



Minutes Montana Board of Regents March 13, 2025

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Meeting convened at 9:06 am

Regents Present: Todd Buchanan, Chair, Loren Bough, Joyce Dombrowski, Jeff Southworth, Heather Hoyer, and Raina Mortenson. Dean Folkvord was excused. Ex officio members present included Commissioner of Higher Education Clayton Christian, Governor Greg Gianforte, represented by Dylan Klapmeier, and Superintendent Susie Hedalen, represented by Deputy Chief of Staff, Tyler Capece.

Comments by Chair Buchanan | 00:00:07

Chair Buchanan thanked everyone for their attendance with a special welcome to the board's new Regent, Heather Hoyer, and spoke to the value of having a regent from the K-12 sector. He then gave a brief agenda overview.

Welcome by Dean Bauman | 00:05:14

Dr. Sandra Bauman, Dean of Helena College, thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She gave an overview of the new Cosmetology Applied Science program and The Salon at Helena College. She said the first cohort of students will graduate from the program in May. She shared some of the non-credit training programs available at HC and highlighted HC's involvement and dedication to community engagement. She gave a detailed overview of the new Occupational Therapy Assistant program that is in development. Dean Bauman provided numerous statistics on the growth at HC since 2021, the success of dual enrollment, and the return on investment for students at HC.

Approval of Minutes | 00:21:03

- January 8, 2025, Meeting Minutes

With no corrections offered, the minutes were approved as distributed.

Commissioner's Report | 00:22:08

Commissioner Christian welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting and welcomed Regent Heather Hoyer to the board, noting her extensive experience in the K-12 arena. He thanked Dean Bauman and HC for their vital role in the Helena community. He gave a legislative session update and said that the MUS has been well received in the subcommittees. He thanked the OCHE staff for their hard work and dedication during this legislative session.



- Federal Update | 00:30:01

Galen Hollenbaugh, Deputy Commissioner for Government Relations and Communications, reported on developments with the Department of Education, federal funding, and the impact on MUS programs. He provided a FAFSA update and said that it is operating as it is intended to this year.

Joe Thiel, Interim Deputy Commissioner of Academic, Research and Student Affairs, updated the Board on federal developments and MUS research. He gave a detailed overview of the short-term impacts of the federal funding pause, the executive order on grants and contracts, and the long-term impacts of the NIH capping of indirect cost returns on federal grants. He provided a detailed description of what indirect costs (IDC) are and their importance to research. Discussion followed.

Ali Bovingdon, Chief Legal Counsel, said that OCHE and legal teams across the MUS campuses are carefully tracking activity at the federal level and the impact on higher education. She gave an overview of the Department of Education's "Dear Colleague" letter and said that the MUS is in compliance with the expectations in the letter.

Commissioner Christian said there are opportunities to improve interactions with Department of Education and other entities in Washington DC to make sure what's needed for student success isn't lost.

- State Legislative Update | 00:50:58

Deputy Commissioner Hollenbaugh, gave an update on House Bill 2 Section E. He provided an update on House Bills 5,10, and13 and said they are all moving through the legislative process. He discussed how OCHE tracks and review bills that may impact the MUS. Discussion followed.

- Campus Reports | 00:11:54

- Introductions & Acknowledgements | 00:12:15

Kerry Davant, Executive Director of Human Resources, introduced Karen Wood, Associate Director of Employee Wellbeing.

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel introduced Amber Spring, Associate Director of Student Wellbeing.

Commissioner Christian introduced Interim President of Salish Kootenai College, Dr. Stacey Sherwin.

MSU Billings Chancellor Hicswa introduced Director of Communications and Marketing, Dan Carter.



Montana University System

Remarks by Governor Gianforte or Designee | 01:18:26

Dylan Klapmeier, Governor Gianforte's Education & Workforce Policy Advisor, welcomed Regent Hoyer to the board. He gave an update on the bills the Governor's office is tracking. He talked about some of the federal changes and the importance of getting the facts out to constituents. He then provided a detailed funding update.

