

Dear Parents and Families of MBU Students,

Just six weeks into my presidency at Mary Baldwin University — I write to you today to update you on work that began in January to rebuild undergraduate residential education at MBU and chart a course toward the university's future.

Faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees have been working on a Board of Trustees charge to build a proactive plan that helps us serve the evolving needs of students both in and out of the classroom, ensures the financial sustainability of our institution, preserves the best components of a liberal arts education aligned with industry, and provides students with experiences that build durable skills and workforce readiness.

We have also created more opportunities to improve your student's experience right now, such as improved academic advising and the launch this fall of the [McCree Center for Life Success](#) — our new hub for life design and professional development.

This is a critical time for universities like ours — one that demands we do a lot of listening and some evolving to meet prospective and current students where they are and where they are headed. We have instituted a process that will unfold over the entirety of the academic year, but we do know that there will be some difficult decisions ahead this semester. As we engage in this work, we want to be transparent about the options before us, including the closure of some academic programs.

The work of updating the student experience involves complicated steps and will affect not only students, but also faculty, staff, university planning, budgets, and employee contracts. The MBU Board of Trustees will consider every option to ensure the university successfully prepares students long into the future, including:

- Voting to approve the building and implementation of engaged and experiential learning programs for students
- Voting to close certain academic programs
- Approving the development of plans to ensure all students can take courses in majors to be closed in the future and graduate on time

- Voting to amend a 2017–18 provision of the Faculty Handbook that prevents separation of tenured faculty when an academic program or department is eliminated

The challenges of this moment require that we simultaneously advance Mary Baldwin *and* support this community. The times demand that we listen carefully – to you and your student and to faculty and staff. Academic leaders and I have engaged with the Faculty Council on the above possibilities, will consult them regularly, and will keep them – and you – informed of developments. We are also committed to ensuring that your student's experience is not negatively impacted and that they have the information and support they need on their path to graduation. Regardless of program decisions, we will ensure every student can complete a degree at MBU in their chosen major.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out by emailing **reimagine@marybaldwin.edu**. I hope to meet you in person during one of your visits to campus.

I hope your student enjoys the remaining days of their summer break. I look forward to welcoming them back to campus soon.

All in for Mary Baldwin,

Dr. Jeff Stein
President