



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Two-Year and Community College Committee

2013/2014 Work Plan

The Two-Year and Community College Education Committee will focus on five strategic areas during FY14:

1. Implementation of Developmental Education Reform Recommendations.
2. Improvement of University Transfer through Tuning Process.
3. Workforce Development.
4. Growth and Enhancement of Dual Credit Opportunities across Montana.
5. Establishment of Two-Year Education Metrics for Performance-Based Funding.

In addition, the Committee recognizes a continuation of efforts previously begun, including:

- Comprehensive Two-Year Mission Integration.
- K-12 Secondary to Postsecondary Partnerships/Pathways.
- Two-Year Education Branding/Rebranding.

Each of the above areas of focus will include the need to engage and partner with Montana's tribal colleges.

FY14 Areas of Committee Focus:

Focus #1: Implementation of Developmental Education Reform Recommendations

- Form a “Developmental Education Council” with participation from both two-year and university sectors:
 - Commissioner-appointed Council members in August 2013.
 - Council to be co-chaired by Deputy Commissioner Cech and Deputy Commissioner Moisey; Sharon O’Hare as Vice Chair.
- Create two separate discipline workgroups in Math and Writing/Reading consisting of faculty representatives from across the System, with the goals of forming recommendations to the Developmental Education Council for the scaling of successful pilot projects; creating a shared understanding of college readiness; and implementing innovative assessment and common placement models. Each committee will be charged with recommending a single, multiple-measures mechanism for placement into developmental and college-level mathematics and writing/reading courses.

- Form recommendations for models that work for Montana to create comprehensive student support and advising programs.
- Create an OPI/MUS communications group with the goal to work together to develop common goals and strategies related to communication.
- Develop recommendations for long-term tracking of students enrolled in developmental education courses and college-level mathematics and writing/reading courses. Provide recommendations on appropriate metrics and benchmarks to the Performance-Based Funding Steering Committee.
- Initiate amending Board Policies based on recommendations from Task Force by May 2014.

Focus #2: Improving University Transfer through Tuning Process

- Engage in a Tuning pilot involving two-year college programs of study in business with MUS bachelor's degrees in business at the Colleges of Business at MSU Billings, MSU, and UM.
- Complete Tuning pilot by May 2014 with full report to the BOR.
- Goals of the Tuning pilot include:
 - Facilitate student success and retention, especially among students from underserved groups, by creating clear expectations for, and pathways to, degree completion;
 - Simplify the process for students transferring credits between institutions;
 - Emphasize lifelong learning and important, but often undervalued, transferable skills;
 - Align the roles of higher education institutions;
 - Increase higher education's responsiveness to changes in knowledge and its application; and
 - Ensure the knowledge and applied skills associated with coursework align with civic, societal, and workforce needs.

Focus #3: Workforce Development

- Recommend policies and strategies to the Commissioner and the BOR to increase training and educational attainment beyond high school.
- Goals for Statewide Workforce Development Taskforce:
 - Make recommendations to improve collaboration and responsiveness of Montana's workforce training programs to be more flexible and responsive in meeting identified industry workforce needs.
 - Recommend strategies for increasing responsiveness to Montana's adult learners:
 - Stackable credentials
 - Credit for Prior Learning
 - Flexible delivery

- Industry Engagement – develop strategies to better link postsecondary education and industry: 1) identification of training needs; 2) availability of workforce training; 3) cost effectiveness; 4) industry needs; and 5) strategies to better engage and link industry.
- Seek sources of external funding through federal, state, and private grants to expand Montana’s postsecondary workforce development efforts and capabilities.
- Continue the role of the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education to coordinate the writing and facilitate implementation of statewide consortia workforce development grants, including the expected release of a TAACCCT request for proposal during the winter of 2014.

Focus #4: Growth and Enhancement of Dual Credit Opportunities

- Form a “Dual Credit Taskforce” with participation from both two-year and university sectors:
 - Commissioner-appointed Council members in August 2013.
 - Council to be co-chaired by Deputy Commissioner Cech and Deputy Commissioner Moisey.
- Revise and clarify dual enrollment guidelines:
 - Update based on changed policies and practices.
 - Present to BOR for approval at November 2013 meeting.
- Develop recommendations to present to the BOR for dual enrollment expansion:
 - Recommend BOR policy changes and modifications designed to foster and support dual enrollment growth in Montana.
 - Identify existing best dual enrollment best practices in Montana and recommend strategies to scale across the state.
 - The goal is to present updated BOR policy recommendations to the BOR in November, 2013.

Focus #5: Establishment of Two-Year Education Metrics for Performance Based Funding

- Work with Performance-Based Funding Taskforce to identify metrics for two-year education.

Ongoing Two-Year and Community College Education Initiatives:

The Two-Year and Community College Education Committee recognizes and supports the continuing work of the two-year colleges in Montana including:

1. Comprehensive Two-Year Mission Integration

- Continue work of supporting extension of comprehensive two-year mission to City College at MSU Billings, Gallatin College MSU, Great Falls College MSU, Helena College UM, Highlands College of MT Tech, Bitterroot College UM, and Missoula College UM.
- Present updates to the BOR on progress of comprehensive two-year mission expansion at each of the colleges.

2. K-12 to Postsecondary Partnerships and Pathways

- Implement identified statewide secondary to post-secondary pathways through the Big Sky Pathways Initiative.
- Develop new joint OPI/MUS partnerships and initiatives with existing initiatives such as common core and Graduation Matters.
- Leverage data gathered from statewide ACT exams to inform planning.
- Identify strategies and suggestions to redesign the Big Sky Pathways portion of Montana Career Information System (MCIS) to make it more user friendly.
- Engage tribal colleges as full partners with secondary to postsecondary pathways.

3. Two-Year Education Branding/Rebranding

- Continue efforts involved with the creation of a statewide two-year education brand concept.
- Continue efforts focused on enhancing the public image and awareness of Montana's comprehensive two-year colleges:
 - Policymakers actively support the policy agenda for an accessible and affordable two-year college system.
 - Business owners, community leaders, educators, families, students, and the media have positive perceptions of Montana's two-year college sector.
 - Educators, families, traditional-age students, and adult students are highly aware of and interested in two-year college opportunities and programs.
 - Effective pathways and relationships with four-year institutions are developed and expanded.

The strategic areas of focus under the Two-Year and Community College Education Committee will include the key initiatives of five major grants which are administered through the Two-Year and Community College Division, including:

- College!NOW
- Carl D. Perkins
- GEAR UP
- Education Talent Search
- Rigorous Program of Study (RPOS)

Planning and implementation efforts will include collaboration with the Budget, Audit Oversight, and Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committees.