Remarks by Superintendent Hedalen | 01:24:31

Superintendent Hedalen provided an update on data sharing and collaboration to improve student outcomes. She gave an overview of funds being requested. She said she is in direct communication with Assistant Secretary nominee and former North Dakota Superintendent of Public instruction, Kristen Baesler, advocating for programs crucial to K-12 schools and so far, she has seen no indication of any federal funding cuts to those programs. She added that there has been no major impact with the K-12 funds that have been cut and they will offer support to fill in any gaps.

- Search Update | 01:34:42

Commissioner Christian provided an update on the Chancellor search at Montana Tech and the Presidential search at MSU.

Budget, Administration and Audit Committee | 01:37:23

CONSENT | 01:39:05

Facility Items:

- a. Request for Authorization to Lease Space in the Molecular BioSciences Building to USGS; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2009-R0325 | Attachment #1

Dan Stevenson, MUS Director of Facilities Planning, presented this request.

ACTION | 01:39:05

- a. Request for Authorization to Perform Major Maintenance Repairs for the Paisley Court Student Apartments; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2007-R0325 | Attachment #1

Director Stevenson presented this request. Paisley Court is a Family/Graduate Housing complex consisting of 90 Apartments constructed in 1985. This project will repair/replace the siding, windows, and associated exterior systems to improve comfort, healthy environment, and preservation of the building assets.

- b. Request for Authorization to Renovate Classrooms; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2006-R0325 | Attachment #1

Director Stevenson presented this request. The scope is to renovate five large classrooms in five separate buildings. These renovations will update technology and reconfiguration for instructional



effectiveness. Summer 2025 Renovations include classrooms in Roberts, Herrick, Cobleigh, Leon Johnson, and Linfield Halls.

- c. Request for Authorization to Remodel Jesse Hall, Phase 1; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1011-R0325 | Attachment #1

Director Stevenson presented this request. The scope of the request addresses common area improvements and life safety/accessibility for Jesse Hall.

Future phases of Jesse Hall will involve the remodel of individual student bedrooms – new furniture, room finishes, lighting and technology. Common bathroom spaces will also be remodeled. The extent of work planned each summer break will depend on what a contractor can accomplish over the 3-month break. The result will be modernization and upgrading the student housing facilities offered at Jesse to be equal to the remodeled rooms in Knowles Hall and Pantzer Hall.

CONSENT | 01:44:27

Facility Items:

- a. Request for Authorization to Lease Space in the Molecular BioSciences Building to USGS; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2009-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of consent item a., ITEM 217-2009-R0325 was made by Regent Bough; motion passed (6-0).

ACTION | 01:45:13

- a. Request for Authorization to Perform Major Maintenance Repairs for the Paisley Court Student Apartments; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2007-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item a., ITEM 217-2007-R0325, was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (6-0).

- b. Request for Authorization to Renovate Classrooms; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2006-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item b., ITEM 217-2006-R0325, was made by Regent Southworth; motion passed (6-0).

- c. Request for Authorization to Remodel Jesse Hall, Phase 1; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1011-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item c., ITEM 217-1011-R0325, was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (6-0).

Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee and Action | 01:47:20

CONSENT | 01:47:51

**Emeriti Faculty:**

- a. Mallory; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1006-R0325
- b. Queen; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1007-R0325
- c. Ekness; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1008-R0325
- d. Wakimoto; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1009-R0325
- e. Swallow; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1010-R0325
- f. Teintze; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2001-R0325
- g. Gregory; MSU Billings ITEM 217-2701-R0325
- h. Havens; MSU Billings ITEM 217-2702-R0325
- i. McMullen; MSU Billings ITEM 217-2703-R0325

Tenure Items:

- j. UM Missoula ITEM 217-1000-R0325

ACTION | 01:49:14

- a. Honorary Doctorate, UM Missoula ITEM 217-1012-R0325 | Attachment #1

Seth Bodnar, UM President, presented the request to award an honorary doctorate to Steven Rinella.

- b. Honorary Doctorate, UM Missoula ITEM 217-1013-R0325 | Attachment #1

Seth Bodnar, UM President, presented the request to award an honorary doctorate to Eric Sprunk.

- c. Honorary Doctorate, MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2002-R0325 | Attachment #1

Bob Mokwa, MSU Provost, presented the request to award an honorary doctorate to Morton H. Meyerson.

- d. Honorary Doctorate, MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2003-R0325 | Attachment #1

Bob Mokwa, MSU Provost, presented the request to award an honorary doctorate to Wendy Red Star.

