

MSU INVESTMENT PROPOSAL FOR INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

Title	Increase Student Accounts Personnel	Request Date	January 2012
Department	University Business Services	Email	bholden@montana.edu
Requestor	Bonnie Holden	Phone	406-994-1953

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Core Themes and Objectives (check all that apply)

Educate Students

- Our graduates will have achieved mastery in their major disciplines
- Our graduates will become active citizens and leaders
- Our graduates will have a multicultural and global perspective
- Our graduates will understand the ways that knowledge & art are created and applied in a variety of disciplines
- Our graduates are prepared for careers in their field
- We will provide increased access to our educational programs
- Communities and external stake holders benefit from broadly defined education partnerships with MSU

Create Knowledge and Art

- Students, faculty, and staff will create knowledge and art that is communicated widely

Serve Communities

- We help meet a fundamental need of the citizens of Montana by providing degree programs for our students
- We help meet the educational needs of the citizens of Montana by providing a wide range of educational opportunities to a variety of students
- Our students, faculty, staff, and administrators reach out to engage and serve communities
- Our students, faculty, staff, and administrator reach in to build the university community

Integrate Learning, Discovery, and Engagement

- Each graduate will have had experiences that integrate learning, discovery and engagement
- Outreach activities will educate students and address the needs of the communities we serve
- Students, faculty, and staff will create knowledge and art that addresses societal needs
- MSU is a community that will be characterized by synergy within and across disciplines, roles and functions.

Stewardship

- The public trusts the institution to operate openly and use resources wisely
- The faculty and staff are well-qualified and supported
- MSU will support Native American students, programs, and communities
- MSU will be an inclusive community, supporting and encouraging diversity
- Our publicly provided resources are used efficiently and effectively
- Natural resources are used efficiently and sustainably
- MSU nurtures a culture of resource conservation and ecological literacy among students, faculty and staff
- Our physical infrastructure (e.g., building, equipment, open spaces) will be well-maintained and useful

INSITUTIONAL BENEFIT						
Campuses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bozeman <input type="checkbox"/> Billings <input type="checkbox"/> Havre <input type="checkbox"/> Great Falls <input type="checkbox"/> FSTS <input type="checkbox"/> Extension <input type="checkbox"/> MAES					
Cross Depts	Please List: ___ UBS					
TIMEFRAME						
Proposed Dates	Start: July 2012		End:			
COST AND REQUIREMENTS						
Funding Type	One-Time (\$)	Multi-Year (\$)			Base (\$)	FTE
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Personnel (w/benefits)					\$35,000	
Materials & Supplies						
Travel						
Contracted Services						
Capital						
Other Operations					\$4,000	
TOTAL					\$39,000	
Please comment, if necessary, regarding cost and requirements.	<p><u>Proposal 1: 0.5 FTE Cashier II</u> Propose the addition of a .5 FTE Cashier II (low entry \$ 10.037/hr). Primary responsibility for this person would be to process departmental deposits. Other duties would be to process credit cards and checks for student payments during fee payment, cover main cashiers for vacations and sick time as needed, and assist in other areas when available. Annual compensation package including benefits ~\$20,000.</p> <p>This position could be located in the third area in the cashier's cage with a few modifications, cost approximately \$2,000.</p>					
	<p><u>Proposal 2: 1.0 FTE Accounting Associate II</u> We propose the addition of a 1.0 FTE Accounting Associate II (low entry \$10.00/hr). This position would split between cashiering and back office student accounts. This person would be responsible for the daily processing of departmental deposits, process credit cards and checks during fee payment, and cover main cashiers for vacations and sick time as needed. In addition to the cashiering duties, this person would be responsible for AutoBills, handling general department tasks such as maintaining the computer/printer inventory, handling the photocopy machine needs, handling printer toner cartridges, maintaining old records in storage, and handling key requests, setting up deferred installments, and back up for the front line student accounts staff. This position could also assist Accounts Payable if needed. Annual compensation package ~\$35,000.</p>					
	<p>A secure location would need to be found for this person if they are not located in the cashier's cage for cashiering duties; general office duties could be performed at any desk in the office. Up to \$4,000 would be needed to provide a working space.</p>					

PROPOSAL SCOPE

Describe the Proposal

Over the last one year, it has become apparent that additional staff is needed in Student Accounts, particularly in cashiering. Student enrollment increased by 795 students in Fall 2010 (6.23%) and by 594 students in Fall 2011 (4.38%). The majority of the work increase happens during two time periods, August 10th through October 1st in the fall and January 5th through March 1st in the spring. These 4 months encompass the fee payment due dates, the beginning of the term, the 15th class day, and the 2nd due date for deferred installments, all critical times for payments to be made and questions to be answered.

