

A watercolor illustration in shades of purple and blue. On the right, a tall, ornate clock tower with a pointed roof and a clock face stands prominently. To its left, a large, craggy mountain range is depicted. In the foreground, a path leads towards the clock tower, flanked by stylized trees and bushes. The overall style is artistic and soft.

CREATING OUR ACADEMIC FUTURE

Academic Plan

2004 - 2005

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MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

The mission of The University of Montana-Missoula is the pursuit of academic excellence as indicated by the quality of curriculum and instruction, student performance, and faculty achievement. The University pursues this mission, in part, through the integration of the liberal arts, professional training, and graduate study, as well as international and interdisciplinary programs. The University seeks to produce competent and humane professionals and informed, ethical, and engaged citizens of local and global communities. It provides basic and applied research, technology transfer, and service to the community, state, and beyond.

ACADEMIC VISION

In pursuit of its mission, the University seeks to foster academic excellence; to provide learning experiences designed to allow students to realize their full potential; to cultivate the civic responsibility vital to a democratic society; and to provide service to the greater community.

KEY TERMS

Academic Vision - The ideals governing academic planning and practice.

Academic Trajectories - A set of long-term academic directions.

Goal - A three- to five-year milestone, generally including a statement of who is responsible for action.

Key Performance Indicators - Measures assigned to assess progress toward a goal or action.

Action Plan - A list of steps required to accomplish a goal.

GENESIS OF THIS PLAN

This plan evolves from the work of the Academic Planning Council and planning clusters from January 2001 through August 2003. Composed of members of the Academic Planning Council as well as faculty representatives, the planning clusters were asked to design strategies to advance the academic mission of the University over the next five years, suggesting changes in programs as necessary. Through earlier phases of planning, a set of academic priority areas was identified and guided the structure of the planning clusters. The programmatic and operational priorities consisted of the following:

PROGRAMMATIC

- Human Values and Human Expression
- Environmental Focus
- Western and Rural Studies
- Educating for a Global Community
- Communication and Information
- Health Care and Life Sciences
- Aging and Generational Issues

OPERATIONAL

- Interdisciplinary and Cross-Campus Programs
- Educating within a Technologically Advanced World
- Community Engagement
- Priorities, Performance, and Resources

All planning was guided by the following Academic Trajectories:

- **Applied Research** based upon a strong foundation of excellence in liberal arts and sciences
- **Niche Programs** that capture the unique strengths of the University and achieve national prominence. Niche programs can be considered academic focal points of the University.
- **Graduate and Research Programs** with broad recognition that benefit the state and region
- **Interdisciplinary Programs** that meet the need for new knowledge and its dissemination
- **Learning Opportunities** adapted to the individual styles and life circumstances of students
- **Global Cultural Perspectives** infused throughout programs
- **Engagement** with the community in the form of teaching, research and service
- **Dynamic Intellectual Environment** that fosters innovation and humanity
- **Fiscal Accountability** that connects performance and priorities to resources

Following are the recommendations resulting from the work of planning clusters and academic officers, connected via one or more academic trajectories to the academic vision and mission of the University. Progress on actions is noted in italics. Further information regarding the planning process can be found in the Appendices.

PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES

I. HUMAN VALUES AND HUMAN EXPRESSION

Opportunities for the investigation and understanding of human values & human expression are strongly embodied in curricula of the Arts and Humanities throughout the University of Montana. Acquainting us with the roots and branches of our own culture and those of others, the arts and humanities represent the most powerful means available for the enrichment of human experience and contribute importantly to the perpetuation of humankind's heritage. Moreover, if education at UM calls for a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, as stated in Trajectory 1, it must therefore emphasize both human values and human expression. These twin priorities are in fact embodied in the arts and humanities curricula at UM, some of which are candidates for niche status as defined in Trajectory 2. In particular, the University has a widely recognized program in Creative Writing; a young but strong Media Arts program; and the only fine arts program between Minneapolis and Seattle that is fully accredited in all three disciplines - art, drama and music. The longstanding Ethics component of general education at UM testifies to the importance the University places on the thoughtful investigation of ethical questions, while historical study brings the same qualities of thought to bear on the documents, art works, and way of life of eras and cultures other than our own. Historical and ethical inquiry meet in the study of religion; and if only because of the salience of religious differences in the world today, the University must take seriously the study of world religions. Such study is not only consistent with, it is practically required by Trajectory 6. Without a solid grounding in Human Values and Expression, the University cannot in any case fulfill its mission of producing citizens at once competent, engaged, and ethically informed.

