PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

FINAL REPORT TO STEERING COMMITTEE

During spring semester 2015, the Collaboration and Partnership Subcommittee collected information about internationalization efforts at UM. These questions were guided by the document, “Questions to Guide the Internationalization Review.”

6/30/2015
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The Collaboration and Partnerships subcommittee began its assessment by gathering relevant data and by collecting information from all constituent programs. The executive summary concisely summarizes the methods and results of the review, and a more thorough description of the methods and results follow under “Data Collection Methods and Results” (pg4). A key element of the review was to identify the strengths, challenges, and opportunities associated with collaboration and partnerships at UM. That analysis follows:

Current strengths of collaboration and partnerships include:

• A university mission which focuses on providing unique educational experiences through the integration of the liberal arts, graduate study, and professional training with international and interdisciplinary emphases.

• A motivated, entrepreneurial, research-oriented faculty with recognized research expertise and facilities, established scholarly reputations and research networks that can be leveraged in the development of complex global partnerships. UM faculty members have significant international experiences: traveling/presenting at international conferences, participating in a myriad of scholarly activities, and hosting international guests.

• UM provides a structure, the Office of International Programs, for students to experience varied study abroad opportunities.

• A designated Associate Provost for Global Century Education who has experience developing complex partnerships.
Challenges to the development of partnerships and collaborations include:

- Lack of an articulated strategy for internationalization linked to university strategic goals.

- Narrow Understanding/Expectations of Partnerships and Collaborations. Most stakeholders hold a relatively narrow understanding and definition of “global engagement” that rarely extends beyond student mobility. There is a lack of awareness of the potential outcomes of an intentional, coordinated strategy for global partnerships.

- Culture of the State, region and institution. Montana is still a relatively homogenous state with a similarly inward focused culture. UM’s institutional culture continues to focus on its public research mission and its strong commitment to the students, with very limited recognition of global engagement as a contribution to that endeavor.

- Lack of institutional recognition for international activities and the development of partnerships. Little is done to incentivize or recognize faculty or administrators for their accomplishments in this area. Faculty perceive conflicting messages related to international collaborations from the administration, being encouraged to engage in activities like developing and leading study abroad programs and hosting scholars, but these activities are not rewarded in merit pay, promotion, or counted toward tenure.

- Administrative obstacles. Faculty encounter obstacles to travel internationally for research purposes, as do their students and visitors they would like to host.

- Limited resources to support international partnerships. Financial constraints are an objective limitation to the expansion of international programming at UM. While some limited funding is available for faculty exchange programs, short-term faculty and staff exchange programs, study abroad programs, and other programs that aide in the development and expansion of our collaborative global efforts remain unfunded. Resources are scarce, and are hardly adequate to support international expansion for UM. The major source of funding for faculty exchanges is derived from general funds to the Provost’s Office. This model stresses that the effort to build partnerships has no adequate source of
funding, other than the general budget allowed to the Provost’s Office, which has been declining every year.

Opportunities to further UM’s international collaborative efforts include:

• Expand current study abroad programming to diversify geographic destination and increase participation from underrepresented populations.

• Intentionally integrate study abroad experiences into student learning, thus increasing the percentage of students who study abroad. These students can then return to UM and enrich the experiences of students who are unable to study in another country.

• A limited number of carefully identified international partnerships could help UM focus its resources on partnerships that offer the best opportunities to enhance the teaching, research, and service components of UM’s mission.

In summary, existing partnership activities at UM while relatively widespread do not represent any complex, coordinated strategies. International and institutional partnerships have to date been motivated by narrowly defined objectives and the outcomes or impact of these have been limited. These types of partnerships do not meet the University of Montana’s potential.

The University of Montana is positioned to build meaningful and transformational partnerships and initiatives that would have an impact across all aspects of the university and to build foundations for faculty to engage with partners around the globe in mutually beneficial teaching, research, and service activities.

The Collaboration and Partnership subcommittee recommends:

• Developing an institutional approach to partnerships and collaborations: The University’s approach to partnerships should be one that serves the collective strategies of the University, promotes synergies, shares best practices, and leverages more powerful outcomes.
Collaboration and Partnerships

• Fund, incentivize and recognize efforts and successes in developing partnerships, and global research and teaching initiatives. In addition to UM’s limited general funding of faculty exchanges, alternative tracks should be explored to bring private financial support to these international activities, developing philanthropic relationships to support international partnerships and activities, such as International Alumni Network, corporate research funding, joint international grants or EB5 Investment Treaty visas.

