Preserving the Future of UCONN

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To the UCONN Community,

We, the graduate students of the Department of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages, are writing to express our concern regarding the university’s plan for financial cuts. On Tuesday, 1/30/2024, we were informed by our Head of Department that, in case this project passes, the number of graduate assistants (GAs) will be drastically reduced in the next few years. There will be fewer qualified assistants, as there will be no funding for seventh-year graduate instructors. Funds for conferences, presentations, summer schools and publishing endeavors have been canceled. After discussing with colleagues from other departments, we realized that our case is not isolated. Our unions told us that the potential consequences for our community may include:

• The cancellation of jobs, programs and courses across the entire university.
• Larger classes. Some classes will be canceled or moved online as needed.
• Fewer opportunities for students, as departments will not receive funding.
• Decrease in university’s diversity and inclusiveness. We will likely have less international graduate students. Underrepresented groups can be directly affected by these cuts.

These communications followed the recent decision by the university administration to raise fees for both undergraduate and graduate students. Questions are arising inside our community about future teaching and research standards, including the following points:

• Will the best professors seek employment at universities with better funding?
• Having bigger classes and fewer GAs, who will teach the courses?
• Who will work with undergraduate students if there are no teaching assistants?
• Will diversity and inclusiveness continue to be core values of our university’s mission?
• Why does the university want to dismiss seventh-year students who were compelled to suspend their research for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
• Do these financial decisions undermine the credibility of UConn and the future of our community?

It is crucial that we all understand that these decisions impact human lives, as well as the future of Connecticut as a state, being UConn the flag university.

Please feel free to reach out to TQC and/or LANGSA for more details.

Thank you,

The Quiet Corner Editorial Board, LANGSA, and the Graduate Students of LCL