GOAL 1

Increased prominence of the creative writing program

ACTION PLAN

1. Pursue external funding for Visiting Writer programs (*50% of endowment raised*)
2. Pursue external funding for a Senior Writer/Endowed chair in Prose and a Senior Writer/Endowed chair in Poetry (*Expanded a poetry line to full-time*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Funding secured; positions established
2. Continuing number of highly qualified applicants
3. Recognition of the program and its graduates in the competitive world

GOAL 2

Recognition of Media Arts as a cutting-edge program with a film studies component

ACTION PLAN

1. Establish an interdisciplinary major in New Media Studies, with a Film Studies component (*Preliminary proposal in development*)
2. Establish Media Arts National Advisory Board (*Established in spring 2004*)
3. Assist Media Arts faculty in serving on regional and national boards of digital arts organizations, movie festivals, etc (*All faculty serve on boards*)
4. Create paper and on-line opportunities to showcase program
6. Introduce digital media component at Five Rivers Film Festival (*New tenure track position added*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Submission, approval, and initiation of major
2. Media Arts National Advisory Board established
3. Increased faculty membership on outside boards
4. Rising number of highly qualified applicants for Media Arts program
5. Increase of graduates obtaining employment in field

GOAL 3

Development of curriculum that furthers an understanding of world religions

ACTION PLAN

1. Draft and submit a proposal for a World Religions major (*Proposal in development*)
2. Offer cross-disciplinary courses for a Religious Studies minor (*New tenure track position added*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. World Religions major proposed, approved, established
2. Well-subscribed courses covering the histories, practices, and influences of the major world religions
3. Minor established

II. ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS

Integrating the methods of natural science with cultural interests and social and economic concerns, the environmental viewpoint represents a unifying force in a world of fragmentation and specialization. Inasmuch as public policy concerns itself to a good degree with environmental questions, the University cannot produce informed citizens, as its mission requires, without cultivating in its graduates an appreciation of such questions. As a recognized strength of the University, and a strength well suited to an institution situated in the Rocky Mountain West, environmental programs are natural candidates for niche status. Environmental courses at UM range from Resource Law to Medicinal Plants to the Environmental Studies curriculum itself; environmental research is conducted in units ranging from Chemistry to the Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station. With a decades-long tradition of interdisciplinary environmental study at UM, the Environmental Focus coincides with Trajectory 4; the proposed Ph.D. programs in Water Sciences and Environmental Sciences coincide with Trajectory 3 as well as supporting the University's vision of raising its Carnegie classification. Clearly, UM is and should be known as a premier site for environmental inquiry.

GOAL 1

Expansion of environmental and natural resource graduate programs that capitalize on the unique position of the university and expertise of the faculty.

ACTION PLAN

1. Create an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Water Resources Science (*Preliminary proposal under review*)
2. Create a Ph.D. program in Environmental Sciences
3. Evaluate the need for a Ph.D. program in Environmental Policy
4. Create a joint Ph.D./LLD and MS/LLD in Natural Resources
5. Create a Master's program in Environmental Education
6. Develop an undergraduate curriculum in restoration ecology (*Proposal in development and a new tenure track position is in recruitment*)
7. Strengthen programs in Earth Resources/Remote Sensing and Nature-Based Tourism
8. Establish joint Journalism/EVST master's program

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Proposals drafted, submitted, approved, put into practice

GOAL 2

Stronger visibility as an environmental university

ACTION PLAN

1. Showcase scholarship concerned with the environment and natural resources (*Showcased in Vision*)
2. Capitalize on and expand environmental scholarship across the disciplines (*Increases in research and scholarship are substantial*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Increase in students attending the University who identify its environmental focus as a reason
2. Publicity materials featuring the environmental theme

GOAL 3

Broader undergraduate programming in environmental areas

ACTION PLAN

1. Develop an international minor/concentration for the various natural resource programs in the College of Forestry and Conservation (*Structure developed*)
2. Develop a protected area management minor/concentration offered by the College of Forestry and Conservation
3. Develop the academic programs at the College of Technology that provide workforce training for the sustainable energy industry

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Proposals written and programs approved
2. Substantial enrollments