• Creating faculty incentives for leadership in internationalization, such as revising faculty promotion and tenure guidelines.

• Establish a long-term engagement strategy which details UM’s countries of strategic priority for future partnerships and university collaborations.

• Create and maintain a comprehensive inventory and database on the international activities of faculty and staff, including its alumni.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND GENERAL RESULTS

The Collaboration and Partnership Subcommittee collected existing information in the Collaboration and Partnerships portion of the internationalization review. Once this aspect of the review was completed, members of the Collaboration and Partnership Subcommittee collected new information from academic officers, faculty, and staff to supplement and complement the information that was currently available. The results from these groups are summarized in subsequent sections of this report. The Collaboration and Partnership Subcommittee was unable to review the complete an analysis of the employee and student survey; however, this report does contain a summary of responses from the two student focus groups that were completed during spring semester 2015.

This section of the internationalization review contains only the most pertinent information collected by the Collaboration and Partnership Subcommittee. This information is organized within the major categories from the “Questions to Guide the Internationalization Review” for Collaboration and Partnerships.
The Local, State, and Broader Environments for Internationalization

1. Question: Does the institution's location facilitate certain kinds of international interactions with a particular region or region? What local organizations or businesses have strong international ties? Are they focused on a particular part of the globe?

Data collection: Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce; City of Missoula – Mayor’s Office; City of Missoula – Development Services, Business Licensing; Sustainable Business Council of Montana; Missoula Economic Partnership; Missoula Cultural Council.

Summary of Findings: In order to best understand the international interactions that the University of Montana has with particular regions and the depth of its international ties to the community, one must understand the history of Missoula.

Missoula began as a trading post in the 1860s, situated along the Mullan Military Road as the first route across the Bitterroot Mountains to the plains of Eastern Washington. Missoula received county seat designation in 1866 and the construction of Fort Missoula in 1877 ensured Missoula’s status as a regional commercial center. This status was further united in 1883 with the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway. When the railway began expanding again in 1898, increased freight shipments came through the city, and with the arrival of the Milwaukee Road and regional office for the U.S. Forest Service.

Lumber mills profited from an increase in demand from railroad expansion and the nation at large. The Bonner Mill, partly owned by both the Northern Pacific Railroad and Copper King Marcus Daly grew to become the largest producer of lumber in the northwest. In 1908, Missoula helped land the city the regional office for the newly establish U.S. Forest Service, created to help manage the nation's timber supply. Over the next century, Missoula's various lumber industries would be consolidated under various entities such as the Anaconda Company and Champion International Paper through the 1980s until most were under control of Plum Creek Timber. In 2007 a downward spiral of Missoula's lumber industry began with the closure of a plywood plant in Bonner, followed by the closure of
Bonner's sawmill the next year, and finally the closing of the Smurfit-Stone Container pulp mill in early 2010.

Since opening in 1895, the University of Montana has had a major impact on the development of Missoula's economy. In addition to the economic advantage from accommodating the student body it gave the city an educated workforce that was not available in most of the state. The university today has a very close relationship with the city as Missoula's largest employer and with the millions of dollars the school brings into the city through visitor of school-sponsored sporting and cultural events. The university also houses Missoula's only business incubator, the Montana Technology Enterprise Center (MonTEC), and several start-up businesses.

Beyond timber and education, Missoula's economic mainstay has been one as a regional trade center. Key businesses sectors serving the area include health care, retail shopping, transportation, financial services, government/social services, education, events, arts and culture. Health care in particular is one of Missoula's fastest growing industries with Providence Health Services - St. Patrick Hospital and the Community Medical Center. Overall, 55% of employment in Missoula is made up of the service and retail sectors. Export industries are concentrated in forestry/logging/wood related industries, civil engineering, construction, beverage production, technical services, and truck transportation. Additionally, with nearly 4 million out-of-state visitors annually, tourism makes up a significant aspect of the Missoula economy.

Missoula has two sister cities, Neckargemünd, Germany, and Palmerston North, New Zealand. Informally, the Missoula Cultural Council also fosters international connections with: St. Malo, France; Beaune, France; Date City, Japan; Kumamoto, Japan; and South Armagh, Northern Ireland.

