




**Two-Year Education
Council Report**



**Montana Board of
Regents**



**November 2007
Bozeman, MT**

Montana Two-Year Education Council was chartered by the Montana Board of Regents in November 2005 with the role and responsibility to:

...highlights Council accomplishments to date, issue discussions, and future direction.

- Advise and assist the Board of Regents and its committees on issues, opportunities or challenges related to two-year education from a statewide, systemic focus.
- Collaborate with all educational levels, K-12 through higher education, to assure smooth transition of students.
- Provide a comprehensive annual report to the Board of Regents on the status of two-year education and workforce development in Montana.

The Council is pleased to present to the Regents the following narrative that highlights Council accomplishments to date, issue discussions, and future direction. Snapshots of the work of individual campuses to meet the BOR strategic goals established in July 2006 complete this report.

SECTION I: COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Highlights of Accomplishments

Academic Policy Committee

The Council established its first Standing Committee—*Academic Policy Committee*. This committee, chaired by Dean Mary Sheehy Moe, represents the Chief Academic Officer for each campus. This committee is charged with addressing policy issues for the Council. As a result of the Transfer Audit conducted by the Legislative Services, BOR Policy 301.12 that established criteria for certificates and degrees at the two-year level was adopted. The policy states that it is the role of the Two-Year Council to review programs for compliance with this policy and forward their recommendations to the BOR.

To meet this requirement, the Academic Policy Committee began its work by documenting existing programs for compliance with the new BOR Policy 301.12. This resulted in the *Process Document for Annual Review for BOR 301.12*. This document will be maintained and added to as necessary. This requires an annual review of programs for compliance. The full report of the Academic Policy Committee is included as an attachment.

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Two-Year Program Data Measures

Four sub goals of the Regents' Strategic Plan were presented by Tyler Trevor for approval by the Council. The Council approved all goals although the measurement approach for Goal One, Employer Satisfaction will be conducted at the institutional level rather than as a statewide measurement using a common template and will coincide with program review.

Marketing Two-Year Education

A marketing ad hoc committee was appointed in response to the need to increase the visibility of two-year education in Montana and recruitment of students. This committee, chaired by John Cech, is assessing the feasibility of conducting another marketing campaign and whether the Council should approach the BOR for additional funding. With an aging of population, strong economy and flat enrollments, colleges find it difficult to recruit new students, but the demands by employers for a highly skilled workforce has not diminished. The Council will look to opportunities to leverage resources from initiatives such as WIRED, Apprenticeship Training (DOLI), and contributions by business, industry and campuses.

Issue Discussions

The Council has often engaged in vibrant and difficult discussions on issues that strike at the heart of two-year education in Montana.

Vibrant... discussions on issues that strike at the heart of two-year education...

campuses.

An issue of particular note related to standardization of curriculum and the program approval process for merged two-year

Although the discussion centered upon standardization of curriculum, the variance of the approval process rose to the surface. This was discussed in the context of the Montana BILT project (MSU Billings COT) to develop a carpentry curriculum model in the same manner as the LPN curriculum model. The question was: does the approval process required for merged Colleges of Technology impact their ability to standardize curriculum? The consensus of the council was that the impact varied among merged campuses, but time to approval was the major issue for all.

Distance Learning Administrative Rule and Dual Enrollment

The recent Board of Public Education adoption of Administrative Rule ARM 10.55.907 (3) requires that “teachers of distance, online, and technology delivered learning programs shall be licensed and endorsed in Montana in the area of instruction taught”...except as provided in (3) (a). “When a teacher of distance, online and technology delivered learning programs and/or courses does not possess the qualification specified in (3) above, the facilitator must be licensed and endorsed in Montana in the area of instruction facilitated.

This rule will go into effect no later than 2009. There is concern that this will have negative impact not only for online courses delivered by two-and four-year institutions as well as dual enrollment courses. This would drastically limit options for students, especially those residing in rural areas. The issue must ultimately be discussed at the public level...by the parents and students it touches.

Board of Regents Policy 720 and 730.6—Faculty Qualifications

Minimum faculty minimum qualifications for Colleges of Technology and Community Colleges are required under these policies. The Academic Policy Committee agreed to work on these policies to incorporate them into one and to use the Community College policy as the template. The question that remained regarded the fairness of having stated faculty minimum qualifications for faculty in two-year institutions, but not a policy for faculty in four-year institutions.

