

Michael Rooke, Ph.D. - Biographical Statement

Dr. Rooke has served as President of Connecticut State Community College - Northwestern since 2015. The college was formerly known as Northwestern CT Community College (NCCC). In total, he has served the Connecticut Community College system for the past approx. 19 years in a variety of roles; as Dean of Academic Affairs at Tunxis Community College (2009-2015) and prior to that as Division Director, Business & Technology Division, Manchester Community College (2006-2009).



In May 2020, the former CT State Colleges & Universities Chancellor Mark Ojakian invited Dr. Rooke to serve dual roles as interim Provost and Vice-President Academic Affairs of the newly merged Connecticut State Community College, in addition to being NCCC president. In January 2022, Dr. Rooke stepped into the role of interim president of CT State Community College and subsequently returned fully to Northwestern in June 2022 upon the hiring of the new president.

Dr. Rooke's career has been focused on ensuring that all CT students have access to a world-class education, regardless of their personal circumstances and background and has been a lifelong champion for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Some of his most important accomplishments include successfully advocating for free community college tuition to the CT general assembly, establishing a student emergency fund at Northwestern, creating a peer mentoring program for all incoming students, leading the establishment of a common academic calendar across all CT state universities and community colleges and had a leadership role in the revision of developmental English and Math education policy across the CT community colleges and many other policy initiatives that improve the lives of community college students.

Dr. Rooke started his career as an assistant professor and associate professor of chemistry at the University of Hartford (1996-2003) and later as Director of Information Technology, as well as assistant director of instructional technology at the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University, (2003-2006).

Dr. Rooke serves on the board of directors of the Northwest CT Chamber of Commerce, the Torrington/Winsted Rotary board of directors, the board of the American Mural Project, as a corporator of Hartford Healthcare's Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board. As president of the Northwestern campus, he works closely alongside the college's foundation and is an *ex officio* member of the board.

He holds a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from Kansas State University, a M.S. degree in educational technology from Long Island University and a B.Sc. (Hons) in applied chemistry from Nottingham Trent University, UK.

Dr. Rooke has been married to his amazing wife of 23 years, and they have three daughters (ages 16-21) all of whom have or will have attended community college. Originally from East Yorkshire, England, Dr. Rooke loves hiking, gardening and traveling.