



## Year One Self-Evaluation Report

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### *Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations*

Submitted by  
Waded Cruzado, President  
Ronald Larsen, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Montana State University  
Bozeman, Montana  
[www.montana.edu](http://www.montana.edu)

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## Introduction

### Mountains & Minds

In 1893 the Agricultural College of the State of Montana was founded as the state's land-grant college. Today, Montana State University is far more than just an agricultural college, but we still take pride in our tri-partite mission of excellence in teaching, research, and service.

As President Waded Cruzado is known to say, Montana State University (MSU) is “one university [with] four campuses, seven agricultural centers, one world-class museum, and Extension offices that serve each of Montana's 56 counties, making the entire state of Montana our campus.”

The Bozeman campus is Montana State University's flagship campus. The other campuses include:

- Montana State University Billings, including the College of Technology
- Montana State University Northern in Havre, Montana
- Montana State University – Great Falls College of Technology

For several years the Great Falls College of Technology offered programs on the Bozeman campus. In 2010, the Montana Board of Regents transferred administrative responsibility for those programs to MSU Bozeman, and the Gallatin College was created to coordinate two-year programs at the MSU Bozeman campus.

While a significant integration program is underway [[www.montana.edu/msuui](http://www.montana.edu/msuui)], at present the four campuses have distinct missions and separate accreditation. The scope of this report reflects the mission and core themes of the flagship campus of Montana State University.

Montana State University provides baccalaureate degrees in 60 fields with many different options, master's degrees in 43 fields, and doctoral degrees in 20 fields. In 2010, a total of 13,559 students were enrolled at MSU, an increase of 6.2% from the previous year. Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment was 11,528, up 8.5% from the previous year. Of the top 200 Montana high school seniors that earned Montana University Honors Scholarships this year, 122 enrolled at MSU.

Our students continue to excel. Montana State University is ranked 14<sup>th</sup> nationally for the number of Goldwater scholarship recipients, and our faculty and students continue to be successful in many other areas:

- National Science Foundation (NSF) Fellowships
- Boren awards
- Rhodes Scholar
- Society of Women Engineers (SWE) Future Leader Award
- Presidential Early Career Awards

- U.S. Department of Defense Science, Mathematics And Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship
- NASA Astrobiology Institute Fellowship
- Fulbright grants and scholarships

Montana State University continues to be ranked as an institution with very high research activity by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Research expenditures again set a new record, at \$109.5 million for the last fiscal year. The faculty's engagement in research at this level provides remarkable opportunities for student involvement in the research experience, and all undergraduate students at MSU now participate in a research experience. However, we seek to see the opportunities for hands-on research and creative experiences for our students expanded and strengthened in the years ahead.

Montana State University inaugurated a new President, Dr. Waded Cruzado, in 2010 and welcomed a new Provost, Dr. Martha Potvin, in 2011. With new leadership in place the institution has begun a strategic planning process, with a new strategic plan to be completed by the end of 2011. The committees involved in the planning process contributed to this report. Faculty and students, administrators and staff have all provided input into the University's new mission statement and Core Themes.

This Year One Self-Evaluation Report includes a brief update on institutional changes since the 2009 site visit, updated responses to the expanded Eligibility Requirements, responses to the Recommendations made by the Commission in the 2009 Accreditation Report, the institution's new Mission Statement, and the five Core Themes that have been developed to assist the University in achieving its mission:

- Educate Students
- Create Knowledge and Art
- Serve Communities
- Integrate Learning, Discovery, and Engagement
- Ensure Sustainability

In addition, this report lists the indicators which have been identified for each Core Theme so that progress can be monitored as we seek to fulfill the Mission of the Institution.

## Institutional Context

Montana State University is experiencing significant enrollment growth during a time of financial uncertainty. Due to a decision by the Montana Board of Regents in summer 2011, in response to 2008 enrollments in the Montana University System, Montana State University will be transferring \$9 million in base funding to the University of Montana over the next three years. The institution will attempt to mitigate this funding loss by utilizing reserve funds, increased tuition revenues, and, if necessary, internal reallocation. Tuition revenues are expected to increase due to increased enrollments and 5% tuition rate increases for the next two years. These funding issues are highlighted in the following comments to MSU faculty from President Cruzado (7/26/2011).

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Some of the significant events shaping our financial picture this year include:

- Steady enrollment growth since Fall 2007
  - Student headcount up 11.4% through Fall 2010 and up 6.2% from Fall 2009 to 2010
  - We estimate total student enrollment to be up 2-3% again this Fall (2011)
- Solid non-resident student base (26% in FY11) provides higher tuition revenue
- State budget cut of 1.6% for the FY12/13 biennium (\$750,000 per year)
- Montana University System allocation adjustment for state funds based on Student FTE
  - FY12 = Loss of \$2.6 million vs. FY11; FY13 = Loss of \$5.2 million vs. FY11
- Tuition increase approved by the Board of Regents
  - 5% increase in FY12 (\$4 million over FY11)
  - Another 5% increase in FY13 (\$8 million over FY11)
- MSU set aside \$7 million in the Board-approved revolving reserve over the past several years. These funds originated from enrollment growth revenues

Although MSU's state funding has been reduced for the FY12/13 biennium, total general fund revenues (state funding plus tuition and fees) will actually be higher this year as a result of continued enrollment growth and tuition increases. In fact, to support the recent enrollment increases, the university in FY12 has committed an additional \$1.2 million in funding to the academic units and \$200,000 to student support. Further, we will still be able to provide one-time funding for additional course sections in FY12, which may be necessary if enrollment growth continues this year.

Reserves we set aside over the past several years will allow us to make strategic investments in our classrooms and instructional buildings to make them more accessible and accommodating to our growing number of students. And, of course, we will continue to explore ways to invest in our greatest assets, our faculty and staff. Even though we will have less financial support from the state this year than in years past, it is important for you to know that the resources of your university are being managed in a responsible manner to meet our growing needs.

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## Preface

### I. Eligibility Requirements

Montana State University (MSU) meets the eligibility requirements of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) for consideration of reaffirmation of accreditation. The 20 eligibility requirements, representing an expected level of performance or pre-condition related NWCCU Standards and/or Policies, are addressed in the following pages.

*Note: Web addresses presented here are intended to be illustrative, not a complete list of applicable web sites.*

**1. Operational Status** MSU meets this requirement by virtue of the operation of its educational programs for students pursuing its degree offerings.

**2. Authority** MSU is authorized by the Montana University System (MUS) Board of Regents (BOR) to grant degrees at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Montana Constitution authorizes the Board of Regents with powers and responsibilities to oversee the operation of Montana State University [[mus.edu/board/default.asp](http://mus.edu/board/default.asp)].

**3. Mission and Core Themes** The current (2002) Mission Statement for MSU has been adopted by the Montana Board of Regents, however the institution is in the process of developing a new strategic plan, including a new Mission and Core Themes. Since the strategic planning process is well advanced (to be completed by December 2011), the nearly final drafts of the Mission and Core Themes have been included in this document. As a land-grant institution, MSU's resources are used to support teaching, research, and service. This is also reflected in the present (2002) and proposed Mission, as well as the proposed Core Themes.

