Dear Campus Community,

Welcome back! I hope your semester is off to a great start and that the holiday break has left you feeling refreshed personally and professionally. The start of the year is a great time to look forward to the progress we will make together in the year ahead.

There are a number of projects underway on campus. Our strategic plan, Beyond the Horizon, has been completed, and we are now in the first stages of implementation. The University Budget Committee will be meeting soon to consider how we will align our budgeting decisions with our plan’s goals. In next month’s Henderson Now, I plan to share the initial results of this process in greater detail, in addition to sharing about the campus’ new emergency management plan.

As I communicated in the last newsletter, Henderson vice presidents continue to conduct listening sessions with their departments to discuss the results of the “Best Colleges to Work For” survey. I am looking forward to implementing initiatives that will improve the Henderson experience for faculty and staff.

Along with our strategic plan, shared governance will be a major focus this year. As we begin a new academic term and a new calendar year, the Henderson community will begin a new era of shared governance. As we’re all aware, in response to longstanding concerns expressed by both faculty and staff over the lack of campus involvement and input into campus governance and decision-making, last spring I announced in our March Henderson Now newsletter the formation of a task force to investigate approaches to shared governance and to develop an initial shared governance model for Henderson. That task force’s successful efforts culminated in the campus-wide presentations of our shared governance model to our faculty, staff, and students this past fall term.

A strong system of shared governance will lead to a stronger Henderson, as we engage each other in the process of making decisions that are always in the best interests of the university and its constituencies. Our institution’s ability to maintain our proud heritage and long history of serving students and our larger communities depends on our ongoing ability to govern ourselves effectively. Just as effective learning and leadership are both about intentional and reflective interaction and collaboration, effective shared governance is about intentional and reflective planning and accountability.
The linchpin of our new shared governance model is the Shared Governance Oversight Committee, which is charged with the effective management and operation of the university’s shared governance process. It serves as the entry point and the exit point for all shared governance proposals and also serves as the shared governance liaison to my office. Additionally, the SGOC is responsible for reviewing shared governance procedures, monitoring the performance of standing committees of the university, and ensuring that shared governance processes are followed.

The inaugural members of our Shared Governance Oversight Committee are as follows:

- Dr. Brett Serviss, President of the Faculty Senate
- Dr. Fred Worth, Past-President of the University Senate
- To-be-named, President-elect of the Faculty Senate
- Ms. Julie Cissell, President of the Staff Senate
- Ms. Beth Taggard, President-elect of the Staff Senate
- Mr. Jacob Mills, Staff Member at-large
- Dr. John Hardee, Dean of Ellis College of Arts and Sciences
- Dr. Rick McDaniel, Chair, Department of Physics
- Ms. Kristen Bell, President of HSU Student Government Association
- Dr. Steve Adkison, Provost
- Ms. Elaine Kneebone, General Counsel

Our SGOC will hold an organizational meeting early this spring term in January to elect committee officers and initiate our new shared governance process.

Our belief and understanding of shared governance at Henderson State University connects directly to our mission as a focused public liberal arts institution and our deep commitment to teaching and learning. Accordingly, we understand shared governance as a partnership in which administration, faculty, and staff work together to provide effective leadership, support, and advocacy for our university as we work together to ensure quality and innovation in all aspects of learning for our students.

In other news, this year’s legislative session started January 12. A series of bills are being considered which may possibly impact higher education and consequently, Henderson. I will keep the campus community updated on any changes via email as appropriate.

Lastly, I’d like to remind everyone that the winter season brings the possibility of inclement weather. Please review the phone numbers you have entered in the Rave Alert system to make sure they are up to date. You can access this information by logging onto MyHenderson and accessing the Emergency Preparedness tab at the top of the page. Henderson communicates weather alerts via the Rave Alert system, the Henderson website and social media accounts, and on local television and radio stations. Please know that the team responsible for making weather-related decisions endeavors to make safety the priority while respecting the responsibilities we have to our students. The decisions are made as quickly as possible out of respect for the campus community. As always, if campus is open but you feel it is unsafe for you to travel because of weather conditions in your area, please use your own discretion and communicate with your supervisor.

Thank you all for your continued efforts to advance Henderson.
In Reddie Spirit,

Glen Jones