



Date: August 7, 2015

To: Board of Regents

From: Daniel J. Bingham, Ph.D.
Dean/CEO, Helena College University of Montana

Subject: Campus Report for September 16-17, 2015, Board of Regents Meeting

- This fall Helena College will begin work on its year seven accreditation report for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The college's evaluation site visit is scheduled for spring of 2017. A team of administrators, faculty, and staff will begin with a comprehensive review of all accreditation standards and responses to current NWCCU recommendations in preparation for drafting the self-study in fall of 2016.
- Helena College successfully graduated the first cohort of summer RN students in a pinning ceremony on Aug 7.
- Awarded a new Strengthening Big Sky Pathways grant, Helena College plans to 1) host a Health Sciences Career Cluster Seminar on October 2, developing pathways in nursing and allied health fields; 2) host "Women in Gear" giving girls in middle school and older the opportunity to have hands-on experiences in technical and trades programs; and 3) provide area high school, college, and Adult Basic education instructors opportunities for professional development and building pathways to careers in Aviation Maintenance, Diesel Mechanics, and Mechatronics.
- Helena College's Big Sky Pathways Coordinator is working with Adult Basic Education representatives to develop a new kind of pathway that focuses on key skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and employability adults must possess in order to become successful college students in their chosen pathway.
- Helena College finished the construction of a bookstore facility at the Airport campus over the summer. This addition to the Airport campus will allow our trades students access the books and supplies they need for their classes without having to drive to the Donaldson campus. The bookstore build out was designed by Helena College students and primarily constructed by Helena College students.
- During the 2014-15 academic year, Helena College was able to complete the HVAC system in the Airport Campus Lecture Hall and install carpeting, making that previously shield out space usable as a classroom and meeting area.
- Helena College is currently planning the 2015-16 Study Abroad to Austria, Czech Republic, and Hungary, scheduled for May 9-22, 2016. Students will examine European cities and their significant sights within the historical context of politics/government, natural environment, technology, life/work life styles and customs, literature and language, design and the visual/performing arts,

and economics/business. The concept of offering an educational learning experience and differentiating from a “traditional tour” has shaped the program and factored in the success of the trips. All students, regardless of credit or non-credit, are required to participate in all of the activities. Weekly assignments, sent out beginning in February and ending shortly before departure, introduce students to the local culture, customs, economy, facts, history, and legends, as well as how these things are reflected in the art and architecture of the past and present. This creates excitement as students recognize the places they learned about. The trips are available to 20 students, initially holding space for 10 credit and 10 non-credit students. This is the third study abroad trip for Helena College with students traveling to China in 2014-15 and Italy in 2013-14.

- New programs and workshops are being put into place by the Financial Literacy Coordinator.
- Helena College student Subsidized Direct Loan borrowing decreased by over 20% each year for the last three academic years, Unsubsidized Direct Loan borrowing decreased by 23% each academic year, and the number of Helena College students who borrowed decreased by approximately 16%.
- To date, 80 veterans receiving benefits have registered for Fall classes, and Veteran Services has successfully paired 7 mentor relationships.
- Helena College successfully submitted their Student Support Services TRiO grant application and was awarded \$1,000,000 spanning the next 5 years. Helena College TRiO serves students who are first generation, low-income, and/or identified as having a disability.
- Retail Services will be expanding its operation with the opening of Bookstore East on the Airport Campus for Fall semester.
- Helena College Disability Resources’ webpages were found to be the most complete and user-friendly in the state by Helena area high school special education teachers doing a review.
- Helena College Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Dean John Garic from Highlands College worked together to conduct a 2-day Title IX Investigator training. Attendees included personnel from Helena College and Helena Public Schools.
- Helena College Assistant Dean of Student Affairs presented in a panel at MT NACADA in Missoula regarding effective advising strategies. A pilot program has begun working with students on academic probation utilizing Proactive Advising Strategies in an effort to develop sound educational skills and improve academic standing.
- Recognizing students identify with a disability need additional and focused support, Disability Resources has instituted an academic coaching model designed to develop and advance students’ skills in addition to providing academic accommodations/adjustments
- *Reflections Writing 095 – Fall 2014-Spring 2015*, a compilation of student essays, was recently published by Helena College Writing Instructor, Karen Henderson. This book is the fifth in the series with the first published in the spring of 2012.