



USG senate votes to dissolve committee on divestment referendum

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The Undergraduate Student Government Senate voted Wednesday evening to dissolve a committee responsible for modifying a referendum calling for the University to divest from the military-industrial complex. The referendum will be put before the senate in its current form on Sept. 10, 2025.

The committee was formed on Feb. 5, 2025, during the same session at which the referendum was brought before the senate for discussion. The senate proposed to appoint 10 senators and a multitude of student organizations to the committee, including: UConn Jewish Voices for Peace (JVP), UConn Muslim Student Association (MSA), UConn Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), UConn Unchain, UConn Chabad, Huskies for Israel, UConn Hillel and Jewish on Campus. The committee was chaired by former Chief Justice Andy Lanza and Chief Diversity Officer Phoenix Harper.

The committee's first official meeting was held on Apr. 21, 2025, according to Harper. "At this meeting, no amendments were adopted. In the days that followed, several senators and student organizations even withdrew, or signaled intent to withdraw from this committee," she said.

No amendments were proposed at that first meeting according to the Chief Diversity Officer.

UConn Unchain, one of the organizations which left the committee, cited inherent dysfunction in the committee as their reason for leaving in a statement on Instagram.

"No one asked to be a part of this committee, and it was dysfunctional from the start," the statement said. "It failed to find senators to fill its own seats, to adhere to its original neutral composition and to reach quorum at a critical juncture."

Senator Smith Bernard originally brought the motion to form the committee before the senate over concerns that

the language of the referendum violated senate bylaws. At Wednesday's session, Bernard made a statement in which he said the making of the referendum committee was a mistake.

"I regret making the motion to form this committee," the senator said.

Many students attended the session in support of dissolving the committee. Some gave public comments.

One such student was Kenza Madhi, a third-semester nursing student at UConn, who said she was attending the session "to support my fellow students who are committed to justice for people across the world, of every color, of every country, of every ethnicity, of every walk of life."

Madhi said she found that the committee was not "very conducive to our fight for equality and justice," and urged senators to dissolve the committee and bring the referendum before the student body.

Madhi took the stand to deliver a public comment to the senate, noting how the University had divested from businesses involved with the then apartheid state of South Africa in 1986.

"As a nursing student here, I have a duty to speak up for issues concerning humanity and ethics," she said. "In 1986, UConn divested \$217,000 from businesses involved with South Africa to stand against the apartheid then. It is possible again."

The global movement against apartheid in South Africa largely employed a strategy of boycotts, divestment and sanctions, often called BDS, to force the South African government to acquiesce to demands of equality.

Some speakers took direct aim at the tactics of BDS such as Eliyahu Cohen, who claimed the tactics are forcing the state of Israel to comply with an agenda.

"The BDS movement claims their goal is to promote equality and justice for the Palestinian people," he said. "The BDS movement uses tactics similar to those of the South African anti-apartheid movement, to force



The Dodd Center for Human Rights is located on the south side of the Homer Babbidge Library on the UConn Storrs campus. The building houses the Human Rights Institute as well as the UConn Library's Archives and Special Collections.

FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Israel to adhere to their agenda."

Some commenters took issue with the specific language used in the referendum. Joshua Fishman was one such commenter. Fishman said he believed that some vocabulary used in the referendum was biased and misleading.

"The wording makes it seem as though the UConn student body accepts biased, unequal rhetoric," Fishman said. "Terms such as genocide and apartheid push students towards a particular outcome, despite the inaccuracy of those terms in this context."

The International Association of Genocide Scholars recently passed a resolution saying that the legal criteria have been met to establish that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. Israel denies these claims.

Similarly, Sophia Rifkin, a third-semester nursing student and the senator representing the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences cited concerns of the referendum's language when asked for com-

ment by The Daily Campus.

"As a senator, I am concerned about the language of this referendum," the senator said. "It shares the anti-Israel, anti-Zionist perspective and that marginalizes pro-Israel, pro-Zionist, Israeli students on campus."

Rifkin also stated that the committee has "not been productive" in addressing those issues.

Others made remarks specifically regarding the committee in question. Kathryn Adinolfi argued that the committee was fundamentally flawed from its conception.

"Through its [the committee's] structure and by design, effectively halted any progress of a referendum being finalized," Adinolfi said. "During the meetings members from JVP, MSA, ASA (African Students' Association) and SJP were subjected to disrespect and dehumanization, despite our constant willingness and corporation to continue working. This was a clear breach of good faith and

willingness to participate."

Reem Saood, a third-semester nursing student and political science major with a track in pre-law, sat on the committee as a representative for UConn MSA. Saood recounted her experience as a member of the committee, recalling a lack of any significant progress and dehumanization from other members of the committee.

"I felt like it was a waste of time," she said. "I felt we made no progress. Every meeting we had, we had no agenda."

Saood also recounted committee members requiring a definition of what a Palestinian is.

"I think it was dehumanizing to come up with how to define, Palestine, Palestinians and Gaza," she said. "Why are we defining Palestinians? They have their own definition; they can make their own definition."

The referendum in its current form is now set as a voting item on the agenda for next week's senate session.

South Campus geothermal project to be completed by February



UConn's South Campus in Storrs, Conn. South Campus' geothermal power project is set to be completed in February 2026.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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The South Campus Infrastructure project, which includes the installation of the geothermal system, is scheduled to be completed in February 2026, according to Elizabeth Craun, director of major projects on the University Planning, Design and Construction Team.

Last year saw the addition of a brand-new residence and dining hall on South Campus. Alongside this construction, the infrastructure plan included a clean, renewable project to heat and cool the buildings, according to O&G Industries. The project broke ground in the summer of 2023.

"The geothermal system was designed to heat the new CT Hall and cool both CT Hall and several existing buildings in South Campus (as we are in a northern climate, heat-

ing requires more energy per cubic foot than cooling, so more space can be cooled than heated with the same system)," Craun said via email.

According to a project update made by O&G Industries, this geothermal system will be implemented deep underground. This system is "known as a ground loop heat exchanger, which functions similarly to air source heat pumps commonly found in residential settings but offers greater efficiency."

According to the project update, the design includes an installation of 80 wells drilled to 800 feet under the S Lot parking area on the South side of campus.

"The wells were completed [last] September and will be tied into the chiller plant this season while it undergoes an expansion to accommodate the new sustainable infrastructure. The area was returned to parking once the wells were completed," the update said.

This process will allow the buildings to conserve heat and cool air more efficiently during the winter and summer months, according to the project update. This expansion will double the size of the currently existing plant being used to heat the South Campus built in 1991, according to O&G Industries.

"Students in the South Campus dorms and CT Hall should not notice a difference in indoor temperatures when the geothermal system comes online this winter," said Craun. "These dorms offer air conditioning as well as suite-style living, making them a popular housing option."

As of now, the geothermal wall has been installed underneath S lot, other underground utilities are all nearly in place, an addition to the South Campus Plant has been completed, and most equipment has been installed inside the plant, according to Craun.

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News

UConn now using SmartBoots to enforce parking tickets

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University of Connecticut Parking Services has started implementing PayLock's SmartBoot technology to enforce parking tickets, according to Associate Director of Logistics Andy Kelly.

SmartBoots, which first appeared on campus on July 31, will be put on vehicles that have accumulated more than \$200 in parking fines, Kelly said.

According to PayLock's website, SmartBoots are the "parking market's first and most successful electro-mechanical boot" that can immobilize vehicles in less than 10 seconds. The boot, which weighs 15 pounds, "is durable, portable and proven in the harshest urban environments in the nation."

Each UConn parking enforcement vehicle will carry three or four boots, Kelly said. When enforcement officers scan the license plate of a car with more than \$200 in parking fines, they will call the Parking Services office at the Facilities Operations Building to confirm the car should be booted. Boots will only be put on cars after confirmation from the office, Kelly said.

"When the person comes back to their car, there's a very, very large sticker on the driver's side... with instructions on how to get the boot removed," said Kelly.

Kelly said there will be a

QR code to pay an outstanding balance via PayLock's website or a phone number to pay over the phone.

Once the balance is paid, students will get a code to unlock the boot themselves via the keypad on the boot. The boot must then be brought to a drop box located in Lot F in front of the Facilities Operations building within 48 hours, Kelly said. If the boots are not returned by then, fines will start to accrue again. Thousands of UConn community members have accumulated more than \$200 in parking fines, Kelly said. He said that many students don't realize that parking fines will follow them past their time at UConn.

"You're not supposed to be able to graduate without paying [your fines]," Kelly said. "If you're not a UConn student, [the fines] eventually get turned over to collections. If you don't graduate, it gets turned over to collections. So, there's really not a clean way out for folks who might think there is."

Since implementing SmartBoots this past summer, Parking Services has already collected "tens of thousands of dollars" in outstanding balances, Kelly said.

