



Mission and Core Themes

Extracted from the Year One Self-Study Report

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

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

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:

- **Proportion¹ of students completing degree requirements.²**
- **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.

¹ Indicators referencing “Number of students” have been replaced by “Proportion of students” throughout this document to account for overall enrollment changes.

² 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

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

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.³
- 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).
- 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.

³ 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
- 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.

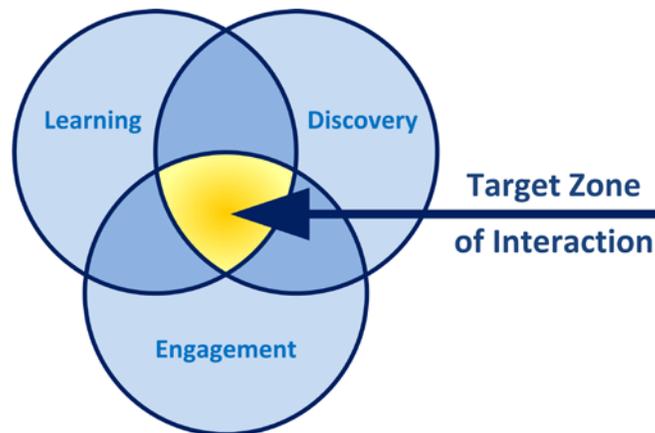
Indicators:

- **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

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

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.