### 4. Operational Focus and Independence

Montana State University is Montana's land-grant university. We are an institution of higher education with a focus on teaching, research, and service/outreach. We hold ourselves accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission's standards and eligibility requirements.

**5. Non-Discrimination** MSU is committed to nondiscrimination towards students, staff, faculty, and other constituencies. Its policies are administered with respect towards the individual and it does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, creed or political belief, mental or physical handicap or disability, or veteran status in admission, access to, or conduct of, its educational programs and activities, nor in its employment policies and practices. [[www2.montana.edu/policy/affirmative\\_action/](http://www2.montana.edu/policy/affirmative_action/)]

## 6. Institutional Integrity

At MSU, institutional integrity is taken seriously and is exemplified in its policies and practices. State law and the policies of the Montana University System Board of Regents and MSU govern the behavior of all MSU employees. These laws and policies are communicated to, and form the basis of, the expectations for faculty, staff, students, and the public in their interaction with the university.

- The State of Montana has adopted a code of ethics and standards of conduct which apply to all state employees, including MSU administrators, faculty, and staff. MSU applies and enforces these ethical requirements through its policies and procedures.
- The BOR maintains a written Policy and Procedures Manual that includes all policies applicable to the units of MUS. These policies provide the framework for the University System's policies regarding academic freedom, ethical conduct, and conflict of interest.
- MSU maintains written policies and procedures that govern all aspects of MSU's operations and governance.
- Policies governing student ethics and integrity are described in the Student Academic Conduct and Grievance Guidelines.

**7. Governing Board** The authorized governing board for MSU is the Montana Board of Regents, composed of seven (7) voting members appointed by the Governor. Those members serve seven (7) year terms, except for the student member who serves one (1) year. Members of the Board have no contractual, employment, or personal financial interest in MSU.

**8. Chief Executive Officer** MSU is guided by a President, appointed by the Board of Regents, who is a full-time employee of the institution. The President does not serve as a member of MSU's governing board.

**9. Administration** Appropriate levels of administrative and support services are provided by MSU towards achievement of its mission and goals. Its resources are committed in support of its goals and objectives, with the educational advancement of its students as among the highest of priorities.

**10. Faculty** MSU employs full-time and part-time faculty, adequate for the educational levels offered, including a core of full-time, professionally qualified faculty representing every discipline in which it offers major work. Through its organizational and governance structures, MSU faculty members are engaged in development of institutional policy and academic planning. Faculty members are evaluated in a periodic and systematic manner and faculty workloads reflect the fundamental mission and goals of MSU.

**11. Educational Program** MSU offers baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees, in recognized fields of study consistent with its mission. Those degrees are granted through seven academic colleges of the university with appropriate levels of quality and rigor commensurate with the degree offered. MSU also offers associate degrees through Gallatin College programs. All degree programs are structured with sufficient content and length, utilization of library and information resources, and levels of faculty student interaction that help ensure program quality.

**12. General Education and Related Instruction** All baccalaureate programs at MSU require the completion of a general education core, designated CORE 2.0, with required elements in communication, quantitative reasoning, arts, humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, diversity, and a research/creative experience. These baccalaureate degrees additionally require a prescribed program of specialized study appropriate to each degree program.

**13. Library and Information Resources** Through the operation of its core library facility, Renne Library, and its centralized and de-centralized information technology resources, MSU provides appropriate services for students and faculty for meeting its mission and supporting its educational program. Those resources are diverse, continually updated, and sufficient in breadth and depth to provide a quality learning experience.

A \$600,000 renovation of the first floor of Renne Library has just been completed, creating a flexible learning space called the Library Commons. The renovation was inspired by MSU's focus on student retention and in response to the need of areas that would facilitate group learning.

#### **14. Physical and Technological Infrastructure**

Montana State University's main campus in Bozeman consists of 120 buildings providing 312,000 net square feet (nsf) of classroom, class lab, and open lab space. The Registrar controls 87 classrooms and the utilization rate is below the national average (most recent data is 88% of national average in 2006). Of these 87 classrooms, 71 (81%) have computer projection equipment, and 54 (62%) have full smart cart A/V capabilities. We are behind in providing technology-enabled classrooms, but we are making significant progress.

Students also have access to 107,567 nsf of dedicated study facilities in the Renne Library and other campus locations, including six residence halls. There is an additional 29,570 nsf of conference/meeting space around campus.

In addition to traditional lecture style classrooms, MSU has 151 laboratory teaching rooms, with a seating capacity of 4,546. There are 633 laboratory research rooms with a square footage of 235,000. Computer labs, dispersed throughout campus, are designed and equipped to accommodate college- or program-specific software and hardware. Over 1300

computer workstations are available for student use in computer labs maintained by the Information Technology Center (27%) and colleges and departments (73%).

A recently completed \$32.5 million renovation of Gaines Hall has provided much-needed instructional space, including a 260-seat lecture hall, language labs, and instructional chemistry, and earth science labs.

A total of 35 buildings around campus have wireless access availability. Heavily used instructional facilities such as the Renne Library, the Strand Union Building (SUB), and the engineering complex (Cobleigh Hall, Roberts Hall, and EPS Building) provide full coverage allowing wireless use throughout those buildings. All student residence halls provide access to ResNet, a campus network that gives students a direct and wireless network connection to the Internet and campus resources.

**15. Academic Freedom** MSU values and encourages the academic freedom of its faculty and students. Through its policies and practices, the university provides an academic environment that supports open dialogue among all constituencies, and maintains an atmosphere of intellectual freedom and independence.

**16. Admissions** MSU is consistent in the application of its student admissions policies, specifying the required qualifications for its degree programs. These policies and procedures are appropriately documented on websites and in printed materials, and its practices are congruent with Board of Regents policies.  
[[www.montana.edu/admissions/apply.shtml#FroshAcad](http://www.montana.edu/admissions/apply.shtml#FroshAcad)]

**17. Public Information** Through a variety of electronic and printed sources, MSU disseminates current information to all constituencies regarding its purpose and objectives. Specifically, significant effort is devoted to informing new and current students regarding rights, responsibilities and regulations impacting their educational programs and activities. [[www2.montana.edu/policy/student\\_conduct/student\\_conduct\\_code.htm](http://www2.montana.edu/policy/student_conduct/student_conduct_code.htm), [www.montana.edu/wwwcat/expenses/exp2.html#Schedule](http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/expenses/exp2.html#Schedule), [www.montana.edu/wwwcat/expenses/exp6.html](http://www.montana.edu/wwwcat/expenses/exp6.html), [www.montana.edu/wwwfa/](http://www.montana.edu/wwwfa/)]

**18. Financial Resources** MSU practices responsible financial planning and development in support of its mission and goals, by demonstration of an annual balanced budget for general operating funds, and an appropriate level of debt service.

**19. Financial Accountability** The institution's financial records are externally audited on a regular basis by the Montana Legislative Audit Division. This division provides an audit report of unqualified opinion that includes findings and recommendations.

**20. Disclosure** Montana State University discloses to the NWCCU all information required for the purposes of evaluation and accreditation functions.