The money accrued from the boots goes back into the university, Kelly said. Section 10a-139 of the Connecticut General Statutes says that the money can only be used to enforce parking regulations. Kelly said the cost of



New SmartBoot technology enforces payment of parking tickets. UConn Parking Services recently began use of SmartBoots for vehicles that have accumulated over \$200 in fines.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

maintaining parking facilities is relatively low. The remaining money goes towards UConn's scholarship funds.

Since switching to license plate readers and virtual parking permits in 2021, UConn had no way to efficiently enforce parking fines, Kelly said. Parking Services wanted to avoid relying on tow trucks, since they can be expensive and inconvenient for everyone involved. SmartBoots will make fine enforcement easier, he said. He hopes that use of the boots goes down over time, but he is unsure how long that will take.

"In theory, over time, you

need [SmartBoots] less and less," he explained. "In a university setting, where there's... a very substantial turnover of vehicles being used on campus on an annual basis... it's kind of yet to be seen whether our use goes down over time."

Parking Services currently has 14 SmartBoots. If the need for the boots does not decrease over time, Kelly said, the University might consider getting more. However, their bigger concern is the drop boxes.

"We're a lot closer to adding a second drop box than we are to adding more boots," Kelly said. "The drop box only holds about five [boots]. So, if we're going

into a weekend and we have eight boots out, if every one of those people decide to pay their fines, take it off [and] return it, we might be in trouble."

The SmartBoots will be helpful to those with parking permits on campus, Kelly said.

"Our job in Parking Services is to make sure that people can park where they pay to park. And so, this is another tool in our bag to limit the number of folks precluding the people going by the rules from parking where they're supposed to park," Kelly said. "It's anything we can do to encourage [that people] work within the policy."

Survey asks students to rank importance of university operations following tuition and fees increases



The Wilbur Cross building, the administrative hub of campus and contains many student services including the Offices of the Registrar, Bursar and the office of financial aid.

FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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Students at the University of Connecticut received an email in their inboxes on Aug. 25 from the office of UConn President Radenka Maric. It asked students to complete a survey in which they could rank which university operations they felt were most important. The survey was released following the end of the university's most recent five-year tuition schedule.

The email included information on two drawings as incentives for completing the survey. The first drawing was for a chance to have a picture taken with Jonathan the Husky. The second was for 12 students to win two tickets to a UConn basketball game in the upcoming season. The email also stated that pizza parties would be offered to the residence hall and regional campus with the highest response rates.

Undergraduate Student Government President Andy Zhang said he appreciated the intent behind the survey but understood that it puts students in an awkward position.

"They [University Administration] are making difficult decisions in a difficult time, and they are trying to provide students with the voice or agency to decide what will be funded or won't be funded," he said. "I appreciate them giving students the voice. It is also, I think, a little bit difficult to have students make the choice of which departments they want to cut."

Zhang said that difficulty stemmed from the fact that each department, whether academic or not, appeals to different qualities of student life. "We are in a difficult time

regarding funding, regarding staff, regarding faculty," he said. "There will be difficult decisions that have to be made, that's just an expectation we need to have. I think we do need to come together to make sure the damage is being minimized."

The board of trustees has frozen tuition for the 2025-2026 term while reviewing possible next steps for future years, according to University Spokesperson Stephanie Reitz.

"The survey is meant to provide an opportunity for all students to share their thoughts, priorities, and opinions about tuition and fee adjustments," Reitz said in an email. "There will be additional opportunities for students to provide feedback, including several town halls in the fall."

The survey is set to close on Tuesday, Sept. 8.

The Daily Campus

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Thursday, September 4, 2025

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The Graduate Employee Union (GEU) at the University of Connecticut sent out a survey to its members on their priorities for contract negotiations with UConn.

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The GEU is made up of approximately 2,300 members, including most graduate assistants at UConn with some exceptions such as UConn Health graduate assistants, according to its current bargaining contract with UConn.

Their contract runs from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2026, and includes items such as wages and healthcare. GEU Vice President Alex Kueny, a graduate student majoring in history, said that the GEU is one union with two separate bargaining units. He stated that the aforementioned contract does not include postdoctoral students and that their bargaining rights are protected by a separate contract.

The GEU sent out a survey to all its members and is gathering responses until Sept. 12, according to Kueny. This survey will be used to determine priorities and items that union members want changed during contract negotiations. He stated that the survey has already had hundreds of responses.

Kueny spoke about the priorities mentioned by members who have already filled out the survey. The current contract included annual raises ranging from 3-4%.

“Our members have been telling us that they want — it’s called COLA in union slang — cost of living adjustment, and that’s one of the things that’s going to be really important,” Kueny said.

Healthcare was also very important to many GEU mem-



Homer Babbidge Library in Storrs, Conn. The library houses study spaces for both undergraduate and graduate students.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

bers.

“We have access to something called the Connecticut Partnership Plan, which is a healthcare plan for Connecticut state employees beyond just UConn,” Kueny said. “That’s really important to a lot of members, perhaps even more so than the cost of living adjustments.”

Kueny said that workforce protections were also highly prioritized.

“We have a grievance procedure we can make use of if

someone’s facing anything like bullying or discrimination or harassment,” Kueny said. “We already have good protections there already, of course, everything’s going to be on the table so we want to work really hard to defend that in the negotiations.”

Kueny said that the GEU has an elected executive board and that during bargaining years and they also have an elected bargaining team that will take part in the negotiations with UConn. He said that while they

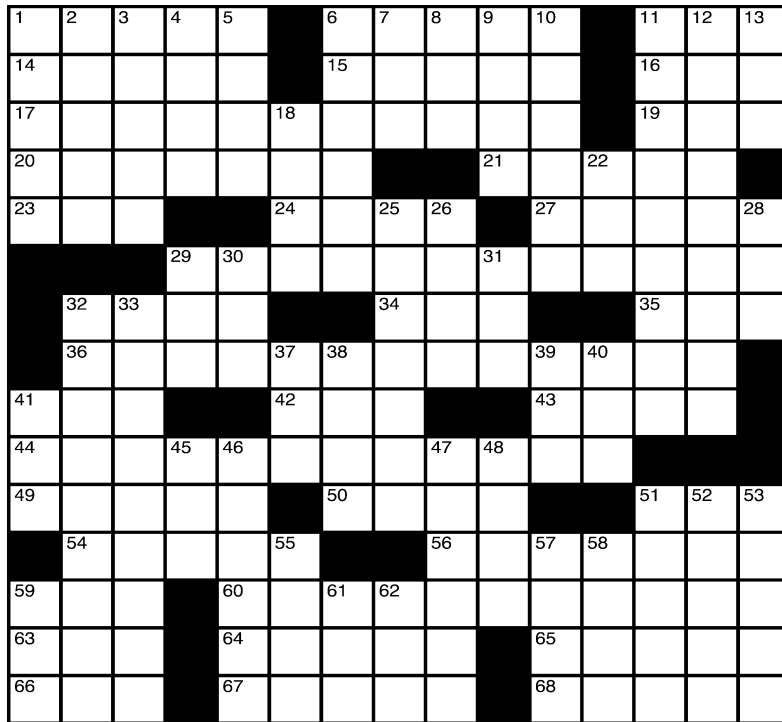
would need to make important decisions in the moment, the GEU wants priorities to be set by its members.

“Some people work in labs, some people are doing field work on the coast, some people are teaching,” Kueny said. “So, we want to get everyone’s experiences to give us a good sense of what’s important to them. And then we’ll use that to create a document about our bargaining goals, which will then be sent back out to the membership to vote to ratify.”

Once it is ratified, that will be the guiding document the bargaining team uses in meetings with UConn. Kueny said the GEU’s bargaining team and university administrators will have their first bargaining meeting on Sept. 17. He stated that contract negotiations would need to be finished by March at the latest, because once the GEU and UConn reach an agreement on the contract, both sides will work to try to pass the contract through the legislature.