Future Direction

Within the next year, the Montana Two-Year Education Council will be proactive in putting together a **Two-Year Education Summit** to stimulate a statewide discussion of the mission and role of two-year education in Montana. To accomplish this goal, it will be important to bring together stakeholders representing the Governor's Office, legislature, State Workforce Investment Board, K12, adult education, faculty, administrators, employers and students to establish the framework and goal for such a gathering. It is the expectation that such a discussion will stimulate growth and expansion of two-year education in Montana by elevating its value to its citizens. Promoting a dynamic and forward looking educational system is essential for sustaining Montana's rapidly changing economy and growing a highly skilled technical workforce.

Two-Year Education Summit to stimulate a statewide discussion...

The Council must also set its agenda to address the issues and concerns of its Tribal College members. Tribal College representatives expressed a hope that the Council will be a place where they can bring their issues to the table and develop a collaborative relationship with the BOR and other colleges. Working with Tribal College members for making this happen should be a priority for the Council.

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SECTION II: MEETING BOARD OF REGENTS' GOALS

As part of this report, snapshots of campus efforts to meet the BOR strategic goals established in July 2006 are provided. As Tribal Colleges are independent of the BOR, they are not represented in this section.

Goal 1: Increase student educational attainment

MSU Great Falls' satellite in Bozeman piloted an advising model for students admitted to MSU Bozeman on academic probation. The model offered students both advising services and developmental coursework in mathematics, composition and study skills. The Fall 06 cohort of these students was twice as large as the Fall 05 cohort and performed significantly better previous cohorts of students admitted on academic probation.

MSU Great Falls

The scholarship equivalent of \$90,129.70 was provided by offering dual-credit courses to 224 high school students from 12 Montana school districts at 1/3 the usual tuition.

The college ensured that students can complete the following programs entirely online from MSU – Great Falls: the MUS Core; the Associate of Science; the Associate of Arts; AAS degrees in Health Information Technology and Medical Transcription; and Certificates of Applied Science in Health Information Coding Specialist, Medical Billing Specialist, and Medical Transcription. 90% of our AAS degrees in CIT Microcomputer Support, Networking Support and Web Development are available online.

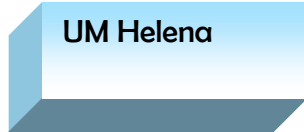
MSU Billings COT utilized the Community College Student Survey of Engagement (CCSSE) and Community College Faculty Survey of Engagement (CCFSE) to obtain data to increase student retention and other desired student outcomes. Surveys were administered for faculty and students between March 19 and April 25, 2007.



MSU Billings COT disseminated a “Report to the Community” newspaper designed to highlight and showcase the College’s role in providing affordable postsecondary education and programs.

A National Science Foundation ATE grant supported the development of a web-based version of several key Process Plant Technology classes with the goal to offer the program via distance delivery using online and hybrid delivery options.

UM-Helena took steps to boost high school student participation in the Dual Enrollment and On Campus Experience programs within the Helena region. The objective of this effort has been to provide opportunities for junior and senior students to experience college academics, reduce the overall cost for degree attainment, and hopefully influence those who were not anticipating attending college to become more comfortable with the thought of enrolling.



Over the past decade, the University of Montana – Helena College of Technology has used individualized program areas in the tracking process of graduating students to determine employment placement. Data show that UM-Helena can boast a job placement rate of 96% for those students completing an AAS degree in a technical field. Although graduation rates have fluctuated for the college due to state and regional need, UM-Helena has experienced an average increase of 15% percent in degrees awarded over the past five years.

UM-Helena has seen steady increases each year in the amount of need-based financial aid awarded. Recent figures (2006-07) show an 8% increase in grant distribution and a 14% increase in loan subsidies.

MT Tech COT conducted a survey and developed an On-line Readiness course to introduce students to on-line courses and to improve student support, retention, and completion.



Tuition was waived by one-third for CNA secondary students through Jump Start with private grants subsidizing the remaining cost to the students. The college also offered Introduction to Health Careers, Medical Ethics and Basic Anatomy on-line to post-secondary and secondary students.

UM Missoula COT implemented Saturday class schedules to increase enrollment of traditional and non-traditional students.



The Missoula COT also established collaboration with high schools for a Tech Prep and Career Pathways initiative. In collaboration with UM Foundation and private industry, the college was able to create new student scholarships.

Flathead Valley Community College awarded all students with need, determined by applying through the FAFSA process, a minimum of \$500 in scholarship support for the 2007-08 academic years. FVCC added three new need-based scholarships in 2006-07.



FVCC faculty and staff represent the college on the six Career Cluster Field Advisory Teams created to implement the Career Cluster model in local School District 5 high school curriculum.

