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The University of Montana is a public research institution on the cusp of celebrating the 125th anniversary of its founding. Our distinguished history of excellence in teaching, research, and public service has had a collective impact that represents higher education at its best: we improve the lives of not only our students but also our fellow local and global citizens. We advance and share knowledge, promote artistic creation, provide opportunity, and enrich the economic and cultural vitality of our region. An intellectual, creative, and economic engine for the state, we promote an educated citizenry for a rapidly changing world. In short, the University of Montana’s value is in its steadfast commitment and contributions to our students and communities.

The mark of a successful institution of higher learning is not merely that it has existed for 125 years, but that it capitalizes on its rich history by imagining an even better future. Our predecessors and fellow Montanans acted upon a bold vision to build an exceptional institution. Their intellectual, cultural, and financial investments obligate us to look forward in a visionary way.

The University of Montana sits at a critical juncture as we face challenges endemic to higher education institutions nationwide. We will continue our storied success as a sustainable organization only if we stretch, adapt, and innovate in an environment of dynamic economic, political, and civic realities. Our aspirational vision for the future coexists with an unpredictable external landscape and immediate financial constraints, requiring that we couple agility with responsible stewardship of our human, fiscal, and natural resources. Therefore, timelines for accomplishing our strategic vision depend on our changing resource and planning environments while our strategic vision compels us to wisely invest in our priorities as a platform for growth.

The citizens of Montana take pride in their resourcefulness under constantly changing conditions. We prepare students to function under such conditions, and we aspire to operate as a nimble and resourceful institution. The breadth and quality of our impact over the next decades will depend on our willingness to take a reflective stance on and proactive approach to refining—and in some cases fundamentally transforming—our organizational structures and fiscal models, providing a foundation to accomplish our purpose in the 21st century.

The Strategic Planning Coordinating Council (SPCC) has taken as its object of study our comprehensive institution as a single body rather than specific sectors or programs. UM Strategic Vision: Creating Change Together therefore approaches the University of Montana as a complex ecosystem whose purpose is greater than that of any of its parts. Our academic, research, and service programs as well as our administrative units form a synergistic whole with a common and singular vision, mission, and set of principles. This plan serves as a foundational guide for purposeful decision making across the institution.

While UM Strategic Vision: Creating Change Together is directional in that it maps a path forward, its content rests on an assumption of existing excellence. As a forward-looking platform, this strategic vision does not suggest that we should ignore what we already do well but rather intends that we cultivate our strengths to align our aspirations with our opportunities. Our last strategic plan, UM 2020, helped to guide significant progress in a number of areas and created promising conditions for the next iteration of our strategic plan. UM Strategic Vision: Creating Change Together honors that progress while looking toward new opportunity.

Building on this foundation of excellence, this vision reflects an institutional commitment to a new way of strategic thinking and doing. Strategic thinking does not end with the unveiling of a plan. Rather, it is a continuous process
of collaboration. The SPCC’s work therefore culminates not just in a plan but also in a new way of working together on behalf of and with our stakeholders. For *UM Strategic Vision: Creating Change Together* to remain relevant and actionable, we must focus on our priorities yet flexibly respond to our evolving contexts through persistent self-reflection, attention to emerging conditions, honest assessments, and iterative adjustments. By design, this strategic platform allows for and requires on-going action. The first expression of this on-going action will be the development of an operational plan.

During our many months of listening, the SPCC heard an emphatic call for a shift toward a new way of working together. We understand this call as a desire—in our research, teaching, learning, and work—to partner across traditional internal and external boundaries. Specifically, the broad directions defined in this plan will require sustained collaborative thought, decision making, and action. For this reason, *UM Strategic Vision: Creating Change Together* does not focus on particular units, programs, or departments. For these strategic directions to be tested, refined, realized and reaffirmed, we must develop new cooperative structures and a trusted data governance model that allow for proactive and integrated decision making and implementation.