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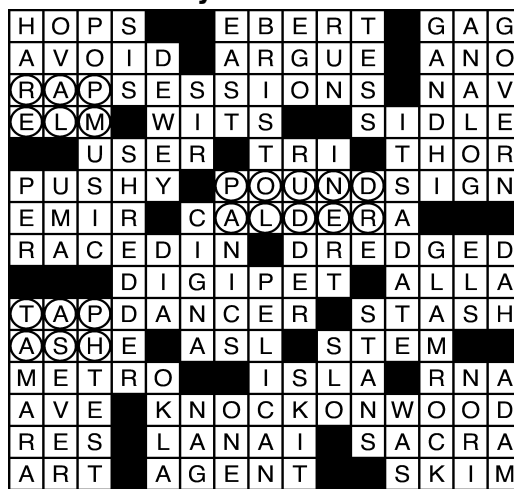
- ACROSS**
- 1 Take off
 - 6 Piccata need
 - 11 Advanced deg.
 - 14 Now, in Spanish
 - 15 Common fruit in 11-Down cuisine
 - 16 Piglet pal
 - 17 “Don’t be impulsive,” literally
 - 19 “!!!”
 - 20 Absent
 - 21 Timid person’s lack
 - 23 Gallery array
 - 24 Designer Jacobs
 - 27 Covers for, maybe
 - 29 Find hidden meaning, literally
 - 32 Garment worn with a choli
 - 34 Try (for)
 - 35 Metal container
 - 36 Requirement for many a private school, and an apt title for this puzzle
 - 41 Talk and talk
 - 42 Atmosphere
 - 43 Aromatherapy options
 - 44 Risks missing a deadline, literally
 - 49 Take off
 - 50 Baking soda target
 - 51 Comedian Samantha
 - 54 Radio-active truckers?
 - 56 Deep-fried appetizer
 - 59 Drink brand with Simbu
 - 60 Nearly identical pair, literally
 - 63 Receipt fig.
 - 64 One-named K-pop singer
 - 65 Party-planning site
 - 66 Photo []
 - 67 Concession speech deliverer
 - 68 Better suited for
- DOWN**
- 1 Actress Hayek Pinault
 - 2 Loft-y group?
 - 3 Dove bar?
 - 4 Holy chests
 - 5 “Please?”
 - 6 Mountain predator
 - 7 “I’m ___ yours!”
 - 8 Epitome of ease
 - 9 “Dear [] Hansen”
 - 10 Void, in a way
 - 11 Like bouillabaisse
 - 12 Squads that typically bat last
 - 13 Canine
 - 18 “I got it”
 - 22 Softball stat
 - 25 Held in high esteem
 - 26 “Double Indemnity” novelist
 - 28 Fed. ID fig.
 - 29 Refrain syllable
 - 30 Juice box brand
 - 31 Lions or Tigers, in recaps
 - 32 Destination for aspiring astronauts
 - 33 “They’re A, B, C, D-licious” cereal
 - 37 Lac contents
 - 38 Actor Ventimiglia
 - 39 Seemingly forever
 - 40 Letters before omicrons
 - 41 Couture monogram
 - 45 Anticipatory time
 - 46 Throw off topic
 - 47 Former “At the Movies” co-host
 - 48 Hard-to-resist desire
 - 51 Hasbro toy that requires twisting and pulling
 - 52 Mexican street corn
 - 53 Senior figure
 - 55 H-Town pro
 - 57 Mother of the Titans
 - 58 “Kindly let us know” letters
 - 59 Stuffed bun
 - 61 “The Phoenician Scheme” director
 - 62 Number worn by Ozzie Smith



By Patti Varol

9/5/25

Thursday’s Puzzle Solved



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9/5/25

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Life

Five Important Albums You May Have Missed This Summer

by Sebastian Munera

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This summer was a great one for music, from established stars to promising newcomers. But some may not realize this, as a lot of the biggest pop stars of now released little to no new material. That's why I'm here to recount the most important album releases that you may have missed this summer.

Annahstasia - "Tether"

California singer-songwriter Annahstasia displayed undeniable passion and promise with her debut "Tether." Vocals that carry the weight and emotion that evokes the likes of Tracy Chapman, lush instrumentals, and pristine production define the sound of the album. Standout tracks such as "Villain," "Silk & Velvet," and "Overflow" showcase Annahstasia's ability to take the listener on an emotional journey with simple and affective lyricism that is greatly heightened by her vocal tonality. I can't recommend this project enough, especially if you are a fan of contemporary folk (i.e. Adrienne Lenker, Mitski, Phoebe Bridgers), Annahstasia has a hauntingly beautiful voice and a very promising career ahead of her.

Miley Cyrus - "Something Beautiful"

Miley Cyrus being on any type of top five list of mine is something I could have never predicted going into the summer; but hey, it's 2025 and stranger things have happened. Cyrus' musical career has spanned almost 20

years now and from those years we've seen nearly every side she has to offer, from squeaky-clean Disney star to raunchy provocateur. Regardless of the era, her discography has been shaky. On "Something Beautiful," Cyrus sounds the most inspired she has ever sounded in her career, homing in on an exciting production style for the whole project. The opening two tracks, "Prelude" and "Something Beautiful," are great at experimenting with putting Cyrus' vocals in front of a more edgy psychedelic soundscape. The rest of the album displays Cyrus' ability to write catchy pop tunes with good vocal performances with tracks like "Easy Lover" and "End of the World" as well as captivating pop ballads like "Golden Burning Sun" and "Pretend You're God."

Quadecca - "Vanisher, Horizon Scrapper"

While not quite making a splash in the mainstream, Quadecca's newest project "Vanisher, Horizon Scrapper" has already amassed a cult-following among listeners and critics alike and for good reason. The self-produced project is the most cinematic album I've heard this year thanks to lush folk instrumentation blended with electronic elements like automation and distortion. Not lacking in lyricism, Quadecca delivers a heartwarming ballad with "MONDAY" and a heart-wrenching call to reality with "FORGONE." The musical journey that this album delivers is unmatched by anything else from this year and is worth all the praise and attention.



Summer 2025 has been a busy one for music. Both well-known and up-and-coming artists made important releases over the summer. PHOTO COURTESY BARB CRAWFORD ON FLICKR

PinkPantheress - "Fancy That"

PinkPantheress' rise to pop's "it girl" has been fascinating and exciting to watch as someone who has been following since her first batch of singles in 2021. The reception to every project and single she Pink has put out in the last two years or so has shown the public's need for the unique fusion of house and bubbly pop that she brings to the mainstream. She perfects her sound on "Fancy That," where her UK House influence is undeniable in the production and allows her catchy vocal hooks to strike a chord in your ear twice as hard. Standout tracks like "Il-

legal," "Stateside," and "Nice to Know You" are amongst some of the best in her career and makes this album a must-listen if you have enjoyed any of her previous singles.

Clipse - "Let God Sort Em Out"

Summer was no stranger to some great hip-hop releases, such as those from Tyler, the Creator, Freddie Gibbs, and JID. But one that stood out as the most important release of the summer was "Let God Sort Em Out" by Clipse. Clipse is a legendary hip-hop duo featuring brothers Pusha T and Malice, with a legacy too large to fit into this one article. "Let God Sort

Em Out" marks their first album after a 16-year hiatus and is entirely produced by Pharell Williams like all their previous projects. What makes this album feel so important to me and many hip-hop fans is the one-of-a-kind lyricism and boastful energy that only this duo can deliver. Hearing that again in 2025 really shines a light on the grit and authenticity that has been missing from a lot of mainstream hip-hop releases. And if Pusha T, Malice and Pharell isn't enough star power for you, the album boasts stellar features from Tyler, The Creator, Nas, and Kendrick Lamar, making it an absolute must-listen for any hip-hop fan.

'THE PAPER': AWAITED JOURNALISTIC SPINOFF OF 'THE OFFICE' PREMIERES

Disclaimer: I would like to preface this review by saying I have only watched the pilot of the series.

New sitcom "The Paper," a spinoff from the famous American series, "The Office," premiered the entirety of its first season on Thursday, Sept. 4.

"The Paper" follows a group

Unfortunately, the best thing going for "The Paper" is that it is reminiscent of "The Office." The pilot is not quite good, but not quite bad.

of coworkers at a newspaper company called The Toledo Truth Teller in Toledo, Ohio. It is filmed in mockumentary style, being 'filmed' by the same fictional crew that once captured the company Dunder Mifflin from "The Office." The newspaper is also currently owned by the same parent company that once purchased Dunder Mifflin.

Unfortunately, the best thing going for "The Paper" is that it is reminiscent of "The Office." The pilot is not quite good, but not quite bad.

Early in the episode, we are introduced to The Toledo Truth Teller, a failing newspaper that is surviving off clickbait and advertisements. The audience gets a feel for the very modern office and its very real employees. Most of the characters are likeable, but we do not get enough time spent with them to get a proper gist for who these characters are.

Actor Oscar Nunez has returned to play his character from "The Office", Oscar Martinez,

who is now employed by The Toledo Truth Teller. Martinez is humorously irritated by the return of the film crew, bringing some familiarity and comedic relief to the show.

The pilot is slow and somewhat boring, lacking the same dry and often out-of-pocket humor that is apparent throughout the entirety of "The Office." Though, without comparison to its predecessor, "The Paper" is an averagely good show.

The employees in "The Paper" seem well acquainted but my first impression is that they currently lack the sense of family that "The Office" characters possessed from the get-go. Potentially these bonds will form throughout the season as the newspaper undergoes many important changes.

One of the main characters of the show, Ned Sampson, played by actor Domhnall Gleeson, is the recently appointed editor in chief of the company, with the pilot documenting his first day at work. He is a rather likeable character, though he's no Michael Scott. His character seems to mirror a more Jim Halpert-type, a sort of dreamer. Sampson, however, is extremely motivated and passionate about journalism, which is refreshing to see on television during the digital age.

