

**MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**  
**SEMI-ANNUAL CAMPUS DIVERSITY REPORT**  
**Western Montana College of The University of Montana**  
**December 29, 2000**

## **I. Executive Summary**

As of Fall 1999, Western Montana College of The University of Montana (Western) had 2.5 percent of its student population who declared themselves to be Native Americans and 2.8 percent students of other minority groups for a total minority population of 5.3 percent. This represents more than a doubling (2.21 times) of the minority student population since 1996. Another doubling would bring Western in line with the desired outcome of the minority population attending Western being proportional to the minority population of the state as a whole. Western is further away from this desired proportion in the composition of its faculty, administration and staff.

Western has had the most success in increasing numbers of Indian students and Indian graduates by delivering its Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) to Indian students physically located at the Salish Kootenai College (SKC). Four Indian students graduated from this program in the fall of 2000 and are now certified elementary teachers. Retention of students enrolled in the program has been one hundred percent with a total of 22 Indian students currently enrolled in the program. Western devotes campus resources to the administration of this program, recruitment of students, provision of fee waivers, provision of student services, and assistance with grant writing to provide other student and program benefits. The campus also devotes campus resources to focused recruiting of other minority groups.

Western has identified a number of courses that will continue to have multicultural components to them. Some of these courses are general education courses while others are advanced courses used in the teacher education program.

Western is geographically disadvantaged with respect to proximity to Indian population centers within the state. This makes recruitment to the Dillon campus especially challenging. There are other Montana University System campuses closer to each of the Indian reservations located in Montana. The overall size of the campus, with its limited budget, makes it difficult to maintain a specialized support system for Indian students, hindering student retention. Similar problems exist with the recruitment and retention of Indian faculty and staff. Western's only current Indian faculty are adjunct faculty who teach on the SKC campus. Future plans are to expand the numbers of students in the SKC program and increase the amount of interaction between students, faculty and staff at the SKC site with those located in Dillon. Increased efforts will also be made to inform all Indian students at reservation high schools and at the tribal colleges of educational opportunities available to them at Western.

## **II. Statement of Objectives**

Western promotes student diversity through its Marketing and Recruitment Plan. Western seeks to enroll and to graduate American Indians and other minorities who are Montana residents in proportion to their representation in the state population at both the undergraduate and graduate levels as dictated by Board of Regent Policy 1902. Another campus objective in line with BOR Policy 1902 is to use discretionary institutional dollars to recruit, retain and graduate American Indian and other minority students.

Western promotes employee diversity through its Affirmative Action Plan of December 31, 1993. The campus disseminates its equal opportunity stance by including the following statement in all position announcements: "*WMC-UM is an equal opportunity employer building strength through diversity; all candidates who are legally authorized to work in the U.S. are encouraged to apply.*"

Western also includes an affirmative action statement in its college catalog and other official campus publications. This statement guarantees equal opportunity to all applicants for campus positions without regard to race, color, national origin or ancestry. Western has designated a campus Director of AA/EEO who is responsible for overseeing the implementation of these equal opportunity policies. Among her other activities, this Director meets with all campus search committees for new positions early in the search process. She also reviews and approves all position announcements and recruitment sources. A continuing objective is to increase the percentage of minority faculty and staff through continual analysis of ways to improve the number of minority applicants.

A provision of BOR policy 1902 is to increase the employment of American Indians and other underrepresented minorities in administrative, faculty and staff positions to achieve representation equal to that of the relevant labor force. This is therefore an additional campus objective.

Western seeks to enhance the overall curriculum by infusion of content which enhances multicultural awareness and understanding as a further campus objective to bring the campus in compliance with BOR Policy 1902.

## **III. Enrollment Management**

The Marketing and Recruitment Plan of 2000-01 is the central campus document that describes Western's efforts to achieve its objective of recruiting minority students. This document includes several provisions to increase and retain minority students on the Western campus. There has been a steady increase in the numbers of Indian students enrolled at Western since the Fall of 1996. In Fall of 1999, there were a total of 27 Indian students compared with 15 in the Fall of 1996, an increase of 80 percent. Current recruitment and retention efforts are likely to result in continued gains in the numbers of Indian students and awarded Indian Fee waivers over the next few years.

Western is currently updating its course transfer agreements with all of the tribal colleges. When completed sometime in 2001, this should make it easier for Indian students to transfer to Western from a tribal college.

Western has a Multi-Cultural Coordinator whose primary role is to arrange for multi-cultural experiences for our education students. This person frequently visits tribal colleges as well as high schools with large minority populations. The recruitment office coordinates with this person to disseminate information on Western and its programs to minority students.

The 2000-01 marketing plan calls for at least one recruiting visit to every Montana high school with a minority population of greater than 60 percent. This includes visits to every high school located on a Montana Indian reservation.

Every year *The College Board* publishes a roster of Hispanic high school seniors recognized for outstanding academic achievement. Western sends personal letters to each of these students in Montana that describe Western's programs and invites the students to apply for admission.

To help accomplish the objective concerning minority student enrollment, Western has established the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) offered in collaboration with Salish Kootenai Tribal College on site at Pablo. Students in this program complete their first two years at SKC and then enroll in the NCATE approved WMC-UM elementary education program. 22 Indian students were enrolled as of fall semester, 2000. The first four Indian teachers graduated at the end of fall semester, 2000, and have met the requirements for Montana certification.

