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## Onboarding during a Pandemic: Creating a Welcome Guide

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# Onboarding during a Pandemic: Creating a Welcome Guide

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## Overview

The pandemic environment has required academic libraries to modify their internal onboarding and training processes. While engaging with colleagues in a virtual or hybrid environment has been challenging for all employees, recent hires in particular face barriers while getting to know a new institution and new people in the virtual landscape. UConn Library has hired several employees since the beginning of pandemic. To address these challenges and create a more seamless onboarding process, the Research Services Unit created a comprehensive online Welcome Guide.

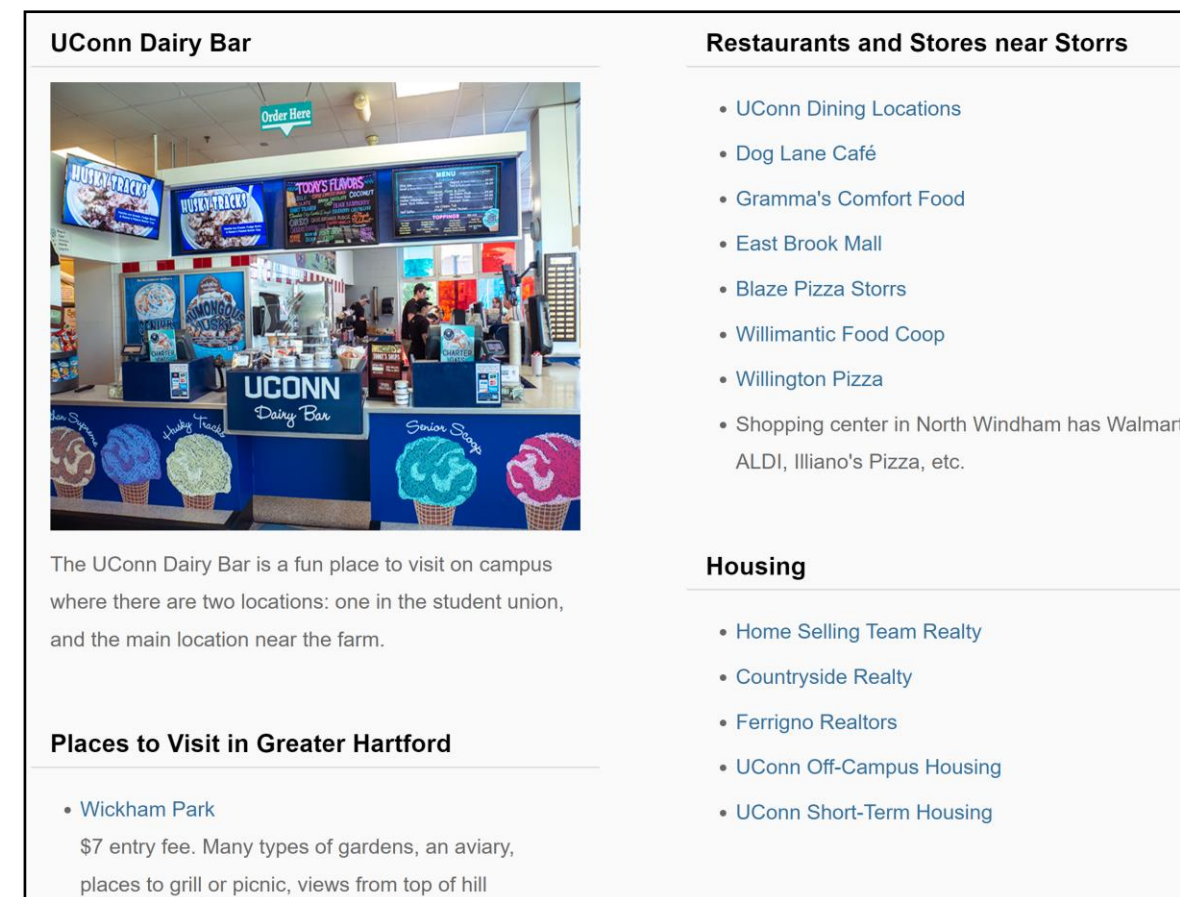
## Guide Formation

Our aim in creating the guide was to supplement the general human resources and library onboarding process by centralizing all documents, deadlines, and links in one place, and by adding content that is specific to our unit. Much of the content serves as a stand-in for informal conversations that previously happened organically among colleagues working in the same space. A working group of four members collectively compiled this guide which is more thorough than any onboarding materials previously used by the unit.