As Sampson introduces some of the changes he has in mind for the reporting of the company, some employees of the other side of the office who sell toilet paper (I am not sure what this is about yet, it does not quite get clarified in episode one), offer to become reporters. This was definitely one of the funnier moments of the episode, reminding me of when the custodial staff at

Actor Oscar Nunez has returned to play his character from "The Office", Oscar Martinez, who is now employed by The Toledo Truth Teller. Martinez is humorously irritated by the return of the film crew, bringing some familiarity and comedic relief to the show.

Dunder Mifflin would often get involved with office interactions and business.

Towards the end of the episode, audiences also get a closer view of character Mare Pritti, played by Chelsea Frei. Pritti seems to be an intelligent woman with an interest in journalism, who has lost motivations in pursuing the field seriously and views it more as a mean to get by. After a rather long conversation scene with her boss, Sampson, viewers are led to suspect a future romance between the two. Can their romance top Jim and Pam's (from "The Office")? Short answer: I do not think so. The longer answer, however, is that this romance might be what prompts me to keep watching the show.

In essence, the series, "The Paper" falls short of its older sibling, "The Office," but as a stand-alone, is not a bad watch.

Rating: 3/5



The cast of new Peacock show "The Paper," a spinoff of "The Office." The first season came out on Thursday, Sept. 4. PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB

by Maleena Muzio
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Wednesday Season Two, Part Two: Here We Woe Again



Jenna Ortega at an event marking season two of 'Wednesday.' The final four episodes of the season came out on Netflix on Wednesday, Sept. 3. PHOTO COURTESY @JENNAORTEGA ON INSTAGRAM

by Noa Climor

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Note: Spoilers Ahead.

Mysterious, spooky and all together ooky: Netflix's "Wednesday," the "Addams Family" spin off, is back with a bang, featuring a season filled with lies, deceit and some fascinating new characters (I'm looking at you, Billie Piper). Fans could not wait to watch the rest, and luckily, they didn't have to wait a long time. The final four episodes of season two came out on Wednesday, Sept. 3.

We start off almost exactly where we left off: Wednesday, as still as we'll ever see her, nearly dead — comatose after Tyler's attack at Willow Hill where she accidentally frees him and gets some serious injuries.

In episode five, "Hyde and Woe Seek," we open with Wednesday in the hospital, arms crossed as if she's being prepared for her funeral. She seemingly wakes up; however, we find out rather quickly that not only is she in some dream realm, but that Principal Weems (yes, the dead one) has revealed herself to

be Wednesday's newest spirit guide, which was previously her ancestor Goody. And if you're thinking, "Wait!! Only family can be a spirit guide in the Wednesday-verse," you'd be correct! However, it turns out they are 13th cousins, twice removed—who knew!

While Wednesday was in the hospital, a whole lot went down, and not everyone is so keen on her attitude anymore, especially her roommate-turned-best friend Enid Sinclair; she is frustrated that Wednesday is still so secretive and, to her, overprotective. Without revealing much, I'll say that we get to see further development of their friendship, and while many insecurities come to light, they are also more understood.

A body swap storyline can be gimmicky and overdone, but I found that it fit extremely well in this show.

Wednesday and Sinclair went through a great deal together. From getting paired up

as roommates to saving each other's lives, it's no wonder that they are close. Jenna Ortega, in an interview with Netflix's Tudum, mentions that "I think their friendship works because of their differences. Sometimes you need someone to keep you tethered to the ground."

This season (more specifically, the second half) truly digs into why things are falling apart. Wednesday's inability to let other people help her conflicts with Enid wanting to be there for her, and their bond is strained. However, in the sixth episode, it changes in ways it hasn't before (Freaky Friday, anyone?).

Ortega and Emma Myers had the exciting opportunity to play each other's characters, and both did so perfectly. Their ability to copy each other's mannerisms and act as though they truly swapped bodies was both entertaining and enjoyable to watch. This was an opportunity for us to learn more about Wednesday and Enid, and they got to learn what each had been hiding from the other, and why.

The first half of the season did not have many scenes of them together, so an episode dedicated entirely to the most

beloved relationship in the show was nice. They both made some changes for each other, but with those changes, their appreciation toward one another changed. A body swap storyline can be gimmicky and overdone, but I found that it fit extremely well in this show.

As for the most anticipated cameo in the show, Lady Gaga, I found her character, Rosaline Rotwood, fascinating. Even though we didn't get much time with her, she looked wonderful and made the most with her limited screen time. Additionally, Gaga has released a brand-new song for the show called "The Dead Dance."

There were many side plots and characters this season, and while the majority of their storylines did wrap up, I wish we had more time to truly focus on how things went down. I did, however, like that we were able to gain more insight on the Addams' family members, specifically, Thing.

Thing is a curious character and contains much personality despite being a literal hand. In these final episodes, fans were able to learn about Thing's origin, and by doing so, more about Gomez and Morticia's

time at Nevermore.

All in all, I enjoyed getting to see both Enid and Wednesday's growth as characters — they both realized that without working on the parts of themselves that led to struggle, they won't be able to move on at all. Post-body swap, they seem even more settled into who they are and what their friendship means, even though some of that depends on Wednesday's success in her journey.

As Wednesday says, the Addams Family's dynamics depend on trickery, and most importantly, secrets. While we found many of these secrets out, I am confident that the showrunners, writers and directors will dig up many more from the grave.

It's tough to get into why this season was so good without diving into spoilers, but I leave you with this: Sometimes, the most unpredictable ending is the one that suits us best, and it seems like Wednesday intends to keep audiences on their toes for quite some time. With a third season already announced, the cliff-hanger we left on will hopefully be resolved soon.

Rating: 4/5 snaps



The main cast of Netflix show 'Wednesday.' The final four episodes of the season came out on Wednesday, Sept. 3. PHOTO COURTESY @WEDNESDAYNETFLIX ON INSTAGRAM



Life

Review: 'The Summer I Turned Pretty' Season Three

by Maanya Pande
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"The Summer I Turned Pretty" is an Amazon Prime TV show featuring Isabel (Belly) Conklin and her ever-evolving love triangle with brothers Conrad and Jeremiah Fisher. The show returned for its third season this summer, with its most recent episode coming out on Wednesday, Sept. 3.

On arrival, Belly learns her study-abroad program spot has already been given away — halting her emotionally-driven decision to fly across the country. Before she can properly figure out what to do, her backpack containing her engagement ring is stolen. Thus begins a 30-minute frenzy that leads into a fun adventure for Belly.

The season's ninth and newest episode, "Last Call," picked up off of a very intense ending: Belly boarded her flight to Paris, but not before meeting Conrad's eyes at the airport terminal. Belly resisted the urge to run back to him and, unexpectedly, chose an option other than either of the Fisher boys. She boarded her flight to the unknown and signaled her growing independence.

This episode symbolizes a power in finding yourself: the Parisian background embodies the fear when forging a new path, while Belly renaming herself "Isabel" marks a subtle reclaiming of agency.

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driven decision to fly across the country. Before she can properly figure out what to do, her backpack containing her engagement ring is stolen. Thus begins a 30-minute frenzy that leads into a fun adventure for Belly.

Her efforts eventually take her to a nightclub, where Belly's quick wit helps her rescue a stranger and earn entry. Upon making friends in Paris, she introduces herself as "Isabel," the first step in shedding old identities and embracing something new.

However, back at Cousins Beach, the rest of her family and friends are still dealing with the emotional blowout of the failed wedding. Jeremiah, in his heartbreak, is hurtfully lashing out at Conrad and even Laurel. His anger seems to increase after getting a phone call where Belly ends things for good. Conrad tries to comfort Jeremiah and make up for the role he played in ruining the wedding, but at the end of the day decides to head back to California.

In contrast to the tense atmosphere, Steven and Taylor finally acknowledge their feelings and recommit to each other — serving as a hopeful subplot that stands in sharp relief to the heavy tension between the Fisher family.

At its core, the episode is less about romance and more about transition.

While earlier seasons were very focused on the love triangle and Belly's push and pull between Jeremiah and Conrad, the episode shifts the focus toward self-definition and growth.

This episode symbolizes a power in finding yourself: the Parisian background embodies the fear when forging a new path, while Belly renaming herself "Isabel" marks a subtle reclaiming of agency.

At its core, the episode is less about romance and more about transition. While earlier seasons were very focused on the love triangle and Belly's push and pull between Jeremiah and Conrad, the episode shifts the focus toward self-definition and growth. By placing Belly in the unfamiliar environment of Paris — an opportunity she



The main love triangle of Amazon Prime show 'The Summer I Turned Pretty.' The newest episode of the show's third season came out on Wednesday, Sept. 3. PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB

had originally given up for this wedding — the writers force her to confront who she is when she is not tethered to Cousins Beach or the Fisher brothers. This pivot pulls on a long-used theme with love triangles: the female character choosing "herself" over either of her love interests.