III. WESTERN AND RURAL STUDIES

As with the Environmental Focus, it is fitting and natural that UM, situated as it is in the Rocky Mountains, should be a recognized center for Western and Rural Studies. Rich in natural and human history, Montana is home to a diversity that reaches deep into the past. The state's cultural heritage is sure to attract growing interest, just as the rise of cultural pluralism, nationally and abroad, has brought about a surge of interest in the human heritage in all its forms. The proposal to train professionals to take their place in the emerging field of Cultural Resource Management accords well with Trajectories 1 and 3, emphasizing, respectively, applied research and graduate programs serving the state and region. Other proposals are similarly consistent with the various trajectories, and all serve the University's stated mission of producing competent and humane professionals and providing service to the state and beyond.

GOAL 1

Recognized for programs with western and rural emphases

ACTION PLAN

1. Create a Ph.D. in Western American Studies (*Proposal ready for review*)
2. Create a Ph.D. in Cultural Heritage Studies/Cultural Resource Management (*Approved by Board of Regents*)
3. Create a Certificate in Forensic Sciences (*Program approved*)
4. Create an MBA-Health Services Administration
6. Create an Associate degree in Hospitality Services

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Proposals drafted, submitted, approved, and put into practice

GOAL 2

Noted for examination and discussion of western and rural issues

ACTION PLAN

1. Obtain support, establish planning committee, set agenda of topics, and conduct a bi-annual symposium by 2006

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Administrative approval, successful funding, completion of first symposium

GOAL 3

Established location of significant natural history collections

ACTION PLAN

1. Identify funding, obtain administrative approval, establish a planning committee, devise and carry out a plan to consolidate UM's many natural history collections

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Acquisition of funding, approval to proceed, establishment of research facility

IV. EDUCATING FOR A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

The world is becoming smaller. The internationalization of the economy, the impossibility of isolationism, the advent of an Internet that knows no borders--in different ways, all measure the change. The times themselves remind us of the importance of a global perspective (Trajectory 6). In an effort to foster such a vision among its graduates, the University has launched a Caspian Basin initiative, maintains active international connections, and, of course, vigorously recruits international students. Diversity itself calls for a strong international presence on campus. The Mission Statement of the University speaks explicitly of the need to cultivate citizens of a global community, just as it charges UM to serve not only its immediate community but the larger world.

GOAL 1

Recognized institution for central and southeast Asia studies

ACTION PLAN

1. Draft and submit proposal for Minor (*Graduate and undergraduate options approved by the Board of Regents*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Minor approved and instituted

GOAL 2

Establishment of coordinated activities across Native American Studies, Central Asian Studies, Asian Studies, African American Studies, Latin American Studies, etc

ACTION PLAN:

1. Constitute joint planning group, set up joint speaker series, and establish joint web page (*Subgroups have been formed with a lunch speaker series*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Planning group formed, speaker series instituted, web page online

GOAL 3

Improved integration of academic programs and international initiatives

ACTION PLAN

1. Director of International Programs to meet with Academic Officers regularly
2. Faculty, Deans, and Provost visit universities abroad to strengthen international ties (*Faculty, Deans and Provost have visited institutions in Ireland, Germany, France, Spain, China, Japan, and Georgia in the past year*)
3. Support for Fulbright Exchanges is strengthened (*New exchanges have been established*)
4. Establish a minor in International Development Studies (*Program approved*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Regular meetings between Director of International Programs and Academic Officers
2. International agreements are coordinated with academic units
3. More faculty participate in international exchanges

GOAL 4

Expanded offerings in Asian languages

ACTION PLAN

1. Identify languages for expansion (*Korean and Italian have been added*)
2. Prepare timeline for development and sequence of offerings (*Persian has been stabilized for two-year sequence*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Additional Asian languages are taught
2. Expansion of sequences offered in identified languages
3. Enrollment in courses justifies continuation and further expansion

V. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

We are living in the midst of an information revolution whose scope and course cannot be predetermined and whose significance seems to dwarf our means of measurement. In an effort to keep pace with these changes, the new field of "informatics" concerns itself with the processing, storage, dissemination, and interpretation of information, along with the impact of information technology on society at large. In its focus on applied research, informatics corresponds with the first of the Academic Trajectories; its interdisciplinary nature (spanning fields from communication theory to library science) answers the fourth Trajectory. To advance this new field of study at UM three programs are proposed; two of them are interdisciplinary, all are intended to serve the community in a direct way, and are all consistent in spirit and letter with the University's mission.