The College has opened three new buildings including an Occupational Trades Building with facilities for Electrical Technology, Plumbing Technology, Heavy Equipment Operator, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning, Welding and Fabrication, and Carpentry; an Arts and Technology Building with a teaching theatre and Culinary Arts kitchen, expanded art rooms and a new graphic arts laboratory; and an Early Childhood Center and teaching laboratory for the Early Childhood Education program.

Miles Community College Center for Academic Success provides both remedial and tutorial services but also serves as a student advising center for entering students. Entry level students have access to GED instruction and testing, COMPASS placement assessment, advising and instruction for students in need of basic skills remediation prior to college level classes, specifically in math, reading, and English. Students have both daytime and evening access for services.



Student Services Division, in tandem with the Registered Nursing Division, has collaborated with Montana Campus Compact to provide \$46,000 in student educational award opportunities for service learning. In addition, grant funding from Wal-Mart Corporation has provided GED test scholarship monies so qualifying students may take the General Equivalency examination (GED) free of charge.

Current Dean of Academic Affairs, Shelly Weight, served internship at Custer County District High School during the 2006-2007 academic year building partnerships with the 9-12 grade principals, counselors, and teachers. In addition, Miles Community College serves as the Miles City community after-school program (Raising Our Community Kids Safely) administrative and fiscal agent. The ROCKS program works with the K-6 system utilizing college student workers who provide homework help and tutoring assistance for ROCKS program enrollees.

Dawson Community College



continues to offer quality university parallel and occupational/technical programs to the population of Northeastern Montana. Students who transfer perform consistently well at receiving institutions and occupational/technical students find employment, although not always in our immediate area. Over 60% of students attending DCC receive some form of assistance from scholarships, waivers, federal and state assistance programs. The college continues to have the lowest tuition and fees in the Montana system. It also has dual enrollment agreements to offer classes in the Glendive, Circle and Savage public school systems.

UM Western



provided scholarships to 20 students pursuing two-year degree programs. The university expanded its advising and academic support services by establishing an Advising Office and the Learning Assistance Center for Excellence (LACE). The LACE is supported through a grant from the Student Assistance Foundation.

MSU Northern



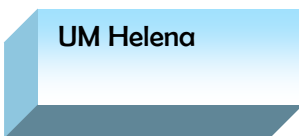
has an ongoing relationship with national and state-wide industries stressing targeted recruiting into 2-year programs, scholarships for new freshmen in those programs, and internships/coops available to 2-year students.

A new marketing plan targeting secondary programs in our marketing area and around the state was implemented by the college.

Further, the college began a program to invite secondary and k-12 school administrators to visit Northern to begin the dialog of recruitment through dual enrollment, advanced placement, and cooperative arrangements that increase student awareness of our programs and opportunities for careers.

Goal 2: Help expand and improve the economy

UM-Helena



has been concentrating on the development of its “just-in-time, just- in-case” training through the re-creation of its Community Education Program. Just over a year ago, the college reinstated the non-credit educational center to meet growing regional needs for training and retraining of business and industry employees.

Specific to UM-Helena’s technical nature, the college expanded its metals technology programs in Machining and Welding to accommodate AAS degrees in each area.

MT Tech Butte COT



incorporated Community-Based Learning projects in the following programs:

- Carpentry – Kiwanis Sunshine Camp
- Historic Preservation – Mary McLain House
- Networking – Belmont Senior Citizen Center, Butte

Drafting – Winninghoff Park, Phillipsburg,
Civil Engineering – Site Survey for Lowney Dental

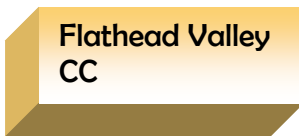
The college also developed the Pre-Apprenticeship Line Program and the Web Development and Administration Program.

MSU Great Falls partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to implement the BEAR program in Great Falls, conducting BEAR interviews and compiling data for 60 Great Falls businesses during the reporting period.



The college convened workforce development providers/community leaders in the Gallatin Valley and coordinated monthly listening sessions during the reporting period with Gallatin-area workforce sectors with the intent to identify demand for one- and two-year programming in the Gallatin Valley.

Flathead Valley Community College is the sponsor of and active participant in the 10-year-old Flathead Business and Education Council which was created specifically to give local educators and business people a quarterly forum in which to discuss bridging the gap between education and workforce needs.



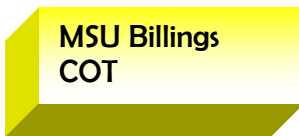
The college is the fiscal agent and staff serves on the steering committee of *Flathead on the Move* which seeks to address the social response to the rapid economic transition in our economy from natural resource based to human and amenity based economy.

