



RESEARCH FAQs

What is Montana 10?

Montana 10 is a new scholarship and community at Helena College University of Montana, Montana State University-Billings, and the University of Montana-Missoula. The program offers academic, social, and financial supports designed to help students succeed in college. Students who become Montana 10 Scholars will be part of a special group of students all across Montana leading the way in a new way of doing college—a kind of college where students have the financial support they need, the community and guidance that knows them and supports them as individuals, and the specialized academic support that will help them achieve their education goals and launch their careers.

Montana 10 is a part of a study being conducted by the Montana University System into the role that these types of services and financial supports play in student's college experiences and outcomes. The study will track the progress of around 300 Montana 10 students and compare their college experience to a similar number of students receiving usual campus services. Around half of students who apply will be chosen to participate through a random lottery (like flipping a coin).

Why am I being asked to be in this research study?

We want to learn more about how to help students succeed in college. By doing this study, we hope to find out how much certain supports can improve success in college. We are asking new students like you to help us.

What if I don't understand something?

If you would like, you can contact the Montana 10 research staff, who can talk through the contents of the Montana 10 application and answer any questions you may have. You are encouraged to ask questions at any time – before, during, or after you are in the study. Please ask as many questions as you would like before you decide if you want to be in this study. If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. If you have questions, please contact the lead researcher, Joseph Thiel, at jthiel@montana.edu or 406-449-9134.

What will happen if I say yes, I want to be in this study?

First, the Montana 10 application will gather some information about you and your college plans. Your response to these questions will not change your chances of being selected for Montana 10. Then we will confirm if you are eligible. Eligible students will:

- Have completed the Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) and be eligible to receive a Pell grant
- Have completed fewer than 15 college-level credits
- Commit to meeting Montana 10 program requirements if selected

If you are eligible, the research staff will randomly (like a flip of a coin) place you into either a group selected to receive Montana 10 services or into a group that will receive normal campus services and supports.

The research team will then use information regularly gathered by your campus to track the academic progress of both groups. This information will include:

- Information included in your admissions materials (like your age, race, high school GPA, and whether you are a veteran)
- Your performance in college courses
- Your progression towards a college degree
- Federal student loans you take out to fund your education

The research team will also invite you to participate in follow-up surveys, focus groups, or interviews. The purpose of these follow-up activities is to learn more about your college experience. You do not have to participate in these follow-up activities.

Who will see this information? How will you keep it private?

Research staff and some campus staff will know your name and have access to your information. When we share the results of the study publicly, we will not include your name or anything else that could let others know you were a part of the study.

Are there risks?

The risks for participants in this study are no more than what you might experience in everyday life.

What if I have questions?

Please contact the head researcher of the study – Joseph Thiel at jthiel@montana.edu or 406-449-9134 – if you have any questions about this study.