**21. Relationship with the Accreditation Commission** MSU accepts the policies and standards of the NWCCU, and agrees to comply with these standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with due process. MSU continues to be responsive to requests from the Commission for accreditation-based information, and agrees that the NWCCU may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or members of the public the nature of any action regarding its status with the Commission. MSU has been in operation since 1893 and has adhered to the standards of its regional accrediting body since its initial accreditation in 1932.

**22. Student Achievement** Educational objectives and expected learning outcomes for each program are identified and published in the MSU 2010-2012 Course Bulletin, on appropriate MSU web sites, and/or in individual department materials. By means of its assessment and outcomes program, MSU demonstrates that students achieve stated learning outcomes.

**23. Institutional Effectiveness** The planning and evaluation processes for MSU are systematically applied, and the results of these assessments are published at appropriate periods. Through its governance structure, MSU ensures that all constituencies are apprised of its fulfillment of mission and achievement of goals.

#### **24. Scale and Sustainability**

Montana State University is large enough to provide a very wide range of opportunities for students, but small enough that a majority of our classes are still taught by faculty. We are large enough to meet the Carnegie classification as a top-tier research institution, which helps us attract world-class faculty and offers tremendous opportunities for student involvement in research, but small enough that our faculty know the students well enough to invite them to work in their laboratories.

Our enrollments are growing, and will likely continue to do so. The number of faculty and the number of degree programs have evolved over the past 118 years to provide a lot of opportunities for students, with a student:faculty ratio now at 17:1. The human resources are in place to be successful.

As for monetary resources, Montana State University does more for less than most institutions, but we have a long history of using limited resources very effectively. A strategic planning effort is underway that will provide a framework for improved prioritization for budgetary decisions in the future.

The integration of learning, discovery, and engagement is viewed as a stretch goal, and we are realistic that we may not achieve 100% of our target in a seven-year accreditation window. But there is a desire among the faculty to stretch to give our students a truly outstanding learning opportunity.

## II. Institutional Changes

On January 4, 2010, Dr. Waded Cruzado took office as the twelfth president on Montana State University. One year later, Dr. Martha Potvin joined the University as Provost.

In her first 100 days on campus, President Cruzado hosted a series of listening and learning sessions to gain a better understanding of the MSU culture and the concerns of the faculty, staff, and students. She then invited over 100 volunteers to design a new shared governance structure for the institution. The result was the creation of five new Councils:

- **University Council**  
Mission: The mission of the University Council shall be to ensure that the institutional policies and procedures support the university's strategic plan and land grant mission.
- **Deans' Council**  
Mission: The Deans' Council will provide vision and leadership for the academic enterprise of the University.
- **Research Council**  
Mission: Enhance the research enterprise at MSU and provide guidance and recommendations for strategic investments to facilitate discovery on the MSU campus.
- **Planning Council**  
Mission: The Planning Council is responsible for promoting an alignment between the institution's strategic plan and resource development and allocation. The Council defines the institutional criteria and procedures necessary to prioritize existing and proposed programs to be in alignment with MSU's Strategic Plan. In its advisory role to the President, the Council provides evidence-based input linking strategic planning with strategic execution, and facilitates the continuous evolution of the Strategic Plan itself.
- **Budget Council**  
Mission: To create, communicate and implement logical and easily understood fiscal processes that lead to fair budgetary guidance or resource allocations that directly support University strategic goals and priorities.

Among the various councils there are representatives from each of the MSU campuses, the students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community.

Additional administrative changes since the last site visit include:

- Dr. Rolf Groseth, Chancellor at MSU-Billings
- Terry Leist, Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Dr. Matthew Caires, Dean of Students
- Thomas Calcagni, Executive Director of University Communications

- Michael Stevenson, President and CEO of MSU Foundation
- Dr. Douglas L. Steele, Vice President for External Relations and Director of Extension
- Dr. David Singel, Associate Provost
- Dr. Ronald Larsen, Associate Provost and Accreditation Liaison Officer
- Dr. Marilyn Lockhart, Interim Director of Faculty Development

Other significant changes since the last site visit:

- The Gaines Hall renovation was completed in September of 2010. This returned 80,000 square feet of instructional space to the campus, including a 270-seat lecture hall, and numerous instructional laboratory facilities.
- Montana State University received the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Funds for a \$10 million expansion to Bobcat Stadium were raised in less than three months, and the new end zone was finished on time and on budget.
- A new Veterans Support Center in the Strand Union Building was opened in Fall 2011 to serve the growing number of veterans on the MSU campus. (MSU was named one of the “Military Friendly Schools” by *G. I. Jobs* magazine in 2010.)
- Twelve projects were awarded funds to improve retention at MSU
  - College of Arts and Architecture Professional Practices Series (\$6,600)
  - College of Business One-on-One Coaching Program (\$10,000)
  - College of Education, Health and Human Development DynaMetrics Program Tools initiative (\$10,000)
  - College of Engineering:
    - Enhance freshman introduction to engineering course (\$9,932)
    - Supplemental instruction to students for high-risk students taking gateway engineering courses in electrical engineering (\$10,000)
    - Introducing first-year students to computer simulation of engineering systems (\$10,000)
  - College of Letters and Science college algebra mastery exam (\$9,958)
  - MSU Library Subject Liaison Program for freshmen and their parents (\$7,720)
  - Student initiatives:
    - MSU Sustained Dialogue: a place where people of multiple opinions and backgrounds can come together and discuss personal, communal and societal problems in a safe space (\$10,000)
    - Conversations with Professors: a 75-minute small group conversation between incoming first-year students and faculty the day before classes start (\$8,250)

- MSU Leadership Fellows Program: a first-year experience focused on leadership and engagement/service learning for incoming students (\$10,000)
- University Studies Sophomore Experience: a three-credit course that will include small group sessions and a general lecture geared at engaging students and focusing individualized career plans (\$9,900)

### III. Response to NWCCU Recommendations

#### NWCCU Recommendation #1

The Evaluation Committee, recognizing the University's stated commitment to further develop as a "Very High Research" institution (consistent with its mission), notes with concern the increasing tension between critical needs and available resources. It acknowledges that in any college or university, and particularly one aspiring to ever higher levels of achievement and recognition, there will always be a perceived mismatch of allocated funds. Nonetheless, the Evaluation Committee respectfully recommends that either additional resources be generated to support such areas as research, graduate education, undergraduate research, faculty and staff development, and facilities management or that strategic reallocations be made to ensure such support and that the progress by which this is achieved be consultative, participatory, and transparent consistent with the University's own commitment to those values. (Standard 7.B.1)

#### Institution Response to Recommendation #1

President Cruzado has reaffirmed her commitment to transparency in budgeting processes, and greater integration between academics and budgeting. In Summer 2011, Terry Leist, from the Office of Academic Affairs, was appointed Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance at Montana State University. Since his appointment he has worked with the University Budget Council to develop plans to link budget allocations with institutional priorities.

A recent decision to change the funding model used by the Board of Regent's has actually had the effect of moving significant funds (\$9 million over three years) away from this institution. Reserve funds will cover part of that loss, and 5% tuition increases each year of the next biennium will help offset that loss. Record enrollments are also bringing in additional revenues. To date, these funds have been used to:

- Open additional sections of courses to meet student demand
- Fund retention initiatives identified through an open proposal process (funded initiatives were listed in the preceding section)
- Fund a Native American Initiative (request for proposals scheduled for 2011-12)
- Expansion of the Honors Program
- Provide 59 additional undergraduate research experiences through the Undergraduate Scholars Program (USP)

The Vice President for Research provided funds to support graduate initiatives to recruit and retain graduate students, particularly PhD candidates.

