

Office of the President

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March 22, 2019

Dear Representative Domb and Senator Comerford,

I am writing to follow up on [your letter of March 12, 2019](#). I emailed last week with brief responses to your questions, and let you know that this week I would provide full responses.

I understand your position regarding the released email correspondence where you feel that I mischaracterized our initial conversation. That was a private email, and what I should have shared is that I had briefed you both and heard your unequivocal support and concern for the people who work and learn at Hampshire. If there is different language that I should use to express this, please let me know. My apologies for creating a perception that you were aligned with or in support of any plans that were unfolding for Hampshire.

I am grateful for your interest in the legislation filed earlier this month by Governor Baker regarding processes for identifying financial instability and communicating about closures and other measures within higher education. I am in regular contact with the deputy commissioner of the Department of Higher Education for the Commonwealth. She has been keeping me abreast of development, and I appreciate that you are doing the same.

I want to restate that while our goal is to have Hampshire College remain independent, we must carefully examine every option for feasibility and potential for long term sustainability and impact. We have a campus committee (with students, staff, and faculty) who are providing input and guidance to the board into options moving forward. I have also constituted an independent external working group of alumni, parents, and past trustees. Here is our announcement about the group: <https://www.hampshire.edu/news/2019/03/20/march-20-2019-the-next-phase-of-our-work>

We held our inaugural meeting yesterday. Earlier today the dean of academic affairs and I met with members of the re-envisioning Hampshire College Coalition regarding their proposal. It is important to know that both the campus Options Committee and this new external Working Group will be reviewing all options. The perspectives and input of each of these committees is key to this work and will be essential for informing the board as it works to find a sustainable and highly impactful future for Hampshire.

We are working hard to retain as many jobs as we can. Moving through the FY20 budgeting process is very difficult in light of our projected enrollment, but in order for the College to remain viable, we must make difficult choices. This includes a reduction of our work force and frank discussions about how best to position the College moving forward. We have to match our expenses to our revenue. Providing severance is our goal, and we are working to secure the resources to do this.

I also want to share that the College's lawyers and the lawyers for the AAUP have been in contact to develop the process for moving forward. There now is a designated faculty representative with whom I am corresponding to ensure that we have a fair process. We are working to develop how we will engage together to come to an agreement. In addition, Human Resources has developed a comprehensive listing of support networks and workshops, all of which are accessible at <https://www.hampshire.edu/hr/transition-support>. This will provide you with a sense of the support we are offering to all employees.

As a reminder, we are updating our website's microsite regularly to provide information to our community. You can access it here: <https://www.hampshire.edu/presidents-office/visioning-project-information-and-updates>. Please let me know if you have any other questions. I look forward to our next meeting together.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Miriam Nelson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Miriam Nelson, PhD
President