The SPCC designed a collaborative process that would model this commitment to iterative thinking and adaptation to emergent ideas, conditions, and aspirations. While the SPCC faced time and capacity limitations, we rigorously upheld our commitment to be responsive to stakeholders, adaptive over time, and informed by listening.

We shaped our learning around a commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and data-informed inquiry. Although not exhaustive, we asked questions and listened to well over a thousand people on campus, in Missoula, and across the state. We analyzed dozens of existing institutional documents to understand current strategic initiatives. After six months of stakeholder engagement, we identified shared principles to guide our campus community’s behaviors and decisions, and we developed a set of strategic ideas for stakeholder consideration. This further engagement generated a prioritized set of focused strategic opportunities permeated by our principles and presented in this strategic vision. We listened carefully and broadly, and we are confident that what we heard helped to shape the ideas presented here. This deep engagement has been a cornerstone of our strategic thinking process and will be a necessary characteristic of our shared institutional culture moving forward.

What follows is a roadmap for a future that represents our collective aspirations. Our *vision* for the future sets an aspirational direction; our four *principles* provide a compass to guide our behaviors and choices; our five *strategic opportunities* set specific direction for continual prioritization and mission-aligned decision making. Built on our capacity and strengths, these strategic opportunities represent promising areas for an exceptional, distinctive future.

Our new vision, principles, and strategic opportunities are actionable only if we—as individuals committed to a shared and singular institutional vision—commit to strategic action. In both short term and long term planning, and in both budgetary and programmatic thinking, we must align our strategic processes, decisions, and outcomes with the initiatives outlined in this general platform for growth. To achieve this vision, we also must boldly reimagine how we operate fiscally and culturally.
Our strategic thinking process generated an ambitious and distinctive University of Montana vision statement that will galvanize our collective path forward. This vision statement reflects not just our current strengths but also our primary ambition to be an agile institution whose global distinction rests upon local and regional excellence.

**WE ARE MONTANA:** Deeply rooted in place,
Committed to local community and global connection,
Open to new ways of thinking, learning, and engaging together,
Dedicated to work that matters for the people of Montana and beyond.
These four principles grew out of the SPCC’s early strategic thinking and guided our yearlong process. While our vision and mission provide a common direction, these principles serve as a compass that will orient our daily behaviors and decisions.

- **INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY**
  - We create, iterate, and optimize with resilience
  - We address the changing needs of society
  - We look forward while honoring the past
  - We reward entrepreneurship and experimentation
  - We take pride in our resourcefulness

- **OPENNESS**
  - We guarantee access to opportunities
  - We foster transparency
  - We value, seek, and rely on diversity in all its forms
  - We work across boundaries, internally and externally
  - We maintain an open-minded approach
  - We collaborate in our work and in our learning

- **IMPACT**
  - We transform lives and are transformed in return
  - We perform local, regional, and global work that matters
  - We represent a vibrant intellectual hub for knowledge creation and exchange

- **PARTNERSHIP**
  - We respect people and place
  - We privilege teaching through human connection
  - We listen to and learn from others
  - We make wise decisions together
  - We partner across boundaries, internally and externally
  - We excel in place-based learning
We are uniquely positioned to fulfill our vision through five areas of strategic focus. These interconnected opportunities represent potential points of distinction that will differentiate the University of Montana regionally and nationally.

Each strategic opportunity includes a set of initiatives, with each initiative supported by a set of tangible actions. Collaborative development, assessment, and iterative adjustment will characterize our implementation of these initiatives.
We recognize our employees as our greatest strength. We will work to address financial, technological, and organizational challenges by growing and supporting and expecting excellence in our employees and by building an organizational culture around our core principles. To this end, we will invest in our employees’ leadership abilities, professional growth, and relationship building opportunities, aiming to become a “recognized institution” by the Chronicle Great Colleges to Work For Program.

First, empowering people to do their best work begins with supporting their leadership potential. Leaders operate in the best interest of those they serve, and with clarity about the institution’s larger mission, vision and principles. Every employee can and should exercise leadership behavior in some aspect of their work.

