UCONN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

PUBLIC ISSUES COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

May 22, 2026

Time: 3:30 – 4:30 pm
Location: Microsoft Teams

Voting Members Present:	Drs. Thomas Agresta (arrival 3:37 pm), Anton Alerte (departure 4:07 pm), Jenna Bartley, Audrey Chapman, Emil Coman, Kirsten Guertin (arrival 3:39 pm), Jaclyn Jaeger, Linda Sprague Martinez (arrival 3:38 pm departure 4:06 pm), Christopher Steele, and Ms. Miriam Miller, and Ms. Deb Polun
Voting Members Excused:	Dr. Neena Qasba, D. Anthony Yoder, and Ms. Carolyn Alessi
Others in Attendance:	Dr. Linda Barry, ex officio member

Non-Voting Members Excused/Absent: Dr. Patrick Murphy, Oversight Committee Liaison

Meeting was called to order at 3:32 pm by chair, Dr. Jenna Bartley.

1. **Updates from Deans Council and Oversight Committee:**

   Dean's Council:

   Dr. Jaclyn Jaeger reported that at the Dean's Council meeting on May 18th, the Operating Guidelines for the Public Issues Council were officially approved, with next steps forthcoming. Leadership shared positive financial updates, including newly secured funding for research and clinical initiatives, and ongoing philanthropic outreach. Key Clinical Council updates include continued Waterbury integration, a finalized Cigna agreement, and several open specialty positions. Education Council updates focused on the Professional Incident Response Triage System (PIRT) process and upcoming Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) feedback expected this summer, with a full report in October.

   Oversight Committee:

   In Dr. Patrick Murphy's absence, Dr. Jenna Bartley gave a brief update from the Oversight Committee. The Public Issues Council operating guidelines were approved with a two-pronged approach, but several proposed changes could not be included because they require updates to the bylaws first. Key items such as public information dissemination, council membership flexibility, and adding a diversity/equity representative as a voting member will be pursued through proposed bylaw revisions. In the meantime, some elements were included as recommendations only, and further updates will follow once bylaw changes are complete.

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes as presented from April 27, 2026:**

   Motion made by Dr Audrey Chapman, seconded by Dr. Christopher Steele, to approve the meeting minutes from April 27, 2026.

Favor to approve:	Drs. Thomas Agresta, Anton Alerte, Jenna Bartley, Audrey Chapman, Emil Coman, Jaclyn Jaeger, Linda Sprague Martinez, Christopher Steele, and Ms. Miriam Miller, and Ms. Deb Polun

Against:	0
Abstain:	Dr. Kristen Guertin
Motion Passed:	10:0:1

3. Discussion of Acting chair, future chair nominations and upcoming meetings:

Dr. Jenna Bartley shared that her term on the Public Issues Council will end in June, and per the Operating Guidelines, a permanent chair will not be elected until September. The council is seeking an acting chair to provide leadership during July and August, with responsibilities including running meetings and helping guide priorities. Members are encouraged to nominate themselves or others. There will be a follow-up email with additional details, including upcoming meeting dates and a request to share any scheduling conflicts.

4. Discussion of proposed limits on federal student loans for professionals:

The council moved into a discussion on student loan limits, noting that Dr. Audrey Chapman has developed an initial document that was subsequently revised by Dr. Christopher Steele. They also discussed the collection of race and ethnicity data, agreeing that while such data may still be collected, it cannot be used in admissions decisions and is currently under heightened legal scrutiny. Participants emphasized that demographic patterns may still emerge in outcomes, requiring thoughtful consideration in how information is presented or reported. The conversation then shifted to shaping a potential UConn Today article, with a preference for focusing on financial and socioeconomic impacts and using publicly available data and broader trends rather than internal data, which would require a longer approval process. As next steps, Jenna will reach out for communication templates and collaborate on a draft in OneDrive to package their ideas for UConn Communications.

Adjournment:

Having completed the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 4:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza M. Bocchichio

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting [Public Issues Council Operating Guidelines]

June 22, 2026