Strategic reallocations are going to be a part of the institution's future as well. This has been started in the Academic Affairs Office where a reorganization of roles and responsibilities has allowed resources to be reallocated to support a full time Director of Faculty Development.

The University Planning Council has been charged with developing a new strategic plan by the end of the calendar year. That plan must set institutional priorities and define strategies for achieving the stated goals. More than ever before, a prioritized strategic plan will drive funding decisions at the institution. The Core themes identified in this document are intended to be the basis for the goals in the strategic plan. The University Budget Council is developing a budget request process that is designed to help align spending with institutional priorities. Requests for funding through this process must be directly related to one of the Core Themes listed in this document.

### **NWCCU Recommendation #2**

The Evaluation Committee acknowledges the steps that have been taken since the 2004 Regular Interim Report to clarify the mission, role, and operations of the affiliated campuses, but it recommends, nonetheless, that the University work with the Board of Regents and the Commissioner to achieve better articulation among these campuses and to take advantage of possible efficiencies through standardization of processes, realignment of programs, and coordination of schedules. (Standards 6.A and 6.B)

### **Institution Response to Recommendation #2**

When Dr. Cruzado was inaugurated she spoke of *One MSU*, a phrase which has come to refer to the effort to unify the four campuses of Montana State University. As part of this process, the Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) from the four campuses now meet regularly, and the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) communicate weekly and meet monthly.

The MSU Integration Initiative was launched in Fall of 2009. This Initiative is an effort to investigate and achieve efficiencies across the four campuses through standardization of processes, calendars, policies, data elements, and any other opportunities discovered. Important goals of the initiative included improving the student experience and establishing a methodology for continuous, coordinated analysis and improvement of four-campus processes and integration opportunities as the new way of doing business at MSU.

Six teams numbering some 70 people from functional areas covering Finance, Human Resource, Academic Support, Information Technology, Student Accounts, and Financial Aid implemented 26 integration projects in the first phase. These included improvements in operational efficiencies and student experience. The second phase includes a growing

list of projects currently under consideration and the addition of a seventh team addressing student recruitment and collaborative marketing.

The initiative management team designed and is implementing a methodology to prioritize and align projects and critical resources with University strategic directives as well as a methodology to continually analyze and improve four-campus processes. Both methodologies are targeted at increasing operational efficiencies and improving the student experience at MSU.

Accomplishments where all campuses are now working together are listed below. More information about the initiative and these projects is available at [www.montana.edu/msuii](http://www.montana.edu/msuii).

### **Financial Aid**

#### **1. Consistent Direct Lending**

Consistent Direct Lending across all campuses reduces student confusion over options for borrowing money to pay for school expenses.

#### **2. Common IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) Reporting**

Common IPEDS Reporting across all campuses reduces Financial Aid staff time freeing up more time to personally assist students and parents.

#### **3. Shared Reports**

Shared Reports across all campuses increases efficiency by reducing manual processes that were often replicated on multiple campuses.

#### **4. Matching Fund Codes**

Consistent use of fund codes across all four campuses results in easier, faster development time for new reports and quicker analysis of problems.

#### **5. Governor's Presidential Job Scholarship**

Consistently applied criteria for the Governor's Presidential Job Scholarship awards results in a more equitable distribution of awards across all MSU campuses.

### **Finance**

#### **1. Veterans Administration (VA) Wire Transfer**

Redesign of VA GI-Bill wire transfer process reduces manual data entry for both MSU and the State Treasurer's Office, while ensuring privacy of data for all GI-Bill aid recipients.

#### **2. Interest Allocation**

Web-based application improves efficiency of the allocation of associated interest revenue to the appropriate invested fund balance.

#### **3. Purchasing Card Notifications**

Purchasing Card holders and administrators may opt to receive e-mail notifications when payments are made with a Purchasing Card, improving quality control on purchasing and streamlining administrative procedures.

4. **NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Athletics Reporting**  
Web-based NCAA reporting for Bozeman and Billings provides the ability to analyze financial results by sport/category.
5. **Commerce Manager**  
Purchase and implementation of Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant application allows departments to take online credit card payments securely and easily.
6. **Finance Approval Queues**  
Electronic expense approvals and enhanced reporting allow decentralized data entry of vendor invoices and eliminate a shadow accounting system.

### **Student Accounts**

1. **Parent PLUS Automated Disbursements**  
Automated process for disbursing Parent PLUS loans enables payments to be made directly to parents.

### **Human Resources**

1. **Conflict of Interest/Consulting Activities**  
Four-campus application allows employees to report conflict of interest and/or consulting activities when necessary.
2. **HRAA (Human Resources and Affirmative Action) online training**  
Four-campus application delivers online Affirmative Action training for prevention of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment.
3. **CHOICES (MUS benefits) Redeployment**  
Consolidating benefit codes across all four campuses allows the University to open a single 4-week enrollment instead of separate 2-week periods, giving employees more time to review and make benefits choices.
4. **Automated Payroll Processes**  
Moving payroll processes to an automated scheduling system reduces the need for manual intervention on monthly processing.
5. **Electronic Personnel Action Forms**  
Automation of paper-based personnel transaction forms, approval processes and data input.
6. **Web and Departmental Time Entry**  
Automation of paper-based time worked and leave taken reporting and approval process.

### **Academics**

1. **Cross-Campus Dashboard**  
Cross-Campus Dashboard allows admissions, registrar's office, and financial aid staff to access all critical information for students from any campus and eliminates the need for students to provide repeat information for different campuses.

**2. Transmittal Form**

New and improved transmittal form works in conjunction with the cross-campus dashboard, simplifying students' ability to transfer from campus to campus.

**3. Advisor Dashboard**

Advisor Dashboard allows advisors to review a student's CORE requirements, current schedule of classes, transcript and course transfer information.

**4. Common Course Numbering**

Common Course Numbering across the MUS guarantees transfer for courses identified as meeting the same learning outcomes. All campuses now use the same course abbreviations to reduce confusion and facilitate course transference for students.

**5. Common Course Evaluation System**

Implementing a common software system for processing course evaluations across three campuses consolidates support and eliminates the need for specialized support staff on multiple campuses.

**Information Technology**

**1. Luminis Banner Channels**

Luminis portal provides single sign-on access to Banner (administrative software) services.

**2. MyApps in MyInfo**

Custom applications targeted to business units across all campuses, with centralized reporting capability.

**3. Transaction Processing**

Streamlined financial transaction processing across all campuses.

**4. Server Virtualization**

Converting the server farm to virtualized machines reduces investment in hardware infrastructure as well as reducing power consumption and space requirements.

