

HSU ERFSA - Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association

August 20, 2021

Dear Provost Capps and Deputy Chief of Staff Lisa Bond-Maupin:

Members of the Coordinating Committee of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association congratulate you and the faculty and staff who worked with you to develop an excellent plan for HSU's transition to a polytechnic STEM campus. Our organization is highly supportive of this initiative. This letter is intended for your use only. Please do not add our letter to the letters appended to the Prospectus.

We do have some issues we ask you to consider. Some of our retired, liberal arts and other former faculty members are concerned that disciplines that are critical to student education may suffer if resources and student advising operations for the liberal arts will not continue to be supported especially given increases in student numbers. We recently read a book called, *Consilience*, by E.O. Wilson, a Harvard professor of biology in which he argues effectively that the liberal arts are critical for the development of new and innovative approaches to science and technology. How will California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt ensure that the value of the liberal arts for students and the future of knowledge be ensured? However, we are pleased to see, on page 19 of the Prospectus, the following statement. "At HSU, we contest the notion that liberal arts are in opposition to applied training, including in technical disciplines, and we disrupt assumptions that the only purpose of the arts, humanities, and social sciences is to serve, augment, or support the sciences." Thus, it will be important to ensure that the liberal arts disciplines have the resources and other support needed to ensure student success.

We are pleased to see your focus on the need to increase and further diversify student numbers. Given the ongoing changes in ethnic diversity in our state, country and many other parts of the world, it is critical that our students have the opportunity to learn from other students and, of course, from a diverse faculty and staff. The university's success in becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution in 2014 and recipient of grants from the federal Department of Education has been and will be critical as the university evolves into a polytechnic campus.

We continue to be pleased that student support programs are excellent and developing at the university. The Place-Based Learning Communities, the Student Learning Community and the Educational Opportunity Program are good examples of ways to assist new students that will be attracted to the polytechnic campus. The future of students will benefit from the combined Academic & Career Advising Center.

Your focus on the need to develop more student housing options is critical for the future of the university. The plans you have developed seem excellent, but we encourage you to work with local and state politicians to reconsider the rules for developers to obtain permits to build housing that will serve the needs of students and many other local people.

Your focus on the need to develop opportunities for students to have internships and job opportunities with newly developing businesses such as the Echo subsea cable, page 27 of the Prospectus, is critical. We would also encourage you to work closely with the Nordic Aquafarm business that is likely to have a range of opportunities for students and faculty and the broader community as they develop their operation in Samoa. Also, the transportation infrastructure support from the federal government is also likely to provide good opportunities for students commuting to and from the campus.

Your plan to develop a Forest Engineering BS degree in 2029 is important. The lumber industry has been critical to economic development in Humboldt and other California counties having lumber industries. This industry will clearly need new and innovative approaches in the future to continue to support local economies and provide job opportunities for students and others. Also, Forest Engineering and Fisheries Biology have a critical role to play in responding to climate change that is clearly affecting California and the rest of our planet.

The university's continuing excellent collaboration with the College of the Redwoods is critical to our community and especially for health care. It is good to see that the university has advisory groups that include Native Americans and community leaders.

This is an exciting time for the university, the California State System and Humboldt County as HSU becomes a diverse polytechnic. The members of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association are pleased to see the successes of their university and will do all we can to assist in the transition to a polytechnic campus. Please let us know how we can assist in this process and whether the advice we have provided will be useful to the campus. Thanks to you and your colleagues for the good leadership you are providing for the future of the university.

Sincerely,

Coordinating Committee of the Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association
Marshelle Thobaben, Emerita Professor, Nursing, Co-Chair, University Senate Representative
Ken Fulgham, Emeritus Professor, Rangeland Resources Sciences, Co-Chair, Treasurer
Jeffry Borgeld, Emeritus Professor, Oceanography, Membership Chair
Bernadette Cheyne, Emerita Professor, Theatre, Film and Dance, Program Chair
Susan Dobie, Emerita Lecturer, Communications, At-large Representative
James Floss, Emeritus Lecturer, Communications, At-large Representative
Rollin Richmond, President Emeritus; Past Chair

Cc: Frank Whitlatch, Vice President for University Advancement