"Last Call" stands out as a reflective and richly layered episode that shifts the momentum of the season.

"Last Call" stands out as a

While no proper resolution is formed, "Last Call" does serve as a reset point and holds promise for more in the future.

reflective and richly layered episode that shifts the momentum of the season. Against the backdrop of Paris, Belly begins to reclaim her story — transforming her heartbreak into a journey of independence and self-discovery. Steven and Taylor's heartfelt reunion provides grounding moments that bal-

ance the tension elsewhere. Still, the gap between what fans expected, and the slower pacing of this installment is hard to ignore, leaving some viewers frustrated by its transitional feel and the "filler episode."

While no proper resolution is formed, "Last Call" does serve as a reset point and holds promise for more in the future.

Rating:
4/5



The main love triangle of Amazon Prime show "The Summer I Turned Pretty." The newest episode of the show's third season came out on Wednesday, Sept. 3. PHOTO COURTESY OF IMDB



Opinion

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COMIC BY ALEXA PAPPAS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Dear UConn, please stop using AI for school

by Tomas Hinckley | OPINION EDITOR | HE/HIM/HIS | tomas.hinckley@uconn.edu

Despite hitting the public market less than three years ago, AI has already become an incredible staple in the average student's life. According to a recent Inside Higher Ed survey of over 1,000 US college students, approximately 85% reported that they used generative AI for schoolwork in the past year. According to another international survey of students at the bachelors, masters and doctoral levels, 54% rely on AI frequently, referring to it for help on a daily or weekly basis. It's being shouted from the rooftops by news outlets everywhere that AI has "unraveled" academia and despite the sensationalism, they're not entirely wrong.

It's clear that choosing to use AI is the path of least resistance right now, with incomprehensible amounts of money being poured into newer versions of ChatGPT that are increasingly effective at making school easy at the surface level. Still, what's easy is not always right and what is popular is not always good. This is the hill which I'll die on today: to the 85% of students who use AI in classes, there is something important lost in the ease of AI, and we as students need to take it out of our schoolwork.

The aforementioned Inside Higher Ed survey helps to contextualize the situation of AI in the university. To begin, there are important considerations in how students are using AI, particularly in completing written work at each stage of the writing process. 55% of respondents reported having

AI help with brainstorming ideas, 38% used it to generate summaries of material, 31% prompted it to outline their papers, 25% just allowed it to complete assignments for them and 19% simply had AI write entire essays for them. In all these use cases, AI is used as a substitute for a very specific and crucial part of the different stages of assignments - the part where you think about them.

Whenever you outline a paper, you are actively practicing logical reasoning to connect different facts and ideas in a way that creates an argument. When you brainstorm ideas for an artistic or academic project, you are practicing creative thinking to come up with something new by making connections about things you already know. The list goes on, but the point remains the same: when you have AI to do these things, you stop thinking.

Now, if this high a percentage of students are using AI on a daily or weekly basis, how much less are they thinking critically or creatively than those who don't use

AI, or that they themselves would be if they didn't use AI? What are the consequences of that? Well, MIT recently published a groundbreaking study which showed that people are actually just becoming dumber as a result

outside resources, while another could use a traditional Google search and the third had full access to ChatGPT. The findings were incredibly evident: the group that used ChatGPT had significantly lower brain connectivity and activity on neural, linguistic and behavioral levels than both the other groups. They got progressively lazier as the project went on and often couldn't even remember what they had said in their essays. Let it be noted that these results came from several sessions over the course of four months, which pales in comparison to the amount of usage that, as stated above, most students are using AI in their own schoolwork.

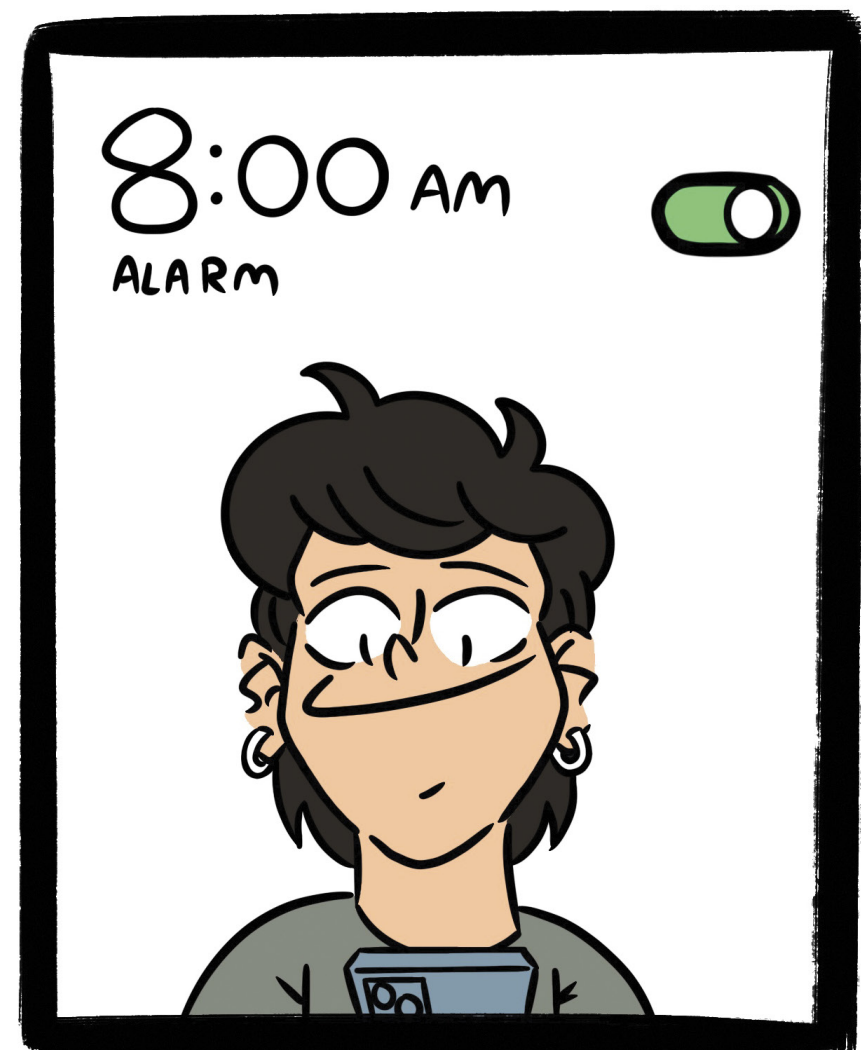
The ramifications of this study are clear: AI is completely antithetical to the goals of an education and the process of actually learning. The more we allow it to creep into our lives, the more we are going to enable the systemic creation of future generations that simply lack the ability to think for themselves. It should be fairly clear without much explanation that that is very bad.

Yet, it's also unfair to completely ridicule those who do use AI for help, especially since it has become a seemingly large majority. There is still truth to the fact that people want this for a genuine reason, and that underlying reason must be addressed. Inside Higher Ed showed that the top two reasons students reported for wanting to use AI in school were a pressure to get good grades and a lack of time to commit to schoolwork. It's not that they were just lazy, but that when given a choice between prioritizing the learning process and getting good results in class, they chose the former. This is the result of an education system that routinely prioritizes results over process, GPA over actual understanding of content and career preparation instead of the academic pursuit. In this case, the allure of AI, which provides a shortcut to results, is completely understandable. The "unraveling" of the university is in fact completely self-inflicted.

Still, that does not mean that we as students do not have the agency to choose otherwise. Regardless of the context, choosing to go toward AI isn't beating the system - it's just falling victim to it. Even if the education system we exist in may not value actual learning as much as it ought to, students can still make the choice to embrace it. For the sake of our own lives, which are surely enriched by the experience of living and learning, as well for the sake of future generations, we must reject the use of AI.



FILE LOGO/THE DAILY CAMPUS



COMIC BY CONNOR SZREJNA,
STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Peaceful rest in the sun



Cows on Horsebarn Hill in Storrs, Conn. on Sept. 3, 2025. Over 200 cows live on Horsebarn Hill. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

From Access to Excess: The over-admittance crisis

by **Hannah McClellan**
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Higher education used to be the ticket to opportunity. Now, as colleges boast of 'record breaking' admissions, students are left with overcrowded classrooms and diluted resources. The door to success isn't opening wider - it's getting harder to push through. As a student, you do not need the statistics to see the manifestation of the over-admittance crisis. From a three-week wait to meet with an advisor, to the competitive sport that is finding a seat in a packed 300-person lecture, the effects of this crisis are impossible to ignore.

With the increased number of admitted students UConn and many other institutions have seen over the past few years, there is a serious threat of a dilution in academic rigor. Pressured professors are expected to manage record-setting class sizes, which forces them to teach differently than they would in smaller settings. After speaking with a UConn professor, he explained that the sheer size of his mostly freshman class this year makes it impossible to engage with students in the same deep and meaningful way. The conversations, feedback and mentorship that once defined his teaching are now replaced by broad lectures and surface-level interaction, not because he wants to teach this way, but because scale has made anything else unmanageable. Students who crave depth are left with fewer opportunities to challenge themselves, undermining the very purpose of higher education.

