

**Board of Regents Meeting Report  
September 19-20, 2007  
Billings, MT**

***eLearning* 2007 OCHE Grant Funds  
Campus Project Summary Highlights**

**Background**

The 2005 Montana Legislature provided the OCHE with support funding to create a position for OCHE to coordinate and support development of *eLearning* by the MUS campuses. In addition to creating and filling the coordinator position, the MUS campuses worked throughout the biennium to increase the numbers and types of *eLearning* courses and programs being offered, and supported the effort to build and populate the new *eLearning* website (<http://mus.edu/online>).

In order to further support faculty professional development, as well as development of State-supported, academic credit bearing *eLearning* courses and delivery, the OCHE coordinated a grant program to the campuses, starting in December 2006. Grants up to \$5,000 were initially offered to fund campus proposals that were strategically aligned with the MUS *eLearning* activities. The campuses agreed to match the grant dollars with local funds in support of the projects. A second round of funding up to \$2,500 per campus was offered in May, under the same general terms and conditions. A copy of the project descriptions and grants, by campus, is attached. The following narrative highlights the noteworthy accomplishments of the campuses.

**Community Colleges**

- Dawson Community College declined participation due to the lack of a campus-based *eLearning* program.
- Flathead Valley Community College participated (granted \$6,500) and noted:
  1. Sent four participants (including faculty) to professional development sessions on *eLearning* technology, faculty development, student online success, etc.
  2. Two additional faculty members were provided professional development in a new software learning management platform.
  3. Faculty stipends were provided for the development of seven new online courses for General Education and to support the online Medical Transcription Certificate.
  4. Two faculty members piloted development and course conversion for a distance delivery platform.
- Miles Community College (granted \$5,000) to develop an online degree program, and actually developed 12 new online courses to fill General Education and program requirements, using “Quality Matters” standards. MCC has engaged 16 faculty to develop a total of 35 new online courses in 2007 & 2008.

**University of Montana Campuses**

- UM-Western (granted \$5,000) noted:
  1. Eleven existing courses were converted to online format for delivery.
  2. Two new online courses were developed to meet General Education requirements.
  3. All campus faculty were provided opportunities to attend WebCT platform training, and seven faculty developed online courses for the first time.
  4. Courses from eight academic disciplines were funded for development.
- UM-Montana Tech (granted \$2,500) noted:
  1. A new math course in elementary stats was developed by faculty for Blackboard-based delivery.
  2. A new hybrid Blackboard-based course in Principles of Speaking was developed by faculty.
  3. The campus surveyed students and developed an Online Student Readiness course to introduce students to online courses and to improve student support, retention, and completion.
- UM-Missoula (granted \$5,000) noted that the grant was to develop marketing materials for online and for the new MUS website containing the online MUS Gen Ed Core courses offered by the campuses. Significant materials were generated in the process, including a possible online logo. However, the logo created a departure from the consistent appearance that existed throughout the OCHE website, so it was not implemented. There were several advertising themes that were generated to support advertising of the

website and online education by all of the campuses, and several of these may be used in the near future. The online slogan or “tag line” that surfaced and was universally accepted by the campuses now appears on all of the pages in the “online” section of the website: “One website – Eleven campuses,” as the website was built to expand as we add more online courses and programs from all of the campuses.

- UM-Helena CoT (granted \$5,000) noted:
  1. Funding was used to pay full-time faculty to develop a new online General Education course in English Composition, available for delivery in Fall Semester 2007.
  2. Funding was also used to pay full-time faculty to develop a new online General Education course, Introduction to Psychology, also available for delivery in Fall Semester 2007. As of August 22, enrollment was at 28 students!

### Montana State University

- MSU-Northern (granted \$7,500) noted:
  1. Enrolled 23 faculty in a professional development two credit course, “Seminar in Online Course Development,” and each faculty member was required to develop an online course in their academic discipline.
  2. The MSU-N Bookstore developed and implemented an online bookstore component for students, and an electronic fee payment option was concurrently implemented for students in July 2007.
  3. Staff engaged in professional development and training in the use and maintenance of a new learning management system (Moodle) currently under review by MSU-Bozeman.
  4. The campus home web page was updated to provide easier access to students seeking information about online learning and online courses offered by the campus.
- MSU-Billings (granted \$5,000) to support the conversion and development of detail course information for over 70 online courses to the new common template utilized for the MUS website. Where possible, scripts were written to electronically import the data, to allow for further scalability in the future as the website is expanded. It also allows MSU-B to maintain timely and accurate information at the website by being able to regularly update the website database using technology to the greatest extent possible.
- MSU-Bozeman (granted \$5,000) to fund an external review to identify ways to strengthen programs, increase student access, improve efficiencies in delivering online education and services, and identify potential new niche markets. Two nationally recognized leaders in distance learning conducted the review and spent two days at MSU interviewing deans, faculty, and support staff involved in *eLearning*. The final report has not yet been provided by the reviewers, but preliminary review by *elearning* administrators revealed that the campus strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for distance learning and *eLearning* efforts were identified.
- MSU-Great Falls CoT (granted \$5,000) noted:
  1. Faculty identified 12 General Education priority courses that needed to be developed for online delivery in order to broaden the menu of online courses and to provide both breadth and depth of General Education offerings, and the grant was used to support the course development. In June, the CoT hosted a celebration to showcase the twelve new courses and the faculty that were responsible for their development. The twelve new courses represented four primary academic program areas.
  2. An average of 16 new students have enrolled in each new course for this Fall Semester.
  3. “Best Practices” were incorporated in the development of the new courses by the faculty, who used the nationally recognized “Quality Matters” course design standards.

It is very clear that the campus grants were utilized by the campuses to help meet their greatest needs in supporting the development of *eLearning* and related online student services. Following the two day strategic planning meeting of the campus *eLearning* Advisory Committee in early August, it was clear that there is both a desire and a need to continue these support grants to the campuses, and to leverage their internal investment in their respective *eLearning* needs. It is our intent to invite additional proposals in several strategic areas and to again award support grants to the campuses, using one-time-only funding provided by the 2007 Legislature.