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New Construction Management program set to begin in the 2027-28 academic year

By BRYCE INFALD
Staff Writer

Quinnipiac University's School of Computing and Engineering is launching a construction management major, which will be available for incoming students in the 2027-28 academic year.

The idea for the program originated in 2017 and will officially be offered to students one decade later, in fall 2027. The school will only be admitting first-year students for this upcoming academic year, as the program is still in its early stages.

"We are not offering it for transfer students because we won't be able to offer upper-level classes right away, but for an incoming group that is planning to take four years, we are offering it," Chair of Civil Engineering Priscilla Fonseca said.

This new degree will be the school's seventh undergraduate program. It is also the school's second new degree program in two years, after Artificial Intelligence and Computing began being offered this semester. Fonseca predicts that as the program continues to grow, it could have a major impact on the number of students in the civil engineering department.

"I'm expecting that we would potentially double or possibly more than double the enrollment…in our department," Fonseca said.

With this program put into action, Quinnipiac will join several other Connecticut schools in offering this pathway, including the University of Hartford, Central Connecticut State University and Sacred Heart University.

Fonseca stated that Quinnipiac's new program drew inspiration from schools throughout the United States.

"And I looked at our close-by competitors, in New England, a little bit further out from there," Fonseca said. "Also some places where I just knew that they existed. I wanted to see how they ran."

Even though the program is not the first of its kind, Fonseca wants it to have its own qualities that make it stand out.

"I do think that it would be good for us to have our own specialty and our own theme that makes us unique," Fonseca said. "I'm hoping that being that our placement (is) in New England, a lot of what is most in demand is heavy infrastructure…I'm hoping that we can go for a specialty in that area."

The creation of this program is a response to the growth of the construction industry in recent years.

"The demand for Construction Management graduates is high, particularly in the last few years since the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law passed," Associate Dean of the School of Computing and Engineering Brian O'Neill said in a statement to The Chronicle. "Nationally, there aren't enough graduates to meet the demand. We hope that this program attracts students who are interested in engineering, technology, and project management.

The school has outlined 17 learning outcomes for students in the program, covering a wide range of construction management roles.

While the curriculum is not publicly available, it has already been developed. As a first-year, students could expect their schedule to largely mirror that of a civil engineering student, with the exception of one major-specific course each semester.

"Not a lot of programs have you take a lot of construction management your first year, but we do want to have…something in both semesters of the first year," Fonseca said.

Current Quinnipiac faculty who will teach in the new department include Fonseca, John Greenleaf and Ari Perez. Fonseca stated that the school will hire new professors that have additional construction experience.

"We will be putting out a posting to hire new faculty starting next year and then another one the following year and then another one the following year…," Fonseca said. "These faculty members would…have more experience specifically in construction management."

To give students hands-on experience in the field, Fonseca stated that the school will work with construction companies to deliver this to students.

"We also plan to have a lot of partnerships with industry," Fonseca said. "And so they will already have their projects at those sites and then…our students would be able to go see and participate, in real time."

O'Neill hopes to see the program growing in the future, hopefully including new extracurricular experiences.

"In ten years, I hope that Construction Management is a thriving major in the School of Computing & Engineering," O'Neill said. "I imagine a major that has a strong community of faculty and students, and student organizations directly related to the program."

As the admissions process continues throughout the coming months, the program will continue to take shape.



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

Available to incoming first-year students in the 2027-28 academic year, Quinnipiac University has announced the launching of a construction management major.

BUDGET from cover

Although 38 full time positions are being eliminated, Highsmith said the reductions would result in 13 layoffs. Other positions would be eliminated through retirements, unfilled vacancies and restructuring.

The district's board of education also raised concerns about the impact on students and employees. Board Secretary and Director of the Honors Program at Quinnipiac University Melissa Kaplan expressed concerns about staff morale and the uncertainty surrounding continued employment.

Beyond staffing, administrators identified extracurricular activities as another area requiring financial adjustments. The district planned to eliminate freshman basketball at Hamden High School, reduce part time tutoring positions and review after school programming at the middle and high school levels.

Middle school athletics also became part of the budget discussion. However the program remained funded for the 2026-27 school year through a previously reestablished three year financial agreement with Quinnipiac. The university had pledged in 2024 to help financially support the program, this year being the last in the agreement.

The budget reductions reflect broader financial pressures facing Hamden. Mayor Adam Sendroff's proposed municipal budget for 2026-27 totaled approximately $328.7 million and included a proposed miller rate increase of 2.55 bringing the rate to 54.43, according to documents submitted to the state's Municipal Finance Advisory Commission.

The mayor's proposal identified rising municipal expenses and the need to maintain a structurally balanced budget as central financial considerations. The administration also presented budget projections for both the town and the Board of Education to state financial officials.

The Legislative Council, which has final authority over the towns budgets, held public budget hearings March 30 and May 18 before approving the spending plan.

The continued attention to special education expenses highlights one of the district's ongoing financial challenges as administrators work to provide required student services while operating within the approved allocation. The issue has resurfaced in recent discussion between town and school officials. This includes a request for additional municipal funding to support special education. At its June 9 meeting, the board of education voted unanimously to ask the Legislative Council for funding to hire an independent organization to review the district's special programs. The proposed review is expected to cost between $40,000 and $100,000, money that was not included in the district existence budget.

Most recently, the Legislative Council Nov. 9 agenda included a separate $70,000 special education finding request for consideration by its Finance Committee. These requests reflect the district's continued efforts to address special education needs while navigating budget constraints.

For Quinnipiac students, the decisions offer a look at the financial challenges facing the community all around campus. The university's previous financial support for middle school athletics illustrates how local institutions can become more involved in addressing gaps in municipal resources.

As Hamden moves through the 2026-27 fiscal year, town and school officials continue to face the challenge of balancing rising expenses with the resources available to maintain public services.

The decision made during the budget process will affect how the district allocates resources, supports employees and provides opportunities for students throughout the school year.