Beyond the decrease in academic rigor, we are also seeing the devaluation of degrees. What this means is that as colleges across the country admit more and more students, the number of individuals gradu-

ating with a diploma grows as well. I am not an economics major, nor do I pretend to be - but even the most basic rules of supply and demand suggest that when degrees become oversupplied, both their economic and symbolic value inevitably decline. The ticket of opportunity that once was a college diploma is increasingly looking like a participation trophy. A diploma is no longer a guarantee of landing a successful job. More often, it's simply the baseline requirement to even get in the door.

The strain doesn't stop at the value of a diploma. Right here on our own campus, as well as many other universities, we are directly experiencing the ripple effects of over-admittance. The unavailability of advisors, the shortage of tutors, the strain on dining services and the overcrowding of housing are just a few examples of pressure that is being put on campus resources. Students are not just competing for grades anymore; they are competing for time, for meals, for beds and for the very support systems the university promises them when it accepts them.

Just this past school year, UConn has arguably experienced one of its worse housing crises to date. UConn previously guaranteed housing for all students up to eight semesters, but in its updated housing contract for the 2025-26 school

year, the on-campus housing guarantee policy is no longer in place. UConn President Radenka Maric wrote in March that a decision had been made to prioritize and guarantee housing for first-year students, which also meant that housing was no longer guaranteed for rising sophomores, juniors and seniors. This shift only adds to the growing list of stretched resources, leaving students with fewer guarantees and more uncertainty in nearly every aspect of campus life.

This is the paradox of education today: more access does not always mean better opportunity, and in many cases, it means quite the opposite. So, the question is: what is to be done? The answer starts with us. Students must use their voices to demand balance and to keep college accessible while also restoring academic rigor. That means investing more in tutors, advisors, housing and mental health services so students are

not left fighting for scraps of support. It also means creating diverse pathways such as trade programs, community college pipelines, and flexible degree options that reflect the diverse ways students can seek opportunity in a changing world. Accessibility without support is empty and growth without quality is hollow. If universities want to boast about record breaking admissions, they must be prepared to back it up with record-breaking investment in their students.



Storrs summer ball: How the Huskies fared on the collegiate summer baseball circuit

by **Thaddeus Sawyer**
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The UConn baseball team saw their 2025 season come to an end after losing to Creighton in the Big East championship game and missing out on an NCAA tournament berth. Despite the early elimination, the end of the Huskies' season did not mark the end of the season for many of their players.

26 Huskies spent time over the summer playing for various summer collegiate baseball teams across the country. Beyond those 26 players, additional incoming freshmen and transfer recruits were also featured on various summer ball rosters. The majority of those 26 athletes played for teams in the New England Collegiate Baseball League, with 14 players appearing on rosters across nine different clubs.

Left-handed pitchers Sam Hutchinson and JT Caruso, as well as first baseman Maddix Dalena and utility man Anthony Belisario, were all teammates for the Mystic Schooners. Dalena put on a great performance in his second summer with the Schooners. Over 19 games, the Pennsylvanian product got on base at a .432 clip with 17



UConn baseball plays against the University of Rhode Island on April 30, 2025. The final score was 16-6 with UConn coming out on top. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

with the Vermont Mountaineers and catcher Gabriel Tirado for the Danbury West-erners. Pudvar started five games for the Mountaineers, pitching 15 scoreless innings. Tirado posted an exceptional OPS at 1.088 after hitting six home runs in only 18 games. Tirado, along with Dalena, were two names that Baseball America National Writer Peter Flaherty noted as drawing attention from evaluators this summer.

“Those are two big, physical kids with a ton of power from the left side,” said Flaherty. “They have a chance to be really productive for Coach Penders.”

He added that the UConn coaching staff continues to do a great job constructing their roster, especially with the added wrinkles of the transfer portal and NIL deals.

“Maddix is perhaps more of a household name, but I think both [Dalena and Tirado] have a chance to be key contributors next spring,” Flaherty said.

Upcoming redshirt sophomore Kyle Peters had an exciting summer in terms of team success, as he was a member of the NECBL champion Keene

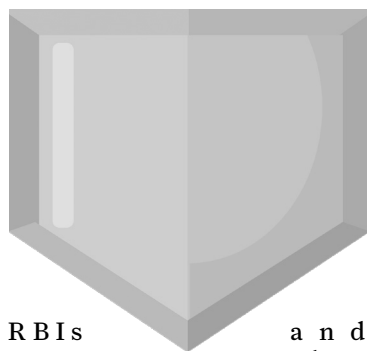
Swamp Bats. After mostly working out of the bullpen for UConn last spring, the right-handed pitcher started 10 games for the Swamp-Bats and started two playoff games. In the quarterfinals, he gave Keene five innings of one-run ball (zero earned runs). Despite giving up seven earned runs over six innings in the championship series against the Martha’s Vineyard Sharks, the upcoming red shirt sophomore took the win in the championship-clinching game after the SwampBats came all the way back from down seven

ring to Elon for this upcoming season.

Outside of the NECBL, UConn players appeared in eight additional leagues within the rest of the summer collegiate ball circuit. Notable performances in these leagues included Ian Cooke, Frank Spirito IV, Jude Abbadessa and Garrett Garbinski.

Cooke, the 2024 Big East Pitcher of the Year, pitched for the Frederick Keys of the MLB Draft League and struck out 23 batters in just 14 innings against three walks. Having exhausted his eligibility at UConn, the righty was likely trying to attract potential interest from Major League Baseball teams.

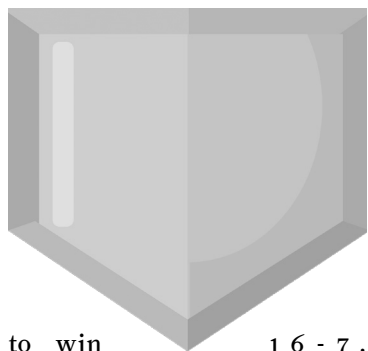
Spirito, pitching for the Norwich Sea Unicorns of the Futures Collegiate Baseball League, saw lots of action this summer after missing all of 2024 due to Tommy John and pitching only 4.2 innings for the Huskies in 2025. He pitched 35.2 innings over 11 games and eight starts, finishing the regular season with a 2.27 ERA with solid strikeout numbers. He



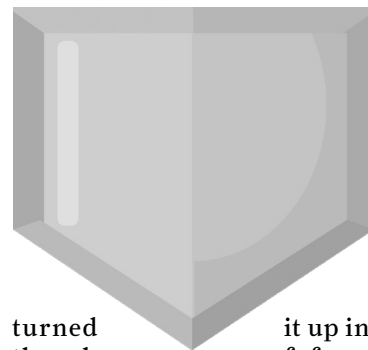
RBI and seven extra base hits. That performance was good for a .898 OPS.

Elsewhere, right-handed pitchers Drew Smith and Greg Shaw III each made the All-NECBL Honorable Mention team. Smith, who was returning to the mound for the first time since undergoing Tommy John surgery in high school, pitched 27.1 innings of relief work for the Sanford Mainers and put up a 1.65 ERA. Shaw gave the Valley Blue Sox six strong starts to the tune of a 2.03 ERA. Shaw was also a league all-star for the second time, having previously made the team for the Blue Sox in 2024.

Other standout performers from NECBL play include left-hander Oliver Pudvar



to win 16-7. Coincidentally, the losing pitcher in that game was former UConn pitcher Cole Taylor, who is transfer-

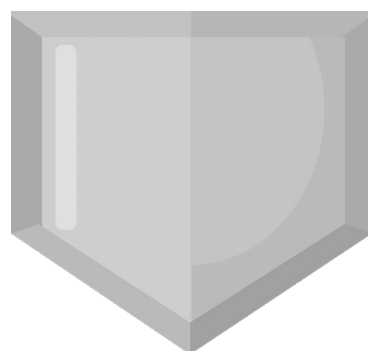


turned it up in the playoffs, spinning 9.1 scoreless innings on Norwich’s way to winning a third straight FCBL title.

One of the only pitchers topping Spirito’s performance in the FCBL was Garbinski. Pitching for the New Britian Bees, Garbinski was electric across his 13 appearances. After missing the 2025 UConn season with an injury, Garbinski pitched 38.1 innings to a sparkling 0.47 ERA and did not give up a run in any of his first 21 innings. Overall, the righty gave the Bees 15 scoreless outings and walked only five batters all summer on his way to being named a league all-star. The Connecticut native should be a contender for the Pitcher of the Year award and the FCBL all-league team, both of which will be announced in September.