UM Missoula COT collaborated with the local job service to assist recent laid-off workers in enrolling in programs at the College of Technology.



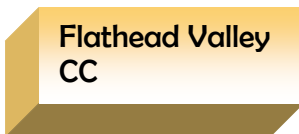
The college currently works with other colleges of technology and community colleges to offer Energy Technology and Surgical Technology programs.

MSU Billings COT developed a Carpentry Construction Technology partnership with Billings Home Builder's Association. This partnership was finalized through an MOU approved and signed at the end of March 2007.



At industry request, the college began a feasibility study for offering AAS degrees in Respiratory Therapy and Anesthesiology Technician. It also conducted DACUM (Designing a Curriculum) study for Welding and Metal Fabrication to identify duties and tasks in order to expand the current CAS into an AAS degree.

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The **Miles Community College** Dean of Academic Affairs, and Director of Center for Academic Success, are members of the Miles City Job Service extended Community Management Team (CMT), which provides information on workforce and educational needs in the community. The Dean of Academic Affairs is also the community/regional workforce and customized training liaison, serving on a variety of advisory councils for employers in skilled trades, healthcare, and large and small business.



Dawson Community College is partnered with MSU-B College of Technology in a “Wired Grant” and a “Community Based Jobs Training Grant” to expand the awareness of, and provide knowledgeable workers for the fledgling bio-fuels industry in Eastern Montana. Moreover, DCC is partnered with the University of Montana College of Technology to offer a program in “Energy Technology”. In addition, we have initiated a new program in “Engineering Technology to meet the needs of the carbon fuels industry.



UM Western established the Workforce Development Center (WDC) in downtown Dillon. The WDC was co-located with Beaverhead Chamber of Commerce. The center provided computer and soft skills training for underemployed citizens.



Three new certificate programs were developed to support workforce needs. The programs focus on early childhood education, computer-aided tool technology and network administration.

MSU Northern, as a partner in the WIRED grant and its Bio-Energy Innovation and Testing Center, continues to support the emerging bio-energy industry through product performance testing.



Also, having received a state appropriation to establish an ASTM fuel certification lab for bio-diesel and other bio products produced in Montana, Northern continues to support the development of this important industry.

Goal 3: Improve institutional efficiency and effectiveness

MSU Great Falls invested in professional development on *abilities-based student learning outcomes assessment*, starting with academic programs but building to include total campus operations.



The college also explored the use of data from the Kansas Study, Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange, IPEDS, and IQAT for benchmarking various operations and functions.

MT Tech COT improved the registration process for on-line students by providing them with the tools to register and pay their fees on-line or by phone with assistance from staff.



To improve instructional efficiency, the college integrated Smart Board technology in the delivery of courses and installed a sound system in a major computer lab for student presentations.

UM Missoula COT is starting instructor workshops concerning the proper design of courses to ensure that learning outcomes are successfully met in an on-line delivery setting



The college is collaborating with local high schools to develop programs that link secondary and postsecondary under the auspices of the Career Pathways initiative.

MSU Billings COT developed and received funding through the US-DOL Community Based Job Training Partnership grant program to establish a Montana Energy Workforce Training Center in collaboration with Dawson Community College.



A collaborative model was developed with MSU Billings College of Professional Studies and Lifelong Learning for creating and scheduling non-credit workforce development programs. Fall initiatives included: Flooring Installation and Welding; and, spring includes "Build a Better Billings" construction training series.

UM Helena took advantage of several position vacancies to reassess its organizational structure in relationship to the size and future direction of its educational mission. The outcome has created broader support for academic programs and increased efficiency in student services. This shift coincided with new facility changes at the college, providing even greater support for the reorganization that, in turn, has allowed for increased process efficiencies.



Each year of the last biennium, UM-Helena implemented zero-based budgeting as a means to restructure the budgetary process, develop completion timelines, connect funding to strategic initiatives, and reallocate fiscal resources. The scope of involvement was broadened to create institutional buy-in and as a means to educate the institution on college funding and expenditure and allocation processes.

Flathead Valley Community College is implementing an enterprise-centric software system that will replace a collection of older disparate administrative software platforms



that have been implemented over the past two decades. This transition allows students to register, pay, and access campus news, announcements, their personal information, and course work from a single, browser-based access point. Faculty members can advise students and develop and disseminate course materials and announcements via a similar access point. This has enabled FVCC to bring all facets of the institution into a single database environment, and provide staff with the capability to input, glean, and report information from a single source, with the same interface, tools, and training needs.