Second, empowering people to do their best work requires a growth mindset. Rather than viewing people as holders of jobs, we will care about the career path and development of every individual we hire. We hire people who want to learn and grow, we expect them pursue excellence through growth opportunities, and we support them in that endeavor.

Third, empowering people to do their best work requires that they be teamed with people who bolster their strengths, mitigate their weaknesses, and keep them accountable to the institution and the people they serve. Building an innovative and adaptive organization requires that we connect people to work on creative solutions, regardless of hierarchical reporting structures or funding sources.

**Invest in leadership**

- Develop a leadership academy focused on building an organizational culture that is creative, adaptive, growth-oriented, and highly collaborative. All employees in leadership roles should be expected to participate through learning and mentoring. The academy should also focus on the development of future leaders.

**Invest in growth**

- Expand and improve professional development programming through increased support for existing professional development positions and a clear charge to:
  - Provide professional development in a more integrated format, allowing for micro-credentialing of skills and abilities.
  - Offer career planning for employees and succession planning guidance for units.
  - Facilitate mentor-mentee relationships.
  - Improve employee onboarding, and orient new employees to our mission, vision, principles, and expectations for collegial and collaborative work across organizational boundaries.
  - Commit to paying all UM employees a living wage at a minimum. Work toward offering competitive wages and incentives for professional growth in order to recruit and retain talented employees.
  - Offer flexible scheduling options for employees to promote job satisfaction, increase productivity, reduce turnover, attract employees without costing more money, and contribute to gender equity. This includes options for alternative work scheduling, remote work, compressed work schedules, job sharing, and reduced schedules.
Invest in relationships

- Support internal connection and communication through interdisciplinary and cross-functional activities that elevate employees’ understanding of our shared vision and that enhance impact through shared knowledge and effort.
- Support and enhance the already successful staff ambassadors program to effectively expose employees to the “big picture” of our vision, while connecting them to colleagues across the institution to develop beneficial relationships and cohorts.
- Offer job-shadowing opportunities to employees who work in complementary or overlapping areas to increase understanding, appreciation, and networks of support across organizational boundaries.
STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY 1

PARTNER with PLACE

Our long history of engagement with our natural and human settings differentiates us from other regional and national institutions and serves as a source of far-reaching impact. We not only honor and leverage our spectacular natural setting, but also stress the importance of collaborative partnerships to enact innovative solutions for local and regional challenges. As a premier partnership university, we will optimize our connection to place as a way to learn from our partners, bring value to our region, and attract students and faculty from across the globe.

First, pursuing an unparalleled partnership with place requires that we promote community and civic engagement, generate and make visible research and creative scholarship that focus on our local and regional communities, and advance strong public-private partnerships. This includes celebrating and building upon our regional preeminence in professional education and the arts. Second, we recognize that diversity and increased access enrich our communities and campus. We aim to be the first choice among all Montanans including underrepresented populations, and we commit to respecting and learning from the diverse perspectives our students bring. Third, our responsibility to honor place compels us to nurture a symbiotic relationship with the City of Missoula and Missoula County through collaborative, intentional, and strategic long-range planning that fosters mutually beneficial growth. Finally, our partnership with place allows us to offer students experiential learning opportunities that leverage our exceptional natural setting.

These emphases and points of pride will not only benefit our students and the citizens of Montana but also draw students and faculty from across the country and globe, sustaining our institution as a cultural and international center.