Abbadessa played for the Trenton Thunder in the MLB Draft League, an organization that may be familiar to some as the former Double-A affiliate of the New York Yankees. Abbadessa struck out 30 batters in 24.1 innings and put up solid numbers after a rough 2025 with the Huskies. Abbadessa will be transferring to Tulane for his junior season.

Other Huskies from the 2025 roster not mentioned who appeared on summer ball rosters this summer include Hector Alejandro, Giovanni Conte, Aidan Dougherty, Sean Finn, Thomas Galusha, Carter Groen, Evan Hamberger, Jack LaRose, Grant MacArthur, Owen Norrell, Charlie West and Devin Wolff.



UConn baseball plays against the University of Rhode Island on April 30, 2025. The final score was 16-6 with UConn coming out on top. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Sports

Photo of the Day |



UConn men's soccer plays Central Connecticut State University in Storrs, Conn. on Sept 4, 2025. The sun set over Marrone Stadium as the game started at 6 p.m.
PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Women's Cross Country: XC opens season at Hartford Invitational

by **Bridget Bronsdon**
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The 2025 women's cross-country season will begin with the University of Hartford Invitational in Hartford, Conn. on Saturday, Sept. 6.

The race will kick off at 11:15 a.m. and will feature athletes from Southern Connecticut State University, the University of New Haven, Bentley University and more.

This year, the Huskies welcomed five freshmen to the roster and welcomed back several team leaders. Of the returners and team leaders is senior Chloe Trudel.

Trudel closed out the 2024 season with a 29th place finish in the 6K at the Big East Championships. Her 21:52.4 time helped the Huskies secure a third-place finish, following closely behind Georgetown and Providence. Trudel continued to shave off time throughout the indoor and outdoor track and field seasons.

The Husky finished the 2025 outdoor track season with a personal best time and fourth place finish of 34:42.71 in the 10,000-meter at the Big East Championships.

Trudel is joined by junior Malin Rahm. The Swiss runner finished the 2024 NCAA Northeast Regional in 67th with a 21:24 time. Senior Ally McCarthy's personal best 6K time of 21:55.4 will also make her a competitive athlete this season.

The freshman runners feature Teanne Ewings of Houlton, Maine. Ewings was the 2024-2025 Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Player of the Year and an 11x state champion.

Freshman Brooke Strauss of Glastonbury, Conn. is another decorated runner joining the program. Strauss was awarded the 2025 Gatorade Connecticut Outdoor Girls Track and Field Player of the Year award for her standout performances. During her high school career, she finished first in the mile at the New Balance Indoor Track and Field National Championships

with a time of 4:39.53 and set a New England meet record in the 1,000-meter with a time of 2:46.05.

The Huskies also said goodbye to several veteran athletes. Among the graduated runners is Chloe Thomas. Last season, Thomas made program history with a first-place finish at the 2024 NCAA Northeast Regional with a 6K time of 19:23. Former senior Jenna Zydanowicz was close behind Thomas with a personal best 19:53 time. The Thomas-Zydanowicz duo will leave big shoes to fill this upcoming season.

This weekend's race will feature tough competition from Southern Connecticut's Courtney Henchcliffe, who finished with a 22:03.9 personal best time in the 2023 NCAA Division II Cross Country Championships. Southern Connecticut's PJ Dauphinais' 6K personal best time of 22:27.7 - ran at the 2023 NCAA Division II East Region Cross Country Championships - is also competitive.



Two UConn women's cross country runners in a cinematic tunnel. The team is slated to compete against the University of Hartford on Sept. 6, 2025.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNFXC ON INSTAGRAM



Two UConn cross country members running in the woods for their team. The women's team will compete against the University of Hartford on Sept. 6, 2025.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNFXC ON INSTAGRAM

Press Box Profiles: Inside the industry with Rich Hollenberg

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Rich Hollenberg has built a storied career in sports broadcasting, working in a variety of roles across the industry. He currently calls Big 12 college basketball games for ESPN, hosts the Tampa Bay Rays' pregame and postgame shows and runs his own broadcasting class called "Break In and Break Through."

Hollenberg's love for being behind the microphone started when he was 10, as a master of ceremonies for his sister's Bar Mitzvah.

"My parents said, wouldn't it be adorable if little Richie was the MC at her party," Hollenberg said. "I guess they saw something in my personality, how outgoing I was, how not shy I was."

He then went on to speak in front of at least 100 people and was hooked.

"I got hired at ESPN and no one was there to hold my hand and say, 'here's what you're going to do.'"

RICH HOLLENBERG

"It was cute and funny," he said. "I remember that feeling and that sensation resonated with me even as a 10-year-old. And I was like, wow, this is not only fun, but I think I might be good at this."

Growing up in New Jersey, Hollenberg was already a sports fan and his father helped nurture that passion by taking him to Yankees, Knicks and Rangers games. Those early trips left a lasting impression, embedding a love for sports in Hollenberg that would shape his future career in broadcasting.

As time went on, Hollenberg spent every summer at camp, an experience that would eventually plant the seed for where he wanted to

go to college.

"One summer, my head counselor was from Syracuse," he said. "Gary Barnab, who I'm still in touch with to this day, would bring people from Syracuse over to our camp to run clinics just for us, so that's how I became a Syracuse fan."

Shortly after, Barnab discovered that Hollenberg had a knack for being behind the mic and mentioned that Bob Costas and Marv Albert, two legendary sports broadcasters, went to Syracuse's Newhouse School of Journalism.

"Those were my two idols," Hollenberg said. "There was nobody bigger or better than Bob Costas and Marv Albert. So that, as a 13-year-old, that sealed the deal for me."

To prepare for Syracuse, Hollenberg got involved in several programs at his high school. He started by voicing the morning announcements and quickly became close with his principal, Rich Polley, who encouraged him to take on more opportunities. Hollenberg be-

acquainted with the university, he dove back into broadcasting. At the start of his sophomore year, he immediately signed up for WAER (Syracuse's radio station) and spent his Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays waking up at 5 a.m., ripping wire stories off the printer and practicing reading them.

"I wasn't even getting on the air," Hollenberg

sociated Press in New York City off-air. About a year after that, Hollenberg received a call from Lissit, informing him of an on-air reporting job in Montana. He jumped on that opportunity.

"I was clueless, but it was my first real opportunity to get a job in TV because all the jobs that I applied for, I got either rejected from or I never heard back from the stations," he explained.

Six months later, Hollenberg received yet another call from his old professor. This time, the job was based out of Tampa, where he has now lived for nearly 30 years.

After that, he started freelancing for ESPN on the weekends, which helped him land a weekday job with the Home Shopping Network, where he would sell sports memorabilia.

"Initially, I said no because I'm a sportscaster," he said. "Then they presented me with an opportunity of traveling with Monday Night Football because they won the NFL marketing contract and they wanted to do a show the hour before every Monday Night Football game from the field."

Then 9/11 happened,

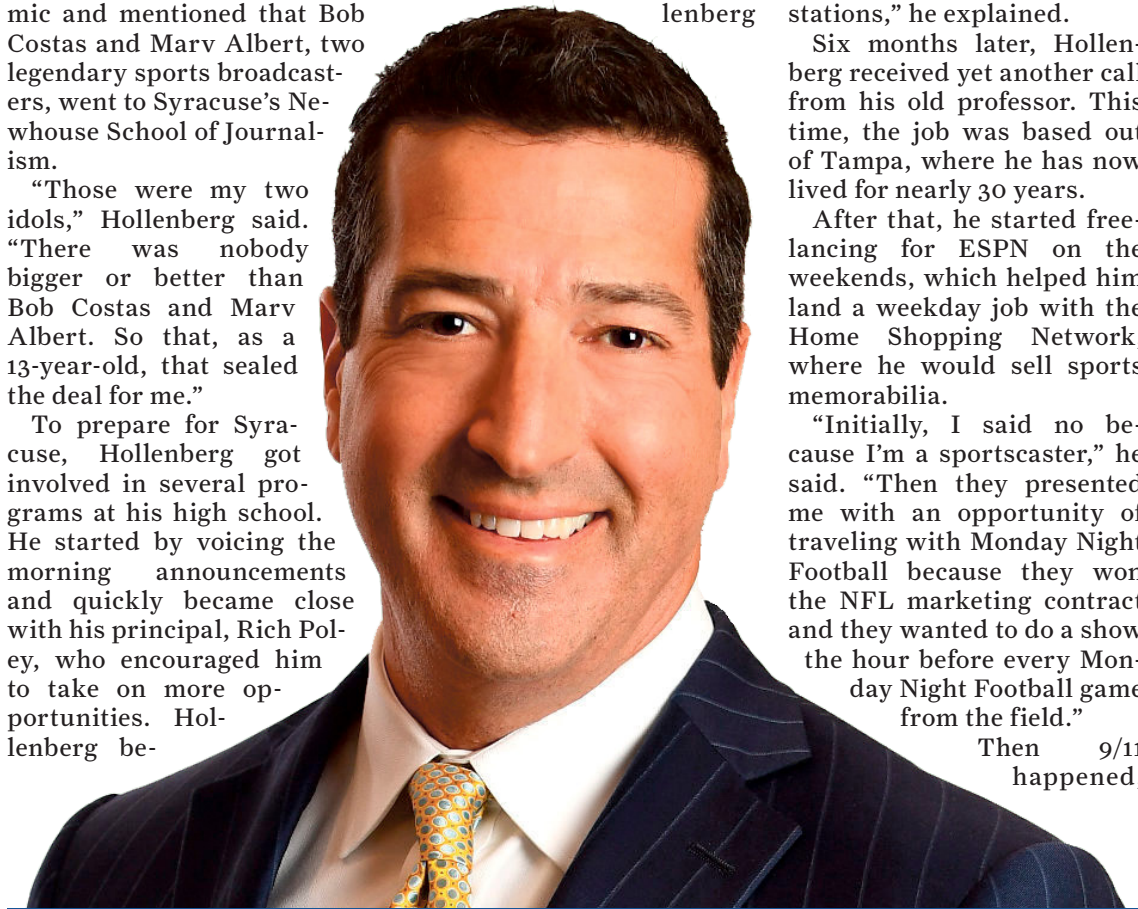


PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPN PRESS ROOM PROFILE PICTURES

