegree.uconn.edu>.

### **First Year Programs & Learning Communities (FYP&LC)**

David Ouimette, Executive Program Director

The Office of First Year Programs and Learning Communities currently encompasses three programmatic areas and a variety of academic enrichment programs that share the common purpose of helping students succeed at the University of Connecticut. FYP&LC offers students opportunities to develop a strong foundation, to engage with faculty and staff across campus early in their academic careers, and to seek meaningful activities that complement their academic studies.

<http://fyp.uconn.edu/>

***First Year Experience (FYE):*** The First Year Experience course suite assists first and second year students with the transition to the University by fostering positive academic, personal, and social practices that have been proven to increase retention and academic success. FYP&LC offers two general FYE seminar courses: UNIV 1800, University Learning Skills and UNIV 1820, First Year Seminar. UNIV 1800 is a holistic introduction to UConn and college-level standards, focusing on academic and extracurricular engagement, everyday critical thinking, and strategies and resources for becoming intentional scholars. This course is intended to help all UConn students thrive in their academic careers. UNIV 1820 sections are topical seminars led by faculty or other experts in the content areas that are intended to engage students in discovery and inquiry-based learning, exposing them to skills and resources fundamental to their academic success at a research intensive institution. Peer Mentors support FYE instructors and students by serving as junior TAs and introducing the students to opportunities and resources on campus. **New instructors and 1820 course proposals are always welcome.** Other courses in the FYE suite are exclusively for Learning Community students. <http://www.fye.uconn.edu>

***FYE Peer Education:*** FYP&LC Peer Mentors participate in a rigorous Peer Education program designed to equip them with the tools necessary to provide support and resources for FYE courses. Coordinated, trained, and supported by FYP&LC, Peer Mentors are developed as student leaders capable of supporting FYE instructors in fostering student development, metacognition, and self-advocacy both in and out of the classroom. This programming strengthens both FYE students' and Mentors' academic, professional, and interpersonal skills starting early in their UConn careers. [http://fye.uconn.edu/fye\\_mentors](http://fye.uconn.edu/fye_mentors)

***Learning Communities (LCs):*** Learning Communities, **led by Faculty Directors** supported by FYP&LC, provide opportunities for students to deeply engage with faculty, staff, graduate students, and student leaders in an area of academic interest. LC students have unique opportunities to get involved in undergraduate research, course clusters, volunteer projects, internships, study abroad, student clubs and organizations, and more. Learning Community themes relate to majors, career interests, or interdisciplinary areas of inquiry such as the environment, public health, or the humanities. FYE courses reserved for LCs include UNIV 1810: FYE Learning Community Seminar, a course that blends an introduction to University Learning Skills with an overview of the community's theme; UNIV 1840: Learning Community Service-Learning, intended to foster active communal learning and global citizenship; and UNIV 3820: Advanced Learning Community Seminar, a course that fosters depth of academic engagement. <http://www.lc.uconn.edu>

***Learning Community Innovation Zone (LCIZ):*** When it was determined that NextGen Hall, the newest residence hall built on campus, would house students participating in one of 8 Living & Learning Communities, Learning Community staff were given an opportunity to work with architects on designing the building with features that would allow enriched engagement of students. An idea for a project room requested by students evolved into the launch of UConn's first makerspace, a 1,500 square foot room housing equipment such as 3D printers, a laser cutter, table saw, drill press, x-carve milling machine, an electronics station, a textile station, as well as tools and supplies to engage students in learning design thinking, prototyping, and technical skills. The space engages students participating in any Learning Community in courses, workshops, and open hours. Website launching soon – <http://wp.lciz.uconn.edu>.

***Academic Support (AS) and the Academic Achievement Center (AAC):*** The AAC provides strategic academic counseling to support students in achieving their personal and academic goals at UConn. Additionally the AAC provides academic process tutoring services and supplemental instruction that aid students in attaining academic excellence. Learning strategies, study skills; techniques for taking and utilizing class notes; and strategies for effectively reading textbooks, journal articles, and lab manuals comprise the program's core. These services are complemented by training in time management, motivation, and stress management skills required for consistent academic performance at the highest levels. <http://achieve.uconn.edu>

***Supplemental Instruction:*** Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a program designed to improve students' academic success and increase retention. The SI program targets traditional foundational courses and provides regularly scheduled, peer-led learning sessions. These sessions are available to all students enrolled in a particular class with corresponding faculty member. Review lecture material, course reading, and assignments through exam reviews, practice quizzes, and discussions. These courses usually require large amounts of reading from complex texts, utilize exams that require application and analysis of heavy content, and do not require or record attendance. Many students have difficulty adjusting their current learning strategies to accommodate to this new style of teaching and learning. Large lecture halls and class size often diminishes the opportunity for teacher / student interaction. Supplemental Instruction supports these types of courses. These sessions are facilitated by an SI Peer Leader.

***UConn Connects:*** UConn Connects is a direct intervention program designed to help students who are on academic warning or probation, or who are subject to dismissal. Trained faculty, staff, and

undergraduate facilitators meet individually with at-risk students on a weekly or bi-weekly basis throughout the semester to help them achieve their potential for academic excellence. Identifying campus resources, encouraging sound choices, and introducing efficient strategies and techniques to manage the academic work load are some of the areas emphasized by facilitators.

***First Year International (FYI):*** The FYP&LC First Year International program provides students with an opportunity to explore the world through **faculty-led global field study courses**. FYI is an interdepartmental endeavor focusing on connecting first and second year students 1-on-1 with research faculty on the global scene. Some trips include service-learning placements at organizations for students across any field of interest. Trips are 10 day to 4 week programs which occur during winter or summer intersessions, and they provide a rich context for students to bring back to their academic life on campus. All UConn students may apply. All trips are sponsored by UConn Education Abroad. <http://fyp.uconn.edu/fyi>

### **Center for Academic Programs (CAP)**

Bidya Ranjeet, Executive Program Director

The Center for Academic Programs provides educational opportunities and access to higher education for students who are first generation to college, from underrepresented populations, and/or from low-income backgrounds. CAP prepares students for successful entry into, retention in, and graduation from a post-secondary institution through these programs: Student Support Services and High School Initiatives. It also supports talented undergraduates in seeking doctoral degrees, mainly in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math), through the McNair Scholars Program. <http://www.cap.uconn.edu/>

### ***Student Support Services (SSS)***

The Student Support Services programs seek to increase the enrollment, retention, and graduation of low-income, first-generation-college, and/or minority students from the University of Connecticut. Selected students must take part in a five-week pre-collegiate program for which they earn up to six college credits. The support provided during the summer is continued throughout the student's tenure at UConn through First-Year Experience courses and regular advising. The program introduces students to the rigors of university life, helps them develop the discipline and skills required to succeed academically, provides professional and peer counseling, and offers academic services such as tutoring, supplemental instructions and peer mentoring. <http://cap.uconn.edu/sss/>

### ***McNair Scholars Program***

The McNair Scholars Program prepares talented, highly motivated UConn undergraduate students for doctoral studies in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines. As part of UConn's TRIO programs, McNair is open to low-income, first-generation college students or those from populations underrepresented in STEM graduate fields who are seeking to pursue a Ph.D. McNair Scholars are paired with faculty mentors for academic enrichment, research, and internships. Students also participate in workshops, seminars, and conferences designed to help them secure admission to doctoral programs and obtain financial resources for graduate study. The McNair program helps participants build skills related to academic writing, critical thinking, professional

development. In addition, it offers preparation for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), for applying to graduate school, and for presenting their research professionally. Scholars design and conduct original research projects during the academic year and also for nine weeks during one summer of their undergraduate careers. <http://cap.uconn.edu/msp/>

***Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program (ConnCAP)***

The ConnCAP program is designed to make educational opportunities available to selected high school students from Hartford and Windham. Students participate in academic-year and summer components. Program services include weekly team meetings, tutoring, mentoring, career-awareness workshops, college and financial-aid preparation, college trips, and an intensive academic six-week residential program during the summer. <http://cap.uconn.edu/hsi/ccap/>

***First Star Academy***

The First Star Academy is a four-week summer residential program for high school students in foster care. Students take courses for college credit while living in a safe, healthy, and nurturing collegiate environment. They also participate in activities designed to help them to build academic and life skills. Participants enter the program after their freshman or sophomore year of high school and continue each summer until they graduate and are ready to enter college. The program also includes regular follow up during the academic year. <http://cap.uconn.edu/hsi/fsa/>

**Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Program**

The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program supports UConn undergraduates toward achievement and graduation in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Open to underrepresented students in STEM majors, LSAMP provides opportunities for mentoring, workshops, personal and professional development, and access to support for study abroad, undergraduate research, and participation in regional and national professional organizations. Through a shared National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, UConn LSAMP is a member of the Northeast Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (NELSAMP) which consists of UConn, UMass-Amherst, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Northeastern University, Tufts University, and the University of Rhode Island. Participation in the Alliance allows LSAMP students to access a broader range of research opportunities and connection with an increased variety of scholars. <http://www.lsamp.uconn.edu>