Dear Colleagues,

One month ago we, as CSU Professors,* wrote a letter of concern over the consolidation of the state universities and community colleges into ConnSCU—a forced marriage that neither partner wanted. The consolidation has not produced the promised results with there being very dangerous signs that the state universities are being downgraded from teaching and research universities into solely teaching ones. Nothing since the release of the letter has convinced us that the crisis has abated. In fact, Interim President Austin canceled the two meetings we arranged with him.

- We are still operating under a mission statement that does not include research. No university in the United States can claim quality status without a research mission.
- There have been little, if any, financial savings from the consolidation—its ostensible major purpose.
- Despite calling for affordable education as the central goal of its very brief mission statement for ConnSCU, the Board of Regents has approved a significant tuition hike, provoking the largest student protest in years.
- The BOR and central administration have failed to advocate in the state legislature for the interests of our institutions and students.
- Students have less representation on the BOR than they did on the CSU Board of Trustees. Faculty continues to have no representation beyond a restricted advisory committee.
- Morale of students and faculty is plummeting in the face of the perceived downgrading. Student recruitment and retention are correspondingly being harmed.

As a solution to the crisis, we are today calling for a return to self-governance for the state universities.

We have no wish to simply reinstate the old model of the Board of Trustees with an autocratic Chancellor. Rather, we call for a reformed self-governance model which has

- Teaching and research central to its mission
- Genuine faculty and student representation
- A mission to upgrade the state universities that guarantees equal status and balanced support for all of the state’s public universities
- A mission that is distinct—but not inferior—among the state’s public universities, especially given the high percentage of CSU graduates who remain in Connecticut as taxpayers, workers, and citizens

*CSU Professors include Vijay Nair, President, CSU American Association of University Professors, Stephen Adair, Vice Chair, Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of Regents, ConnSCU.
The failure of ConnSCU requires bold action, including in the state legislature, to repair the damage by adopting a superior governance model that will assure that students are not being forced into an increasingly lower tier of the state’s higher education institutions.

Sincerely yours,

Imna Arroyo, CSU Professor of Art, ECSU
Felton O. Best, CSU Professor of Philosophy, CCSU
John Briggs, CSU Professor Emeritus of Writing, Linguistics and Creative Process, WCSU
Edward Hagan, CSU Professor of Writing, Linguistics and Creative Process, WCSU
James E. Mazur, CSU Professor of Psychology, SCSU
C. Thomas Philbrick, CSU Professor of Biological & Environmental Sciences, WCSU
Heather Munro Prescott, CSU Professor of History, CCSU
James W. Russell, CSU Professor of Sociology, ECSU
Vivian C. Shipley, CSU Professor of English, SCSU
Joseph Solodow, CSU Professor of Spanish & Latin, SCSU
Jeffrey Trawick-Smith, CSU Professor of Education, ECSU
Marie A. Wright, CSU Professor of Management Information Systems, WCSU

*"The Board, upon the recommendation of a President and the Chancellor, may award full-time members the title, CSU Professor, provided that the member: 1) has been recommended for the honor by the President who has received the advice of a committee elected from the membership by a procedure designed by the Senate and approved by the President; 2) has been recognized by peers in the field for professional excellence. CSU Professors shall retain their title for the duration of their service to the system Not more than four (4) CSU Professorships shall be awarded in any given year, and there shall not be more than twelve (12) in Connecticut State University nor more than three (3) in any one university at any given time." CSU Board of Trustees - AAUP 2007-2016 Contract.