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Irma bridge replacement expected to be completed in October 2027

By **AVA HIGHLAND**
News Editor

Due to required permits, construction on Quinnipiac University's Mount Carmel Campus for the Irma pedestrian bridge's replacement will not be completed until October 2027, causing continued frustration for students.

Since the first weeks of the school year, the bridge has been closed due to an observed shift and is pending construction. The closure of the commonly used pathway has caused inconvenience for students going to classes, the Recreation and Wellness Center and attending other on-campus activities.

"The pedestrian bridge by the Irma and Dana residence halls was closed last year after an inspection identified that the bridge needs to be replaced," John Morgan, associate vice president for public relations, wrote in a statement to The Chronicle. "A new bridge will need to be designed and approved before construction can begin."

The Office of Residential Life sent out

an official statement on Sept. 3, noting that "it is likely that the replacement will not occur soon."

However, many students still speculated a quick fix for the bridge, but months later it is still closed. It is now known that the construction awaits several permits, per a newly posted "Wetlands Notice" sign hung on the bridge.

"The Irma pedestrian bridge replacement falls within a Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) Natural Diversity Database Area of Concern," the sign reads.

The construction requires seven permits: Army Corps of Engineers, State Historic Preservation Office Mashantucket, Mohegan, Wampanoag and Narragansett Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, Bat Presence Survey for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Officers, CTDEEP Fisheries Division, Hamden Inland Wetlands and Hamden Planning and Zoning.

In a search through Town of Hamden Planning and Zoning Department meeting minutes, no mention of the bridge has

been made yet. It is also not yet listed in the pending applications of the Inland Wetlands Commission at the time of publication.

The posting notes the estimated project timeline beginning with "design, survey and permitting" spanning from January 2026 to May 2027. This will be followed by construction from June to September 2027 and project completion in October 2027.

Students quickly shared the information on social media platforms including Yik Yak and Instagram.

"I'm gonna graduate before the Irma bridge is rebuilt," one student wrote on Yik Yak.

Having caused inconvenience, students have taken to using other methods, like jumping over the creek and building their own rock path. Though, Quinnipiac officials advised using other options.

"In the meantime, pedestrians should use the other bridge by the Larson residence hall and the walkway by the library," Morgan wrote. "We appreciate the community's patience and cooperation as we work to ensure the long-term safety and accessibility of the bridge."

Recent 'Comm-versation' delves into the politics of film

By **EMILY MARQUIS**
Associate Sports Editor

Quinnipiac University's School of Communications' Diversity Committee presented another installment of "Unfiltered Comm-versations" Tuesday, presenting an open forum to discuss the Academy Awards and the state of modern film and media.

The event, held in the Communications, Computing and Engineering Building, began as a discussion of the 2026 Oscars, held this past Sunday, before becoming an exploration of the reactions of movies.

The conversation began with a brief discussion of some of the Oscar-nominated films, filtered to avoid spoilers. Students and faculty mentioned best picture nominations "Sinners," "Marty Supreme" and "One Battle After Another," with silence lingering as the realization set in that the overlap in movies watched was limited.

The variety in films invited individuals to share personal anecdotes about their watching experiences, starting with Oscar films and branching out to other movies that left an impact.

The array of movies watched led to a common thread of political activism within the film industry, which was followed by students questioning the legitimacy of political advocacy in moments like award shows.

Some argued that using an Oscar speech as a place to call out injustice can come off as performative, particularly in cases where actors, directors and crew do not maintain that level of activism beyond the stage.

"You haven't said anything about this the entire time it's happening, but once you know everyone is going to be watching, you say it," first-year film, television and media arts major Cecilia LaSpina said.

Others argued that the art of the film and the inherent political messaging speak for themselves, and there is no obligation for creators to speak out against social injustices.

"Is this the moment to make a political statement?" Associate Professor of Journalism Margarita Diaz asked. "The political statement is the movie. I mean, if you see the movie and you don't see it as

a political statement, then you know, why bother, right?"

A notable example in the discussion was American filmmaker Paul Thomas Anderson, whose film "One Battle After Another" won three Academy Awards, including a nod to Anderson for Best Director.

"I would love to tap into (Anderson) and the lack of using the platform, like through that film," Assistant Professor of Film, Television and Media Arts Mary Schmitt said. "It's about political activism, and it's about the next generation doing better than what came before. So I am mad about that, that there was no response from him, really."

Another comment on the politics that also tied back to Anderson was improper representation, particularly in his representation of black women in "One Battle After Another."

Students cited Anderson's relationship with long-term partner, actress and comedian Maya Rudolph. They questioned how there could be a "cognitive dissonance" between the art he creates and the views he shares and how those politics converge.

Furthermore, the conversation veered into

how politics are no longer centralized to just the product it's connected to. As the impact of media grows, so does the political messaging present beyond the product, whether that be film or other forms of media.

"They call it paratexts," Assistant Professor of Media Studies David Kocik said. "Where it's like their interviews, movie trailers, right? All that extra stuff that you engage with when it comes to a film. Where does the responsibility of the artist lie?"

Even as talks wound down into the specifics of how the Oscars are presented as an award show, the politicalization remained a central point.

However, just because it is central to films and how they are consumed does not mean politics in art is something to be viewed negatively.

"I don't want you to think of politics as a bad thing, right?" Kocik said. "There are some people online where it's like, you're making it political. That's kind of like a phrase that's said online a lot. It's about how you see the world and how things should be organized and how things should be kind of constructed."



Left to right: Associate Professor of Journalism Margarita Diaz, sophomore sports communication major Skye Cuscuna, first-year journalism major Paige Thomas and Assistant Professor of Film, Television and Media Arts Mary Schmitt engage in conversation about the 2026 Oscars.

LILY ZAHKA/CHRONICLE