GOAL 1

Known for graduate programs emphasizing the social applications of information

ACTION PLAN

1. Constitute a committee consisting of faculty from Law, Communication Studies, EVST, Forestry, and Wildlife Biology to devise an MA in Environmental Mediation (*Graduate Certificate in Natural Resources Conflict Management approved for fall 2005 start*)
2. Constitute a committee consisting of faculty from Forestry, Computer Science, Biological Sciences, and Journalism to devise an MA in Forest Informatics (*Discussions underway*)
3. Constitute a committee consisting of faculty from Education, Computer Science, Communication Studies, and Information Sciences to devise an MA in Instructional Technology/Distance Education

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Proposals drafted, submitted, approved, and put into practice

VI. HEALTH CARE AND LIFE SCIENCES

Located in a medical hub with two regional hospitals, the University has unique strengths in health fields and the life sciences. If biomedical research at UM were one program, it would certainly be a niche program, but such is the diversity of existing biomedical programs on campus that some were unknown even to members of the planning cluster. Consolidating information about these programs and making it readily available to undergraduates is good sense and good advising practice; acquainting undergraduates with the opportunities for biomedical research on campus would serve the University's stated goal of involving more undergraduates in research. As diverse as its biomedical offerings are, UM finds itself in the position of having more faculty expertise in the area (particularly perhaps in neuroscience) than programs to channel it. The untapped strength of biomedical expertise at UM argues for the creation of new programs at the graduate level--programs that will bring recognition to the University and will serve the region, in accordance with Trajectory 3. The inauguration of a Ph.D.

in Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics will also advance the University's goal of raising its Carnegie classification.

GOAL 1

Increased undergraduate awareness of university programs in the health sciences

ACTION PLAN

1. Establish web pages for both Health Science programs and on-campus biomedical research opportunities
2. Establish a web-based clearinghouse of health sciences information within the Davidson Honors College

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Web pages up and running

GOAL 2

Established masters of public health program

ACTION PLAN

1. Constitute a committee to draft a proposal for an MPH program (*Committee formed and proposal in review*)
2. Staffing for new program added

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Drafting, submission, approval of proposal and initiation of program

GOAL 3

Initiation of an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in biomolecular structure and dynamics

ACTION PLAN

1. Complete proposal, with participation of Division of Biological Sciences, Department of Chemistry, Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Dean of College of Arts and Sciences (*Program approved by Board of Regents*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Institutional and BOR approval and enrollment of students

GOAL 4

Initiation of a Ph.D. in neuroscience jointly with Montana State University

ACTION PLAN

1. Complete proposal, with participation of the Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences at UM and the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience at MSU (*Program approved by Board of Regents*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Institutional and BOR approval and enrollment of students

GOAL 5

Consideration of the need for a Ph.D. in Health and Human Performance Sciences

ACTION PLAN

1. Establish a committee to conduct a feasibility study examining the costs and benefits of offering a Ph.D. in Health and Human Performance Sciences

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Feasibility study submitted to Provost and affected departments and schools

GOAL 6

Expanded two year offerings in Health Care

ACTION PLAN

1. Develop certificate and two year RN programs (*Programs approved by the Board of Regents and the Board of Nursing*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Proposals prepared and approved
2. Programs implemented

VII. AGING AND GENERATIONAL ISSUES

By the year 2050 the elderly will constitute nearly 23 percent of the American population, as compared to 12.6 percent in 1991. The fastest growing segment of the United States is the aged, a salient trend that has been referred to as "the graying of America." This demographic change presents many opportunities to UM, including the opportunity to offset enrollment lost due to smaller Montana high school populations (indeed, the elderly are expected to enter higher education at a rate exceeding that of traditional 17 or 18 year olds); the same trend challenges UM to provide training for students in health care and social service disciplines and enhance gerontological research and its funding. The University, after all, is located in an area attractive to senior citizens, largely because of its educational opportunities as well as superior health care. Generational issues concern youth as well as the elderly. The initiatives proposed here address both the young and the old, and fit a number of Academic Trajectories, most notably Trajectories 5 (learning opportunities adapted to the life circumstances of the student) and 7 (engagement with the community). The first initiative in particular, which enables students to work in group homes, juvenile detention centers, etc., advances the University's stated goal of promoting service learning.