Establish an Institute for Community Partnerships and Solutions

- Become a dedicated community partner by establishing the Institute for Community Partnerships and Solutions (ICPS). The ICPS will bring community and campus together through cross-disciplinary research and creative scholarship that directly tackles challenges facing Missoulians and Montanans.
- Convene an interdisciplinary team to create a long-range ICPS vision that promotes place-based inquiry. Include on this team participants from the community, area Native American tribes, campus administration, and campus faculty, staff, and student populations.
- Capitalize on ICPS partnerships to develop experiential learning opportunities that turn our communities into classrooms and that prepare our students to be engaged citizens in their future homes.
- Pilot the ICPS as a virtual hub for collaborative problem solving.
  - Recruit ICPS advisory liaisons from entities such as but not limited to tribal communities, Missoula County, the City of Missoula, the State of Montana, Missoula College, the UM Social Science Research Laboratory, the Rural Institute, the Offices of Academic Enrichment and Civic Engagement, and faculty and student groups.
  - Focus pilot partnerships on research that supports Missoula County, the City of Missoula Mayor’s Office, and the State of Montana. Integrate graduate students into this research experience.
Promote diversity through partnerships

- Value diversity by partnering with and learning from tribal communities, colleges, and people, and by becoming a premier institution for Native American education, scholarship, and engagement.
- Design and support place-based faculty, staff, and student semester abroad opportunities with one of our state’s tribes.
- Implement curricular development awards for academic programs that create and adopt inclusive pedagogical approaches.
- Establish a Chief Diversity Officer position under the Office of the President to oversee coordinated and authentic cross-campus efforts to create an inclusive environment and to promote intercultural and intercommunity outreach.
- Expand the diversity recruitment funding pool to recruit and attract diverse faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

Foster a neighborhood alliance: Building a bright future for Missoula-UM

- Institute a joint Missoula-UM team to build on our 124-year symbiotic partnership. This team will partner with the ICPS to develop a long-range plan for a shared and mutually beneficial City of Missoula, Missoula County, and UM future:
  - Plan for and responds to city-university growth, housing, and transportation needs.
  - Boost city-focused innovation, economic development, and social mobility.
  - Turn our city and county into a classroom for students and the campus into a community hub for cultural and educational experiences.
  - Recommend and help to develop two- and four-year workforce education and training programs that address the needs of our community.
- Work with community partners to promote cradle-to-career support, to close persistent opportunity and achievement gaps for Missoula city-county’s next generation, and to ensure college and career readiness. With these community partners, UM organizations such as the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, Broader Impacts Group, spectrUM Discovery Area, Montana Area Health Education Coordinators, and ICPS will further an evidence-based, collective-impact approach to help the next generation of Missoulians thrive.
- Increase the number of employees who serve on Missoula boards and the number of employees and students who engage regularly in volunteer opportunities. Coordinate with the Offices of Academic Enrichment and Civic Engagement to track, promote, and celebrate this community engagement.

Design student experiences that engage and promote our setting

- Encourage and support the development of curricula, internships, certifications, and micro-certifications that study the nature and characteristics of western Montana as a place.
- Support place-based collaborations with statewide land-management organizations, leveraging these relationships to situate research in Montana’s natural environment.
- Provide course-release opportunities for faculty who seek to connect students and Montana’s natural spaces through dynamic learning and research endeavors.
- Publicize our place-based research and student engagement as points of distinction.
At the University of Montana, we have long provided an undergraduate academic experience rooted in a philosophy of liberal education and the opportunity for excellent professional preparation. Together, these two components foster the knowledge and abilities necessary to flourish professionally, intellectually, and civically in a free society. We commit to this tradition while recognizing an opportunity to better leverage new strategies, new technologies, and new interdisciplinary emphases. At this confluence exists the possibility of a new approach that emphasizes innovation, design, and educational arts and sciences (IDEAS). Evidenced by national survey results, our own outreach to business and community leaders across Montana, and an increasing number of high profile executives around the world, employers value the core competencies that we foster in our students: skillful communication, analytical and creative problem-solving, critical thinking, and effective collaboration.

The IDEAS approach reimagines a shared academic experience that will distinguish the University of Montana as a national model of innovation and excellence in student-centered undergraduate education. Students deserve an educational experience that prepares them to navigate the important intellectual processes inherent in learning to think and act in cross-disciplinary ways. A new, more integrated approach to delivering students’ shared academic experience would provide an opportunity to reimagine the structure and delivery of our model of general education.