- e. Request to Plans

Bob Mokwa, MSU Provost, presented the request to plan proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Optical and Photonics Engineering and Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.

Adrea Lawrence, UM Provost, presented the request to plan proposal for the Center for Hunting and Conservation, the Institute for Positive Education, the Montana Clinical Translational Research Center, and the Montana Public Health Training Center. Discussion followed.

INFORMATION | 02:15:34**Academic Review Items:**

- a. Academic Approval Memo



Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel said these are items that have reached the next stage of development in the final approval process.

CONSENT | 02:17:56

Emeriti Faculty:

- a. Mallory; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1006-R0325
- b. Queen; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1007-R0325
- c. Ekness; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1008-R0325
- d. Wakimoto; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1009-R0325
- e. Swallow; UM Missoula ITEM 217-1010-R0325
- f. Teintze; MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2001-R0325
- g. Gregory; MSU Billings ITEM 217-2701-R0325
- h. Havens; MSU Billings ITEM 217-2702-R0325
- i. McMullen; MSU Billings ITEM 217-2703-R0325

Tenure Items:

- j. UM Missoula ITEM 217-1000-R0325

A motion for approval of consent items a.- j., was made by Regent Southworth; motion passed (6-0).

ACTION | 002:18:59

- a. Honorary Doctorate, UM Missoula ITEM 217-1012-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item a., ITEM 217-1012-R0325, was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (6-0).

- b. Honorary Doctorate, UM Missoula ITEM 217-1013-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item b., ITEM 217-1013-R0325, was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (6-0).

- c. Honorary Doctorate, MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2002-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item c., ITEM 217-2002-R0325, was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (6-0).

- d. Honorary Doctorate, MSU Bozeman ITEM 217-2003-R0325 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item d., ITEM 217-2003-R0325, was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (6-0).

- e. Request to Plans

A motion for approval of action item e., Request to Plan Proposals, was made by Regent Southworth; motion passed (6-0).



Public Comment | 02:22:56

Waded Cruzado, MSU President, welcomed Regent Hoyer and thanked the board for their Honorary Doctorate and Emeriti approvals.

Appeal

Chair Buchanan explained the process related to appeals. He called for a motion to hear the appeals. No motion was made to hear the appeals, and therefore the Commissioner's decisions were upheld.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:27 am

Executive Session

The Board convened an executive session at 11:40 am. Chair Buchanan determined the discussion related to matters of individual privacy and the demands of individual privacy outweigh the merits of public disclosure.

Executive Session adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Approved by the Board of Regents on

May 21, 2025

Date

Clayton T. Christian
Commissioner of Higher Education
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

May 21, 2025

Date

Todd Buchanan
Chair, Board of Regents

APPENDIX A

From: [Jabour, Anya](#)
To: [Casanovas, Jasmine](#)
Subject: TIME SENSITIVE: Comment for today's livestreamed BOR meeting
Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025 10:34:50 AM

****External Sender****

Hello,

I am Regents Professor of History at the University of Montana Missoula and I have been watching the livestreamed meeting, which only came to my attention this morning. I have a time-sensitive question/comment for the group related to pending/passed legislation and how it might affect our students. I called OCHE and was told there was a comment deadline yesterday at 5 p.m. Here are my comments in writing:

I appreciate the BOR's commitment to student well-being and the decision to address the complicated matter of compliance with pending legislation at the state level, recent Executive Orders aimed at higher education, and the Dear Colleague letter in today's meeting. I have concerns that this information is not readily available to faculty, staff, and students. In the past few weeks, multiple students, faculty, and staff on my campus have approached me with concerns. It is apparent that there is a great deal of confusion and consternation on campus about what compliance will entail. Some information circulating among students is almost certainly inaccurate, such as the belief that syllabi cannot use the phrase "climate change." Some is perhaps accurate, but misinformed as to the rationale, such as changes in bathroom signage. And still more seems to be coming either from individual faculty members or particular chairs, such as directives banning faculty from using their students' preferred pronouns.

I am concerned that the lack of real information and the circulation of false information is undermining faculty morale and student welfare.

Best,
Anya

Dr. [Anya Jabour](#), Ph.D. (she, her, hers)
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