**NWCCU Recommendation #3**

Consistent with the recommendations from the 1999 Full-Scale Evaluation Report and the 2004 Regular Interim Report, the Evaluation Committee again recommends the University work with the Board of Regents and the Commissioner to develop comprehensive policies and practices that will ensure competitive salaries and benefits for the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and administrators. This will, in turn, will [sic] serve to maintain the current high quality of operations as well as support further fulfillment of the University's stated goals. (Standards 4 and 7)

### **Institution Response to Recommendation #3**

The institution acknowledges that salaries below peer institutions are a problem. MSU's Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA) has compared MSU faculty salaries with average values in the Oklahoma benchmark data, and the extent of the salary "gap" has been quantified, with the overall average of MSU salaries at 74.6% of the average value reported in the benchmark data (2009). Furthermore, the amount that the institution would need to spend to begin closing the gap has been determined. It would require an annual recurring expenditure of \$5.5 million to bring all faculty to 85% of the benchmark average.

In April 2009 the faculty of Montana State University voted to form a collective bargaining unit.<sup>1</sup> To date, a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) is still being negotiated. The university will now be working cooperatively with the faculty union to identify strategies and resources to improve compensation and other factors important to the recruitment and retention of faculty. For example, the institution worked with the faculty union to develop a one-time process for merit increases in Spring 2011. Approximately 12% of faculty members received merit increases (base salary increases) of \$2500. Staff members of the Montana Public Employees Association will receive raises as indicated below.

#### **Approved Staff Raises (Montana Public Employees Association)**

- 2011-12                      1% plus \$500
- 2012-13                      2% plus \$500

The negotiations on the faculty CBA are on-going but the goal of both parties is to have a CBA which offers a salary increase and the flexibility for the university to address merit, market, and equity. The institution looks forward to working with the faculty union as institutional resources are identified to address market adjustments and salary compression.

### **NWCCU Recommendation #4**

The Evaluation Committee acknowledges that significant progress has been made university-wide to define and publish expected student learning outcomes (especially in some professionally-oriented programs), but notes that this is, at present, still a largely decentralized and uneven process. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that further steps be taken promptly to ensure that the importance of educational assessment is communicated effectively across all academic departments and programs (including the Core 2.0) and that steps be taken to ensure that all are: (a) defining and publishing expected learning outcomes, (b) evaluating student achievement, (c) analyzing the results,

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<sup>1</sup> In 2011, the graduate students at Montana State University also petitioned to form a collective bargaining unit. The matter is pending before the Board of Personnel Appeals to determine whether graduate students are employees under the state collective bargaining law.

and (d) providing evidence that changes in student learning experiences are made as needed. (Standards 2.B and Policy 2.2)

#### **Institution Response to Recommendation #4**

Significant steps have been taken to shift the “decentralized and uneven” culture of assessment at Montana State University.

1. Dr. Ronald Larsen has been appointed Associate Provost and Accreditation Liaison Officer effective August 15, 2011. Formerly a Department Head in the College of Engineering, he has extensive experience developing assessment processes. His primary assignment is to strengthen the “culture of assessment” at Montana State University, and to build more consistent assessment processes across all departments and programs.
2. Better information on how to develop and assess learning outcomes is being developed. The first document, *The Basic Assessment Process*, is available now and is being rolled out. A second document, *Building an Assessment Plan, Step by Step*, is being prepared. Dr. Larsen will work with the departments to help update their assessment plans.
3. New Assistant Deans in two colleges with little history of assessment have agreed to help build the culture of assessment in their areas (Agriculture, and Letters and Science) and will attend a national assessment workshop with Dr. Larsen in September.
4. The Deans will be held responsible for ensuring that assessment plans are updated and carried out in their colleges. At the Deans retreat on September 8, 2011, each Dean received a report card showing how their college assessment plans measured up on key features, such as:
  - a. Clearly identified learning outcomes for each program
  - b. Identified sources of assessment data
  - c. A schedule for assessing each outcome and updating their assessment plans

Another area of concern is the assessment of the Core curriculum. Since 2004, each Core course has been reviewed periodically (every 6 years) for renewal of its Core designation. Instructors are asked to provide a syllabus, student evaluations, and...

...a one page narrative describing how successful the course has been in assuring that students are achieving the learning outcomes associated with the Core area for this course... Where possible, provide specific examples of how you know this. This could include some form of embedded assessment, which may include student responses to a specific essay question, a paper topic, or other assessment of learning.<sup>2</sup>

This was a conscious effort to get at outcomes assessment for Core courses. However, this approach relies strongly on the instructor’s assessment of student performance, and

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<sup>2</sup> From the Application for Core 2.0 Renewal cover page.

suffers from uneven data collection and assessment. Because of this, Dr. Larsen has tasked the Core 2.0 Committee to develop a direct assessment plan for Core 2.0 by the end of the 2011-12 academic year, for implementation in 2012.

## Chapter One – Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

### Section 1A. Mission

**1.A.1. The institution has a widely-published mission statement – approved by its governing board – that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.**

Montana State University has developed a new mission statement over the past seven months. MSU's Planning Committee coordinated the development of the mission, which has had significant public input via campus public meetings and on-line opportunities to comment.

**Montana State University, the State's land-grant institution, educates students, creates knowledge and art, and serves communities, by integrating learning, discovery, and engagement.**

This mission statement has been provided to the Commissioner of Higher Education and is scheduled to be presented to the Board of Regents at their November 2011 meeting.

### Our Vision

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Our vision for Montana State University is to build an educational institution as remarkable as our location. The beauty of our mountain home is a constant reminder that we are to be stewards of this place, and the people entrusted to our care.

We seek to be a community of scholars where students, faculty, and staff learn and grow together; where the discovery of knowledge and the creation of works of art are pursued; and where the campus boundaries do not define the limits of the communities we serve.

Our goal is to build upon our strengths, to strive for excellence and to achieve national recognition as the institution of choice for those seeking a student-centered environment distinguished by the integration of learning, discovery, and engagement.

**1.A.2. The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.**

Teaching, learning, and service are the traditional purposes of a land-grant institution. Montana State University has always sought to accomplish these goals. While the Institution recognizes that not all faculty must be equally engaged in each activity, the vast majority of faculty members are engaged in all three activities as part of their assigned responsibilities. Activities relevant to all

assigned responsibilities are considered during annual reviews, and as part of retention, promotion and tenure decisions. Montana State University expects to see the faculty, as a whole, accomplishing all three historic purposes, and desires to see individual faculty members increasingly participating in, and integrating, all three areas as part of their primary responsibilities.

While the Institution has always focused on teaching, research, and service, the students at Montana State University for many years have historically been seen as part of the “teaching” component. Approximately ten years ago, Montana State University recognized that strong growth in research productivity on campus was providing enhanced opportunities for students to participate in the research enterprise. The Institution recognized the benefit of integrating student learning with research, and sought to expand this benefit to every student. The Institution committed to providing every student with a research experience prior to graduation. This was ultimately built into the Core curriculum as a required “R” course for every student. Some R courses are built into various capstone courses, others are integrated with other Core courses.

- We have a goal of assessing the achievement of students in R courses to see if the learning outcomes for the student research experience are being met.
- We have a goal of using assessment results to improve achievement in the student research experience.

Requiring each student to have a research experience prior to graduation was a significant first step in integrating learning, discovery, and engagement, but as the necessary next step we want to see every student have an opportunity to engage with a community in service prior to graduation.

Just as we desire to see all faculty members engaged in teaching, research and service activities, we similarly desire to see all students have the opportunity to participate in activities that result in learning, discovery, and engagement.

