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Cal Poly College of Science and Mathematics Adopts College of Education, Liberal Studies *Mergers Aim to Produce Best and Brightest K-12 Teachers*

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly’s College of Education merged with the College of Science and Mathematics on July 1. The move will help address the state and national issue of preparing K-12 teachers to teach science and mathematics and will provide cost savings for the university.

As a polytechnic institution Cal Poly doesn’t provide enough teachers to make a significant change on a national level, said Phil Bailey, dean of the College of Science and Mathematics. But he believes the university can help address the state’s problem by continuing to graduate highly qualified teachers, more specifically highly qualified science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) teachers.

“California’s economy is based in technology, and the state is falling behind in educating science and math teachers. There simply aren’t enough in the pipeline,” said Bailey. “If children aren’t taught math and science, how can they effectively enter and support California’s workforce?”

By creating the School of Education within the College of Science and Mathematics the university will increase the number of graduates competent to teach science and math in California’s K-12 schools, Bailey said. “Our goal is to use our strengths as a polytechnic institution to produce the best possible single and multiple subject teachers with expertise, competency and confidence in science and mathematics.”

The Liberal Studies major in the College of Liberal Arts also merged into the College of Science and Mathematics. It remains an interdisciplinary undergraduate teacher preparation program providing a curriculum that prepares future K-6 teachers for a credential program.

“Shifting Liberal Studies over to the College of Science and Mathematics provides undergraduate students greater opportunities to enhance their understanding of STEM disciplines,” said Debra Valencia-Laver, assistant dean for the College of Liberal Arts. “Students will be able to apply what they learn to create innovative, cross-disciplinary projects that connect STEM and the arts and humanities.”

“Liberal Studies, the College of Science and Mathematics, and the School of Education credential program will all focus on STEM programs with an emphasis on science and mathematics,” Bailey said.

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