Increased enrollment affects the cashiers in two main areas: student payments and scholarship payments. Students and their parents/payers have several methods of payment options: checks, cash, bank wire, and credit cards. Online payments can be made by credit card or e-check and currently account for about 40% of the total payments made during a semester.

All scholarship checks received from outside entities are first processed by the Financial Aid department where they are recorded and attached to a completed cash receipt form, generally one check per cash receipt. These are then sent to the cashiers where they are reviewed for proper endorsement and correctness of written amount, entered into Banner, and sent to the bank for deposit. In addition to an increase in the number of scholarships due to increased enrollments, donors are changing their method of disbursement. Where before donors would submit one check for the year, they are now splitting payments into two or more checks in an effort to ensure the scholarship recipients are maintaining their eligibility. The Financial Aid department is reporting a 40% increase in scholarship checks for Fall 2011 over Fall 2010.

Increased enrollment also affects the front line staff and the collections staff in two main areas: processing deferred installments and assisting customers. Deferred installments applications increased by 235 (18.7 %) in 201070 and increased an additional 255 (17.1%) in 201170. As enrollment increases, the Student Accounts front staff are assisting a proportionate increase in additional students and parents on the telephone, email and walk-ins. One specific area of increased workload for the front staff personnel is the reconciliation of the Chapter 33 Veterans student accounts. From the beginning of this program in 200970 to 201170 the number of students taking advantage of this benefit has increased by 123% (157 students to 350 students). It is anticipated that we will be serving 500 students in the next year.

In the past, steps have been taken to lessen the workload of the cashiers by implementing the QuikPay system for web payments and processing the very time consuming Foundation check by an xfeed. Former cashiers, who then moved to other areas of UBS, would help out during fee payment as they had the knowledge to do so. We have also used supervisory, other Student Accounts staff, and temporary help to assist with cashiering duties when needed and have required overtime for the cashiers during fee payment. With the increased workload across the department and the former cashiers no longer working in UBS, these are no longer options.

Montana State law requires deposits to be made to the bank within 24 hours of receipt. Approximately 50% of the time we have not been able to achieve posting all deposits received on a particular day without carrying over to the next day or, at fee payment time, the day after, putting us in non-compliance with state law. Vacations and sick time for the cashiers also decreases the amount of work that can be processed in a day.

PROPOSAL SCOPE

Describe the broader impacts and benefits of this proposal

1. Compliance with Montana State law regarding time frame for deposits.
2. Departmental revenue is posted timely allowing department accountants to have a more complete picture of their financial status.
3. Better segregation of duties by not utilizing supervisory personnel as cashiers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

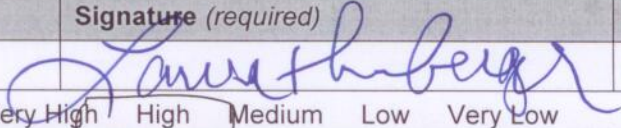
Implementation Plan *(Please describe with timelines)*

- Hire additional staff person by June 1, 2012 so they will have time to be fully trained before the fall 2012 semester fee payment deadline and can cover for summer vacations.

Assessment Plan *(Please describe with indicators)*

- We currently monitor the cashier work that was not completed at the end of each day. We will continue to monitor and would expect to have only deposits brought to the cashiers after 4:00 pm each day waiting to be entered.

If assessed objectives are not met in the timeframe outlined, what is the plan to sunset this proposal?

SIGNATURES		
Department Head <i>(please print)</i>	Signature <i>(required)</i>	Date
Bonnie Holden		January 2012
Dept Head Priority <i>(please circle one):</i>	Very High High Medium Low Very Low	
Dean/Director <i>(please print)</i>	Signature <i>(required)</i>	Date
Laura Humberger		January 2012
Dean/Director Priority <i>(please circle one):</i>	Very High High Medium Low Very Low	
Executive/VP <i>(please print)</i>	Signatures <i>(required)</i>	Date
Terry Leist		January 2012
Executive/VP Priority <i>(please circle one):</i>	Very High High Medium Low Very Low	