UM’s immediate environment from which it draws its students suggests strong connections with Japan, Brazil, China, and Saudi Arabia. UM’s location facilitates certain kinds of international connections, with copper and precious metals in drawing international mining interests, and the U.S. Forest Service provides international opportunities for forestry and conservation research.
The University of Montana is home to a number of internationally recognized centers that have strong international ties and connections, including Bolle’ Center (Forestry); Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center (Asia & the Pacific Rim); Center for the Rocky Mountain West (Regional Studies); Montana World Trade Center (Global Trade & Business); Wilderness Institute (Wilderness Research & Education); Forest and Conservation Experiment Station (Forestry); Biotechnology Center (Biological Research); Numerical Terra-dynamic Simulation Group (Global Climate Change); Rural Institute (Disability Education, Research & Service); Center for Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics (basic and biomedical sciences); Center for Environmental Health Sciences (Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Science); The National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis (Forestry).

Engagement with Institutions Abroad

1. Question: Does the institution have an overall strategy for international partnerships? If so, what does it address? How well is it working?

Data collection: Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs; Office for University Planning, Budgeting and Analysis

Summary of Findings: International Partnerships are part of UM’s vision, mission, and goals. The University of Montana- Missoula’s Strategic Goal “Education for the Global Century” includes general wording about partnerships, but there is no overall strategy. The strategic goal states:

“UM will offer an educational experience at all degree levels that provide graduates the foundation to make positive impacts on a world that is increasingly interconnected. The University’s Academic Strategic Plan, endorsed by the Faculty Senate in 2009, identified the need to create a gateway-to-discovery experience focused on the challenges of the global century for all incoming students at each level of postsecondary education. At the same time, the University recognizes the need to support and strengthen foundational academic programs. For all students, curricula will focus on producing workers and leaders who make a difference in the cultural and economic fabric of Montana and the world.”
Additionally, the Strategic Plan of the University of Montana, “UM 2020: Building a University for the Global Century” also details the strategic issue of a dynamic learning environment that engages partnerships locally and worldwide by gauging the value through review of distinctive programs, including outstanding athletic, cultural and entertainment opportunities, as well as engage local to worldwide partnerships and connect programs to UM’s unique location.

2. Question: Does the institution regularly evaluate its partnerships? If so, what criteria are used? What have recent evaluations revealed? What actions have been taken as a result?

Data collection: Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs;

Summary of Findings: Yes, partnership agreements are signed for 3 to 5 years and are reviewed in advance to their agreement expiration. Prior to 2014, UM did not regularly or systematically evaluate its partnerships and other agreements were informally evaluated.

In 2014 the International Committee began reviewing and modifying the partnership agreements with overseas universities and has concentrated its effort to clarify and streamline the Memorandum of Understanding and overseas partnership process. A thorough evaluation by the International Committee reveals whether the partnership falls short of the expectations set forth in the initial agreement and the proposal. If failure is identified, one of the following courses of action is taken:

(1) In the event that unforeseen problems or other circumstances have arisen which dictate that continuing the institutional relationship is not likely to be productive or sustainable, the relationship will not be renewed. (2) If there is a reasonable expectation that the situation can be improved, the program advocate(s) from the UM campus community will be invited to an International Committee meeting to discuss and support the case for continuation of the partnership. If renewed by the International Committee, these partnerships will be evaluated again in three years.
In concentrating its efforts in this regard, the goal is to create beneficial and rigorous partnerships for the University, thus eliminating partnerships that are ineffective and have no benefits to UM. Too many partnerships reduce the ability to focus on and support more productive relationships. Recent evaluation of UM’s partnerships have revealed a lack of activity with the institution (students, faculty, research), an imbalance with student exchanges, the inability of the institution to deal with a student support situation, and unsafe conditions in the host country. As a result of these revelations, agreements have either been terminated or recommended for renewal every three years (as opposed to a five year agreement).

3. Question: Does the institution have an inventory of partnerships throughout the institution? In what form? To whom is it available? How is it used?

Data collection: Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; International Programs; Office for University Planning, Budgeting and Analysis

Summary of Findings: An inventory of partnerships throughout the institution is housed in the Office of International Programs using Access but is a simple collection of data. This database is located in the shared files drive of the Office of International Programs (OIP). All OIP employees have access to the database and this information can be used to prepare and obtain reports on partnerships for the International Committee, and allows for the sharing of information with university faculty and staff when inquiring about the activities of a specific partnership. None of UM’s schools/colleges report having an overall strategy for partnerships, but all have international connections. No other institutional data exists or is compiled regarding university partnerships.

