Cal Poly Announces 25-Year Higher Education Veteran as New Dean of Students

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly has announced the appointment of Kathleen N. McMahon, Ed.D — a 25-year veteran of higher education teaching and administration — as the university’s new assistant vice president for student affairs and dean of students.

McMahon — currently associate vice president for student life and Title IX coordinator for Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. — will begin at Cal Poly in February.

In her new role, McMahon will assume responsibility and management of all departments within the Dean of Students Office, which include the Center for Leadership and Service, Cross Cultural Centers, Center for Service In Action, Clubs and Club Sports, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and the Safer program (which focuses on sexual assault prevention).

McMahon will also serve the university as the point of contact for all crisis intervention with students and represent the university at select governance meetings, on campus and in the community.

“We are thrilled to welcome Kathleen to the Cal Poly community,” said Keith B. Humphrey, vice president for student affairs. “Kathleen brings a wealth of knowledge, leadership and higher education experience, and she shares our passion for supporting student success.”

McMahon’s career has included a wide range of administrative and academic experience. She has taught in higher education, written several published articles and given presentations within her field of expertise. She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of New Hampshire and a master’s degree from Boston College in clinical social work, where she also completed coursework in human development and education. She earned a doctoral degree in educational leadership from UCLA, where she also served as associate dean of students. Her doctoral research focused on leadership development among female college students.

“I am enamored with the Cal Poly community – the Learn by Doing that is in the fabric of all that happens here and the student-centered ethos that every community member exudes”, McMahon said. “It’s an honor to join the Mustang family and be part of a team that cares so much about their students’ success and wellbeing.”

McMahon said her husband, Thom and two children, Grayson (15) and Bayley (13), are also excited to join the Cal Poly community.

An interim leadership plan for the current dean of students, and its staff, will be announced to the campus community shortly.
About Student Affairs

Cal Poly’s Student Affairs promotes student success through the Cal Poly experience by promoting Learn by Doing opportunities, delivering student-centered programs, encouraging personal growth, and empowering our students to live within a safe, healthy, inclusive and supporting environment. More information about Student Affairs is at [www.studentaffairs.calpoly.edu](http://www.studentaffairs.calpoly.edu).

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