GOAL 1

Strengthened human and family development program

ACTION PLAN

1. Secure release-time or compensation for HFD Director
2. Identify an academic home for the program
3. Solidify program connections on campus and maintain the high student enrollment in the minor

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Academic home located and program solidified

GOAL 2

Recognized as a provider of educational opportunities for an aging population

ACTION PLAN

1. Constitute a steering committee to conduct a needs assessment and review course offerings for the elderly at universities with successful programs
2. Devise and conduct a marketing campaign to promote suitable courses, perhaps through the Davidson Honors College, and particularly during the under-utilized summer session¹

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. A well-conceived curriculum attractive to senior citizens
2. Substantial enrollment

GOAL 3

Expanded graduate studies in gerontology

ACTION PLAN

1. Inventory UM courses with gerontological content, review Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) criteria for certificate programs, perform a needs analysis both on and off campus, and, if such a program is sustainable, prepare a proposal for a graduate certificate in gerontology and submit it to the Board of Regents

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Thorough inventory; effective publicity for gerontological courses; compliance with AGHE criteria; drafting, submission, and approval of proposal; enrollment of students

¹The University aspires to raise Summer Session enrollments to 5000 by 2008.

GOAL 4

Creation of an interdisciplinary master program in Intercultural Family and Youth Development

ACTION PLAN

1. Prepare proposal for submission (*Program approved by Board of Regents and began fall 2004*)
2. Constitute a committee with representation from Psychology, Counseling Education, Social Work, Sociology, etc., to oversee program

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Proposal drafted, submitted, approved, and put into practice

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

I. INTERDISCIPLINARY AND CROSS-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

Not all academic projects fit within units. Since their advent at UM in the 1970s, interdisciplinary programs have established themselves in the life of the university, and their importance to UM is underscored in the fourth Academic Trajectory.

Interdisciplinarity at UM takes many forms, from African-American Studies to Environmental Studies, from joint degree programs to centers and institutes. Indeed, interdisciplinary programs have figured prominently in this plan itself--the minor in Religious Studies and a major in New Media Studies; the minor in Central and Southeastern Asian Studies; the Ph.D. in Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics; the Ph.D. in Rural Studies; the minor in Human and Family Development; the three programs proposed under the heading of Communication and Information. So prominent, in fact, is interdisciplinary study in these pages that it may appear to overshadow the disciplines themselves. Academic excellence presupposes a strong disciplinary base.

Precisely because they do not belong to a department, some interdisciplinary programs are organizationally homeless, orphans of a university designed on the unit model. The proposal below for a Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies is intended to correct this organizational deficiency.

Some academic concerns transcend not only departments but even colleges and schools, encompassing virtually the entire University. Such a concern is writing. High on any list of campus-wide interests is the enhancement of writing instruction and student writing itself. The pursuit of academic excellence--the first responsibility of a university, and the first cited in the Mission Statement--simply cannot take place if students do not write well. Language is the very medium of thought and perhaps the primary instrument of human expression; the English language in particular is today the very currency of world communication, used, for instance, in air-traffic control towers in Asia and political

assemblies in Africa. Educating for a Global Community (programmatic priority 4) means educating in the use of English. There is no denying the glaring fact that over the years writing proficiency at UM has fallen to substandard levels. To underscore the importance of writing in liberal education, the University recently instituted an Upper Division Writing Proficiency Assessment (UDWPA). Students must pass the UDWPA before enrolling in upper-division courses; to provide the necessary support to those who fail the UDWPA, among other services, the University established a Writing Center in the Fall of 2002.

GOAL 1

Greater coordination of and support for interdisciplinary studies

ACTION PLAN

1. Identify leadership for interdisciplinary study programs (*Currently leadership is distributed with teams organized for particular program*)
2. Develop a unique model for UM

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Position established and Dean hired
2. Greater coordination of interdisciplinary activities and better information disseminated about them

GOAL 2

Reduced impediments regarding participation in interdisciplinary programs

ACTION PLAN

1. Collaboration in interdisciplinary programs recognized and rewarded in the assignment of salary increases, research space, teaching loads, etc

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Increased participation in interdisciplinary programs

