The Faculty Council of the University of Massachusetts Boston is deeply dismayed by UMass Amherst's proposed acquisition of Mt. Ida College and outraged at the disregard for our campus demonstrated by President Meehan and the Board of Trustees throughout this process.

We declare, first, that *we* are the Boston campus of the UMass system. It is superfluous to build a branch of UMass Amherst in Boston, since there is already a Boston campus in the UMass system. We submit that if UMass Amherst would like to provide its students with access to the Boston metro area and its opportunities, the UMass system should encourage intra-system student exchange and resource-sharing, rather than having one branch acquire an additional campus that will only compete with us for enrollment, programming, internships, and student employment opportunities. We believe in and want to work toward a system in which our many campuses are in collaboration, not competition, with one another, given our shared goal of providing excellent public higher education to students in the Commonwealth and beyond.

Second, the way UMass Boston has been treated throughout this process betrays a deep disrespect for our campus community. Everyone at UMass Boston—from administration to faculty to staff and students—found out about the acquisition deal from the press. There was no consultation with anyone on this campus. The fact that we must issue this statement at all, as if to remind the President and the Board not simply of our existence, but also of our entitlement to have been consulted on a decision that will have significant consequences for our campus's future, makes it difficult for us not to conclude that UMass Boston is held in complete and utter disregard by this university system. UMass Boston is a large campus with a diverse curriculum. For this reason, we were also surprised and baffled that UMass Boston was not part of the negotiations to offer programs and transfer credits to students at Mt. Ida, with only UMass Dartmouth given this opportunity.

This disregard is all the more outrageous given that, as the only public 4-year university in the greater Boston area, we are in fact extremely valuable and do very important work. Along with traditional college students, UMass Boston also serves first-generation college students, immigrants, many different communities of color, veterans, and adult learners, among many others. There are some 60 languages spoken by students on our campus. Despite crumbling buildings, perennial underfunding, overcrowding, and a generalized lack of resources, we provide top-notch education to thousands of students every year and produce internationally-recognized scholarship that enhances the knowledge of our students, citizens of the Commonwealth, and policymakers in the nation at large. We continue to do so in our current environment of budget cuts, layoffs, the potential elimination of center and institutes, and upcoming parking fee increases, an overall assault on the lowest-paid and least job secure people on our campus in order to close a budget deficit for which none of us—especially students—are responsible. The deficit is the result of the corrupt and crumbling foundations upon which this campus was built long ago. But this is not our students' price to pay. They deserve the same academic opportunities and environments for learning as UMass Amherst students receive.

If the President and Board support an inter-campus model of competition rather than collaboration, then we well know that UMass Boston will lose, because our campuses have never been on a level playing field. We have been asking the Board and the system to level the playing field, and while we collaborate with them regarding what that would mean, we ask that they not put us in competition with other UMass campuses. We agree with our university's Deans that "the process of the proposed acquisition of Mt. Ida [should] be reconsidered." Like them, we would be "more than happy to work with the President's office in assisting" in this process. Our new Chancellor should have the opportunity to create a collaborative vision with the other Chancellors, rather than be faced with yet another threat to our campus immediately upon

her/his arrival. Give us a place at the table so that we can begin the important and vital process of cross-campus collaboration, resource-sharing, and student exchange, so that all of our campuses may thrive and flourish together, and no one campus's growth comes at the expense of any other.