

February 26, 2024

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Jeffrey P. Geoghegan, CPA
Executive Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

RE: Changing the Urban Semester Program from Fee to Tuition



RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve changing the Urban Semester program from the current fee-based structure to a tuition-based structure beginning in Fall 2025.

RESOLUTION:

“Be it resolved that the University’s Urban Semester program be changed from a fee-based structure to a tuition-based structure beginning in Fall 2025.”

BACKGROUND:

The University is seeking to move the Urban Semester program, housed within the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, from a fee-based structure to a tuition-based structure to afford students the opportunity to apply financial aid to this program. As it stands with the current fee-based model, students are unable to use certain financial aid awards. This change is consistent with the recent shift from fee to tuition for all semester-based programs in Experiential Global Learning (EGL). The University must ensure equitable access to these essential experiences and programs for all students. The targeted minimum number of students in this program per semester is six so there is an extremely limited financial impact, and we anticipate this to be budget neutral.

Urban Semester is a 15-credit program including both internships and seminars. It has historically run in Hartford but beginning in Spring 2025, limited opportunities may exist in other Connecticut cities. The program offers students a tremendous opportunity for service learning and public service. For over 50 years, students from diverse backgrounds have participated in this classroom and internship experience, enabling them to assist Hartford in addressing its challenges. Students intern in human service agencies, government offices, and community and non-profit organizations, including school-related programs, shelters, and advocacy organizations. Urban Semester students involve themselves in issues facing the city from education, poverty, homelessness, youth issues, crime, and the challenges of the changing economy.

The Urban Semester Program has allowed students from across UConn to put what they study to work addressing real-world urban issues and challenges. For many, the program is a life-transformative experience that helps shape their career plans while, at the same time, contributing to the community.