MUS Structure Study
November Update

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This is NOT a new conversation

“Nothing has been more impressive than the defects in the system of divided institutions and their government in Montana. That higher educational resources are divided among four institutions, widely separated from each other, is well known. That this division produces the weaknesses of rivalry and waste of duplication, without real compensating advantages of separation is recognized by many thoughtful men”

1912 quote from Dr. C. Duniway, then president of Montana State University (Missoula).
Our structure has characteristics that require careful management

• Dual role of presidents

• Distance of affiliate / embedded campuses from BOR and OCHE

• A “divided” system
What I’ve done so far

- **Reviewed documents** – Including accreditation reports, board minutes, and internal memoranda.

- **Reviewed the research literature** – Including similar reviews in other systems and scholarship on multi-campus universities and systems.

- **Interviews** – With 82 individuals / groups, including current and former administrators, board members, faculty, staff and students.

- **Contextual Data** – Building a base of data on the system and state through existing reports and new analysis.

In preparation for a full report in January
Takeaway #1
Restructuring accomplished many of its goals

• OCHE has assumed more central roles in legislative advocacy & in leveraging system data.

• Cooperation on statewide goals and reforms (CCN, Suicide Prevention, etc.)

• Both services and expertise shared within each affiliation
What is left to do?

• Improve and deepen academic collaborations
• Share more “across the divide”
• Clear roles. Consistent communication.
What are our options?

Option A – Deepen affiliations

Option B – A “flat” university system

Option C – Work within our current structure
How can we work better within our current structure?

“In this system, I don’t know what my lane is”

- Better define how different levels of the system are meant to interface in key areas through an MOU.
- Review these definitions regularly.
How can we work better within our current structure?

“Collaboration gets done by putting people in a room and having them talk about common goals”

- Provide more structured time, apart from BOR meetings, for system leaders to meet and collaborate on system issues.
Questions