

**Division of Student Affairs**  
**Strategic Plan**  
**2010-2015**

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## ***A note from the Vice President...***

*Here in the summer of 2009, as we prepare for a new biennium and the beginning of another academic year, we have just ended the five years included in our last Student Affairs Strategic Plan. These five years have been a time of challenges and accomplishments. As we prepared the new strategic plan for 2010 through 2015, we first took time to review the goals we set for ourselves five years ago. We not only were interested in knowing the degree to which we have succeeded in achieving our goals, but also the changing factors in the environment that might either shift our priorities or create new challenges. From my perspective, I was also interested in looking for themes that have emerged as we have worked to achieve the goals and meet the challenges.*

*We then shifted our focus to the future, to identify where and how we should continue to build on our strengths, improve where needed, and seize opportunities to meet the challenges of an uncertain future. In the strategies we developed, which you will find in the following pages, I think you will see reflected a shared sense of responsibility and of optimism not born of false hope for a sudden windfall in funding, but rather of a willingness to help shoulder the load and to continue to evolve as needed. This evolution must preserve the quality of the student experience without the luxury of public resources that keep pace with cost increases.*

*We know that, just as it is unlikely that State public policy makers will dramatically increase appropriations support for higher education in the near future, it is also unlikely that Montana family resources will soon be significantly better able to meet the financial burden of paying the cost of attendance. We in Student Affairs are mindful that a significant portion of that cost is tied to fees charged by Student Affairs units. Therefore, it is ever more important that we remain cost effective – and also that we help students find appropriate tuition assistance and succeed in the timely completion of their educational aspirations. The need to increase the percentage of the population earning post-secondary education credentials is not only today's headline; it is perhaps the most important challenge we face, and undoubtedly the reason we are here.*

*We have also learned in recent years that what we must do, we can better do together. One of the most important (and most encouraging) themes I have identified in reviewing our work under the last strategic plan is collaboration. Increasingly, particularly over the past two years, we have been able to make significant progress toward critical goals because we have been able to work collaboratively with willing partners. This has been true as we have begun to make progress on retention, but also as we have strategically improved recruitment. It has been evident not only in implementing programs to increase tuition assistance, but also in improving the processes by which students register and pay their tuition and fees. We serve students better not only in continually improving freshman orientation, but also in ensuring that families perceive the welcoming atmosphere on the campus.*

*Therefore, you will see in these pages a continued and increasing focus on student success and a growing commitment to collaboration, particularly with Academic Affairs. As we confront potential economic effects on enrollment and the likelihood that the University will face in the next biennium the challenge of replacing funds provided by the Federal Government, we must work together creatively to grow our capacity without proportional growth in State support. By continuing our success in attracting out-of-state students, as well as by increasing continuation rates of Montana high school graduates and the participation rates of working adults, while at the same time continuing improvement in retention and persistence to graduation, we will mitigate the effects of the decline in Montana high school graduates – and we will help secure Montana's future.*

*Alongside our colleagues, we are ready to face the challenge.*

*Teresa Branch  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
The University of Montana*

# Division of Student Affairs

## Strategic Plan

2010-2015

### Mission Statement

*The Division of Student Affairs facilitates student learning by providing high quality programs, services, and developmental opportunities, while fostering an inclusive campus community in support of the educational mission of The University of Montana.*

### Planning Principles and Values

- ✦ **Quality ...** We provide high quality programs that prepare students to understand and address the needs of society.
- ✦ **Fiscal Responsibility ...** We budget wisely and prepare for a future in which fewer dollars may be available for new programs and services.
- ✦ **Technology ...** We utilize improved technology to continually enhance service delivery.
- ✦ **Collaboration ...** We collaborate with faculty, staff, and students to offer educational programs and services.
- ✦ **Respect for Diversity ...** We foster a campus community that welcomes all, celebrates diversity, and is student-centered.
- ✦ **Innovation ...** We encourage and reward innovative thinking that improves the substance and delivery of programs.

## Strategic Goals: 2010-2015

1. Build on success in **student recruitment**.
2. Enhance **student learning**.
3. Work collaboratively with campus partners to improve **student success**.
4. Continually improve **student service** delivery.