GOAL 3

UM graduates are recognizably competent writers

ACTION PLAN

1. Expand the University's investment in the Writing Center
2. Increase number of W-courses and see that all subscribe to a common standard of writing competence
3. Evaluate additional opportunities for strengthening student writing proficiency

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. More W courses and improved pass rate on UDWPA

II. STRENGTHENING GRADUATE EDUCATION

The University aspires to increase graduate student enrollment to 2500 and to attain the Carnegie classification of Doctoral Extensive, both by 2006. Already proposed in this document are half a dozen new Ph.D. programs in fields ranging from Neuroscience to Cultural Heritage Studies. Unmentioned but exemplary is the Ph.D. in History recently approved by the Board of Regents, the History department being a center of excellence on campus.

In addition to the inauguration of Ph.D. programs, the University should consider adding Master's programs to meet student needs, possibly including a Physician's Assistant program and programs in Communication Disorders, information technology and management, clinical sciences (in conjunction with the International Heart Institute of Montana and the Neurosciences Institute), and so on.

Strong graduate programs attract strong students who in turn enhance the programs. The strengthening of graduate education is mandated by Trajectory 3.

GOAL 1

Financially well supported Graduate School program

ACTION PLAN

1. Increase the number of graduate assistants and stipend levels in regular increments to meet market demands by 2008

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Graduate assistants and stipends increased

GOAL 2

Award of 50 or more doctoral graduates per year

ACTION PLAN

1. Reduce doctoral tuition costs and expand recruitment of doctoral students

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Fifty doctoral graduates annually for a three-year period

GOAL 3

Increased array of doctoral programs

ACTION PLAN

1. Expeditious consideration of Ph.D. proposals in this plan (*New programs approved*)
2. Introduction of Ph.D. programs

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. New doctoral programs approved and functioning

GOAL 4

Create significant roles for directors of graduate studies (DGSs).

ACTION PLAN

1. Establish a DGS group, monthly forums for DGSs, and a web page with information about these events

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Increased recognition of the role of DGSs in maintaining the quality of graduate education

III. EDUCATING IN A TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED WORLD

With the advent of the digital revolution, communication on campus, as elsewhere, has changed fundamentally. The least that can be said is that the digital revolution makes possible new learning opportunities (Academic Trajectory 5). The task now before us is to mine the educational benefits of a technology that seems to be evolving faster than our institution moves, to connect the people of the UM community via network to accomplish the tasks that drive the institution, and to do all of this without falling into the belief that technology itself is the cure of educational ills. The Internet certainly changes the nature of research, yet many students seem to use the Internet as a substitute for research. Inasmuch as involving undergraduates in research is a stated goal of the University, both the use and the misuse of the Internet must be carefully considered. And just as interdisciplinary study presupposes disciplines, so it should be said that the virtual university (in whatever shape) presupposes the actual university.

In the spirit of educating in a technologically advanced world, the University envisions online programs, including degree programs, and greater opportunities for technical education itself, as detailed below.

GOAL 1

Optimized use of digital tools for teaching, research, creative activities and service

ACTION PLAN

1. Survey faculty and staff to identify technology needs and gaps
2. Identify pedagogical possibilities opened up by the digital revolution
3. Determine the infrastructure needed to support these pedagogical innovations
4. Determine the technical support services needed

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Faculty and staff survey conducted
2. Evaluation of pedagogical possibilities
3. Infrastructure upgrades as needed
4. Sufficient technical support

GOAL 2

Increased learning opportunities via on-line programs

ACTION PLAN

1. Offer online programs that will satisfy prerequisites for the MBA; certificate programs in network engineering and management, database management, Webmaster, and information management; appropriate bachelor's and master's programs; and collaborative bachelor's degrees with the Butte, Dillon, and Helena campuses (*Surgical Technology program put on-line*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Programs functioning

GOAL 3

Recognized for economically relevant programs in technical education

ACTION PLAN

1. Assist the Butte campus to bring undergraduate Engineering to the Missoula campus
2. Broaden the training and certificate programs offered by the College of Technology
3. Create a collaborative program for nursing education in Missoula

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Expansion of nursing and engineering education, as well as training and certificate programs, in Missoula (*New certificate and RN programs approved*)

IV. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Mission Statement of the University mandates service to the community; the seventh of the Academic Trajectories calls for civic engagement. It is fitting, therefore, that the University maintain a strong civic connection with the immediate as well as the broader community. Among the possible forms such engagement could take (and the open-ended nature of community engagement is one of its attractions) are helping to evaluate the impact of legalized electronic gambling, state budget reductions, or out-migration of youth on tribes, localities and regions; work- and service-based learning; and online tutoring for state K-12 students.