Additionally, the Office of International Programs website also contains a list of UM’s institutional partnerships. General information on criteria for partnerships can also be found on this the Office of International Programs website about how to pursue partnerships, but there is no UM specific strategy for doing so.
4. Question: Does the institution have criteria for deciding whether to pursue potential partnerships? How well do they work?

Data collection: International Programs

Summary of Findings: Yes, proposed partnerships must have at least one advocate who is a University of Montana full-time tenured or tenured-track faculty member or administrator at the level of dean, director, or higher. The advocate must have a working knowledge of the candidate partner institution and must agree to serve as the point of contact for questions regarding the proposed partnership.

Faculty members or administrators who are interested in exploring the possibility of an overseas institutional relationship are requested to consult with the Office of International Programs to discuss their ideas and draft a proposal that will be submitted to the International Committee. The proposals must address the following criteria:

1. The units on campus that would benefit from the establishment of a formal partnership. The advocate must demonstrate that the significant academic merit and institutional compatibility exist to establish a formal long-term relationship;
2. A clear endorsement of the proposal by affected units at the level of Dean or Director;
3. A list of expected outcomes from the partnership and timeline for activity involving students or faculty or both;
4. Evidence that the partnership will strengthen research, teaching, or other scholastic activity and will substantially enhance existing student and/or faculty opportunities at UM. Proposed partnership should provide significant new opportunities to UM faculty and students, particularly if UM already has agreements in place with other universities from the same country of the same region;
5. A discussion of the financial ramifications of establishing a formal agreement.

The International Committee also looks at the overall reputation (university ranking), language of instruction (classes offered in English?), student/faculty housing, safety, and international student support.
By instituting the above criteria, the International Committee is able to identify whether a partnership is worth pursuing. This is a huge improvement over earlier criteria, which was largely conducted on an individual basis by faculty and staff, and has provided for a coordinated strategy for this activity.

5. Question: To what extent does the institution engage in student, faculty, and staff exchange? Do the institution's study-abroad programs facilitate such exchanges?

Data collection: Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs;

Summary of Findings: UM offers study abroad, internships, fieldwork, research and service learning in a variety of capacities.

*Student Exchanges:* Though its own programs, and affiliate campuses, the Office of International Programs offers students two exchange program opportunities – Partner Exchange University Program and the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP). With the Partner Exchange Program, there are 60 universities in 26 countries that students can choose from and 162 universities in 55 countries through ISEP), but students are not limited to these programs and may elect other options.

*Faculty Exchanges:* Each year the Provost's Office announces a Call for Proposals for faculty long-term international activity program funding (formerly faculty exchange). Prospective applicants complete a comprehensive application and are asked to indicate if the requested exchange will be carried out in conjunction with a sabbatical. Proposals are evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Anticipated impact upon teaching and/or UM curricular development as measured by pedagogical enrichment, course proposals, syllabi changes, thesis or dissertation supervision, and related outputs.

2. Anticipated impact upon scholarship, research and/or creative activities at UM as measured by refereed publications, grant proposals, contracts, presentations, or opportunities for collaboration with and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students.
3. Anticipated service to the UM campus community as measure by local articles, speeches, presentations, performances, guest lectures, and related public outreach contributions as well as the potential for the exchange to enhance institutional partnerships for UM.

4. Anticipated impact on the host community (or communities) as measured by teaching, local, articles, speeches, presentations, performances, guest lectures, and related public outreach contributions as well as the potential for the exchange to enhance institutional partnerships for UM in the host county (or countries).

5. If relevant, articulation of impacts, outcomes and products generated by previous Long-Term International Activity Awards/Faculty Exchange Awards.

Once evaluated by the International Committee, a recommendation report is made to the Provost. The Provost’s Office has explicit approval in awarding faculty exchange awards.

**Staff Exchanges:** Almost all of UM’s exchange agreements include a staff exchange component and the process to apply is the same as that for faculty, including the review by the International Committee. Funding for staff exchanges was discontinued in FY14; however, funding to staff exchanges has always been a challenge and institutional funding for staff exchanges has always been very limited.