# Partnering for Student Success

The University will help its students succeed academically and personally so they graduate well-prepared for their careers or further education. In order to achieve the University's planned outcomes in Partnering for Student Success, the Division of Student Affairs intends to:

## Encourage collaborative involvement of faculty & staff. - PSS

- Launch a campaign to raise awareness among the campus community about the mission and activities of Student Affairs.
- Encourage Academic Affairs to include enrollment success in criteria for faculty incentives.
- Collaborate with faculty/departments in targeted recruitment (by major) and student success initiatives.

## Enhance campus and alumni involvement in recruitment. - PSS

- Utilize the Advocates in recruitment.
- Continue internal collaborations to enhance recruitment and student success.
- Expand the Enrollment Services International Student Advisory group and further involve them in targeted recruitment.
- Train and encourage alumni to participate in college fairs.

## Expand and improve tuition assistance and scholarship. - PSS

- Develop targeted scholarships/assistance for Montana's non-traditional population.
- Solicit modest expansion of both the Cal Murphy and LAS pools. *(Additional 20 nonresident students.)*

## Develop a campus strategy to improve continuation & participation rates. - PSS

- Hold an Education Summit, including the offices and individuals listed below, aimed at changing the paradigm of the Montana public (target adults, youth, and Native Americans), and impacting "college going" decisions.

Student Affairs	President	Governor's Office
Alumni Affairs	OCHE/MGSLP	Student Assistance Foundation
Academic Affairs	OPI/School Superintendents	Veterans Administration
Planning, Budget & Analysis	Montana Indian Ed Assoc	Legislators
University Relations	Tribal Education Offices	Media
UM Foundation	Tribal Governments	

- Develop a comprehensive marketing/outreach program aimed at middle schools.
  - Identify recognizable student role models to use in marketing materials.
  - Develop multiple transmission/communication methods, including videos, site visits, posters, billboards, and commercials.
- Partner with academic departments and Athletics to coordinate and expand summer programs.
- Partner with Academic Affairs to implement 2+2 recruitment strategies and 2-year programs, in collaboration with COTs, Community Colleges, and Tribal Colleges.
- Partner with Academic Affairs to implement and market online degree programs to encourage adult learning participation.

**Encourage and facilitate ongoing professional development of Student Affairs staff. - PSS**

**Promote greater collaboration with Academic Affairs in enhancing student learning. - PSS**

- Propose the establishment of a joint Student Affairs and Academic Affairs advisory board to facilitate collaboration related to student learning.
- Utilize the living/learning environment within Residence Life to further develop the Freshman Year Experience.
- Recommend incorporation of a career advising module in academic advising.

**Prepare K-12 Students (Ensure Adequate Preparation) - PSS**

- Partner with Academic Affairs, TRIO, Upward Bound, SAF/MGSLP, GEAR UP, and Education Talent Search to develop and implement a communication and mentoring program that effectively speaks to pre-high school students, their parents (whose families do not necessarily encourage higher education), teachers, and counselors about academic and fiscal preparation for college.
- Collaborate with Academic Affairs and K-12 partners to ensure out-of-classroom preparation for the transition to college (social skills, college life management, and life skills).

**Transition to College (Admission Process and Evaluation) - PSS**

- Collaborate with Academic Affairs to achieve a new admissions process using holistic evaluation methods.

**Transition to College (Placement) - PSS**

- Assist Academic Affairs with implementation and marketing of 2+2 Programs.

**Transition to College (New Students) - PSS**

- Work with Academic Affairs to enhance orientation and advising of incoming freshmen.
- Develop ongoing transitional activities that provide students with information and support at key points in their Freshman Year Experience.
- Improve the website to better provide information to potential students.

**Transition to College (Affordability) - PSS**

- Work with UM Foundation to increase institutional financial aid, scholarships, and grant opportunities for students.
- Continue to advocate for financial aid at the state and national level.

**Engage Students (Living/Learning Communities) - PSS**

- Plan for Living/Learning Communities by identifying diverse student audiences, selecting themes and engaging faculty participation.
- Utilize Living/Learning communities for the Freshman Year Experience.

- Inform the campus community about research findings concerning the incoming generation of students, including their attitudes, values, outlook, and learning habits.