GOAL 1

Prominent engagement with the external community

ACTION PLAN

1. Survey faculty, staff and employees to ascertain current level of participation in the community
2. Consult the community itself (including the rural areas), identify needs that UM might help meet (*New Education Advisory Board met in fall 2004*)
3. Offer workshops and training programs off-campus for new and current businesses and their employees, and for rural communities, as needed (*Summer Business Institute planned for summer 2005; workshop for Non-Profit Management Training in development; workshops in tobacco prevention; Montana Tax Institute; wilderness and fire workshops offered in collaboration with external agencies*)
4. Publish quarterly information on service learning and internships undertaken by UM students
5. Develop formal partnerships with schools

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Survey conducted
2. Community needs identified
3. Measurable increase in community participation by faculty, staff, and students
4. Information on service learning and internships published

GOAL 2

Acknowledged as a university where critical social issues are examined and discussed

ACTION PLAN

1. Constitute an external advisory committee to support and guide the *Montana Summit (Established in 2003)*
2. Identify an internal working group each year to design the annual summer think tank (*First summit held in 2003 and Summit 2005 in planning*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Summer think tank launched
2. *Montana Summit* publicized both locally and nationally

V. EXPANDING DIVERSITY

The University's Academic Vision commits it to the pursuit of diversity. Diversity itself, moreover, must be understood in diverse ways to include national, geographical, ethnic, religious, and racial differences among others, as well as differences in viewpoint. The Caspian Basin initiative and the major in World Religions, both cited above, are two examples of the academic pursuit of diversity. The University may wish to establish symposia and film series devoted to other cultures, and should consider revising its web

page in the interest of attracting a broader range of students. Diversity calls for the recruitment and retention of both international and minority American students, with special attention to Native Americans, and for dialogue as envisaged in Trajectory 8, rather than uniformity of opinion.

GOAL 1

Diverse faculty, administration, staff, and student body

ACTION PLAN

1. Consideration of diversity in hires (*NSF Advance grant supported new positions for women in sciences; record hiring of minority faculty in fall 2004*)
2. More effective recruitment, enrollment and retention of minority and international students; in particular, improved retention of Native Americans (*New 2+2 education program with Blackfeet Community College*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Enrichment of the University as a result of the incorporation of different groups, viewpoints, and voices
2. Higher graduation rate of Native American students

GOAL 2

Acclaimed as a place that embraces diverse viewpoints and backgrounds within academic programs

ACTION PLAN

1. Hold forums and symposia, both within and across academic units, to present different perspectives (*Programs offered for Native Americans in tobacco prevention, diabetes, obesity, bioterrorism and wildland fire*)
2. Establish an integrated approach to address physical, emotional and intellectual health in partnership with Native American communities

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Enhanced appreciation of alternative methods, traditions, and interpretations
2. Attendance at forums and symposia
3. Generation of new proposals

VI. PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES

Reviewing the performance of academic programs and units is necessary for the continual revision of activities. Institutional priorities and academic performance should guide the allocation of resources. Mandated by the last Academic Trajectory, the linkage of performance and priorities with resource allocation is a critical aspect of effective functioning.

GOAL 1

Planning and resource allocation are informed by program review and outcomes assessment

ACTION PLAN

1. Conduct program reviews, including assessment of learning outcomes (*Program reviews that include assessment continue on a cycle*)
2. Strengthen academic assessment efforts (*All departments improved assessment work; assessment training for chairs; curricular mapping of general education goals and coursework; strengthened writing opportunities based upon assessment*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Accurate appraisal of academic performance
2. Allocation of resources coupled with academic performance

GOAL 2

Review of centers and institutes to ensure their relevance and effectiveness

ACTION PLAN

1. Timeline for review of Centers is established and reviews proceed accordingly (*All centers are reviewed according to a determined cycle*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Centers are reviewed by Faculty Senate, Provost, and President
2. Centers with weak performance are closed