Reassert and rebrand our liberal philosophy of education

- Reassert and rebrand our educational model—through clear, concise, and consistent assertions—as one that cuts across all disciplines, colleges, and schools to prepare every graduate to excel in the areas of problem-solving, adaptability, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and ethical reasoning. Tout this model of education as the one that best prepares all students, regardless of major, to be flexible leaders in a rapidly changing world.
- Ensure our rebranding emphasizes this educational model as distinctive in the state and grounded in our commitments to place, diversity, professional programs, and research excellence.
- Make clear the value proposition of a University of Montana education in student recruitment, branding, legislative outreach, and donor cultivation. Emphasize and market the connections between career success and the core skills we develop in our students.
Reimagine the structure and delivery of the UM curriculum: Innovation, design, and the educational arts & sciences

- Develop and deliver the IDEAS approach with three primary objectives:
  - Deliver a new interdisciplinary shared academic experience to all first-year undergraduate students. Deliver this experience through a sequenced series of team-taught courses that together prepare students with a set of core competencies: problem solving, adaptability, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and ethical reasoning (PAC4E). Students progress through the PAC4E curriculum in cohorts, with each cohort following a structured course sequence to be completed during a student’s first three semesters. Students collaborate with IDEAS faculty (from departments across campus) to develop and curate an online academic portfolio that—in a distinctive and tailored way—demonstrates the core competencies they have developed and that links these competencies to their career and professional goals.
  - Design a Vertical Integrated Project (VIP) model to connect advanced undergraduate students from majors across campus with graduate students and IDEAS faculty. The VIP students will complete signature projects defined by their applied nature, experiential learning, and collaborative inquiry.
  - Establish a UM Innovation Lab, where graduate research teams form to solve educational, creative, research, and business challenges, including self-study of the IDEAS approach itself.
  - Pilot the PAC4E (problem-solving, adaptability, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and ethical reasoning) curriculum—an expression of the IDEAS approach—to initially exist alongside our current model for general education. Use the pilot PAC4E cohort experience as an opportunity to reimagine the delivery of our General Education Program.
  - Incentivize and empower interdisciplinary teams of faculty to construct and deliver PAC4E instructional content that promotes core competencies, fosters information literacy, and provides interdisciplinary experiences for students and faculty.
  - Incorporate the PAC4E curriculum into two-year campus programs, recognizing the need for greater connection between our four- and two-year curricula.
  - Engage in faculty-led assessment of the pilot PAC4E curriculum to determine its impact, effectiveness, need for adjustment, and potential for widespread adoption as a shared academic experience for all students.
  - Ensure IDEAS faculty receive appropriate recognition through the merit, tenure, and promotion process, recognizing that excellence in teaching is fundamentally based in supportive relationships with students.
  - Treat the IDEAS approach as an experimental effort based on collaboration between and integration of existing academic units. If successful, the IDEAS approach will attract campus faculty who embody the teacher-scholar ideal, who pursue cross-disciplinary scholarship and engage in collaborative instruction, and who place innovation and technology at the heart of their teaching. As the approach gains traction, IDEAS faculty and students will engage the wider campus to explore appropriate structural manifestations of the approach, be it an institute, center, degree program, or even a standalone college.
We firmly believe that the quality of our students’ education depends on our ability to provide students-first, engaged, supportive relationships and structures. All undergraduate, graduate, and professional students should have access to first-rate learning and mentorship programs, robust academic support services, and relevant professional development opportunities. We will flexibly respond to students’ needs, aspirations, and promise at all stages of their educational journeys because we understand that excellence in student performance and increased retention, persistence, and graduation rates are byproducts of high quality student experiences.