### **Strengthen Student Support (Office of Student Success and Office of Academic Enrichment) - PSS**

- Strengthen collaboration with the Office for Student Success (OSS) and the Office of Academic Enrichment.

### **Strengthen Student Support (Early Alert Intervention) - PSS**

- Continue campus-wide educational efforts to train faculty, staff, and students to identify and refer students with emotional, physical, and psychological issues.
- Educate students about alcohol and other substances and their correlation with lower GPAs.
- Strengthen support for students with disabilities by ensuring accessible learning experiences both in and outside the classroom.

### **Strengthen Student Support (Nontraditional Students) - PSS**

- Create online orientation for nontraditional and returning students.
- Enhance programmatic support for nontraditional and commuter students.
- Encourage employers to counsel soon-to-be unemployed workers regarding continuing education options.

## **Education for the Global Century**

**UM will offer an educational experience at all degree levels that provides graduates the foundation to make positive impacts on a world that is increasingly interconnected. In order to achieve the University's planned outcomes in Education for the Global Century, the Division of Student Affairs intends to:**

### **Engage Students (Co-curricular Opportunities) - EGC**

- Increase number and variety of internships, civic engagement experiences, opportunities for service learning, student employment, study/work abroad, and undergraduate research.
- Continue to increase leadership, multicultural, and other student activities designed to promote personal development; promote engagement through social networking and life building skills.
- Recognition of faculty participation in co-curricular opportunities.

### **Strengthen Student Support (Diversity) - EGC**

- Provide opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to develop the skills necessary to effectively create an inclusive campus community where diversity is valued.
- Develop an array of activities that promotes diversity and social justice.
- Contribute to the implementation of the UM Diversity Action Plan.

## **Discovery and Creativity to Serve MT and the World**

**The University will transform discovery and creativity into knowledge, applications, and experiences in ways that benefit the state, region, nation, and world. In order to achieve the University's planned outcomes in Discovery and Creativity to Serve MT and the World, the Division of Student Affairs intends to:**

**Define, document, and disseminate the distinctive set of benefits Student Affairs imparts to graduates of The University of Montana, such as: **D&CMW****

- Overarching learning outcomes.
- Cultural and life skills development.
- Socialization, citizenship skills, and values development.
- Economic benefits (employment opportunities and earning potential).

**Enhance career opportunities with Montana, regional, national, and international employers. - **D&CMW****

- Enhance collaboration with Internship Services on the identification and cultivation of employers offering student employment, internship, and career opportunities.
- Educate potential employers regarding the value of employing University of Montana students and graduates.

**Continue to explore with the School of Education the development of a Master's degree program for Student Affairs professionals. - **D&CMW****

## **Dynamic Learning Environment**

**UM will enhance its character as a place where people are passionate about learning, discovery, and growth. In order to achieve the University's planned outcomes in Dynamic Learning Environment, the Division of Student Affairs intends to:**

**Strengthen recruitment programs for underrepresented and international populations. - **DLE****

- Build a critical mass of students of color by developing an aggressive scholarship program.
- Promote and support development of 2+2 programs for schools with high concentrations of historically underrepresented and international populations.
- Collaborate with campus resources such as the Diversity Advisory Council, Upward Bound, Pharmacy Diversity Programs (Native American Center of Excellence & REACH Program), International Programs, and TRiO to enhance recruitment of underrepresented prospects.
- Develop programs specifically targeting out-of-state Native American populations as well as collaborative programs with non-Montana tribes and tribal colleges.
- Optimize international recruitment strategies.

### **Promote opportunities for student learning. - DLE**

- Create learning opportunities within student employment.
- Promote and encourage student participation in governance and committees.
- Encourage involvement in service learning.
- Collaborate with Academic Affairs to provide opportunities for experiential learning in credit-earning activities and assistantships.
- Foster cross-cultural learning.

### **Recognize student and program achievement. - DLE**

- Continue to promote the Student Employee-of-the-Year Award.
- Recognize student achievement at a campus-wide awards ceremony.
- Raise the visibility of awards for employees and campus units that provide outstanding opportunities for student learning.
- Recognize co-curricular achievement at Commencement.
- Develop scholarships for students who have demonstrated outstanding service and leadership.

