

**University of Montana (UM)
Academic Program and Administrative Services Prioritization (APASP)
Staff Senate Response to Recommendations**

December 18, 2017

To: President Stearns, Cabinet, and Shared Governance Groups (SGG)

Due to time constraints, Staff Senate restricts its response to majority-voted seconded motions brought forth at our December 13, 2017 meeting. Moving forward when timelines/deadlines allow and in a format parallel to other SGGs' templates, Staff Senate will pass formally-constructed resolutions regarding APASP. General commentary follows the three motions with specific recommendations and references highlighted in yellow.

1.) Regarding **Recommendations 4 and 29 (b)**:

Recommendation 4: *Invest in the Faculty Development Office.*

Recommendation 29: *The Vice President of Administration and Finance, after reviewing the APASP categories and comments, recommends the following, and I concur:*

b. Continued investment in professional development.

Campus-wide professional development and training **must be** a priority for UM to positively affect long-term success of restructuring as staffing is downsized. Based on the APASP review (report A&F 59 Staff/Professional Development) and categorization (Category 1 - Priority for Development & Growth), Staff Senate views professional development investment as a natural, strategic complement to post-Voluntary Severance Offer (VSO) realignment.

The phrase **continued investment** infers a monetary investment exists; however, effective June 2017, the staff training and professional development program ceased due to an A&F budgetary decision. Staff Senate vehemently opposed the cut and passed resolution [SB 3 2016-17](#) identifying professional development as a key component to Strategic Opportunity 1: [Invest in People](#). Contrastingly, the Faculty Development Office (fully funded and staffed) was mentioned in the President's recommendations (**Recommendation 4**) ranking in the second APASP category (Category 2 - Consider for Development and/or Modification). Indisputably, both faculty **and staff** professional development are vital to the health of the institution and would benefit from greater resource investment. In collaboration with UM administration, Staff Senate looks forward to reestablishing a staff training and development program, or the development of a campus-wide faculty-staff training and development program.

2.) Regarding **Recommendations 5, 6, 7, 10, 18, 22, 30, 35**:

The recommendations (listed below) contain language referring to shared services, shared staff support, consolidation, restructuring, etc. Staff Senate asserts that programs identified for review for restructuring must consult with the staff within the identified units. Active, inclusive participation at all structural levels is critical to the creation of a more efficient, cohesive working group. Particular attention must be paid to existing staff workloads and compensation during post-VSO. **At this time, involuntary cuts to staff is not an option; we must revitalize, retrain, and invest in the staff who elected to continue their employment with, and commitment to, UM.** Ensuring their short- and long-term job security through training and development should be a priority to enhance UM's mission of serving students and pursuing academic excellence.

Recommendation 5: *Integrate the Montana Museum of Art and Culture with the College of Visual and Performing Arts to create synergy with the associated missions and need for administrative support. Sharing staff support for both saves resources.*

Recommendation 6: *Develop coordinated administrative services throughout Academic Affairs, indeed, throughout the University. It is likely that some employees and services are isolated and duplicative.*

Recommendation 7: *Align all centers and institutes within the Office of the Provost with the most mission-appropriate college or school. This could create better shared staff support and mission collaboration.*

Recommendation 10: *Relocate primary administrative support for several entities that have strong connections to academic programs, such as the PEAS Farm, the George and Jane Dennison Theatre, the Wright Zoological Museum, and the Blackfoot Café to ensure efficiency and sufficient support.*

Recommendation 18: *Merge the School of Art and the School of Media Arts within the College of Visual and Performing Arts. Review whether savings can be achieved through stronger connection between the Broadcast Media Center, School of Journalism and the College of Visual and Performing Arts.*

Recommendation 22, Undergraduate-Graduate Restructuring Opportunities:

D. Honors and Global Leadership: The dean of the Davidson Honors College should propose opportunities for the University to invest in the honors program as a tool for student recruitment, retention and success, and as a laboratory for curricular innovation at UM. The dean, in consultation with the director of the Franke Global Leadership Initiative, also should explore opportunities for integration between their interdisciplinary and experiential learning programs and to capture administrative, recruiting and programmatic efficiencies.

Recommendation 30: *Through some of the APASP reports and from her own analysis, the vice president also recommends the following, and I concur to the extent possible and with appropriate consultation with affected stakeholders:*

- a. Invest in human resources business solutions software.*
- b. Consolidate employee ADA services and Disability Services for Students.*
- c. Consolidate management of surplus property under recycling.*
- d. Explore shared services across campus (as also recommended by the provost in administrative areas of Academic Affairs).*
- e. Consolidate and collaborate among the Adams Center, Grizzly Athletics, UM Productions, theatres and the College of Business Entertainment Management program.*
- f. Consolidate ASUM's transportation program and UM's parking services.*

Recommendation 35: *The University should accept a definition of IT as a critical campus-wide service and utility, as well as an enabler for initiatives in UM's strategic vision. IT should proceed to implement the plan under the guidance of the new president, including possible restructuring. The CIO must continue campus communications to convey the competitive environment for IT employees and services. Even during times of hiring freezes, some areas such as this one will require recruitments and new hires. Information Technology should continue to refine the OneIT plan its leaders and stakeholders developed over the course of the past 10 months, in concert with end users such as faculty, students, staff and all programs. The location for IT services is less than ideal. Consolidation and change should be explored for the sake of making best use of, in some areas, fewer employees.*

3.) **Regarding Recommendation 29:**

The UM Grounds Crew was ranked in Category 2 - Consider for Development and/or Modification. Grounds crew members' work directly impacts campus safety. This unit has experienced significant staff reduction in recent years. Post-VSO, further staff reductions will potentially raise injury rates, negatively impact the public's perception of campus, and harm the overall campus aesthetic (and thus affect recruitment efforts). Reduced staffing will impact maintenance priorities, increase deferred maintenance tasks, and prolong response time to service requests. Safety and maintaining Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility is always Grounds Crew's first priority; this will continue, but may result in decreased accessibility to secondary building and campus access points. The UM campus serves as the State Arboretum. Increases in deferred maintenance will result in reduced ability to appropriately maintain campus trees. This reduction in maintenance will have not only safety implications, but also will result in reduced tree vigor and the correlated aesthetic.

Recommendation 29: *The Vice President of Administration and Finance, after reviewing the APASP categories and comments, recommends the following, and I concur:*

*c. Improve understanding of **campus safety** and security needs.*

Regarding Category 2, Vice President Rosi Keller recommends the following, and I concur:

*a. **Elevate deferred maintenance as a priority investment.***

4.) Regarding specific areas that warrant further exploration of current staffing workloads and compensation: Examine unfilled vacancies (pre- and post-VSO) and opportunities to promote and train from within the UM community -

- Missoula College
- IT
- Office of Research and Creative Scholarship and the Graduate School
- Office of the Registrar
- Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs

5.) Regarding the APASP process moving forward into Phase II, Staff Senate calls for:

- Improvements to reviewer training
- Reexamination of timeline/deadlines
- Increased transparency
- Continued data scrutiny
- Continued inclusivity