As a result of UM’s exchange efforts, several faculty members have taken advantage of UM’s institutional contracts and have hosted their faculty directed program at our partner institutions, including, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures (Mexico & Chile), School of Journalism (Chile). There is significant potential to increase exchange opportunities and promote programs that are mutually beneficial to UM faculty.

6. Question: To what extent do faculty members engage in collaborative research and development cooperation with faculty at institutions in other countries?

**Data collection:** Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs; Provost’s Office
Summary of Findings: The level of faculty engagement abroad varies widely across campus and often depends on its program. Math, Forestry and Conservation, Humanities and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts tend to have high levels of research and collaboration. The number of applications for faculty long-term international activity increases each year, however, the funding and award amount has decreased yearly for the past five years, with AY2007-2008 being at its height of funding (11 awardees funded a total of $148,000).

Furthermore, there is a significant amount of research and cooperation by UM’s faculty and colleges in other countries. A distinction was made between collaborations that are institutional versus individual. A significant number of individual collaborations exist on UM’s campus, especially in the regions of Asia, Latin America, and Africa, as field site research occurs more frequently in these locations than in academic institutions. While no concrete data exists, it was suggested that 75% of the current collaborations that exist at UM are based on individual collaborations that are short term/temporary and are based one joint research project/publication. 25% was offered as the rough estimate for the percentage of institutional collaborations outside the US. (Data from the employee survey was not available at the time to completely analyze this question.)

7. Question: What effect do partnerships have on student international learning on campus?

Data collection: Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs; Provost’s Office

Summary of Findings: Exchange Programs and Partnerships have an indirect effect on student international and intercultural learning on campus, however they do enhance study abroad and faculty exchange opportunities. UM students and faculty returning to campus help to internationalize the curriculum by sharing experiences, incorporating international perspectives in the classroom and in the campus community, and through international students and faculty interactions with UM students and faculty. Many students who arrive at UM and hope to study abroad do not do so. There is a perception that the cost of study abroad is high and that studying leads to added time to graduation.
Collaboration and Partnerships

Partnerships help students think beyond the borders of the classroom and the local community. The Provost’s Office funds exchange program operations through general funds; these partnerships are generally sustainable because there is the commitment from the institution to continue the collaborations. Individual departments, collegiate units and faculty partnerships are largely dependent for funding the individuals initiating them and the support that the academic unit provides for them.

8. Question: How does the institution fund its partnerships? How sustainable are the existing partnerships?

Data collection: Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs; Provost’s Office

Summary of Findings: Currently, there is no funding allocated for partnerships and they are largely determined by a faculty’s interest in a particular region, country, or university. The sustainability of UM partnerships remains a concern. Currently, UM has 90 partnerships, of which 60 have a student exchange component added to them. The partnerships that include student exchanges are sustainable as student interest remains high and there are no institutional funding commitments tied to them. UM needs to restructure its partnership process to ensure that all of UM’s partnerships are not solely student or research focused. Additionally, UM could build on a foundation of supporting visiting scholars by inviting more scholars to campus and including a residency component.

Structure, Policies and Practices, Resources

1. Question: What policies or practices related to collaboration and partnerships hinder internationalization efforts as this institution?

Data collection: Missoula Area Chamber of Commerce; City of Missoula – Mayor’s Office; City of Missoula – Development Services, Business Licensing; Sustainable Business Council of Montana; Missoula Economic Partnership; Missoula Cultural Council; Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center; International Committee; Foreign Student and Scholar Services; International Programs; Office for University Planning, Budgeting and Analysis
Summary of Findings: Overwhelming, the consensus from each data collection group was that there was a significant lack of funding to develop, support, and formalize institutional and individuals partnerships (joint conferences, joint degrees, joint research, campus visits, seed funding for faculty directed programs, etc.).

Collaboration and Partnerships Subcommittee report submitted by:

☐ Nancy Gass, Subcommittee Chair, Associate Director for Comprehensive Internationalization, Office of International Programs (also Task Force Co-chair)
☐ Keith Bosak, College of Forestry and Conservation
☐ Jillian Campana, College of Visual and Performing Arts
☐ Abraham Kim, Director, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center (also member of Steering Committee)
☐ Samuel Panarella, Assistant Professor, School of Law (also member of Task Force)
☐ Sandy Ross, Graduate School