### **Enhance documentation of learning objectives for programs within Student Affairs. - DLE**

- Identify learning objectives within each unit, create a tool to assess achievement, and recognize achievement of learning objectives.

## **Planning Assessment Continuum**

**The University will model transparency, systematic communication, and sound decision-making to ensure that resources are marshaled to achieve UM's mission. In order to achieve the University's planned outcomes in Planning Assessment Continuum, the Division of Student Affairs intends to:**

### **Seek service-driven innovation that is both high-tech and high "touch." - PAC**

- Promote effective use of the website for transacting business by replacing mailed forms with online submittals whenever possible.
- Conduct a service inventory across all Student Affairs departments to determine which services can be provided online and work together with other campus entities to provide those services.

### **Facilitate and participate in cross-functional (inter-sector) meetings on student service delivery. - PAC**

### **Link outcomes assessment with strategic development and resource allocation. - PAC**

- Include performance measures in annual operating plans for all Student Affairs units; develop a practical/efficient method of reporting on performance measures as a part of annual reporting.

- Incorporate an outcome-based funding component in resource allocation within Student Affairs.
- Continue to enhance assessment within and across Student Affairs units, ensuring what we are measuring is critical to student and institutional success.

**Complete professional certifications, accreditations, or comprehensive program reviews of Student Affairs units on appropriate timelines. - PAC**

**Explore and pursue creative sources of revenue generation. - PAC**

- Work with the UM Foundation to secure funding to support programs and services within Student Affairs.
- Explore entrepreneurial ventures and grant opportunities, as well as other funding sources.

## Assessment – Achievement of 2005-2009 Goals

*Student Affairs utilizes an extensive and participative ongoing assessment program involving all unit leaders, as well as an interdisciplinary assessment council. Outcomes, as well as performance levels, are measured by objective data, including peer reviews and student surveys. Results are analyzed and reported continuously by the Student Affairs Assessment Council and compiled in an annual report from each unit for the Vice President. These data were reviewed in preparation for the development of the 2010-2015 plan. Here is a retrospective summary of the achievement of goals from 2005-2009.*

**Increase Student Recruitment:** Non-resident enrollment has increased steadily through the use of targeted scholarships and enhanced recruiting over the past few years, reversing a negative trend of nearly a decade. In addition, scholarship and tuition assistance programs for Montanans have been expanded through the MPACT and Horatio Alger programs, as well as UM Foundation efforts. American Indian recruitment has continued to advance, with the result that the University has the highest representation for this minority group of any Montana campus other than the tribal colleges.

**Enhance Student Learning:** Practica, internships, specialized certifications, leadership development programs, and involvement in program planning and assessment are ongoing activities designed to meet this objective. Many of these activities have been coordinated with academic units and have included ongoing research projects, such as a largely student-conducted tobacco use study undertaken with The College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences.

**Improve Retention & Graduation:** Efforts have focused on helping students meet financial challenges and on making campus life more conducive to engagement and student success. Scholarships and financial aid continued to grow, both in University aid and in UM Foundation scholarships. Career Services created a job website that lists on- and off-campus opportunities. In addition, credit-earning activities and assistantships were implemented.

**Continually Improve Service Delivery:** Several units have initiated inventive uses of web capabilities to enhance student service delivery. Student preferences have been monitored across units, and services have been modified to optimize student satisfaction. Examples include menu updates by Dining Services and recreation activities provided by Campus Recreation. Student satisfaction surveys were employed by several units, and problem areas were identified and addressed, such as problems visually impaired students experienced with E-text. Focus groups provided mechanisms for additional student input regarding existing and planned programs. Additionally, each unit has a Student Advisory Board.

**Maximize Visibility of Student Affairs Programs:** Orientation programs offered to incoming students are continually assessed, using data gathered through student surveys. Student Affairs programs were posted on websites, around campus, and advertised in the *Kaimin*. Where appropriate, efforts were made to link programs to academic units.

**Recruit, Retain, & Train Quality Staff:** Ongoing employee participation in professional organizations and workshops has promoted a variety of learning opportunities and professional enhancement across Student Affairs units. Regular in-service training has also been provided.

**Generate & Retain Critical Funds:** Revenue-producing units across Student Affairs have continued to grow in revenue, and have consistently maintained positive fund balances.