Partnerships were established with area employers to provide cost-effective workforce training. As an example, in 2007 the Pharmacy Technology program was taught by pharmacists at Kalispell Regional Hospital along with internships at pharmacies and long-term care facilities.

Miles Community College established a Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) regional office on campus. The SAF employee coordinates with MCC Student Services Financial Aid Director to help students in financial assistance applications, provide student loan exit counseling, providing student training in financial literacy, and provide traveling workshops into service area communities to provide post-secondary financial aid information.



Based on campus employee input through open meetings in fall 2006, a President's "Big Rocks" list was compiled at the beginning of the 2006/2007 year. The list of campus-wide needs and requests has been placed in a five year strategic plan for budgeting; equipment, facilities maintenance, program development, and new hires.

Dawson Community College in conjunction with Miles CC and Flathead Valley CC, and with the support of the Commissioner's office developed a new model for state funding for community colleges (Senate Bill 12) based upon the actual costs of education divided between fixed and variable costs.



University of Montana Western improved business services for all students, providing better communication, billing and payment options via electronic services. The university has used strategic funding to enhance program review, academic assessment and accreditation, student advising efforts. All of these efforts are aimed at increasing institutional efficiency and effectiveness.



MSU Northern's technical programs have been greatly enhanced by partnering with industry to obtain specialized training to support factory technician update training, which also allows these new technologies to be integrated into course curriculum.



A significant effort has gone into devising a long range course scheduling scheme to simplify the registration and degree completion process for our students.

Tribal Colleges—Campus Highlights

Fort Belknap College has added associate degrees in Forestry and Environmental Science as well as certificates in Sports Coaching, Blackfeet Tribal Law, Gerontology, and Hazmat.

Fort Belknap College

The College has had major changes in its facilities over the past two summers. These changes include: construction of a 7,500 sq.ft. building to house 17 offices for Business and Administration; purchase of the Aubrey Ranch—698 acres adjacent to current college property; and, infrastructure work on water, sewer, paved roads, parking and lighting. This was accomplished through a \$1,375,350 Title III construction grant.

Salish Kootenai College's Elementary Education bachelor degree program has been accredited by the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

Salish Kootenai

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) honored the college as the "Minority Higher Education Institution of the Year" in recognition of its Highway Construction Training Program's track record of graduates, job placements, and wages earned

Salish Kootenai College neared completion of several important buildings: 14 units of student housing for 42 single students, a Health and Physical Education Complex that will seat 1,600 people, and a Performing Arts Center that will seat 200 people.

Chief Dull Knife College establishment of expanded daycare services and early childhood learning has been made possible by the completion of the Early Childhood Learning Center. The center is a 3,000 square foot structure of straw-bale construction built in cooperation with the College of Architecture at Pennsylvania State University's American Indian Housing Initiative. The building was funded by grants from HUD and USDA Rural Development initiatives.

Chief Dull Knife College

Continued tweaking of Chief Dull Knife College's developmental level Mathematics Seminar program has led to higher student retention, better comprehension of principles, and improved rates of measurable progress among the students in the program. The program is blended computer-assisted instruction designed to bring up to a college-algebra-ready entrance level in one credit segments that are completed sequentially in a self-paced mode.

Utilization of Department of Defense equipment grant funding made Polycom Interactive Television dial-up networking available among Chief Dull Knife College and the four area high schools from which the college draws most of its traditional freshman students. The

system enables two-way presented classes between the college and any other three nodes on the network. During Spring Semester 2007 an Introduction to Chemistry course was presented to one of the networked high schools and a beginning Cheyenne Language class was presented at another. The Cheyenne Language class is being presented again this Fall Semester with live students on each end of the link learning via the Total Physical Response (TPR) method of instruction.

Stone Child College secured an additional \$6,256,183.00 for the next five year through competitive grants. These grants will provide much needed financial assistance for our students, equip the college with the latest technology, help teach and preserve our Native Cree language, train future college staff and faculty, assist in the needs of our library, provide our community with elementary and secondary teachers, and much, much more. Also, Stone Child College increased the Endowment Funds by \$196,511.61 through proper budgeting, fund raising activities, and donations. The construction of the Jon Cubby Morsette Vocational Center was completed and the grand opening was held in September, 2006. These efforts increased the camp square footage from 33,579 to 58,780.

The college hired a Retention Officer and implemented a Fine Arts Degree, a Pre-Engineering program, a Customer Relations Certificate Program and updated the Construction Technology program. It also expanded the SCC's course offerings by offering eight (8) week sessions, as well as the regular semester courses.

In preparation for conducting a Self-Study of the college, a Self-Study Steering Committee was established and three training workshops on the process were implemented.

