Dear Friends,

Like many of you, I have been watching news accounts of the multi-state manhunt for a UConn student who is a suspect in two deadly attacks that occurred in Willington and Derby over the weekend, claiming two lives and gravely injuring another man.

The university has been working with Connecticut State Police and others to assist in the search for the suspect. It was my intention to communicate with you about this tragic episode once that manhunt had concluded and there was some sense of finality. But as of this moment, the suspect has still not been apprehended, and we do not know if or when he will be.

I want you to know that we at UConn deeply mourn the loss of life and are thinking of the victims and their families.

The horrific and incomprehensible loss of life is reminiscent of so many other tragedies at so many other places around the country and the world. Though rare, we have been sadly reminded that none are immune from such random acts, and that they don’t always happen somewhere else.

No matter where they occur, such tragedy leaves us with overwhelming sadness for the victims and their families and struggling to make sense of how someone -- in this case, someone from our own community -- could be capable of such carnage. Added to the loss of life from the pandemic and the associated need to social distance, we are left without the ability to grieve at a time when we very much need to.

As we struggle with how to grieve for this tragedy and the other losses we have experienced this year, we must also do all we can to find comfort in the common humanity of our community, and remind ourselves of the kindness and beauty and good in the world.

I hope you are safe and well, and hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,

Tom