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Washington State University Administrator Named New Cal Poly Liberal Arts Dean

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Douglas Epperson, a veteran of liberal arts higher education and current dean at Washington State University, has been named the new dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Cal Poly. He will assume his new post Aug. 15.

“Doug understands and appreciates the special niche that Cal Poly has in higher education as one of the nation’s few comprehensive polytechnic universities,” said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. “Doug brings to Cal Poly outstanding experience as both an administrator and a faculty member who also has created an impressive body of scholarship.”

Epperson has served as dean of Washington State’s College of Liberal Arts since 2009. Before Washington State, Epperson spent his career at Iowa State University – beginning as an assistant professor of psychology in 1979 and ending with a five-year stint as associate dean of the university’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

“Doug has a blend of skills that will enable him to build on the great work done the last eight years by Dean Linda Halisky to bring the College of Liberal Arts into a full partnership with our polytechnic-focused colleges,” said Cal Poly Provost Kathleen Enz Finken. “Doug has the experience and the desire to expand our multidisciplinary offerings in support of our Learn by Doing programs. He knows that being a dean means not only assisting the faculty in providing the best possible academic experience for our students but also providing skillful management through demanding budgetary times and assisting in fundraising and development activities.”

“It’s a privilege to be joining Cal Poly,” Epperson said. “The university’s highly regarded Learn by Doing approach is particularly appealing to me, and throughout my interview process I was deeply impressed by the faculty and staff’s commitment to Cal Poly’s students, who clearly are highly motivated to succeed.”

Epperson earned his bachelor’s degree in philosophy in 1973 and master’s in educational psychology in 1976, both from the University of Utah. In 1979, he earned a doctorate in counseling psychology from The Ohio State University.

He is a member of several professional organizations, including the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science and the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. He has served on many committees and councils relating to psychology and to higher education, including a term as chair of the Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs.

At Cal Poly, Epperson will succeed Linda Halisky, who is retiring after a 28-year career at Cal Poly including the past eight years as dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

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