Integral to our promise for the future is a series of commitments to improve student access, support, and overall wellness: we will provide high-quality advising and mentorship, flexible course delivery and timing, accessible pipelines into two- and four-year education, cross-disciplinary student support structures, and user-friendly student service pathways. We will commit to providing all of our students—full-time, part-time, residential, distance, transfer, graduate, professional, underrepresented, domestic, and international—with learning pathways that meet their needs and promote excellence.

Invest in professional advising and faculty mentoring

- Ensure students receive first-rate, timely, and consistent advising and mentorship by investing further in a holistic professional advising model that provides more uniform coverage of professional advisors across academic units.
- Identify and scale up existing effective professional advising models on campus, allowing for faculty to begin shifting their time spent advising to teaching, research, and student mentorship.
- Train current staff to become professional advisors. Create career ladder pathways through Human Resource Services and use the current advising certificate opportunity to train and support staff to become excellent advisors.
- Develop mechanisms to better recognize and incentivize high quality professional advising and faculty advising/mentoring.
- Invest in people who can implement new technologies that support student learning and retention, addressing the currently inadequate pool of staff dedicated to developing and leveraging these technologies.

Ensure access through flexibility: Reimagine when and where students learn

- Increase our number of dual bachelors/masters degree programs
- Expand online and hybrid offerings in consultation with faculty, focusing on areas of high student demand and enhancing educational access.
- Develop a summer session modeled on a residential-based, block system to allow for focused and intensive learning. Explore alternatives to our traditional academic sessions to provide scheduling flexibility and timely degree completion.
• Design an online curriculum, through faculty consultation and in tandem with the development of the PAC4E curriculum, that allows students to complete all General Education Requirements within three semesters and with the option of beginning any semester.

• Increase the number of fully online degree programs by leveraging the new online General Education curriculum, incentivizing departments to develop online degree programs through a revenue sharing model.

• Incentivize departments to develop online degree programs through a revenue sharing model.

• Invest in two-year education in two ways:
  • Promote flexible “return-to-learn” pathways that will foster workplace development across the state.
  • Develop clear and coordinated pathways through developmental and lower-division coursework to facilitate matriculation into Mountain Campus four-year programs.

**Strengthen student support that sets us apart**

• Perform a comprehensive assessment of student services to understand students’ admissions-to-graduation experience and to identify potential obstacles and points of confusion. This comprehensive assessment will include a team of staff who shadow students as they navigate institutional systems. Use this assessment to modernize and simplify paths; for example, invest in technology that supports efficiencies and self-service.

• Implement proactive programming that empowers students to achieve balance and health around all aspects of wellness. Recognize the promotion of wellness as a shared responsibility across campus.

• Expand and invest in cross-disciplinary, collaborative academic support systems that meet undergraduate student learning needs across majors and students’ academic tenures. Tailor these support systems to our students’ differentiated needs.

• Invest in co-curricular and academic support models that enhance student learning and shorten time to degree (e.g., co-requisite learning models, individualized tutoring, career support).

• Support the integration of library instruction across the curriculum to address the changing needs of undergraduate and graduate students and of an educated citizenry.

• Build a more robust network of support for graduate and professional students to improve the quality of the graduate experience and to further our effort to achieve a Carnegie Highest Research Activity designation.

• Foster supportive one-to-one communication between graduate students and faculty to improve mentorship and research guidance.

• Expand career support and professional development opportunities across graduate programs through Professional Preparation Workshops. Be responsive to varied career goals, recognizing that not all doctoral students pursue work in academic fields. This includes providing abundant opportunities for travel funding and the implementation of professional and teaching workshops to meet the distinct needs of graduate students.

• Build campus partnerships (e.g., among the Mansfield Library, Writing Center, ICPS, and the Graduate School) to expand opportunities for graduate and professional students to become better teachers, writers, researchers, innovators, and citizens.