**Table 1** shows that as of Fall of 1999, Western had 2.5% of its student population who declared themselves to be Native Americans and 2.8 % of other minority groups for a total minority population of 5.3%. This indicates that Western has been successful in recent years at increasing its minority student population but that it is still at less than 50% of the target goal.

**Note:** The increase in numbers of students reported with "unknown" racial/ethnic status occurs because the campus uses "quick-admit" screens in BANNER to register students taking off-campus/night/weekend classes. Due to a limited staff in the Registrar's office, WMC does not populate all data fields in all BANNER student screens to enter all demographic data on all part-time or early admission students. In some cases that information has been missing from the forms that the students fill out.

#### IV. Completions

All students admitted to ITEP remain in the program or have graduated. This 100 percent retention rate reflects Western's willingness to offer the entire program on site at SKC, the use of both Indian and non-Indian faculty, and close involvement of Western faculty and staff with the ITEP students. Data on graduation rates are provided in **Table 2**. Completion rates are below the target goals but progress is being made, especially with the ITEP program.

The number of Indian students currently enrolled in ITEP as a percentage of all students enrolled in WMC-UM elementary education is approximately in proportion to their representation in the state population. Overall, Indian students represent approximately three percent of the student population at Western, less than one-third of the number necessary for proportionality.

**Correction:** In 1994-95 there was an error on the student enrollment IPEDS report. Our Registrar at the time mistakenly counted all post-baccalaureate students as graduate students. There is a notation in our files that this was recognized and corrected. However, the error was still there in the IPEDS report that OCHE sent to us.

#### V. Faculty (and other employees)

Trend numbers for various employee categories are provided in **Tables 3 through 8**. In keeping with BOR Policy 1902, Native American faculty members (as well as others) are employed to teach in the ITEP program. Their numbers exceed 10% of the total faculty teaching in the WMC-UM elementary education program. The Co-Director of ITEP, Dr. Vernon Finley, is an enrolled member of the Salish Tribe. Outside of this program there have not been significant gains in the employment of minorities by Western. Total numbers of employees remain below the proportionality goal in all categories of employees.

#### VI. Funding

Western funds the costs of recruiting and advising students in ITEP. Funds are also provided for recruiting visits to Tribal Colleges and to state high schools with large minority populations. Mailing costs for recruitment materials and other campus communications with potential minority students are also borne by the college. The Indian Teacher Corps grant to SKC has funded scholarships, student stipends, and some administrative costs beginning fall, 2000. Western contributed administrative time to the writing of this grant.

Western provides Indian fee waivers to all eligible Indian students (**Table 9**) and has substantially increased the numbers of Indian Fee Waivers awarded in recent years. In 1999-2000, these amounted to 18.0 FTE with a

cost of \$37,489. This compares with 11.06 FTE fee waivers with a cost of \$19,965 in 1995-96, an increase of 88 percent.

#### VII. Coursework

In order to enhance the overall curriculum by infusion of content which enhances multicultural awareness and understanding in compliance with BOR Policy 1902, Western has assured that multicultural components are infused into the following courses:

- ANTH 105 – Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- ED 250 – Child Growth & Development
- ED 278 – Exploring Culture in Schools and Community
- ED 301 – Foundations of Education
- ED 331 - Educational Psychology, Management & Assessment
- ED 341 - Exceptional Learner
- ED 370 – Literacy and Language
- ED 371 – Elementary School Social Studies Program
- ED 372 – Elementary School Language Arts Program
- ED 381 – Literacy and Assessment
- ENG 160 – Introduction to Literature
- FA 101 – Introduction to Creative & Performing Arts
- HIST 351 – Methods & Materials in Social Science
- MATH 460 – History of Mathematics
- ED 472, 473, and 474 - Student Teaching

Total enrollment in each of these courses over the past five academic years is given in **Table 10**.

### VIII. Future Plans

The final paragraph of the Western campus mission statement is "*As part of the global community, the College encourages diversity, international awareness, environmental responsibility, and mastery of technology as a gateway to the world.*"

In pursuit of its mission, Western will continue to seek ways of building a support structure that will attract Indian students and faculty to the Dillon campus. Western is continuing to build and expand on the ITEP program. Efforts will continue to recruit more students into ITEP, these efforts will be enhanced due to successful grant-writing efforts by SKC assisted by Western.

Western will continue to work closely with the Montana Youth Challenge (MYC) program, which has a high proportion of Indian students. These efforts include the admittance of MYC students into college coursework after GED completion, while they are still MYC students. It is expected that this will eventually lead to some Indian MYC students eventually becoming full-time Western students.

Western is currently in the second year of a three-year grant program to assist in the development of Math and Science teachers in South Africa. This project brings South African teachers to Dillon where Western's students and faculty have had a number of opportunities for interactions with the South Africans.

Fontana, California has a high proportion of Hispanic students. Western students gain valuable multicultural experiences by being placed in this school district as student teachers. Other Western graduates have accepted employment in Fontana as well as in other school districts with high minority populations. Western plans to make increasing use of its alumni to assist in the recruitment of minority students. Having teachers in schools with large minority populations should greatly enhance those possibilities.

Along with other campuses of the Montana University System, Western is currently updating its course transfer agreements to include all of the tribal colleges. When this document is completed, it will be easier for students from the tribal colleges to understand how their coursework will transfer into various academic programs at Western. Along with increased recruiting efforts to the tribal colleges, this should increase the numbers of Indian students who transfer to Western from a tribal college.

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