## Guide Contents

The guide is divided into 10 pages (listed to the right). Topics covered include but are not limited to: staff union information; library acronyms list; organizational charts; relocation information such as realtors, rentals, and local restaurant and activity recommendations; detailed biographies of unit members; tips for engaging in liaison work, collection development, and instruction; goal-setting, evaluation, and promotion processes; setting up technology; and lists of key contacts for various needs.

*"It also provided an easy point of conversation with colleagues and felt like UConn Library cared about me personally acclimating to the area in addition to filling out all of my forms on time! As someone who interviewed remotely and joined the library when few of my colleagues were physically around to welcome me, this touch was especially welcome."*



**UConn Dairy Bar**

The UConn Dairy Bar is a fun place to visit on campus where there are two locations: one in the student union, and the main location near the farm.

**Restaurants and Stores near Storrs**

- UConn Dining Locations
- Dog Lane Café
- Gramma's Comfort Food
- East Brook Mall
- Blaze Pizza Storrs
- Willimantic Food Coop
- Wellington Pizza
- Shopping center in North Windham has Walmart, ALDI, Illiano's Pizza, etc.

**Housing**

- Home Selling Team Realty
- Countryside Realty
- Ferrigno Realtors
- UConn Off-Campus Housing
- UConn Short-Term Housing