- Consistent with our Carnegie classification as an engaged campus, we will incentivize the development of courses and provide support that will allow students to use their knowledge to engage communities.
- We will build engagement into the curriculum in general, and the Core curriculum in particular.

Our objective is to move towards becoming an institution where learning, discovery, and engagement are activities that are integrated throughout the lives of both faculty and students. To move towards this objective we have set a goal of reaching 70% of each of our target levels (which will be defined as part of the multi-step accreditation reporting process) within four years.

## Section 1B. Core Themes

The Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators listed below were developed over a period of nine months. The MSU Planning Council created the first draft, and hosted the first public forum for public comment on May 5, 2011. Later drafts were developed with the MSU Accreditation Officer and input from the following groups:

- MSU Planning Council Working Sessions, Summer 2011
- Second Public Forum, August 17, 2011
- College of Letters and Science Deans' Retreat, August 18, 2011
- President's Executive Committee
- Third Public Forum, August 31, 2011
- Faculty Senate, September 7, 2011
- Deans' Retreat, September 8, 2011
- ASMSU (Student) Senate, September 8, 2011

Additionally, drafts were available online with the ability to submit comments online.

## Core Theme 1: Educate students

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Two simple words in the mission statement are used to describe a vast array of educational efforts at Montana State University.

### *Educates Students*

Montana State University provides courses of study for over 60 majors and many more programs. While over 14,000 students are enrolled on our campus, the educational opportunities provided by the institution go far beyond resident instruction. Our students include people in communities across the State and around the world. Some examples are:

- Montana State University has Extension Agents serving every county in Montana, in part, by bringing educational opportunities to the citizens of the State.
- The Montana Manufacturing Extension Center and the Jake Jobs Center for Entrepreneurship for the New West help develop businesses across the State and region.
- The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has partnered with Montana State University to reach communities through the Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program.
- The MSU Water Center partners with the Montana Watercourse, a statewide water education program that supports water resource decision making and stewardship.
- MontanaPBS operates from Montana State University (KUSM) and the University of Montana (KUFM) to provide public broadcasting coverage to over 150 communities in the State.

- MSU creates multicultural experiences for all of our students by hosting more than 600 international students from around the world in our degree programs. We also offer more than 250 education abroad programs for credit, and send more than 300 MSU students abroad to study each year.
- Since 1997, student work-study and volunteer tutors have served over 2500 children in area schools through the MSU America Reads\*America Counts program.
- Montana Shakespeare in the Parks has brought the greatest works of Shakespeare and others to Montana and neighboring states for 39 years.
- MSU's National Teachers Enhancement Network (NTEN) offers online, graduate-level science courses to science teachers across the country.
- MSU empowers Native American individuals and communities.
  - The Indian Leadership Education and Development (I LEAD) Project is sponsored by the Department of Education.
  - MSU hosts the Native American Heritage Day in the fall and the Pow Wow in the spring to celebrate Native American culture.
- Students in MSU's Engineers Without Borders (EWB) group educate communities in Kenya on how to develop and sustain clean drinking water and sanitation facilities. This group has been awarded a 2011 Outreach Scholarship/W.K. Kellogg Foundation Engagement Award and is one of four groups competing for the 2011 C. Peter Magrath University/Community Engagement Award, to be announced at the APLU Annual Meeting in November.
- Gallatin College Programs provide two-year programs in aviation, drafting, interior design, welding technology, bookkeeping, and medical assistant.

And education implies far more than just imparting knowledge. We strive to help our students become critical thinkers capable of making informed ethical decisions, ready to become active citizens and community leaders.

*Objective: Our graduates will have achieved mastery in their major disciplines.*

Indicators:

- **Proportion<sup>3</sup> of students completing degree requirements.<sup>4</sup>**
- **Performance on standardized exams, such as professional exams, GRE scores.**
- **Performance on end-of-program assessments.**
- **Number of successful masters and doctoral thesis defenses.**
- Student retention rates.

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<sup>3</sup> Indicators referencing “Number of students” have been replaced by “Proportion of students” throughout this document to account for overall enrollment changes.

<sup>4</sup> More direct indicators are shown in bold font.

*Objective: Our graduates will become active citizens and leaders.*

Indicators:

- **Performance on embedded assessments in selected courses.**
- Proportion of students completing campus leadership programs.
- Number of student hours on service activities.
- Proportion of students completing ethics training (or courses) for research or professional practice.
- Change in score on select National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) items between first year and senior student respondents.

*Objective: Our graduates will have a multicultural and global perspective.*

Indicators:

- **Performance on embedded assessments in selected courses.**
- **Proportion of students participating in international learning experiences.**
- **Proportion of students earning International certifications.**
- **Number of international graduate fellowships.**
- **Number of graduate students doing research abroad.**
- Change in score on select NSSE items between first year and senior student respondents.

*Objective: Our graduates understand the ways that knowledge and art are created and applied in a variety of disciplines.*

Indicators:

- **Performance on embedded assessments in selected courses.**
- Number of inquiry courses taken outside student's major discipline.
- Scores on select NSSE items.

*Objective: Our graduates are prepared for careers in their fields.*

Indicators:

- **Number of graduates employed in a field related to their degree.**
- Number of external advisory boards consulting with MSU Colleges.

*Objective: We will provide increased access to our educational programs.*

Indicators:

- **Number of distance-delivered courses.**
- **Number of degree and non-degree (e.g., certificate) programs available via distance delivery.**
- **Proportion of students taking distance-delivered courses.**
- **Number of students outside the Gallatin Valley taking distance-delivered courses.**
- **Number of students outside Montana taking distance-delivered courses.**
- **Number of support services provided to faculty and students for distance-delivered courses.**
- **Number of non-resident graduate students.**
- **Number of joint degree programs with other educational institutions.**
- **Proportion of students who receive need-based financial aid.**

- Growth in Gallatin College program enrollments.
- Number of veteran students.

*Objective: Communities and external stakeholders benefit from broadly defined educational partnerships with MSU.*

Indicators:

- **Number of technical and professional conferences held on the MSU campus.**
- **Number of Extension programs, publications and workshops.**
- **Number of community partnerships.**
- Number of students, faculty and staff participating in identified programs focused on providing educational opportunities and/or meeting societal needs.
- Proportion of students participating in internship and co-operative educational opportunities.
- Number of cities visited by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks.
- Number of training events sponsored by the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC).

## **Core Theme 2: Create Knowledge and Art**

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One of the purposes of any university is to be a place where the boundaries of human knowledge are continually being expanded, and Montana State University certainly has a strong focus on the creation of knowledge through research and discovery. We also support the scholarly work associated with the creation of art, acknowledging the significant role of the arts in society.

*Objective: Students, faculty, and staff will create knowledge and art that is communicated widely.*

Indicators - Students:

- **Number of student research and/or creative experiences** (e.g., enrollments in Undergraduate Research or Guided Research courses, participation in Undergraduate Scholars Program, number of paid undergraduate laboratory workers.)
- **Number of undergraduate and graduate student publications and presentations.**
- **Number of graduate theses and dissertations produced.**
- Self-reported participation in research as reported in NSSE.

