The process of preparing for our 2010 NWCCU Accreditation visit began one year ago, and we have almost exactly one year until the visiting team arrives on campus. The Accreditation Steering Committee, under the effective leadership of Professor Jim Hirstein, has been working diligently to prepare for the visit. The self-study document is under development and work will soon turn to preparing the document and accompanying material in final form. In other words, we are right on schedule.

The accreditation visit is much more than a hurdle we must clear every ten years and much more than the preparation of a self-study document. It is an opportunity for us to examine closely how we deliver on our mission, to celebrate areas in which we excel, and to identify concerns upon which we must focus. For example, in the 2000 accreditation cycle, the campus recognized the need to improve its assessment protocol and consequently spent considerable energy on assessment. In the current cycle, the coordination of strategic planning is an active topic of discussion in the context of Standard 1 (Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning and Effectiveness).

A successful visit will require the active participation of the campus community. Most importantly, as the Steering Committee publishes the self-study document, I encourage you to study it, both to learn about our University and to be prepared for interactions with the visiting team. I am confident that the visiting team will recognize the excellence that is present at The University of Montana and that we are delivering on our stated mission.

Thank you, and have a productive summer.

-- Royce Engstrom, Provost --

Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC)

April 20, 2009 Update

The View from Main Hall

The Accreditation Steering Committee has been hard at work since last May preparing the University’s self-study report for a campus visit by a team from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities on April 12-14, 2010. We have worked closely with the Academic Strategic Planning Committee as they held “town hall meetings” to gather valuable input from the campus community on future directions. We have studied campus planning documents and data on whether our plans are being carried out. Program reviews for both our undergraduate and graduate programs are included. Responses to standards about students, faculty, staff, administration, governance, finances, facilities, resources, libraries, and technology are all a part of this vast effort. The subcommittees that are dealing with these reports are listed on the back of this newsletter. I extend my thanks to these dedicated colleagues who are making our study possible. Subcommittee chairs have placed progress reports on the Accreditation 2010 website. I encourage you to go to the Provost’s webpage then click on the Accreditation link. You will find the progress reports on the standards under the link Interim Reports. As Provost Engstrom has suggested, we want the campus community to be as familiar as possible with our study. The visiting team will ask to have a conversation with many of us, so it is important that we all be informed.

-- Jim Hirstein, ASC Chair --

Accreditation Steering Committee

Jim Hirstein, Chair
Professor, Mathematical Sciences

Bonnie Allen
Dean, Mansfield Library

Teresa Branch
Vice President, Student Affairs

Carol Brewer
Assoc. Dean, College of Arts & Sciences

Jim Burchfield
Dean, College of Forestry & Conservation

Bob Duringer
Vice President, Administration & Finance

Betsy Hawkins
Director, Human Resources

Lou Hayes
Professor, Political Science

Shelley Hiniker
Staff Senate Representative

Siri Smillie
Student Representative

Bill Muse
Assoc. VP, Planning, Budget, & Analysis

Eijiro Uchimoto
Professor, Physics & Astronomy

Arlene Walker-Andrews
Associate Provost

Accreditation News

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-- Jim Hirstein, ASC Chair --

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ACCREDITATION STANDARDS SUBCOMMITTEES

Each Subcommittee chair is a member of the ASC

Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Planning (Bill Muse, chair)
   Carol Brewer, Perry Brown, Teresa Branch, Shelley Hiniker, Susan Wallwork,
   Tony Tomsu

Standard 2: Educational Programs (Arlene Walker-Andrews, chair)
   Sue Samson, Ashby Kinch, Ione Crummy, Tim Manuel, Don Potts, Ebo Uchimoto,
   Barry Good (COT), Sharon Alexander (Cont Ed), Perry Brown (Assoc Provost Grad)

Standard 3: Students (Teresa Branch, chair)
   Jed Liston, Dave Micus, Melanie Hoell, Jim O’Day, Charles Couture, Jim McKusick,
   Liz Roosa-Miller, Mike Herring, Trevor Hunter (student), Cedric Jacobson (student)

Standard 4: Faculty (Jim Burchfield, chair)
   Jim Scott, Dan Doyle, Jim Lopach

Standard 5: Library & Information Resources (Bonnie Allen, chair)
   Betsy Hawkins, Ray Ford

Standard 6: Governance (Louis Hayes, chair)
   Betsy Hawkins, Liz Ametsbichler, Jim Staub, Lucy France

Standard 7: Finance (Bill Muse, chair)
   Tony Tomsu, Susan Wallwork, Mick Hanson, Dan Jenco

Standard 8: Physical Resources (Bob Duringer, chair)
   Rosi Keller, Hugh Jesse, Kevin Krebsbach, Brad Evanger, Jameel Chaudry

Standard 9: Institutional Integrity (Betsy Hawkins, chair)
   Roberta Evans, Lucy France, Dane Scott, Shelley Hiniker, Adrian Irish

ASC PLANNING CALENDAR

→ Academic Year 2008-2009 – Data collection, department drafts

→ Summer 2009 – Rough draft of accreditation review

→ December 2009 – Complete accreditation review

→ February 2010 – Completed review submitted to NWCCU

→ April 12-14, 2010 – Accreditation team visits UM campus