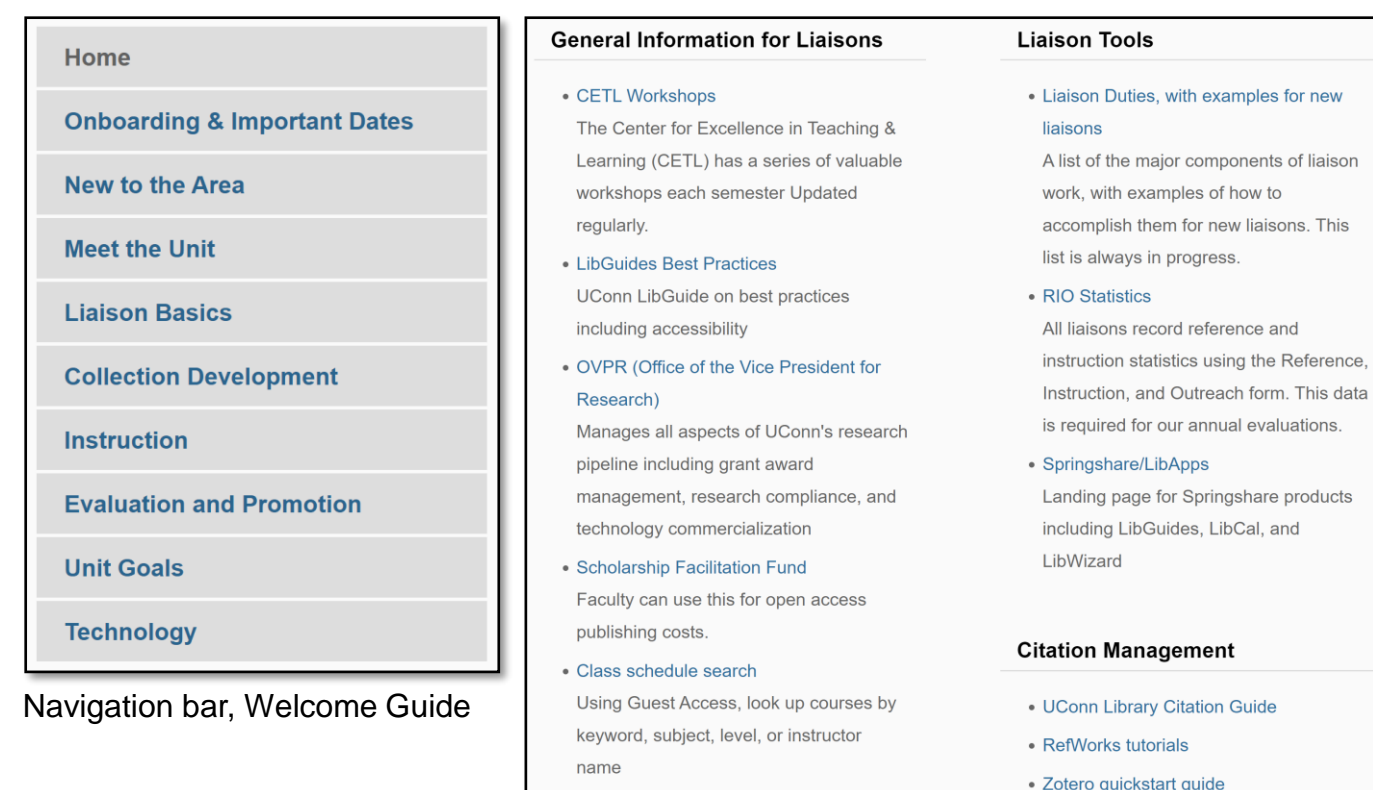
**Places to Visit in Greater Hartford**

- Wickham Park

\$7 entry fee. Many types of gardens, an aviary, places to grill or picnic, views from top of hill

New to the Area page, Welcome Guide

*"I need to refer back to this guide beyond just the onboarding and important dates info that I previously focused on. It is a goldmine."*



**Navigation bar, Welcome Guide**

- Home
- Onboarding & Important Dates
- New to the Area
- Meet the Unit
- Liaison Basics
- Collection Development
- Instruction
- Evaluation and Promotion
- Unit Goals
- Technology

**Liaison Basics page, Welcome Guide**

General Information for Liaisons	Liaison Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CETL Workshops The Center for Excellence in Teaching &amp; Learning (CETL) has a series of valuable workshops each semester Updated regularly.</li><li>• LibGuides Best Practices UConn LibGuide on best practices including accessibility</li><li>• OVPR (Office of the Vice President for Research) Manages all aspects of UConn's research pipeline including grant award management, research compliance, and technology commercialization</li><li>• Scholarship Facilitation Fund Faculty can use this for open access publishing costs.</li><li>• Class schedule search Using Guest Access, look up courses by keyword, subject, level, or instructor name</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liaison Duties, with examples for new liaisons A list of the major components of liaison work, with examples of how to accomplish them for new liaisons. This list is always in progress.</li><li>• RIO Statistics All liaisons record reference and instruction statistics using the Reference, Instruction, and Outreach form. This data is required for our annual evaluations.</li><li>• Springshare/LibApps Landing page for Springshare products including LibGuides, LibCat, and LibWizard</li></ul>
	<b>Citation Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• UConn Library Citation Guide</li><li>• RefWorks tutorials</li><li>• Zotero quickstart guide</li></ul>

Liaison Basics page, Welcome Guide



*"I wish such a guide had been available for when I began work at UConn."*

## Guide Usage

The guide was launched on 6/11/2021 and has been consistently accessed and updated since then. It has been promoted to 3 recent hires within the unit and 2 recent hires outside of the unit.

- Guide views from 6/11/2021 – 4/22/2022: 843

A survey of the entire unit (12) as well as 2 other recent hires about guide usage was conducted from 4/6/2022 – 4/13/2022.

Most useful guide pages, as indicated by survey responses:

- Liaison Basics (n=6)
- Collection Development (n=6)
- Onboarding and Important Dates (n=5)
- New to the Area (n=5)
- Unit Goals (n=5)

Selected qualitative feedback about the guide is presented on this poster in italics and quotation marks.

## Conclusion

The Welcome Guide has been integral to onboarding new unit members. Several existing members have also expressed appreciation for the guide as a go-to source for links and documents that we use daily in our work. This living document has been a welcome innovation for the Research Services Unit and could serve as a template for other libraries wishing to enhance their onboarding and training processes.

## Additional Resources

- Dill K. It's not just working remotely; hiring and onboarding go virtual, too. *Wall St J.* April 16, 2020. Accessed April 22, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/its-not-just-working-remotely-hiring-and-onboarding-go-virtual-too-11586963419>
- Carlos AR, Muralles DC. Onboarding in the age of COVID-19. *IFLA Journal.* 2022;48(1):33-40. doi:10.1177%2F03400352211035413
- Alexander A. Virtual onboarding: lessons from the pandemic. *Public Services Quarterly.* 2021;17(3):208-211. doi:10.1080/15228959.2021.1915913
- Craft AR. Onboarding and training new electronic resources personnel in libraries: an overview of literature and resources. *Serials Review.* 2021:1-5. doi:10.1080/00987913.2021.1988423

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