What Are the Graduation Guarantee Programs?

With its Graduation Guarantee programs, Montana State University-Bozeman offers serious, goal-oriented incoming freshmen guaranteed savings in time and money as they work toward the completion of their baccalaureate degree programs. In signed contracts, the University and its participating students commit themselves to achieving cost-effective programs of study. Two types of contracts are available: 1) a four-year contract for most majors, and 2) a five-year contract for Architecture majors.

The University's Commitments

The University will provide eligible students with advising about their academic programs and with the courses they need to complete them. To assist students in their plans to graduate in four/five years, the University will:

- Ensure that its students be well-informed about University, college, and major requirements, and assign students to designated advisors.
- Provide timely access to the courses students must take to meet degree requirements.
- Pay post-contract incidental and mandatory fees until the contracted students graduate pursuant to their advisor-approved courses of study, if the students have met all the conditions of their Graduation Guarantee plans. Appeals from contracted students who need more than the contracted time to fulfill their graduations requirements will be heard by the Admission and Graduation Requirements Board. If the Board finds the University to be at fault, appropriate actions will include waiving course requirements, authorizing tuition and waiving fees, or a combination as deemed appropriate.
- Interrupt the plan's clock if students must withdraw from the University because of serious health or family problems.

The Students' Commitments

Students shall follow the academic advice provided and take the courses which are available to them. If they are committed to graduating in four years, they must:

- Be first-time MSU-Bozeman freshmen (including freshmen with Advanced Placement, but excluding freshmen admitted on provisional, part-time status).
- Take all applicable placement examinations (e.g., English, mathematics, languages, etc.) and earn placement in college-level courses in these areas prior to the beginning of their first-semester classes.
- Declare majors prior to earning 45 credits. (If students change majors, they may be unable to complete the requirements of the new majors within the four-year time frames of the contracts. Students cannot change out of Architecture and continue a five-year contract.)
- Meet with their academic advisors every semester to ensure that the courses they select will meet all program requirements (major, college, and University) within their contract periods.
- Enroll in classes each semester at their assigned registration times. They may need to adjust their preferred schedules to take courses they need when they are offered.
- Complete the average number of credits necessary each academic year to meet the minimum credit requirements for graduation. (Students may need to attend Summer Session to achieve the necessary rate of progress.)
- Maintain the grade point averages required by the University and particular majors. Students must earn grades sufficient to allow them to enroll in the next level of required courses in order not to repeat courses and thereby lose time.

Is the Four-Year Guarantee Program for You?

The Four-Year Guarantee Program is not for all students. There are many good reasons why you may choose to take longer than four years to graduate.

- You may have pre-college work (e.g., in English or mathematics) to complete before you can proceed with college-level courses.
- You may be enrolled in a high-credit major with a very strict sequencing of courses.
- You may have family or work responsibilities that prevent you from completing an average of 16 credits per semester.
- You may find your interests change while you are at MSU-Bozeman, leading you to change your major field of study.
- You may involve yourself in internships in preparation for your post-graduate career.
- You may take specific additional courses to meet the requirements of admission to a professional school.
- You may involve yourself in time-consuming research opportunities in preparation for graduate or professional school.
• You may choose to study abroad for a year.
• You may choose to involve yourself heavily in extracurricular activities as a citizen of the campus and community.

Each of the choices that you make may enhance your education, yet they make it more difficult to finish the Four-Year Guarantee on schedule. Nevertheless, many students in each of the above circumstances can finish their degree programs in four years. More information and Graduation Guarantee forms are available from the colleges and departments.