came sports editor of his school newspaper, served as a PA announcer for Saturday games and even hosted school assemblies. If there was a microphone in the area, Hollenberg would be behind it.

"These things were offered to me because of who I was and the relationships I had with my peers and teachers," Hollenberg said. "They saw I had that type of personality."

After high school, Hollenberg attended his top school, Syracuse. After spending his freshman year getting

said. "After one semester, I quit WAER and I looked into the student television and radio stations, and I started working at both of those and really found my groove there."

He also took classes taught by the late Bob Lissit, who was a major mentor for Hollenberg and longtime CBS producer.

After college, Hollenberg moved back home to New Jersey and coached tennis while applying for jobs. Eventually, he landed a role with the As-

limiting who was able to travel for events and budgets getting slashed.

Hollenberg then had to pivot to hosting a cooking show for the network despite having no prior cooking experience.

"They literally sent me to cooking school," Hollenberg said. "Wolfgang Puck taught me how to make scrambled eggs."

The stress levels and long hours took a toll on Hollenberg, so he eventually stepped down after 12 years

with the company. This led to him auditioning to be a host for the Miami Heat's pregame and postgame shows. Due to scheduling conflicts between the NBA and college basketball seasons, he turned that down.

Hollenberg made a strong impression on the hiring managers, and a few months later they offered him the Tampa Bay Rays' pregame and postgame host role, which he accepted.

"I turned one job opportunity that I turned down into a job opportunity that I've now had for the last 12 years," Hollenberg said.

Working for both ESPN and the Rays has meant a lot to Hollenberg. In the 15 years he's been at ESPN, he has grown tremendously and learned a lot.

"I got hired at ESPN and no one was there to hold my hand and say, 'here's what you're going to do,'" he said. "That taught me a lot of lessons. You have to be responsible for yourself first and foremost and you learn on the job. It's baptism by fire, and the people who don't, don't last very long in the business."

Working for two major networks also gave Hollenberg the platform to start a mentorship program, BIBT. He had been interested in teaching because he was inspired by Lissit, and after being stuck at home during Covid, he officially launched the program. The goal of the program is to help passionate aspiring broadcasters, reporters and host break in or through the industry and build community.

Now, five years and over 200 members later, the program is running strong.

"It's become my legacy. No one's going to remember a single game that I call or a single team that I cover," he said. "But I think when it's all said and done, if we can keep growing this community, and if my mindset remains the same, which is get comfortable being uncomfortable and always keep growing and learning, then "Break In and Break Through" is going to be my legacy."



Rich Hollenberg standing with Dick Vitale, one of the people who inspired his early career. Hollenberg hosts a coaching service for aspiring broadcasters and announcers.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @RICHHOLL ON INSTAGRAM



Sports

FOOTBALL: HUSKIES TRAVEL TO FACE BIG EAST RIVAL SYRACUSE AT THE DOME

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When you ask UConn fans what schools they consider rivals, Syracuse is one of the first names that you normally hear.

Two schools with lots of history in the old Big East Conference face off against each other on Saturday, Sept. 6. The UConn football team (1-0) looks to remain undefeated while the Syracuse Orange (0-1) look for a bounce back win after a season-opening loss.

It will be the second-straight season where the Huskies travel up north to upstate New York to face the Orange. Connecticut fell to Syracuse 31-24 last November and have lost the past five games against their archrivals. The Huskies are 2-5 at the Dome, with their last win coming in 2010.

In the 31-24 loss last season, Syracuse quarterback Kyle McCord threw for 470 yards and two touchdowns, completing 37 of 47 passes. Both of his touchdown passes came in the first half. The Huskies could not contain McCord's options, with Oronde Gadsden II, Darrell Gill Jr. and Jackson Meeks all tallying over 100 yards receiving.

Quarterback Joe Fagnano is looking for his performance to be like last week's 59-13 rout over Central Connecticut. The Maine transfer completed 18 of his 25 passing attempts for 266 yards and three touchdowns. In addition to that, he walked in for a touchdown as he and wide receiver Skyler Bell were among some of the top performers



The UConn football takes on Syracuse on Saturday, Sept. 6. The team is coming off of a 59-13 win over CCSU last weekend.

PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

in the Group of Five during Week 1. With Fagnano now having 23 career touchdown passes at UConn, he moved into the top-10 in the record book. Against Syracuse last season, Fagnano went 27-48 for 228 passing yards and two touchdowns.

Bell showed the college football world why he was put on the 2025 Biletnikoff Award watch list, which recognizes the best wide receiver in college football. He finished the season-opener with four receptions for 135 yards and two touchdowns. The former Wisconsin Badger had his fifth 100-yard receiving game at UConn in 14 games played. He was named to the Pro Football Focus (PFF) National Team of the Week as a flex.

Bell did not play in the second half and was unavailable

to the media after the win last week but is expected to play on Saturday according to the Hartford Courant's Joe Arruda. The Bronx native caught a career-high 10 passes last season against the Orange.

In addition to Bell earning national recognition by PFF, left tackle Ben Murawski was named to the Group of Five Team of the Week.

The Huskies ran all over the Blue Devils, with running back Cam Edwards leading the way with 115 yards and a touchdown on six carries. He, along with Fagnano, were among the four players who found the end zone via the ground on Saturday. Eastern Illinois transfer MJ Flowers scored his first-career UConn touchdown and Victor Rosa found the end zone, matching his touchdown total from last season. UConn ran for 250 yards, the 10th time that number has been reached in the Jim Mora era.

Even though the offensive line was strong on Saturday, they will have to go up against a tough defense from a film standpoint.

"Defensively, they are really good up front. They've got a really good defensive line," Mora said. "They've got some new linebackers, but they're big, physical and they're active. I think their secondary is really, really athletic."

Syracuse returns home to the JMA Wireless Dome (formerly known as the Carrier Dome) after a 45-26 loss to then-No. 24 Tennessee at the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta last weekend.

With a 59-yard, one-touchdown performance from CCSU running Elijah Howard last week, the Huskies need to contain Syracuse running back Yasin Willis, who ran for 91 yards on 23 carries while scoring three touchdowns. Willis is part of one of the top running back tandems in the country, being

named to the Doak Walker Preseason Watch List alongside teammate Will Nixon. Mora called Willis a "big bruiser" during his weekly press conference on Tuesday.

Pass defense will be important for the Huskies, especially with defensive back Malachi McLean out for Week 2. Notre Dame transfer Steve Angeli, the successor to McCord at quarterback, completed 23 of his 40 passing attempts for 274 yards and a touchdown last weekend. The Huskies only recorded one sack last weekend, but Angeli was prone to sacks in Week 1 after being sacked five times against the Volunteers.

UConn is 8-28 all-time against the ACC, snapping a six-game skid with a win over North Carolina in the 2025 Wasabi Fenway Bowl. The Huskies have faced Syracuse 13 times since the 2004 season, with the Orange holding a 7-6 edge in the all-time series.

There is a tall task at hand for Connecticut to beat the Orange for the first time since Nov. 5, 2011. While Mora has a more determined mindset heading into Week 2, Syracuse head coach Fran Brown seems more relaxed.

"We're just ready to go out and have some fun this weekend," Brown said in his weekly press conference according to Field Level Media. "We want to get on the winning side of the column so we can try to go face the things we need to face."

Brown is not the only one on the Orange who feels confident in Syracuse's chances to win on Saturday. According to Syracuse.com, "We gonna get the dub this week" was overheard after practice.

Chapter 14 of the football rivalry kicks off on Saturday, Sept. 6, at noon at the JMA Wireless Dome. It will be available to watch on ESPN+ and ACC Network Extra.



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PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS