

August 25, 2020

UConn PROVOST'S MESSAGE

Dear UConn Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Students:

In any academic year, the week before classes begin is an intense time of preparation for nearly everyone across our institution. This year presents an additional layer of complexity, as each of you has had to reconfigure curriculum and syllabi, office operations, physical spaces, and events, in various combinations of virtual and in-person formats. For many of you, these efforts run parallel to intensified caregiving responsibilities and other personal stressors brought on by COVID-19, with disparate impact experienced by some of the most vulnerable in our community.

President Katsouleas and I emphasized last week [in our message](#) the necessity of community in this moment. While we focused on public health in that message, it's important to remember the other half of the [UConn Promise](#), which calls on us to ensure that each member of our community feels included, supported, and valued by doing all we can to support the goal of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive UConn.

As we start this new semester, each of us will experience professional and personal challenges. I encourage us all to continue to approach our colleagues and our students with compassion, flexibility, and understanding. The care you have each put into building a semester that prioritizes physical safety and emotional well-being, and academic rigor and progress is truly remarkable. I thank each of you for all you have done, and will do throughout this fall, to help UConn move forward, together.

Sincerely,
Carl

Carl Lejuez

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Updates for the Academic Community

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies

We announced this week the three finalists for our Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies search. All UConn faculty and staff are invited to submit questions for the candidates, as well as view their public presentations. More information on the finalists and presentation access can be found on the Provost's Office website: provost.uconn.edu/administrators-and-leadership/academic-leader-searches.

Faculty and Staff Handbook

The Faculty and Staff Handbook website has a new look. Visit the updated website at handbook.uconn.edu. The handbook is a centralized resource for faculty and staff to locate the information and resources they need at UConn.

Community Office Hours with the Provost's Office

The Provost's Office's weekly Community Office Hours are open to all faculty, staff, and students. More information on upcoming sessions can be found on the Provost's Office website, provost.uconn.edu.

Returning to Campus training

Please be sure to complete the Returning to Campus and/or Returning to Research training provided by Environmental Health & Safety. This training is required for any employee (faculty/staff/graduate student employees) who will work on campus this fall.

Links for the trainings can be found here:

- General employee training: ehs.uconn.edu/covid-19-campus-training
- Lab researcher training: ehs.uconn.edu/returning-to-research-at-uconn-and-uconn-health-training-course

Library reopening plan

The Library recently announced its reopening plan to begin on August 31. The plan includes details on availability of common spaces, access to collections, and other Library services. You can find more detail on the UConn Library website.

COVID-19 support resources

InCHIP's Social and Behavioral COVID-19 Workgroup has created and distributed a COVID-19 Support Resources infographic as a quick reference guide for instructors teaching amid COVID-19. The infographic and information on workgroup members can be found here: <https://provost.uconn.edu/covid-19-faculty-infographic/>.

Travel updates

- *International travel*
 - The U. S. Department of State has updated its COVID-19 related international travel advisory. Instead of the worldwide "Level 4—Do Not Travel" advisory, it has referred travelers to the country specific travel advisory and U.S. embassy updates (travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/covid-19-information.html). Almost all countries, however, remain at the status of Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) or Level 4 (Do Not Travel). According to University policy, UConn personnel traveling to Level 3 or 4 countries on University business are required to seek University approval and waive institutional liability for such travel (policy.uconn.edu/2015/07/23/policy-for-education-abroad-and-related-activities-in-sites-with-u-s-department-of-state-travel-warningtravel-alert/#).
- *Domestic travel*
 - Any faculty member, graduate student, or postdoc who needs to request an exemption to the suspension of domestic out-of-state travel

should submit their travel request into Concur. Exemptions to the domestic travel suspension can now be provided by Deans through an additional approval requirement built into Concur for the remainder of COVID-19 travel restrictions. Further FAQs relating to travel can be found here: provost.uconn.edu/covid-19-fall-planning/covid-19-faqs-for-instruction.

In-person office hours

We encourage schools, colleges, departments, and all other offices to post information about your in-person and virtual services to your websites. This will help students and staff know which offices are open to in-person visitors, as well as those offices that continue to operate entirely remotely. Please consider including information such as in-person office hours and procedures (e.g. drop-in or appointment), points of contact, and any other detail that will help your constituents know how and when they can reach your office. Signage is also available to post in your offices and buildings to guide in-person visitors on protocols: brand.uconn.edu/wordmarks-assets/downloads-2/#covid-reopen.

Mansfield town news

The Town of Mansfield recently shared information about modified operations and other local protocols in place to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community. More information, including a list of which businesses are open, can be found by [clicking here](#).

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