GOAL 3

Well coordinated academic planning that relates to institutional priorities

ACTION PLAN

1. Deans draft goals and priorities for their units and programs based on institutional goals and academic trajectories (*All deans prepare goals for the year*)
2. On this basis, units or programs prepare a statement listing prioritized goals for the next three to five years; methods for achieving or making progress toward the goals; explanation of resources used, required, or desired; and identification of outcomes to be assessed
3. Following discussion with those concerned, Deans forward revised unit or program statements to the Provost for approval
4. Units or programs review their performance in meeting goals
5. Deans, in consultation with Provost, evaluate progress of units or programs

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Resources are coupled with progress toward meeting stated goals
2. Units and programs review their plans and performance on a continuing basis
3. New proposals and assessment plans are generated

GOAL 4

Increased retention of undergraduate students

ACTION GOALS

1. Increase freshman to sophomore retention rates (*Retention rates increased by 2%*)
2. Establish first year experience (*New program implemented in AY04-05*)
3. Attend to needs of transfer students (*Surveys used to modify policies and practices*)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Increased retention rate
2. Enhanced academic opportunities

Appendix A Planning Process

During Fall of 2000, an Academic Planning Council was formed with broad representation by Deans and faculty from all colleges and schools. The Council met in January 2001 and discussed the future needs of a changing society and the obligation of the academy. Through a series of discussions the Council established a set of long-term academic directions called trajectories, each one representing a vision of present and future goals for academic units of The University of Montana. Next the Council identified action steps that included: 1) strategies or mechanisms; 2) programmatic changes; and 3) structural changes necessary to attain each trajectory. Small groups refined these recommendations.

As a result of the initial planning process, an overall academic vision was set forth. Specific elements of that vision are embodied in the Academic Trajectories that were formulated by the Academic Planning Council. The Academic Trajectories serve as guides for subsequent stages of the planning process.

During AY 2002-2003, the academic planning process was extended to include more participants in planning in an effort to bring more of the creativity of the University into planning our academic future. Initial planning clusters involved members of the council with additional representatives from every department and school. Approximately 25% of the tenurable faculty at The University of Montana-Missoula were participants in planning clusters.

The clusters were asked to evaluate the need to change programs and structures, and to devise strategies to serve the future academic needs of the University. Each cluster held forums and gathered data and comment from the university community as well as external constituents.

Through this process, a set of academic priorities evolved that extend UM's Strategic Plan in a manner responsive to the changing environment of higher education. The process itself is designed to be flexible and dynamic so that changes can be made as needed. Indeed, one purpose of the process is to strengthen the notion of continuous planning and readiness so that the academic community is poised to respond to emerging needs of the students, the community, and society.

In Fall 2002 the planning clusters were refocused and directed to refine each academic priority. Clusters were asked to justify each priority and describe the reason each priority is a priority; conduct an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; and identify specific goals, with action plans and with performance measures and a timeline for each action.

Cluster reports were used to refine the draft academic plan; and that draft in turn was refined into the present document.

Appendix B

Planning Clusters and Cluster Chairs, AY 2001-02

Environmental Focus--Perry Brown (Forestry)
Communication and Information--Keith Graham (Journalism)
Commerce and Society--Nader Shooshtari (Management/Marketing)
Health Sciences and Human Services--Richard Bridges (Pharmaceutical Sciences)
International and Cultural Diversity--Jeffrey Gritzner (Geography)
Human Values and Human Expression--Shirley Howell (Fine Arts)
Aging and Generational Issues--Thomas Storch (Arts and Sciences)
Western and Rural Studies--Gregory Campbell (Anthropology)
Connecting Performance and Priorities to Resources--William McBroom (Sociology)

Academic Priority Clusters and Cluster Chairs, AY 2002-03

Programmatic Clusters

Environmental Focus--Perry Brown (Forestry)
Western and Rural Studies--Gregory Campbell (Anthropology)
Educating for a Global Community--Jeffrey Gritzner (Geography)
Aging and Generational Issues--Thomas Storch (Arts and Sciences)
Communication and Information--Keith Graham (Journalism)
Health Care and Life Sciences--Richard Bridges (Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Human Values and Human Expression--Shirley Howell (Fine Arts)

Operational Clusters

Interdisciplinary Programs--Donald Robson (Academic Affairs)
Priorities, Performance, and Resources--William McBroom (Sociology)
Community Engagement--Nader Shooshtari (Management/Marketing)
Educating within a Technologically Advanced World—Sharon Alexander (Continuing Education)