Indicators – Faculty and Staff (e.g., research and Extension staff):

- **Number of peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations.**
- **Number of juried exhibitions, performances, creative readings, or other shows.**
- **Magnitude of externally funded research expenditures.**
- **Number of Extension publications and workshops.**
- **Number of patents awarded to faculty and staff members.**
- **Number of technologies successfully transferred to the government or private sector.**

## Core Theme 3: Serve Communities

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When the Extension Service was established in 1914, the focus was on getting research on new methods in agriculture communicated to rural communities. The idea that the scholarly work of the institution needs to be applied to solve real problems is still at the heart of community service, but the scope of the service activities has expanded significantly, and even the definition of “community” is evolving. At Montana State University we embrace a broad definition of community, and are eager to find ways to see our students engaged with those communities.

In 2009 Montana State University was listed on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement. In 2011, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has awarded Montana State University its community engagement classification.

Recent examples of community service activities include:

- The Montana Extension Service continues to bring educational opportunities to the state. Topics range widely, from a home, ranch, and farm Energy Conservation Toolkit to a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Workshop in Billings.
- Since 1997, student work-study and volunteer tutors have served over 2500 children in area schools through the MSU America Reads\*America Counts program.<sup>5</sup>
- Thousands of MSU students provide service to hundreds of Bozeman area non-profit, school and governmental organizations each year. This effort is coordinated by the MSU Office for Community Involvement ([www.montana.edu/comminv/index.html](http://www.montana.edu/comminv/index.html)).
- The Early Childhood Education Distance Partnership program helps Head Start teachers and early childhood educators in tribal communities throughout Montana complete bachelor's degrees from MSU.
- Bobcat student athletes have logged over 14,000 hours of community service through the A.L.L. (Academics, Leadership, Life Skills) Challenge program.
- The Western Transportation Institute uses research to find solutions to problems and improve transportation in rural areas. WTI also sponsors the Bridges and Dams outreach program to demonstrate engineering principles to elementary school students, and partners with the MSU Engineers Without Borders student chapter to conduct workshops in elementary school classrooms.
- MSU Science Saturdays provides kids aged 8-13 with hands-on science and research activities. More than 900 Montana children have participated since 2008.
- The Fire Services Training School trains community and volunteer firefighters from all of Montana.

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<sup>5</sup> This bullet item appeared in Core Theme 1 as well. There is significant overlap between the Core Themes of Educate Students and Serve Communities – but repetition has been minimized in this document for the benefit of the reader.

- The Agricultural Marketing Policy Center provides applied research and education on agricultural marketing and related policy issues for farm and ranch managers and public decision makers.
- MSU's TechLink helps organizations commercialize new technologies.
- The Montana Manufacturing Extension Center helps Montana manufacturers increase profits by improving business processes.

Note: Many of the examples listed here have been extracted from much larger lists at:

- [www.montana.edu/about/outreach/communityengagement.html](http://www.montana.edu/about/outreach/communityengagement.html)
- [www.montana.edu/about/outreach/k12.html](http://www.montana.edu/about/outreach/k12.html)

#### **A. Education as a Public Service**

*Objective: We help meet a fundamental need of the citizens of Montana by providing degree programs for our students.*

Indicators:

- **Proportion of students who receive need-based financial aid.**
- **Growth in Gallatin College program enrollments.**
- **Increase in on-line educational opportunities offered.**
- The percentage of students with financial need that have 90% or more of the need met through grants and loans.
- Number of resident students.
- Number of veteran students.
- Number of transfer students.

*Objective: We help meet the educational needs of the citizens of Montana by providing a wide range of educational opportunities to a variety of students.*

Indicators – Formal Education:

- **Proportion of enrolled students from underserved populations.**
- **Proportion of graduates from underserved populations.**
- Proportion of students enrolled in distance education courses.

Indicators – Informal Education:

- **Number of programs offered in underserved communities.**
- Number of Extension programs offered.
- Number of participants in Extension programs.
- Number of outreach activities to Montana communities reported by faculty.

Indicators – K-12 Partnerships:

- **Number of partnerships with K-12 institutions.**
- **Number of curricula developed and distributed.**
- **Number of K-12 educators participating in MSU educational programs.**
- **Number of MSU programs taken off-campus to K-12 students.**
- **Number of K-12 students participating in MSU off-campus programs.**
- **Number of MSU programs bringing K-12 students to campus.**

- **Number of K-12 students participating in MSU on-campus programs.**
- Number of grant proposals focused on improving K-12 education.

## **B. Service by the MSU Community**

*Objective: Our students, staff, faculty, and administrators reach out to engage and serve communities.*

Student Indicators:

- **Proportion of students taking courses identified as offering engagement opportunities.**
- **Proportion of students participating in identified groups focused on meeting societal needs.**
- **Number of identified student groups focused on meeting societal needs.**
- **Number of hours served by Bobcat athletes through the A.L.L. Challenge.**

Faculty and Staff Indicators:

- **Number of faculty indicating community service activities in the Faculty Activity Data.**
- **Number of faculty, staff, and administrators participating in community outreach activities.**
- **Number of service-learning courses.**
- **Number of faculty and staff serving as advisers to student groups focused on meeting societal needs.**
- **Number of faculty and staff serving as conference chairs.**
- **Number of faculty and staff serving editors of professional publications.**
- Number of organizations assisted through TechLink and MilTech.
- Number of organizations assisted by the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center.

## **C. Service to the MSU Community**

*Objective: Our students, staff, faculty, and administrators reach in to build the university community.*

Indicators:

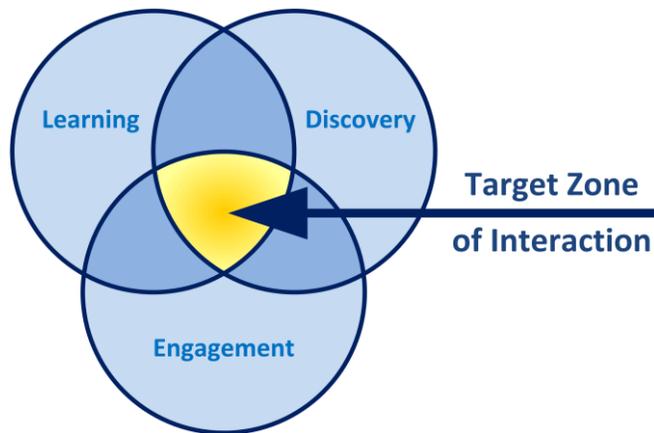
- **Proportion of students choosing theme floor (community) options in on-campus residences.**
- **Number of faculty participating in Undergraduate Scholars Program.**
- **Proportion of students participating in Undergraduate Scholars Program.**
- **Proportion of students attending campus athletic events.**
- **Number of faculty, staff, and administrators participating in Freshman Convocation.**
- **Number of faculty teaching University Seminar courses.**
- **Cumulative percentage of faculty and staff participating in shared governance committees, councils, and senates.**
- Responses to key questions (trust, respect, teamwork, collaboration across functions) on annual survey.
- Proportion of students participating in campus athletic programs.
- Proportion of students participating in campus cultural events.
- Number of faculty, staff, and administrators participating in campus leadership development activities.

- Number of faculty, staff, and administrators participating in move-in day activities.
- Number of staff members participating in the MSU Organizational Initiative (MSUoi).

