CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | Nov. 19-20, 2026

GREAT FALLS COLLEGE MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY | GREAT FALLS COLLEGE

Great Falls College experienced significant enrollment growth this fall, enrolling 1,614 students, an increase of 8.3% from fall 2025, while full-time equivalent enrollment grew 7.3% from 884 to 949 students. Since fall 2022, headcount enrollment has increased 35.4%, reflecting sustained demand for the college's academic and workforce training programs. These numbers only tell part of the story as the Career and Technical Education department served 354 learners in the previous academic year.

Great Falls College faculty continue to distinguish themselves through scholarship, research and service. Dr. Brad Bechard, director of the Physical Therapist Assistant program, recently published a peer-reviewed research study nearly 15 years after its original completion, demonstrating perseverance and a commitment to advancing rehabilitation science. Dr. Deanna Thompson, Nursing program director, published research examining human trafficking among Indigenous women in North America, helping bring attention to an important public health issue and the role healthcare professionals can play in identifying and supporting victims. Dr. Elfie Neber, interim executive director of instruction, received the Friend of Recovery Award from Dynamic Recovery in recognition of her leadership in developing counselors who now serve individuals, families and communities across Montana after Neber started Great Falls College's Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling program.

The Native and Indigenous Cultural Center continues to foster cultural awareness, community engagement and meaningful learning opportunities for students and employees. Recent activities included a sweetgrass harvest and braiding event that introduced participants to important cultural traditions and teachings. The center also coordinated an Orange Shirt Day observance to honor those who were and are still affected by boarding schools while creating space for reflection, education and dialogue. Through these efforts and other programming throughout the year, the center helps strengthen understanding of Indigenous cultures and perspectives.

About 2,000 eighth- and 10th-grade students from 27 schools across north-central Montana participated in Worlds of Work, an immersive career exploration event hosted by Great Falls College and the University of Providence. Students engaged in hands-on activities in healthcare, technology, skilled trades, public safety and numerous other fields while interacting directly with regional employers. The event highlighted the college's commitment to workforce development and helping young people discover career pathways available throughout Montana.

Great Falls College launched the second Montana cohort of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program, continuing its role as a statewide leader in entrepreneurial education. The nationally recognized program provides small business owners with practical business training, access to expert advising and opportunities to build valuable professional networks. The newest cohort of 41 business owners from every corner of Montana (from Poplar and Peerless to Ennis and Broadus to Eureka and Libby) includes business leaders who are working to strengthen their companies, create jobs and contribute to the state's economic growth. The Mountain West Hub, located at Great Falls College, is recruiting for an Arizona cohort to start in January and a second Wyoming cohort for summer 2027.

Great Falls College began holding listening sessions with students, alumni, faculty, staff and the community as it is starting the process of developing a strategic plan when the current plan, Forging Futures, is finished on June 30, 2027.