• Establish a President’s Teaching Fellows program to encourage and recognize graduate students who excel in and commit to effective teaching. Students in this program will earn a Graduate Instructor Certificate as one indication of their commitment to and proficiency in undergraduate teaching.
Research and artistic creation at the University of Montana embody our commitment to knowledge creation, creative activity, and innovation that matters: engaged research and creative scholarship are responsive, agile, innovative, iterative, and far-reaching. They improve our human and natural settings as well as attract world-class scholars and artists to Montana. The broader impacts of this inquiry, creation, and ongoing discovery act as drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship, and public service. We are a hub for creating and sharing knowledge and art that stimulate the economic and cultural health of our region. We will grow our research and creative enterprise, communicate widely and publicly the benefits of that research and creative activity, and engage faculty and programs to encourage innovation.

**Become a Carnegie R1: Doctoral University - Highest Research Activity**

- Grow research activity and creative scholarship by adding academic programs in fields that have both significant external funding potential and high student demand.
- Identify and develop high potential doctoral programs in the social sciences, arts, and humanities, recognizing that research excellence is not solely defined by success in securing external funding, and that the Carnegie R1 classification is also based on high numbers of doctoral completers.
- Provide research mentoring, proposal development support, and other internal support mechanisms across disciplines.
- Establish a clear and relational system for resource allocation across disciplines to ensure that as the research enterprise grows in externally-funded areas there are mechanisms in place that trigger a corresponding increase in the pool of internal grant money. In this way all units can benefit from, celebrate, and contribute to the growth of the University’s research portfolio.
- Increase the number and quality of doctoral completers through internal and external funding of graduate students as well as through more robust academic support at the dissertation writing stage.
- Support and optimize a 21st century library to meet graduate student and faculty research needs.
- Communicate the broad impact of UM research with our local and global communities, and inspire Montana K-12 learners about the bright futures that await them in higher education and the work force.

**Catalyze innovation and economic development through entrepreneurship**

- Become a dynamic hub where research and development support entrepreneurship and drive the vitality of our region’s economic ecosystem.
- Facilitate regular meetings with state and industry leaders to articulate our successes and initiatives; to identify local, statewide, and regional needs; and to promote economic development through research.
- Leverage Accelerate Montana to develop an entrepreneurial and innovation pipeline that translates research and original ideas into start-up businesses and non-profits. Expand Accelerate Montana’s ability to support existing local organizations and businesses as they work to become viable.
- Create a mechanism for these businesses and organizations to give back in support of our on-campus entrepreneurial efforts.
The purpose of *UM Strategic Vision: Creating Change Together* is to provide high-level direction by setting an ambitious vision expressed through five major areas of opportunity. For this vision and these strategic opportunities to become lived realities, we must translate them into concrete and actionable systems while recognizing that timelines will depend on our budget environment. This means that in every sector, unit, and program we must live a culture of strategic thinking, planning, and assessment while actively refining and amending the initiatives presented here.

In the near term, this strategic vision will orient our decisions. However, this strategic vision is not designed to address a single moment in time nor is it meant to be static. As a plan for the University of Montana’s ongoing evolution, its initiatives will be achieved only through long-range thinking, adjustment, and operational planning. Over the next ten months, in connection with important restructuring and reorientation efforts on campus, we will develop a flexible operational plan, try different approaches, assess what works and what does not work, and refine our overall path forward.

**The operational plan will outline:**
- A mechanism for comprehensive and long-term oversight of our progress under each strategic opportunity.
- A set of progress indicators based on a mixed methods approach to assessment.
- A procedure for unit-level planning and alignment to ensure the strategic plan informs planning and decision making throughout campus.
- A reimagined system for vision-aligned budget allocation.
- A comprehensive assessment of current operational and fiscal structures to identify problems and potential solutions.

This ambitious vision for the University of Montana is within our capacity to realize. Just as this plan represents an integrated perspective on the institution, our effort to bring about its vision will require cooperative structures, collaborative thinking, integrated decision making, and a commitment to action.

The University of Montana is an exceptional institution whose promising future is one of agility and distinction. This strategic vision calls upon all of us to share the responsibility for creating change together.
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UM STRATEGIC VISION: Creating Change Together

umt.edu/strategy