TO: Members of the Board of Trustees  
FROM: President Sabah Randhawa on behalf of Brent Carbajal, Provost  
DATE: October 11, 2018  
SUBJECT: New undergraduate major in Marine and Coastal Sciences  
PURPOSE: Discussion Item

Purpose of Submittal:

Brian Bingham, Interim Director of the Shannon Point Marine Center, and Brooke Love, Interim Academic Program Coordinator will provide background and a progress report on the new Marine and Coastal Sciences major. The presentation will be supplemented by thoughts from Shawn Arellano, Assistant Professor in the Biology Department, and Laura Anthony, an undergraduate alumna of the WWU Marine Science Scholars Program.

Background:

As part of its 2018 supplemental budget, the Washington State Legislature approved $1.3 for development of an undergraduate degree program in marine and coastal sciences at WWU. This program, only the second undergraduate marine science degree program in the state, will help meet a growing demand among incoming students for access to marine science training while addressing the need within the State of Washington to create more STEM graduates who have the necessary interdisciplinary training to tackle the problems that face our local coastal communities, state, and planet. The degree program will pull together expertise and resources from the Department of Environmental Sciences, the Biology Department, the Geology Department, and the Shannon Point Marine Center in a rigorous, interdisciplinary, cohort model. The program will focus on research opportunities for students early in their college career; active, hands-on learning experiences in the laboratory and in the field; and engaged learning communities built around coursework series, programs, and immersive learning experiences.

Strategic Questions:

1. How can we improve transportation between Bellingham and Anacortes to facilitate working and learning in both places?

2. What advice do you have as we develop an advisory board for the marine science program at WWU?

3. Are there areas of training and education we are missing or upon which we should put more emphasis?