## Core Theme 4: Integrate Learning, Discovery and Engagement

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In the past Montana State University set a goal to include a research experience in each student's undergraduate experience to help our students experience knowledge acquisition, synthesis and analysis. We now want to extend this to include engagement with communities as well.



We seek to increase opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in ways that serve others, and we intend to build learning, discovery, and engagement into courses across the curriculum.

*Objective: Each graduate will have had experiences that integrate learning, discovery and engagement.*

Indicators:

- **Number of courses that are updated to include engagement activities.**
- **Number of programs requiring courses that include engagement activities.**
- Number of majors requiring integrative capstone courses.

*Objective: Outreach activities will educate students and address the needs of the communities we serve.*

Indicators – Students:

- **Proportion of students completing service learning courses and engagement experiences.**
- **Number of identified courses offering engagement opportunities.**
- **Proportion of students taking courses identified as offering engagement opportunities.**
- Number of identified student groups focused on meeting societal needs.
- Proportion of students participating in identified groups focused on meeting societal needs.

Indicators – Faculty and Staff (e.g., research and Extension staff):

- **Number of faculty serving as conference session chairs (as reported in Faculty Activity Data)**

- **Number of Extension programs offered.**
- **Number of outreach activities to Montana communities reported by faculty.**
- **Number of faculty and staff offering service learning courses.**
- Number of faculty and staff assisting student groups focused on meeting societal needs.

*Objective: Students, faculty, and staff will create knowledge and art that addresses societal needs.*

Indicators – Faculty and Staff (e.g., research and Extension staff):

- **Number of community partnerships.**
- **Number of Extension publications and workshops.**

Indicators - Students:

- **Proportion of students completing identified courses that offer engagement opportunities.**
- Number of identified student groups focused on meeting societal needs.
- Proportion of students participating in identified groups focused on meeting societal needs.

*Objective: MSU is a community that will be characterized by synergy within and across disciplines, roles and functions.*

Indicators

- **Number of opportunities for faculty/student interaction and engagement.**
- **Number of undergraduate research projects reported in Faculty Activity Data.**
- **Number of undergraduate student publications and presentations.**
- **Number of multi-department grant proposals.**
- **Number of graduate committees including faculty members from multiple departments.**
- Number of grant proposals including budgeted funds for undergraduate researchers.
- Number of Core courses enhanced to include engagement activities.
- Annual reports of initiatives that result in synergistic outcomes (e.g., MSU Integration Initiative (MSUii) Program Accomplishments Report).

## Core Theme 5: Stewardship

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Our motto, *Mountains and Minds*, expresses what we love about our institution: this is a place where creative minds come together for discovery in an exceptional setting. The state of Montana is characterized by its beautiful landscapes, intact ecosystems, wildlife, and abundant natural resources, which provide inspiration and livelihood to our citizens. As stewards of this remarkable place it is our responsibility to ensure that these resources and natural systems are conserved so that they may endure for posterity.

### A. Stewardship of the public trust.

*Objective: The public trusts the institution to operate openly and use resources wisely.*

Indicators:

- **Responses to key questions on annual survey.**
- **Number of University committees and councils with one or more members from the community (where appropriate).**

- **Number of faculty engaged in public outreach (communications) programs about the University.**
- **Amount of Annual Fund donations.**
- Number of University committees and councils with publicly posted agendas and minutes.

#### **B. Stewardship of human resources.**

*Objective: The faculty and staff are well-qualified and supported.*

Indicators:

- **Percent of faculty with the terminal degree appropriate to their field.**
- **Ratios of average MSU faculty salaries to peers.**
- **Ratios of average MSU staff salaries to peers.**
- **Ratios of average Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) stipends to peers.**
- **Ratios of average Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) stipends to peers.**
- Number of participants in faculty, staff, and administrative development programs.
- Number of faculty reporting leadership roles in professional organizations.
- Number of faculty serving as editors for professional publications.
- Number of external awards reported in Faculty Activity Data.

#### **C. Stewardship of our cultural heritage.**

*Objective: MSU will support Native American students, programs, and communities.*

Indicators:

- **Number of Native American undergraduate students on campus.**
- **Number of Native American graduate students on campus.**
- **Number of Native American faculty, staff, and administrators on campus.**
- **Retention rate of Native American students.**
- **Graduation rate of Native American students.**
- **Number of community partnerships with Native American communities.**
- Number of Extension workshops in Native American communities.

*Objective: MSU will be an inclusive community, supporting and encouraging diversity.*

Indicators:

- **Number of students from minority, international and underrepresented groups.**
- **Number of faculty, staff, and administrators from minority and underrepresented groups.**
- **Number of identified student groups supporting and encouraging diversity.**
- **Number of public events promoting diversity.**
- Number of international research and creative projects collaborations.

#### **D. Stewardship of public resources.**

*Objective: Our publicly provided resources are used efficiently and effectively.*

Indicators:

- **Degree of alignment of budget and planning.**
- **Faculty productivity indicators (e.g., comparison with Delaware data set).**
- **Economic Impact Indicators (Montana jobs, income, tax revenue impacts).**

- **Student performance measures such as time to degree, retention rate, and graduation rate.**
- **Results of biennial audit.**

#### **E. Stewardship of natural resources.**

*Objective: Natural resources are used efficiently and sustainably.*

Indicators:

- **Extent of progress on MSU's Climate Action Plan.**
- **Avoided energy costs due to energy conservation projects.**
- **Number of energy conservation projects.**
- **Number and impact of water conservation projects.**
- **Number and impact of waste minimization projects.**

*Objective: MSU nurtures a culture of resource conservation and ecological literacy among students, faculty and staff.*

Indicators:

- Number of students, faculty, staff and administrators participating in campus sustainability programs (e.g. ASMSU Sustainability Center)
- Number of courses which integrate sustainability and ecological literacy.
- Proportion of students taking courses with a significant sustainability component.

#### **F. Stewardship of physical resources.**

*Objective: Our physical infrastructure (e.g., buildings, equipment, open spaces) will be well-maintained and useful.*

Indicators:

- **Facilities Condition Ratio.**
- **Ratio of Facilities (non-utilities) budget to peer institutions.**
- **Percentage of classrooms with current educational technologies.**
- Classroom utilization rate.
- Alignment of campus development with the campus master plan.
- Progress on reduction of deferred maintenance needs list.

## Conclusion

Montana State University is in the process of developing a new Mission Statement and a set of five Core Themes to assist the Institution in fulfilling its mission. Indicators have been identified to allow progress on each Core Theme to be measured. The Mission and Core Themes have been developed by the University Planning Council over a period of nine months, presented for public comments, and available online for review and comment in several drafts. While our strategic planning process is on-going, the Mission and Core Themes are not expected to change substantially from the versions reported in this document.

This self-study report has been reviewed by the academic deans (September 8, 2011) and the President's Executive Council (September 13, 2011). The Core Themes described in this document are intended to be the basis of MSU's new strategic plan which is to be completed by December 2011. That strategic plan will include priorities and strategies for making progress on each of the Core Themes.

Montana State University enthusiastically endorses the revised accreditation standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and their grounding in continuous improvement. The new standards will help keep mission and assessment at the forefront, and will assist in mission fulfillment.